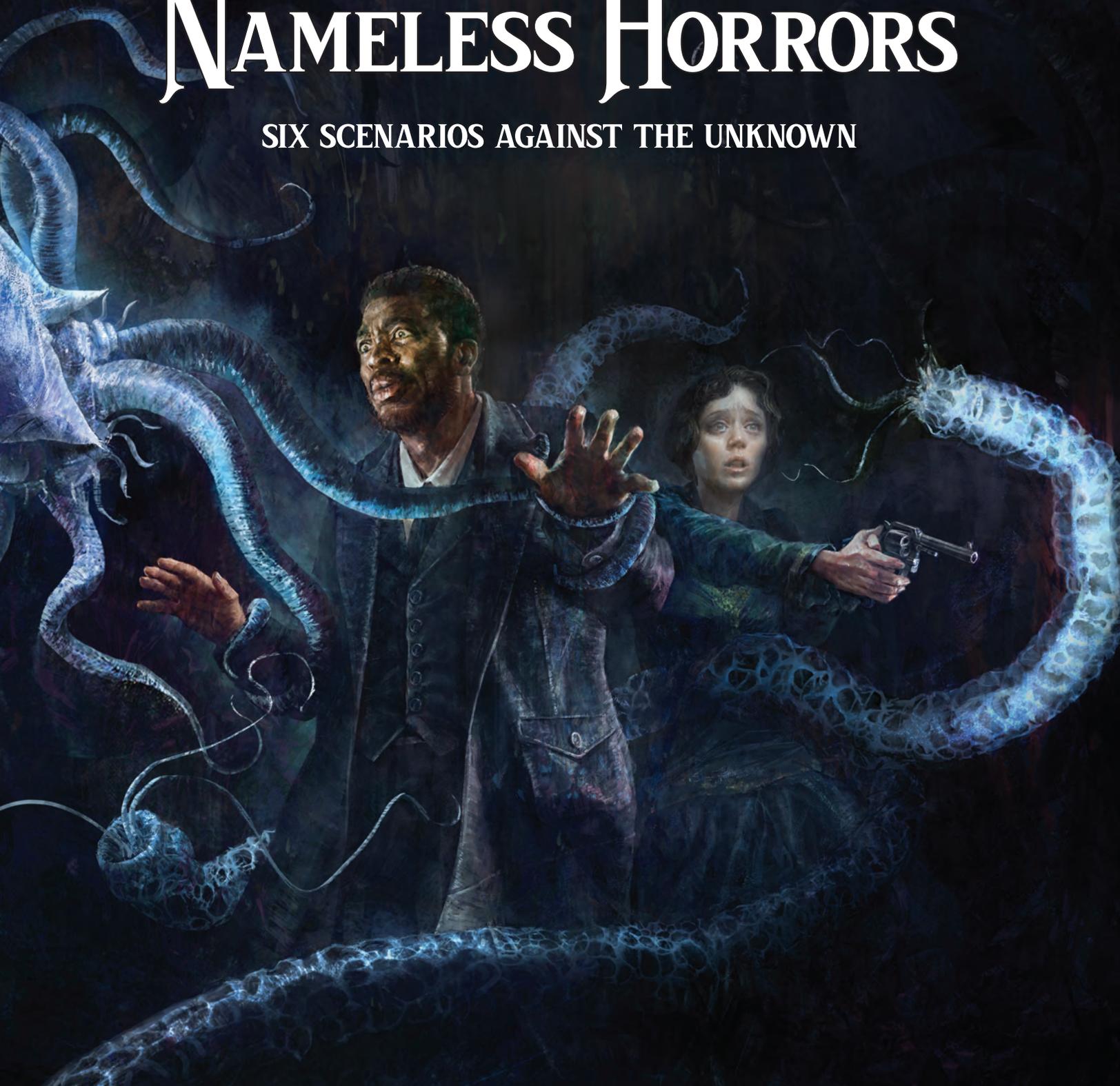


CALL of CTHULHU®

NAMELESS HORRORS

SIX SCENARIOS AGAINST THE UNKNOWN



PAUL FRICKER, MATT SANDERSON, SCOTT DORWARD AND FRIENDS



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This supplement is best used with the *Call of Cthulhu* roleplaying game and, optionally, with the *Pulp Cthulhu sourcebook*, available separately. Find more Chaosium Inc. products at chaosium.com.

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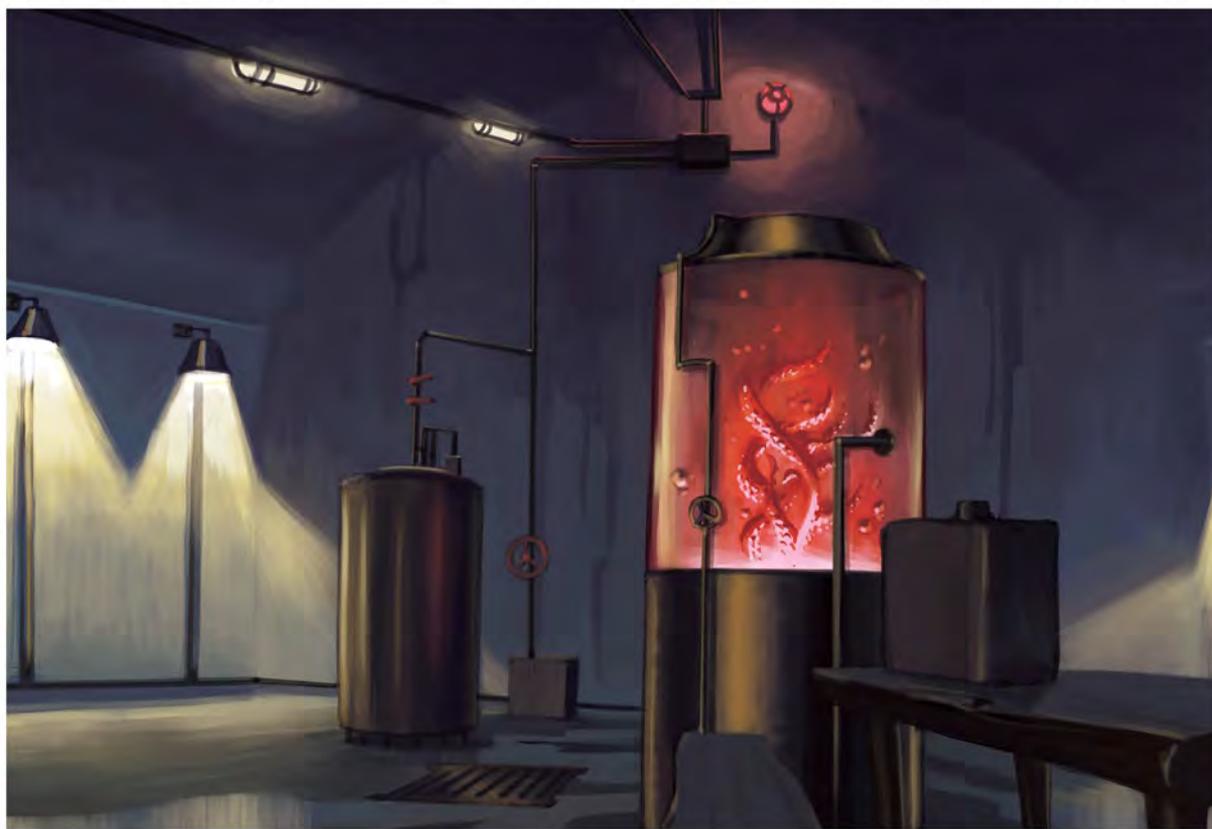
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PLAYER HANDOUTS AND MAPS

All the handouts and maps featured in this book can also be downloaded for free at Chaosium.com





MATURE CONTENT WARNING

The material in this supplement deals with mature themes—violence, gore, murder, abuse, drug abuse, assault, moral corruption, and sexual activity. In addition, **The Moonchild** scenario alludes to (off stage) abuse of a child (although that child is actually a Mythos entity), and the pre-generated investigators' backstories include one with accusations of sexual misconduct, one with self harm and drug abuse, while another has been diagnosed with cancer.

Keepers are advised to adjust their presentation of this subject matter—and the specifics thereof—in accordance with their own and their group's comfort levels. While some groups may want to explore certain themes and realize their game world as a full-on visceral and gritty diorama, others may desire a subtler approach and seek not to address certain matters. Adjusting or eliminating details to suit your group's tastes, and fading out from difficult material as needed, are all tools that can be used.

Ensure your group has the opportunity to discuss how they wish the game world to be presented and what level of detail they will enjoy. Remember, the game is designed to be a shared experience and everyone in the group should feel they can contribute to it in a safe and enjoyable manner. Taking time to discuss how, and if, such darker material should feature in your games is time well spent and ensures that no one is uncomfortable or distressed by the events and depictions that occur. This is, after all, a game—adjust the material so that everyone can have fun.

INTRODUCTION

The oldest and strongest emotion of mankind is fear, and the oldest and strongest kind of fear is fear of the unknown.

—H. P. Lovecraft, *Supernatural Horror in Literature*

It's a situation that every Keeper has encountered at least once. You're describing the abandoned mine shaft, the way the shadows flicker across the rock in the lamplight, the sound of dripping water echoing all around, and the disquieting smell of rot permeating the air. The investigators are tiptoeing through this sinister environment, frightened but determined. Suddenly there is a snarl from behind them. As the investigators spin around, you describe the lantern beam picking out a misshapen figure squatting behind a boulder. The figure hisses through an oddly canine snout...

"Oh, it's a ghoul," says one of the players, "does anyone have a melee weapon? Firearms aren't so good against them."

It doesn't take much to break the spell of unease, and familiarity will break it most effectively. The majority of Keepers have ways of mitigating this, including never mentioning creatures by name, using vague descriptions and creating variations of the monsters presented in the books. The problem is that many players have either read the rulebook cover-to-cover or played enough scenarios that they can identify common Mythos threats from the slightest of hints, no matter how obfuscated they may be.

Nameless Horrors aims to create games that will frighten the most experienced of Call of Cthulhu players, giving them reason to fear the unknown.

First and foremost, you won't find any ghouls, gugs, ghastrs, or other named Mythos entities here. As the title of the book suggests, the horrors found within have no names, but they are still very much of the Mythos. Your

players will not have encountered their like before, and no one will be on safe, comfortable ground.

There are no easy answers on offer. Each scenario presents the investigators with a problem and largely leaves the nature of the solution up to them. There is no expectation of a climactic fight, and some of the scenarios may end up with no combat at all. The Mythos presents far worse horrors than mere death.

The scenarios are all self-contained, with a selection of pre-generated investigators who are tied to the horrible situation. The stakes in each are personal. Moreover, because the scenarios are not part of an on-going campaign, there is no expectation that the investigators will survive. None of the scenarios are fatalistic enough to demand a total party kill, but such a thing is not unlikely either.

While each of the scenarios is a one-shot, some may take longer than a single session to complete. Again, depending on the actions of the investigators, some may provide several hours of play, while others will be wrapped up in a single evening.

Where appropriate, advice is provided for those Keepers wishing to use a scenario within their on-going campaign.

We hope that your players find the horrors presented unpredictable, dark, and discomfoting. Sometimes it's good to be reminded that the darkness holds terrors beyond our understanding.

New Edition

This updated edition corrects a handful of errors while also refreshing the art, maps, and handouts—now all presented in full color and hardback book format. All of the six sets of pre-generated investigators included in this book are available to download in writeable PDF format from Chaosium.com.

OVERVIEW OF THE SCENARIOS

AN AMARANTHINE DESIRE

Suffolk, England, 1895. A smuggling ship approaches the shore. Assisted by locals from the nearby village of Dunwich, the crew begins unloading its cargo as a storm grows around them. Dunwich used to be a thriving port, but much of the city was claimed by the sea hundreds of years ago. Now, all that remains is a shadow of its former self. In the darkness beneath the waves, a powerful force remains, keeping a shard of the past very much alive. The investigators, as the smugglers, find themselves entering an echo of the night that sealed the fate of the city.

A MESSAGE OF ART

Paris, 1892. The first salon hosted by the Salon de la Rose + Croix has just come to a close. The Parisian elite have gathered to celebrate the arts show that its creators hoped would revolutionize the art scene across Europe, and possibly the world. Some of the most prominent artists of the Symbolist movement are present, along with critics and supporters of the salon. Here, art and religion have become one in a dangerous fusion. The investigators, as members of the artistic elite, are about to uncover that such talent was never intended to be part of the design of man.

AND SOME FELL ON STONY GROUND

Small-town America, 1920s. Life is not quite what it used to be for the residents of Stowell. Local people are behaving strangely—some delve the mysteries of science, while others experiment with avant-garde music. Events escalate as the townspeople are increasingly divided into masters and slaves. When the situation is seemingly resolved, the final act is triggered and the story changes to one of survival horror.

BLEAK PROSPECT

Crawley, MA, 1932. The residents of a shantytown in Depression-era Massachusetts find their small community under assault from unknown forces. Working to overcome their own infirmity and the indifference of the authorities, the investigators—residents of the shantytown themselves—need to find out who or what is preying on them before those they hold dear are destroyed. Their investigation will bring them into contact with otherworldly horrors, a house that exists between dimensions and the machinations of the faceless men.

THE MOONCHILD

Milton Keynes, UK, modern-day. David Barber was driven to make a deal with the Devil to save his son's life. In doing so he has allowed a great evil to assume the form of a human child. The investigators were all part of an amateur occult society at college along with David, back in the early 1990s. Now some twenty years later they are drawn back together by a mutual acquaintance. Soon they will come face to face with the Moonchild, who knows more about them than they could possibly guess.

THE SPACE BETWEEN

Los Angeles, USA, now. The Church of Sunyata is a powerful force in modern-day Hollywood, but it is still fighting the popular perception that it is a cult. Part of the campaign to change this involves the funding of a new feature film, one that will present an allegorical story of the Church's beliefs. The filming is in trouble, though: the leading lady has vanished, the director has retreated from the world, and the police are sniffing around the set. It is up to the investigators, as loyal members of the Church, to make sure that these problems do not prevent the Church's vision from being shared with the world, no matter what that vision turns out to be.



AN AMARANTHINE DESIRE

1895 & 1287, DUNWICH, ENGLAND

INTRODUCTION

Eight miles north of Aldeburgh, along the English Suffolk coastline, and three miles south of Walberswick, stands the remains of what was once one of the largest and most prosperous ports in East Anglia. Over the centuries, the port has been eroded and gradually consumed by the sea to the point that it is a shadow of its former self. Its name is well known amongst readers of the Mythos, although this place is half a world away from the home of the Whateleys that readers will be familiar with in the hills of the upper Miskatonic Valley. This is the city taken by the sea: Dunwich.

While Lovecraft's village was fictional, the Dunwich in Suffolk is real. The history of Dunwich stretches back to the time of the Roman occupation. It grew to city-like proportions in the medieval era, driven by the prosperity of the port, and was always threatened by the constant erosion of the North Sea. Two tremendous storms in 1287 and 1328 destroyed large parts of the city and blocked the harbor, heralding its decline. In 1895, it is a small village that clings onto an ever-receding coastline.

Dunwich's history and legends have provided a rich background for many stories. As told in M.R. James' excellent tale *A Warning to the Curious*, one such legend is that of the "Three Crowns" that protect the region from invasion. One of these crowns was believed to have been buried in "a Saxon royal palace which is now under the sea." The power of the crowns gives them great potential to be considered Mythos relics.

The *Cthulhu by Gaslight* investigators in this scenario are thrown into an echo of the night in 1287 when the first storm hit Dunwich, and they are pitted against those who seek the crown for their own ends. They are caught in the fallout of actions that took place hundreds of years before the scenario begins. The investigators can't fight the past, but they do stand a chance of being able to save the future...

KEEPER CONSIDERATIONS

An Amaranthine Desire typically runs over 1 to 2 sessions, and is reminiscent in style of the film *Groundhog Day* as the investigators are caught in a time loop, fated to revisit Dunwich until their doom. The pace of the adventure can be regulated by the frequency in which the time loops take place.

Keepers should familiarize themselves thoroughly with the background to the scenario, as this provides the frame of reference upon which each time loop is built, detailing the events leading up to the storm hitting Dunwich in 1287. These events repeat in each loop, but in each instance, the investigators should discover a little more about what is happening, and slowly discover what they need to do to save themselves.

BACKGROUND

THE THREE CROWNS

The Kingdom of East Anglia has traditionally been represented by the image of three crowns upon a shield. Legend has it that these three crowns symbolize those of the ancient Saxon kings of the realm (the "Wuffingas") that were buried to protect the land from threats beyond the sea. As long as any one of these crowns remains in place, East Anglia will be safe—so the legend says.

The crowns were believed to have been buried along the shore, forming a protective barrier that no invader could cross. One of the crowns, that of King Redwald, King of the East Angles, was unearthed in Rendlesham in 1687 and melted down for its silver. While not on the shore, it was only a few miles from the coast and on a major line of access from the sea.



The Three Crowns

PRE-GENERATED INVESTIGATORS

An Amaranthine Desire is primarily designed for up to six pre-generated investigators (in the accompanying PDF pack for this book). However, if the Keeper wishes to run the scenario for a pre-existing party of investigators, in any era, all that needs to initially occur is that they are travelling just off the Suffolk coastline at the time of a severe storm. The investigators hear the bell tolling under the waves and the adventure begins. The Keeper can then determine what period in time they exit Dunwich and return to the world that best fits their campaign.

Note that the pre-generated investigators have been written to support a degree of intra-party conflict that might otherwise be lost when not using these characters.

The other two crowns have yet to be discovered. However, it is rumored that one was kept in an ancient Saxon palace that was swallowed by the sea. Erosion is a severe problem along the East Anglia coastline, and nowhere knows this more than Dunwich. It is here that one of the two undiscovered crowns is rumored to have been buried. One remains hidden to this day, somewhere along the wild expanse of the East Anglian coast.

THE TALE OF SARAH BROWNE

In the thirteen century, Dunwich was one of the largest ports in eastern England, being nearly a mile across. Its reputation grew from its ships and ship builders. Both its port and marketplace were alive with activity, trading with merchants across Europe and Scandinavia, from Iceland to the Baltic, from the Low Countries to France.

Sarah Browne was born in Dunwich in 1258. Her mother, Agnes, died in childbirth. Her father, Thomas Browne, was a local fisherman. Thomas brought in a modest income that kept him and his daughter with food on the table. He was from a wealthy family, but was disowned when he fell in love with Agnes, a commoner. He could read and write, and passed on these skills to Sarah in the hope they would help

AN AMARANTHINE DESIRE

her achieve greater things. When Sarah was thirteen, a storm at sea claimed her father, leaving her alone in the world. Following the tragedy, she worked in the fields, but barely brought in enough money to feed herself. Being otherwise unskilled, she had few options available.

Sarah had been raised as a God-fearing child, but Thomas' faith had been tested by the death of Agnes. Following Thomas' death, Sarah's own faith eroded quickly. God had taken both of her parents before their time and left her alone with a life that was destined to be hard and miserable. What little of her faith remained turned to resentment, and in turn into anger and hatred.

Looking for any way that she could strike at God, she turned her attention towards tales of witches that haunted the coastline. She sought them out and eventually found a trio of sorcerers, two female and one male, who worshipped the Old Gods that predated mankind. After assessing her character and motives, the trio brought Sarah into their confidence and enlightened her to the ways of magic.

Sarah devoted herself to the Old Gods and soon came to understand the truth. There was no Christian God. The faith promoted by the church was a lie crafted to shroud humanity from the horror of how insignificant it was in the universe. In blind ignorance, mankind had turned away from the true Gods and persecuted those who would seek to shatter the lies of their "faith." In the wake of this revelation, her rebellion suddenly seemed pointless. She had been filled with hatred directed at something that she now realized did not exist.

Returning to Dunwich, Sarah used her newly learnt power to protect the fishermen. She sailed with ships, called fish into the nets, and kept fearful storms at bay. She became known as the sailors' lucky charm, which brought her to the attention of a local merchant, William Levett. He didn't understand what made her "lucky," but he knew how to exploit it. Levett paid Sarah to accompany his trading vessels as they crossed the North Sea, thus protecting his precious cargo. She accepted, as she needed the money, and worked her arts to protect the sailors.

It was on these journeys that her eyes were opened to the division between the rich and the poor. The tales of sailors and the poverty they endured to build the empires of the wealthy merchants drew Sarah's anger. She had found someone to blame. Without God, there was only mankind left to blame for her father's death.

Sarah focused her efforts on formulating a plan to destroy the empire of wealth in Dunwich and East Anglia as a whole. She realized that her power alone was not enough to bring about this dream, that it would take an army to destroy such centers of avarice.

On one of her visits to the sorcerers, Sarah shared her thoughts of tearing down those who hoarded money while the

poor starved. The leader of the coven, Katherine Downing, told Sarah that such a plan was doomed to failure while the three crowns remained buried along the coast. The first phase of Sarah's revenge became clear. She had to destroy the crowns.

Delving deeper in the legends, Sarah came to believe (correctly) that one crown was buried somewhere under Dunwich. Her odd, almost obsessive behavior in this endeavor had not escaped William Levett's notice. He dispatched a trusted servant, Ralph Hawkins, to follow Sarah and find out what she was up to. Hawkins caught her trying to break into St. Bartholomew's Church on the East side of Dunwich, where the crown was buried.

Levett was lucky that no one had seen Hawkins apprehend Sarah, but he was deeply concerned by her actions, as he could be implicated by association (she was working for him on his boats) in any act she was trying to commit against the church. He ordered Hawkins to discover her motives and so protect himself from anything else she might have perpetrated. Under torture, she admitted to being a witch and confessed her plan to find and destroy the crown.

Levett saw an opportunity in her revelation. He who controlled the crown became the protector of East Anglia. Such power could demand tribute from the kingdom, further enhancing his wealth and dominion. In essence, he would hold the land to ransom in order to fuel his own greed. Keeping Sarah imprisoned at his house, Levett went to the church to search for the crown himself.

Each of the crowns, over the centuries, was guarded by series of devoted families. These guardians saw themselves as protectors of their homes, the kingdom of East Anglia. The family protecting the crown in Dunwich had dwindled to just one remaining member. Father Joseph Fynche was the Pastor of St. Bartholomew's, and he had hidden the crown under the church when his wife died of pneumonia some years ago. As the last of the Fynche family in the area, he hoped that the church would stand longer than his family, and so continue to protect the crown over the following centuries.

Father Fynche found Levett examining the stone slab he had lain in the floor of the crypt to cover the crown (marked with the emblem of three crowns upon a shield). The Pastor's suspicion was aroused when Levett questioned him as to the meaning of the crown symbology. When Father Fynche directed him away from the truth by stating that the crowns represented the virtues of St. Edmund (chastity, martyrdom, and kingship), Levett saw through the lie. Levett revealed that he had become aware of Sarah's goal to destroy the crown and stated that he had come to the church to see for himself if the legend was true. This disturbed Father Fynche enough to convince Levett that the priest was guarding the relic.



THE THREE CROWNS: OTHER LEGENDS

The unofficial coat of arms of East Anglia, comprised of the three crowns image, is featured in numerous forms across the region. There are also a variety of different myths and legends that surround their meaning.

The identities of the three kings to whom the crowns belonged varies; King Anna, St. Sigeberht, St. Edmund, and King Redwald stand as four potential owners. Others point to the crowns as being associated with just one figure. Some believe them to be representations of the three virtues of St Edmund: chastity, martyrdom and kingship. However, it is also believed that they are symbolic of the Celtic King Belinus, who was crowned in three countries.

In connection with the historic roots of some of these individuals, some historians have linked them as being connected with the imagery of three crowns in Scandinavian culture, and a potential depiction of the Norse gods, Odin, Thor, and Fro.

There are a number of religious interpretations too. Connected with the See of Ely, one version depicts the crowns as representing the first three abbesses of the monastery (Etheldreda and her sisters Saxburga and Ermenilda, the first two of which were daughters of King Anna of East Anglia) who were all queens. Furthermore, given the presence of the imagery in churches, some theorize that they represent the holy trinity.

The truth behind the symbology may never fully be known.



Levett informed Father Fynche that he had determined Sarah was a witch and that the church should deal with her. Levett knew that questions would be raised about how he had come to discover this, and the scandal that could arise from it being revealed that he had employed a witch. To avert social disaster, Levett proposed that Father Fynche should be the one to unmask her to the world in the midst of casting a spell. Then, the Pastor could confirm that Levett had been “acting under the witch’s direction and under her evil influence,” thus exonerating him from any guilt. In return, Levett would omit any mention of her plan to destroy the crown and the subject would never be raised again.

Fynche agreed and Levett stated he would arrange for Sarah to be taken to one of the windmills beyond the southwestern edge of the city. The windmill would be set alight, allowing the Pastor to accuse Sarah of setting the



THE OLD GODS

The Mythos deity (or indeed deities) that Sarah worships has not been explicitly stated. Some may argue that elements of her power are drawn from certain gods over others (the power over weather possibly being linked to Ithaqua; the calling of the fish to Dagon or even Cthulhu; and the temporal effect of her dying prayer being within the purview of Yog-Sothoth), but those will remain undefined.

The Mythos is vaster than the human mind can comprehend. There countless entities across the universe that have passed into obscurity or even oblivion that may once have been called gods. Their power may linger in forgotten corners of worlds scattered throughout space and time. In the spirit of this collection, Sarah’s patrons will remain nameless.



fire as part of a ritual to bring calamity upon the city. The fire would bring the audience needed to witness the Pastor’s discovery and declaration that she was a witch. As an act of generosity and atonement, Levett promised to have the windmill rebuilt. Father Fynche agreed to Levett’s plan and thus sealed his fate. There would be no witch waiting for him at the windmill, only Hawkins, with orders to kill him, and so remove any obstacle to Levett obtaining the crown.

The following day, Levett ransacked Sarah’s house and discovered a small collection of parchments and scrolls upon which she had documented the teachings of the coven. He passed one such document to Hawkins, detailing sigils used to invoke the Old Gods, and told him that he was to carve these symbols into the Fynche’s body so that the death could be attributed to the witch.

Everything went according to plan. In the dead of night, Fynche traveled to the windmill, believing he was going to meet with Levett and the witch. Instead, he was greeted by Hawkins and promptly murdered. Hawkins carved the sigils into Fynche’s body and set the windmill on fire. This was the signal for Levett to proceed to St. Bartholomew’s and deliver the unconscious Sarah, along with a selection of her incriminating parchments. He claimed he had come to the church in panic, worried that his immortal soul might be in danger from having inadvertently brought a witch into his house. He claimed that he sought the forgiveness of the Lord by bringing Sarah to the church to receive God’s judgment. By burning her, the witch’s soul, as well as any

taint she had spread, might be cleansed. The priests were easily swayed by Levett's cunning and so set about building a pyre to purify Sarah.

Sarah, her pleading words twisted by Levett, was burnt at the stake. In her dying moments, she called to the Old Gods, praying for rescue and the fulfillment of her unending desire to tear down the oppression of the rich. Her prayer was answered, although not in a way she expected. With her death, the force of all of the storms she had held back at sea, protecting the lives of the sailors, was unleashed, hitting the city with terrifying force. The date was January 1st, 1287—that of the first tempest to devastate Dunwich and ultimately begin its decline. That night, St. Bartholomew's was swallowed by the ocean, the crown with it, along with much of the eastern part of the city.

The Storms and the Fate of Dunwich

Dunwich's fate was sealed by two tempestuous storms, the one in 1287, and another in 1328 that destroyed large parts of the city (up to 400 houses according to some accounts). The resulting rubble and collapse from the cliffs blocked the harbor. Despite attempts to create a channel to sea, the river upon which the city had stood changed course and opened to the sea at nearby Walberswick. Walberswick and Blythburgh subsequently profited at the expense of Dunwich, which never returned to its former glory.

Fishermen working off the Dunwich coast claim even to this day that they sometimes hear the tolling of a bell beneath the waves. This is the bell of St. Bartholomew's, the same bell that tolled to warn the city of the growing storm as Sarah burned to death. Herein lays the answer to Sarah's prayer. When the bell tolls in a storm, those close by are transported the domain of the Old Gods where the night of New Years Day 1287 plays out again and again, until someone rescues Sarah and shows her the way back to the world.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

The following section outlines the background and role of each of the major non-player characters (NPCs) portrayed in this scenario. Statistics for each can be found in the **Characters** section at the end of the scenario (page 41).

A **Relationship Map** is provided on page 15, which shows connections between both the various NPCs, as well as the pre-generated player investigators.

Sarah Browne

The investigators encounter her in the courtyard behind St. Bartholomew's, tied to the stake and about to be burned alive. The time loop of the evening resets each time that



NEW SPELL: WRATH OF AGES

Cost: 1 hit point; 10 magic points; 1D6 Sanity points.

Casting time: one round.

This deadly spell is only cast in dire need as it exacts a heavy cost upon the caster. The caster slices deeply into their open hand (1 damage in each instance) and gestures toward their intended target(s) in an arc, spraying blood through the air. The caster then sacrifices 10 magic points and 1D6 Sanity points.

Upon successfully casting the spell, the caster may select between 1 and 5 targets from those at whom they have gestured. The caster may allocate 5D6 damage between these targets. Thus, 1 target could receive 5D6 damage, whereas 5 targets would each suffer 1D6 damage. This damage ignores armor and manifests as the target ageing and withering rapidly. Skin begins to decay and turn to dust to the point where a target killed by the spell simply explodes in a cloud of dust and ash.

A note to Keepers: given the high magic point cost, it is unlikely that any character with the spell will wish to cast it more than once in the course of the scenario.



Sarah Browne

she dies and the storm hits the city. If she is freed by the investigators, she can lead them across the void beyond the range of the bell's tolling, back to the real world.

At heart, Sarah is a young woman filled with anger. The focus of her anger has become the oppression of the poor by the rich, personified by the merchant, William Levett. She does not need to be played as inherently evil, but could be portrayed in such a fashion by Keepers wanting to remove any moral ambiguity from the situation. In such a case, she has been completely consumed by her hatred. However, should the Keeper present her as a misguided soul, this makes the moral quandary of allowing her to return to the real world one that the investigators can deliberate at length before finally resolving it.

Once freed, Sarah should not attack anyone (NPC or investigator), or even fight back when defending in combat, instead electing to Dodge in each instance. The only time when she should be aggressive towards another character is when and if she has returned to the real world. Until then, she should not be presented as a threat. However, use of the **Wrath of Ages** spell (see nearby) will definitely present her as being very dangerous.

- **Description:** beautiful, long flowing black hair, with piercing eyes, dressed in peasant's rags.
- **Traits:** ruthless manipulator; the ends justify the means.

Roleplaying Hooks:

- Initially presents herself as kind and helpless, an innocent victim of the greed and tyranny of the rich.
- Underneath her façade, undying hatred fills her heart, and a rage that will kill without hesitation if forced.

Servants of the Old Gods

Katherine Downing (aged 32), Clare Boone (aged 22), and Nathaniel Hall (aged 26) carry on the worship of the Old Gods in 1287. It is highly unlikely their individual backstories will come out in the course of play. They are most likely to be encountered by the investigators in the woods outside Dunwich shortly after the beginning of each loop. If pressed, they say that they live in the countryside between Dunwich and Bramfield (5 miles to the northwest), living off the land. Each is dressed in outdoor clothing (furs and leathers) appropriate for winter in their era.

These three greatly distrust outsiders, who would brand them witches and warlocks should they be unmasked. The Keeper should portray them as cautious in their dealings with the investigators, occasionally dropping a note of disdain when the subject of the church or God is brought up (such as snarling at using the phrase "Year of our Lord" if they are asked what the year is). However, if the investigators say that they are looking for Sarah, the Servants will be significantly more cordial.

As with Sarah, the Servants should not engage in any hostile actions unless they reach the courtyard where Sarah

is being burned alive. In this instance, the Keeper should consider the gloves to be off and unleash them with all the force necessary to free their friend.

Katherine Downing

- **Description:** tall and thin, with long wiry hair, partially malnourished, haunted eyes.
- **Traits:** reserved and distant.

Roleplaying hooks:

- Fearfully distrustful of strangers (as many wish to kill a witch).
- She knows the true nature of the world. The fact she knows such horrific truth is visible in her eyes. She rarely blinks and often stares at those she talks to.



Katherine Downing

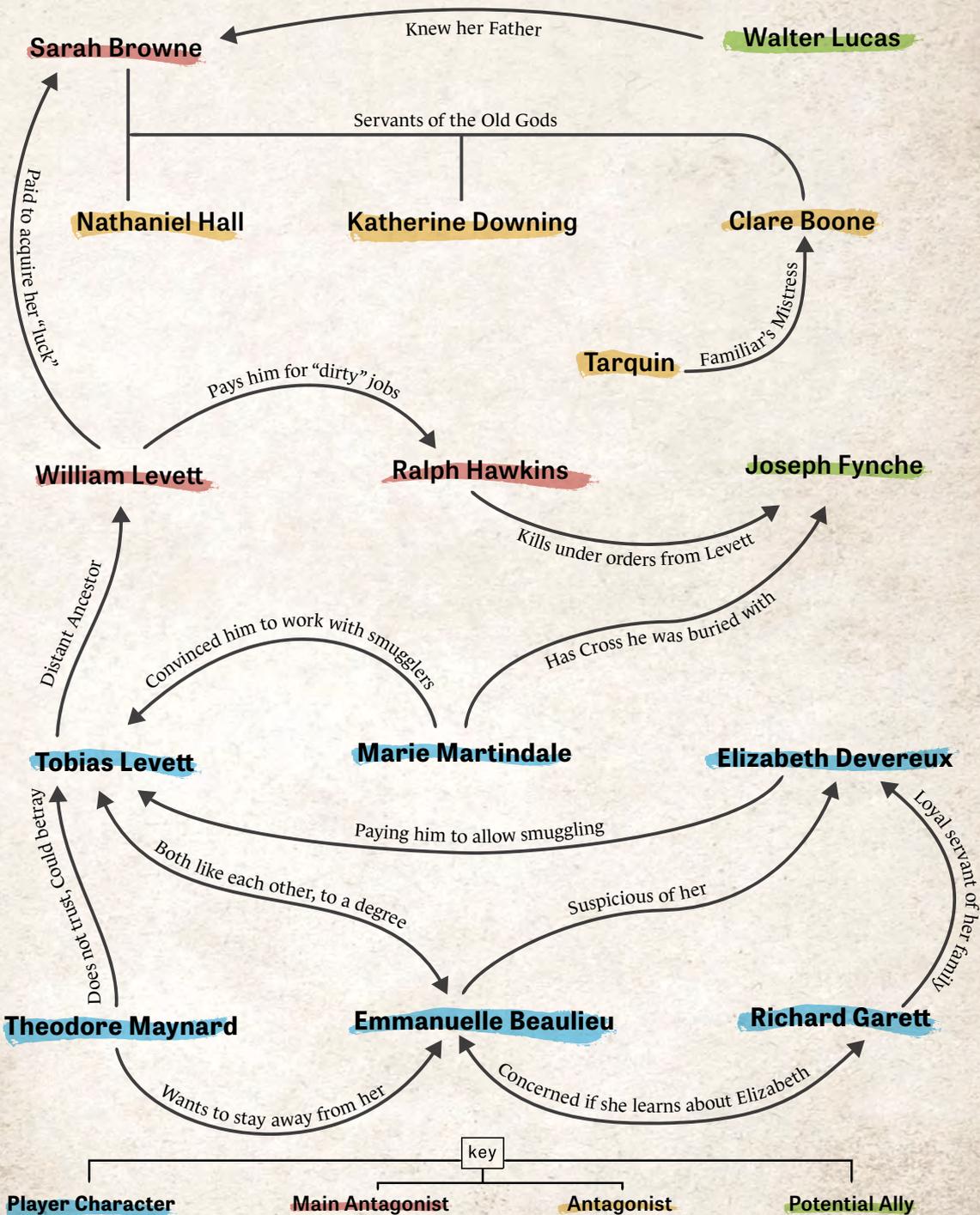
Clare Boone

- **Description:** short blonde hair, warm smile. Tarquin often sits on her outstretched arm.
- **Traits:** friendly and pleasing.

Roleplaying hooks:

- She revels in knowing the truth that few men have discovered. There's a sly, almost teasing aspect in her interaction with strangers.

An Amaranthine Desire Relationship Map



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Clare Boone



Nathaniel Hall

- She knows that she is blessed with the power of the Old Gods, which gives her exceptional confidence, but not in an arrogant way.

Nathaniel Hall

- **Description:** messy hair, angular features, and one raised eyebrow.
- **Traits:** quiet and attentive.

Roleplaying hooks:

- Shaken from the revelations of the Old Gods, he lives in fear of their wrath should he fail them.
- He knows his place in the coven, at the bottom of the rung. He acts subservient to the others.

Tarquin

Clare Boone’s familiar who helps the Servants of the Old Gods search for Sarah. Outwardly, the creature looks like a barn owl, but is actually a being sent from the Old Gods to Clare in thanks for her service. If pushed, Clare refers to Tarquin as “a gift from She who walks the untrodden paths.” The creature is a shape-shifter. Underneath its layer of feathers, in its guise as an owl, is a black leathery hide that indicates its abnormal nature.

The creature obeys only Clare’s commands, which she utters in a guttural, inhuman tongue, and it instantly leaps to attack any who threaten the Servants. It has no “true form”



Tarquin

AN AMARANTHINE DESIRE

per se, but in each form it takes, there is a hidden distortion (such as the aforementioned leathery skin) that indicates its deception. Also, it cannot change its size to more than that of a large dog or smaller than a cat. It can shift form in less than a second, warping its body with terrifying ease.

William Levett

William Levett is an ancestor of Tobias Levett (one of the pre-generated investigators and a customs official). William Levett is also corrupt to the core, with a thirst for power. He seeks to obtain the crown under St. Bartholomew's so that he can hold East Anglia to ransom, becoming richer than the dreams of avarice. At the start of the scenario, he is on his way to St. Bartholomew's Church with the unconscious Sarah, where he plans to hand her over to the priests to be burned alive. He remains there to ensure that nothing interferes with his plan.

His first course of action when confronted with any problem is to get a local to resolve it for him, threatening them with his power and influence should they refuse to do as he says. However, the investigators, being from outside of his time, probably pay no attention to such orders he might bark at them. If he is successfully goaded enough into acting himself, he flails ineffectually at any opposition. He is not a combatant, having always had other people to do that kind of work for him.

- **Description:** slightly overweight and clean-shaven, dressed in fine robes and a large feathered hat.
- **Traits:** supremely arrogant and condescending when talking with those of lower station.

Roleplaying hooks:

- He is the most important man in the room and knows it. He makes sure others know it too.
- Wealth and power are everything to him. Those without it are merely expendable resources in his eyes that he can use to acquire more.

Ralph Hawkins

A former thief, Hawkins is employed by William Levett to perform his dirty work. Currently, this means the murder of Father Fynche. Hawkins is essentially a mercenary at heart, whose loyalty can be bought by the highest bidder. There should be no ambiguity in the portrayal of Hawkins—he is a nasty piece of work. There is nothing he wouldn't do if the payment is right.

At the start of the scenario, Hawkins has been sent to murder Fynche and burn down the windmill. If this is successful, he moves to Sarah's house to commit further arson to hide the fact that her texts of sorcery have been taken by Levett. Hawkins fights to death or unconsciousness, but if spared, he is willing to impart all the information he has about Levett's activities.



William Levett



Ralph Hawkins

NAMELESS HORRORS

- **Description:** dirty complexion, long and mangled hair, hooked nose, dressed in dark clothing.
- **Traits:** ruthless and uncaring murderer.

Roleplaying hooks:

- A man with little conscience. He has lots of blood on his hands. What's a little more going to mean?
- The ends justify the means because completing his work means he gets paid. Money keeps food in his stomach and keeps him alive. He's a born survivor, willing to do what it takes.

Father Joseph Fynche

Fynche is the last of the line protecting the crown in Dunwich. His wife died of pneumonia before the pair could found the next generation of guardians. Thus, he buried the crown under St. Bartholomew's hoping the church building would never fall, and so both guard and house the crown long after his passing.

Even though he has never been particularly strong, Fynche has a sharp mind. His family line in East Anglia stretches back hundreds of years and he is passionate about protecting his homeland, and certainly willing to die for it. He is a man of faith though, so does not advocate violence as a general rule.

Should Fynche die at the windmill, his ghost appears at St. Bartholomew's Church to continue guarding the crown. The ghost knows all that Fynche knew, but is certainly no longer human. It appears dressed in priest's robes, arms

crossed in front, hood pulled down over its head. Should it extend its arms, the investigators might catch sight of burnt flesh and charred bones under the robes. Should the robes be opened fully, the body is similarly charred, with an almost completely skeletal torso.

The ghost concerns itself primarily with protecting the crown. It has no interest in what happens to Sarah. It tolerates the presence of the investigators in the church as long as they do not make any move to enter the crypt. If the investigators manage to sneak past the ghost, it appears at the crown should they try to lever open the slab above it, whereupon it attacks them. However, if the investigators can convince the ghost (with an Extreme **Persuade** check) that the church is doomed and will collapse by the end of the night as the storm hits, and that they are to take the crown to a new resting place further inland, then it will not attack, instead staying with the investigators until they fulfill this promise.

- **Description:** dressed in priestly robes, hood pulled back, fair complexion, with a warm smile.
- **Traits:** kind and considerate, a priest with a heart of gold.

Roleplaying hooks:

- The weight of responsibility guarding the crown weighs heavy on him, but it's a load he knows he must carry.
- A good, kind man that has the best intentions for everyone, even those who don't deserve any kindness.

Walter Lucas

A former fisherman, he was injured in an accident in the harbor and has a twisted left leg. He limps around, supporting himself with a sturdy tree branch. His primary function in the scenario is to dispense information.

He begins by Gilden Gate, watching the burning windmill, wrapped in layers of old, stinking clothes he has scavenged. The best way for him to attract the investigators' attention is to ask for alms. They have small change on them (copper or silver coins that Lucas won't look at in detail and so not realize they are not of his time), or scraps of food they can give him, both of which he will eagerly accept.

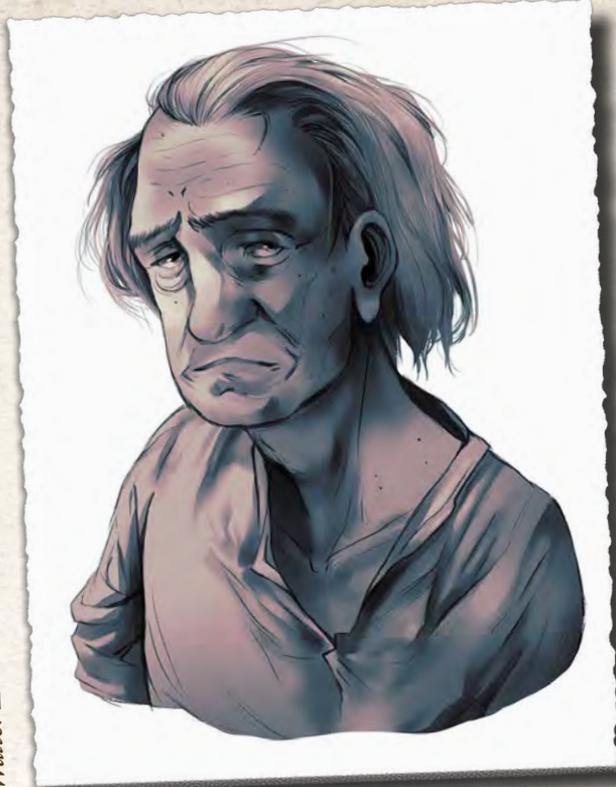
Lucas, once he has been given a token of generosity by the investigators, can explain to them anything they wish to know about Dunwich.

He can later be encountered walking through the streets of the city, near the taverns in the harbor district, or near St. Bartholomew's Church. The Keeper should work in at some point that he looks up to the sky as a look of concern crosses his face, saying "a storm is coming," despite there being no indication to the investigators that this is the case. He comments this is a gift he's had ever since his accident, and mentions Captain Browne, with whom he sailed and on whose boat he suffered his injury. As



Father Joseph Fynche

AN AMARANTHINE DESIRE



Walter Lucas

if lost in reverie, Lucas may then speak of the Captain's daughter, Sarah, the fisherman's "lucky charm."

No statistical profile is provided for Walter Lucas.

Henry Scott

Henry is an optional character that can come into play should the investigators go the Harbor Tavern. He is a way by which the Keeper can indicate that the investigators are trapped in a time loop, and that each passing loop brings them closer to their deaths. Henry should be encountered no more than twice.

On the first encounter, Henry stares at the investigators wildly from across the tavern, declaring the investigators to be outsiders and different, and that they weren't here before. This may work most effectively if they go to the tavern on their first loop. The innkeeper subsequently throws him out for disrupting the other guests. If the investigators disregard him, then the second encounter can complete his interaction with them. If they follow him outside onto the street, he can impart what he knows and then simply fade away in the next loop.

Henry was a resident of Dunwich in 1753 who heard the bells of St. Bartholomew's tolling under the waves when he went out to plunder the remains of graves that had been exposed by a section of cliff collapsing. He believes he is now trapped in purgatory for his desecration of the once holy ground. He has been in Dunwich for four loops by the time the investigators find him, and he looks like a man in his 70s, despite being only 30 years old.



Henry Scott

He can explain that each loop ends with the coming of the storm and that the investigators will age upon it resetting. While he believes that there has to be a way out, he doesn't know what it could be. If this is a test set by God, he is convinced he has failed it, and so he is content to fade into oblivion, drinking his sorrows away. In his parting words, he suggests that the investigators make their peace with the world as best they can and prepare to meet their ends shortly. As the next loop begins, he has faded into oblivion and the Innkeeper does not recall his presence.

No statistical profile is provided for Henry Scott.

Priests of St. Bartholomew's

The other six priests at St. Bartholomew's Church are preparing for the burning of the witch by building a pyre in the courtyard behind the church. As a whole, they honestly believe they are saving the young woman's soul and cleansing the taint she has laid upon William Levett.

While they will not initiate any violence towards the investigators or the Servants of the Old Gods, they will defend themselves. Should the Servants cast the Wrath of Ages spell on the priests, this will cause them to scatter and flee.

Roleplaying hooks:

- Men of God, who believe passionately that they are doing the right thing, for the city, and for Sarah.

Dunwich City Guard

Following the arson of the windmill and Sarah's house in the harbor district, the city guard will be active on the streets looking for any suspicious behavior. There is no set number of guards when encountered; the Keeper should number them to mirror the number of investigators.

The investigators in their odd attire and walking the streets in the small hours of the morning may draw attention, so they will need to avoid the roaming bands of guards unless they wish to be taken to the jail.

The city guard can be used as much or as little as the Keeper wishes, injecting a degree of opposition into traveling around Dunwich. Keepers looking for a shorter game should choose not to deploy them at all. When moving through the city streets after the windmill has been set on fire, call for a group Luck roll to avoid crossing the path of the city guard. Should the roll be failed, the investigators need to pass Stealth rolls in order to avoid detection. At the Keeper's discretion, a chase scene could develop following a failed roll, or simply have the investigators cornered.

If the investigators resist arrest, the band of guards will attempt to beat them into submission. The investigators can comply at any point and will subsequently be dragged back to the jail, where they will stay until the loop resets.

Roleplaying hooks:

- The city guard doesn't normally see trouble these days. They are ordinary folk, wary and suspicious of any strangers in town.
- They can jump to conclusions, pinning blame where there might be none.

START: EVENTS UNFOLD

It is now 1895. Enter the investigators. Even though smuggling in Suffolk had been taking place for centuries by the twilight of the 19th century its heyday had come and gone. However, high duties were still imposed on some goods, such as tobacco, leading some to smuggle such things into the country. Smugglers were known to have landed near Dunwich in the 17th and 18th centuries. Being a quiet stretch of coastline, Dunwich is seen as a prime location for bringing goods ashore once more.

The investigators are unloading tobacco from a smuggling ship and hear the sound of the bell of St. Bartholomew's Church, tolling under the waves. The investigators will be trapped in the repeating night of New Years Day 1287. Sarah Browne's dying prayer has been answered, trapping her, and all who hear the tolling bell of the church, until someone rescues her. The investigators have a little time before the

witch is burned alive and the storms that she has held back over the years are unleashed to assault the city anew.

As the sea and high winds devastate the eastern half of Dunwich, the time loop resets and the investigators find themselves back in the woods where they first arrived. Each time this occurs, the investigators age. They cannot survive the passage of many loops. Either they find the way out, or they will fade away into nothing.

Contextual Information

Present the players with **Handout: Amaranthine 1: Setting the Scene**.

DUNWICH, 1895

The scenario opens with the investigators bringing a shipment of tobacco to shore from a smuggling ship. Under the darkness of a new moon, a storm is building and the sea is becoming increasingly unsettled. Levett and Martindale are on the stony shore at the base of the cliffs. Above them, signal lamps have just been lit to help direct the crew of the *Wave Rider* to shore. There are approximately ten other locals who are waiting with them to help unload the cargo. The other investigators (Devereux, Maynard, Beaulieu, and Garrett) are on board the *Wave Rider*.

Captain Gerd, upon seeing the lamp lights, orders all of the crew to help load the rowboats and get them to the shore as soon as possible. He is concerned about the swiftness with which the storm is building. The crew leaps into action, and the investigators on board are ordered to help.

Over the course of the next few minutes, the line of boats (six in all) work their way to and from the ship to the shore. The Keeper should draw the situation to a point where all the investigators are together in one place at one time. This could be done in various ways:

- Levett and Martindale could be called upon to help replace two crew members injured bringing the cargo ashore. At this point, the other investigators are already working their way back from the *Wave Rider* to the shore.
- The locals head up a narrow path to the top of the cliff after several of the boats have landed in quick succession, leaving Levett and Martindale to help the other investigators unload their cargo as they arrive on shore.

At this point, the wind suddenly increases and a tremendous wave rises up out of the ocean, speeding toward the shore. A **Hard Pilot (Boat)** roll is needed to keep an investigator's boat from capsizing (a Hard success is required by only one of the investigators in each boat), or a **Hard Swim** roll to keep an investigator's head above water when the wave rushes over them on the shore.

Those who were successful can then make a **Spot Hidden** roll to see a hooded figure (the ghost of Father Fynche) standing on the edge of the cliff, looking down at them, its

AN AMARANTHINE DESIRE



An Amaranthine Desire Setting the Scene



January 25th, 1895. Smuggling was once a major operation in England, but that was two centuries ago when heavy duties were levied on imported goods as a means to finance wars being fought in Europe. Now, smuggling is much less widespread, but still takes place. Chief amongst the smuggled goods are alcoholic spirits and tobacco.

You are all part of a smuggling operation, transporting a shipment of tobacco from Holland to be brought ashore near the small coastal town of Dunwich in Suffolk, three miles south of the port of Walberswick. A small handful of locals, assisted by a bribed customs official, are on hand to help with the landing, whilst one of the ringleaders of the operation, Captain Louis Gerd, oversees his crew and hired hands ferrying the goods from his steamer, the *Wave Rider*, to the shore.

It is approaching 2 AM and the crossing has been relatively calm for the most part. A breeze is building, heralding a possible storm. Dunwich is just appearing over the horizon, little more than a couple of points of light in the distance. The mood amongst the crew is tense, as the sea grows more restless. At that moment, the lamps to guide the ship to shore are lit on the cliff-top overlooking the beach, a little way south of the town.

Handout: Amaranthine 1

robes not seeming to move despite the high wind rustling the trees behind it.

Those who failed the Pilot or Swim rolls find themselves swept under the waves. In the cold and the dark, as they struggle to reach the surface, they hear the sound of a church bell tolling ominously in the distance, under the waves, the vibration shaking through their bodies.

Suddenly, any boats left in control of the investigators come to a grinding halt, as if they have run aground. Flying from the boat, the investigators hurtle through the air and land on cold, muddy ground. Investigators struggling below the waves kick and claw their way upwards to suddenly find themselves falling to the ground, gasping for breath. The air is ice cold. A full moon hangs in the sky, and dark woodlands surround them. This prompts a **Sanity** roll (0/1D2).

DUNWICH: 1287

The following section forms the core of the scenario. The investigators will no-doubt experience the events outlined here from numerous different perspectives, and in different orders, as they repeat the evening again and again. Each time, they should gain more of an insight into what is happening.

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

To make things easier for the Keeper, the exact time at which events occurs is not stated, but simply the order in which events occur in relation to one another. This way, the story can continue to flow in a natural fashion without being handcuffed to minutiae.

1. The investigators begin each loop in the woods to the south of Dunwich. A few moments later, Tarquin flies over their heads from the east (the sea), heading west (further inland). This potentially facilitates a meeting with the Servants of the Old Gods.
2. Unless interrupted, Hawkins murders Fynche. The ghost appears at St. Bartholomew's. Hawkins then torches the windmill.
3. As the windmill burns, Levett arrives at St. Bartholomew's with Sarah and tells how he discovered her being a witch and that he has come to purify her soul with flame. At the same time, Hawkins is traveling to Sarah's house in the harbor district.
4. Hawkins sets fire to Sarah's house, prompting an increased presence of the city guard on the streets. He then returns to Levett's house nearby.
5. The Servants of the Old Gods enter the church and confront the ghost in their search for Sarah. The ensuing disturbance attracts Water Lucas, who is passing by, and he rings the bell to call for help.

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The ghost of Fymbe on the cliff

6. Sarah, hearing the bell toll, as the priests are about to burn her alive, makes her prayer to the Old Gods. She dies soon after and the whole of the eastern horizon is lit by lightning. The wind begins to rise and the storm hits the city. The loop then resets.

As mentioned in **Keeper Considerations** (page 9), the pace at which the time loops end can be regulated by the Keeper. Bear in mind the actions of the investigators in relation to the timeline above. When it feels like the right time to begin a new loop (if the investigators have taken a lot of time following a particular line of investigation that does not cross the path of the main events taking place, or they have wandered significantly off track by heading far outside of the city), the Keeper should begin describing the tolling bell, the flashes of lightning in the eastern sky, and the rapidly building storm. The loop then resets, with the investigators back in the dark woodlands (see **The Night Begins Again**, below).

EFFECTS OF NOTE

The following effects, when realized by the investigators, help to promote both a sense of urgency (as they comprehend that their time is limited), and caution (as they realize they all share each other's suffering). The Keeper should bear these in mind at all times.

Language Barrier

The first time the investigators speak to anyone in 1287, they are confronted by an odd phenomenon. The conversational partner begins talking in Middle English, as would be typical of the time (spoken between the late 11th and late 15th centuries), saying:

"God morgen everychon, ac hwa motan oew gyst beon?"
(*Good morning everyone, and who might you strangers be?*)

However, after a few words have been uttered, their lips don't seem to be in phase with what they are saying, and slowly the words begin to transform into Modern English. This will most likely occur when either when the investigators meet the Servants of the Old Gods in the woods or the Dunwich locals trying to put out the fire at the windmill. In either case, given the low light in the woods or the flickering of the flames, it could be rationalized as a trick of the light, but the investigators definitely hear the locals talking oddly to begin with.

The Night Begins Again

The following describes the main details of the storm as it hits, immediately before each loop resets, should the investigators be close enough to experience this happening.

Once the bell of St. Bartholomew's begins to ring, this heralds the end of the current time loop. As Sarah screams, engulfed by flames, the whole of the eastern horizon is lit by lightning. The wind begins to rise suddenly and continues to grow, unrelentingly. Houses begin to shake, roofs are torn off and tremendous waves crash against the cliffs, causing huge sections to collapse into the water. Lightning strikes the tower of St. Bartholomew's and the ground begins to give way beneath the building. The tower groans, and the bell falls, smashing through the rafters to the ground below, crushing William Levett if he is still there, otherwise crushing one of the other priests.

As St. Bartholomew's is destroyed, the time resets and the investigators find themselves back in the woods to the south of the city. Each time this occurs, the investigators age by 10 years. The Keeper can choose to hold this information back from the investigators until they are exposed to a prominent light source and thus can clearly see each other (given it is still dark in the woods, even with the light of the full moon). This has no mechanical effect on the first loop. On subsequent loops, the aging begins to erode their bodies and minds. On the second loop, the investigators roll 1D10 and subtract this amount from each of their characteristics. On the third loop, this becomes 2D10, on the fourth loop, 3D10, and so on. Such losses will begin to affect damage bonuses and movement rates. Should any characteristic hit zero or less, the investigator fades away into oblivion.

Damage and Dying

The strange spell affecting the investigators not only compels them to relive the day's events as a time loop, it also combines their very life force. Every time an investigator takes damage, it is also taken by all of the other investigators. In each instance, the damage manifests in exactly the same way. If an investigator is hit by a burning beam in the windmill, all of them feel the heat of the burning wood striking them. Likewise, cuts and bruises manifest in the same place as on the investigator who was originally hit. This realization prompts a **Sanity** roll the first time it occurs (1/1D4).

If an investigator dies during a loop, the loop automatically resets, prompting further aging. All hit point and magic point totals reset to the normal maximums at the beginning of each loop. Investigators who have lost POW by the ghost, regain only half of the amount lost. Lost Sanity points are not restored.

Ending the Cycle

The cycle is broken if any of the following occurs:

- The bell does not ring, or if it is destroyed (invalidating Sarah's prayer).
- Sarah is freed and/or killed before she can make her prayer.

When such events happen the investigators simply find the world fading away around them. Moments later, they are

WHAT IS THE VOID?

Keepers may require a more concrete explanation of what the void is should they be running the scenario for investigators with the Cthulhu Mythos skill who seek answers to this question.

The void itself is a god-like being, referred to by Sarah in her prayer as, "He that is the dark behind the night," and "He that resides beyond our reach." The presence they feel is this being looking back at them from outside of the human concept of reality. The being is the cosmic representation of oblivion and the absence of everything (space, time, matter, light, etc.) It exists in the spaces between; seeking to be let in so it may consume all that is, so that only nothing remains. Indeed, the investigators are all being slowly eroded into nothing by its influence upon them, and the repetition of the destruction of the city is harmonious with its nature. Likewise, by its very nature, it is intangible and undefeatable. After all, how can you destroy a manifestation of pure nothing?

floating in a void outside of space and time—see **Denying Reality** (following). How to escape is outlined in **Edge of the World** (page 37).

Denying Reality

Faced with the strangeness of events unfolding, there may come a point where one or more of the investigators believe they are trapped in a dream or some form of hallucination. If they try to deny what they see, call for a **POW** roll:

- Failure reinforces to the investigator that what is around them is indeed reality.
- Success allows the investigator to see through the pocket of time in which they are trapped. They see themselves floating in a dark, illimitable void that stretches in all directions. Here, time, space, and matter have no meaning. They are outside of everything they would call reality. This is a void left in the fabric of creation. Something was once here, something powerful. Now, beyond the threshold, beyond the darkness, they can feel the gaze of a vast, malevolent intelligence looking back at them. The feeling of isolation and impending doom becomes too much for their small minds to cope with, prompting a **Sanity** check (1D3/1D10). After this shock, the vision fades.

IN THE WOODS

The forest is cold and dark, much like the winter evening the investigators experienced in 1895. However, the wind has subsided and there is only a slight breeze in the air, and the sound of the sea appears to come from at least half a mile to the east. A few minutes ago, the investigators were on the seashore, and now they are further inland.

For the first few minutes, the investigators are likely to be disoriented, trying to get their bearings. They will quickly realize that they are in a wood, with nothing by way of landmarks other than a rarely used path through the undergrowth. The most obvious change in the sky is the appearance of the full moon, whereas it was a new moon in 1895. Furthermore, a **Hard Know** or Regular **Science (Astronomy)** roll will identify that the constellation of Orion has shifted position (and the whole night sky with it). At 2 a.m. on January 25th, Orion was approaching the western horizon. Now, on January 1st, it is well above the southwestern horizon. This can be interpreted a number of ways. If the position of the stars was the only thing to have changed, it could be argued that the investigators have somehow lost a day and it is now the middle of the following night. The presence of a full moon, however, implies a more significant time shift.

At a point that is dramatically appropriate, Tarquin (Clare Boone's familiar) flies silently over the investigators' heads. They feel a sudden movement in the air above them, and a black figure blots out the moon for a second. The near ghostly figure of an owl then swoops down and flies along the path to the west, deeper into the woods. If the investigators follow, they soon see the owl land on Clare Boone's outstretched arm. Katherine Downing and Nathaniel Hall accompany Clare, and the trio are dressed in outdoor clothing (furs and leathers), but do not carry any light sources, moving solely by the light of the moon. They will definitely comment on the oddness of the investigators' attire (being somewhat different to clothing in the 13th century).

At the Keeper's discretion, a **Hard Listen** roll can be made to hear Clare talking with Tarquin in a guttural, inhuman tongue, to which the owl promptly replies in kind; a failure still allows the investigator to notice, rather than hear, Clare whispering. This episode is recommended to occur in a later loop, rather than the first.

Katherine, Clare, and Nathaniel are out in the woods looking for Sarah, who was supposed to meet them two nights ago. She is never late and always keeps her promises. Sarah had called them together to discuss breaking into the church, after she sensed the power of the crown within, but



Tarquin, Clare, Nathaniel, and Katherine

1287: HISTORICAL CONTEXT

King Edward I (1239–1307) sits upon the throne of England. “Edward Longshanks” is in the process of subjugating the Welsh, who are in the midst of a rebellion.

Recently, much of Southern England was flooded, with storms affecting towns like Old Winchelsea and the harbor at Hastings.

Any of the 1287 characters would know this information.

she grew impatient and went to scout out the area ahead of time (and so was captured by Hawkins).

When Sarah didn't show, the trio went to her house in the city under the cover of darkness (late the previous night) and found it deserted. They have returned this night to see if Sarah appears, but they have begun to suspect that she may have fallen foul of the priests. They are discussing returning to Dunwich and entering the church where they believe Sarah may be held.

To begin with, the trio states they are searching for their friend who went missing earlier that day. They will ask if the investigators have seen Sarah on their travels. They won't ask for the investigators' help, but won't turn it down if it is offered. Otherwise, they are happy enough to part company after a few minutes, as they want to continue their search. Don't forget that initially the trio will be speaking in Middle English before the language becomes clear and understandable to the investigators.

If asked, the trio can confirm the date as being Wednesday, January 1st. If asked for the year, they will say, with an evident degree of disdain upon the word “Lord,” that it is, “the year of our Lord, one thousand, two hundred and eighty seven,” (which is, incidentally, by the Julian calendar, as the Gregorian reform did not occur until 1582). Likewise, they can confirm that they are a little way south of the port of Dunwich, should the investigators ask where they are.

Investigators can make **History** rolls to understand the significance of the date. The pre-generated investigators of Levett, Devereux, Martindale, and Garrett receive a bonus die on the attempt, as they are local to the area. Success reveals that the night of New Year's Eve 1286 / New Year's Day 1287 was the start of a tremendous storm that devastated the city of Dunwich over the course of three days. Buildings were knocked down by high winds, others swallowed by the sea as

THE CROWN REVEALED

The Crown serves as bone of contention in the scenario for the investigators to fight over, much like Sarah and Levett are fighting to obtain it. Each of the pre-generated investigators' backgrounds portrays how the Crown could satisfy some of their desires, should its power be revealed. However, these are not blatantly stated goals that the investigators should aim for. If the players' reach such conclusions by themselves and wish to follow them, the Keeper should certainly allow them to run with it.

For those Keepers wishing to make it more obvious and actively promote an atmosphere of competition and friction in the group, they should provide **Handouts: Amaranthine 2 to 7** as appropriate to the players (see **Appendix A**), when the legend is explained to them, either by the trio, or by Hawkins during his interrogation (see page 34).

Keepers who wish to keep the scenario relatively cooperative, or who are not using the pre-generated investigators, should not feel compelled to use these handouts.

waves devoured the cliffs to the east. An immense volume of debris was swept into the harbor, blocking it and forcing a change in the course of the river. This, followed by a similarly devastating storm on 14th January 1328, sealed the city's fate.

Interactions may well change on subsequent loops, depending on how much the investigators interact with the trio. If the investigators inform them of where Sarah is being held, the trio will proceed immediately to St. Bartholomew's and begin the confrontation there. This will most likely occur before the pyre can be completed, so they stand a good chance of saving Sarah from the flames. As this would also occur before Lucas rings the bell, it will prevent the next loop from starting.

If the investigators mention the “holy relic” being kept at St. Bartholomew's, the trio will be able to reveal it is one of the three legendary Crowns of the Kings of East Anglia, protecting the kingdom from the threat of foreign invasion.

If the investigators mention that they have met the trio before and that time is somehow repeating, the Keeper should decide how much of this the trio comprehends. Perhaps it is Sarah who has caused such “woes” to the investigators? Perhaps they are doomed to relive this day until they fulfill some oath or deed? Use such suggestions if the players are

 Handout: Amaranthine 2

Legends of the Three Crowns for Tobias Levett

The potential for power here is amazing. In 1895, much of Dunwich has been lost to the sea, and it is more than likely the crown has gone with it. To recover the crown from 1287 and take it back to your world, if its power still holds, would grant you the power to dictate the safety of East Anglia. That is something that could be exploited for money, for political power, or for anything you wanted. All you need is the crown and to be able to bring it back for yourself, and no one else.

Handout: Amaranthine 3

Legends of the Three Crowns for Elizabeth Devereux

Your family has held land in East Anglia since the Norman Conquest. This is your home, your birthright. The crown, should the legend be true, represents a tangible force that protects everything you hold dear. In 1895, much of Dunwich has been lost to the sea, and it is more than likely the crown has gone with it. However, if you could bring the crown back to your world, or if your actions here could alter the future, then protecting it and keeping it buried would keep your family heritage safe. Anyone interfering with the crown threatens everything you hold dear.

Handout: Amaranthine 4

Legends of the Three Crowns for Marie Martindale

Suddenly, the dreams you had become clearer. Helping the smugglers on the beach meant that you would be here, now. It was not God that answered your prayers, but the crown. It protects East Anglia, and it protected your son, giving him back his life. In return, you are meant to find it and save it from this purgatory and bring it back to your world to continue its role. In 1895, much of Dunwich has been lost to the sea, and it is more than likely the crown has gone with it. This is your way of defying the force of the ocean and reinforcing the protection of your homeland. Bring it home, bury it, and let it continue the role it has been trying to do for centuries. Then, your debt is repaid.

Handout: Amaranthine 5

Legends of the Three Crowns for Theodore Maynard

You've heard stories of these three crowns before. One was supposedly lost to the sea in an old Saxon Kingdom, which, you guess now, is probably Dunwich. Another of the crowns, supposedly that of King Redwald, King of the East Angles, was unearthed in Rendlesham in 1687 and melted down for its silver. It was worth a lot of money to those who discovered it. Either they didn't know of its supernatural power, or they didn't care—they were only thinking about the money. That's exactly what you are thinking right now. A relic of silver that old, it could pay off your debts to the gang in London several times over. No need to betray the smuggling operation here, no need to get anyone hurt. All you need to do is take the crown and get it to London.

Handout: Amaranthine 6

Legends of the Three Crowns for Emmanuel Beaulieu

In 1895, much of Dunwich has been lost to the sea, and it is more than likely the crown has gone with it. However, this is not 1895. Maybe the crown still works its magic, out at sea? Maybe your actions in 1287 can change the future? What if someone were to try to take the crown back to your world to re-establish its power there? This is the chance you've been waiting for. You could strike a real blow at England, weakening its defenses should an invasion eventually take place. All you need to do is destroy the crown or at least make sure it doesn't make it back with you. It's simple, and you will finally be able to taste true vengeance.

Handout: Amaranthine 7

Legends of the Three Crowns for Richard Garrett

Your family, much like Elizabeth's, has been in East Anglia for centuries. This is your home, your birthright. The crown, should the legend be true, represents a tangible force that protects everything you hold dear. In 1895, much of Dunwich has been lost to the sea, and it is more than likely the crown has gone with it. However, if you could bring the crown back to your world, or if your actions here could alter the future, then protecting it and keeping it buried would keep your family heritage safe. Anyone interfering with the crown threatens everything you and Elizabeth hold dear.

failing to grasp how to tackle their predicament after a number of loops have taken place.

Note that such suggestions by the trio brings forward the climax of the scenario by some degree, as it directs the investigators toward a solid goal that gives them the chance of escape. As such, the Keeper should think carefully about when to deploy it.

At the end of the encounter, a growing fire can be seen in the distance to the north. This is the windmill being set ablaze by Hawkins. If the investigators begin a loop and immediately leave the path, making their way through the woods towards the windmill, they arrive just in time to meet Father Fynche as he is approaching the windmill (with Hawkins already inside, waiting for him).

THE WINDMILL

The windmill is a little way out from the tree line of what the investigators would call Greyfriar's Wood, to the south of Dunwich. The surrounding fields are now bare in winter. In the first loop, the windmill is ablaze by the time the investigators arrive, but on subsequent loops they may attempt to get there quickly enough to prevent the murder and arson taking place.

As the investigators approach for the first time, locals who have seen the fire are already gathering, bringing buckets

with them, and forming a line to pass out water from a nearby pond within the woodland. Some thirty or so locals join the effort over time. A group of men from the city waits anxiously by the entrance for one of their friends to emerge from within—he went inside to check for survivors. The would-be rescuer coughs and splutters his way out, his face blackened by soot, and says that he thinks he can see someone upstairs, but the smoke became too much for him.

If any of the investigators head inside, call for **CON** (to withstand smoke inhalation) and/or **DEX** rolls (to avoid burning debris) as they ascend the steps to the upper floor. Failure on the CON check inflicts 1D2 damage, while failure on the DEX roll inflicts 1D4 damage from falling, burning woodwork. Remember that such damage is also felt by the other investigators, as with all damage inflicted throughout the night.

The interior of the windmill is divided into three floors. The lower floor is mostly bare, as it is winter, but would otherwise be full of stores of grain and flour. A **Spot Hidden** roll here can uncover discarded, cracked pots, the oily contents of which are on fire.

The middle floor houses the grinding stones where they connect to the upright shaft. More discarded pots can be found here, with the oil having been thrown over empty barrels and piles of wood. It quickly becomes apparent that this is no accident and that the fire has been set deliberately.

NAMELESS HORRORS



Windmill

However, the walls around the stairs have been spared (not being doused in oil and set alight), unlike the rest of the structure. Perhaps this was the arsonist making sure they could flee, or perhaps that they wanted someone to ascend the structure while it was burning?

A further successful **Spot Hidden** roll means that a figure on the upper floor, standing by the exterior wall, can be seen partially through the holes burnt in the ceiling.

The upper floor houses the gears connecting the upright shaft to the windshaft that is turned by the blades outside. Here, the body of Father Fynche has been pinned to the exterior wall in a mockery of the crucifixion. His robes have been torn open and a circle cut into his chest. Around the interior of the circle are a series of odd symbols that look like some form of language. The center of the circle is filled with another series of lines that intersect at odd angles, as if to form another, larger letter of the same alphabet. A successful **Occult** roll reveals that the symbol is reminiscent of the seals of spirits and demons, such as those outlined in the *Key of Solomon* (which the pre-generated investigator of Elizabeth may have seen in her studies); however, it is difficult to determine the symbol as it appears hurriedly drawn and is not an exact match.

A successful **Spot Hidden** notices a silver cross lying discarded on the floor, on a partially burning beam. This cross would have later been buried with Fynche and found by Marie's son (see Marie Martindale investigator in the PDF pack). If Marie sees it, she instantly realizes it is the same cross. She has the one her son found hanging around her neck and can compare the two. The burn mark is the same on both, but the one from the windmill is evidently hundreds of years newer than the one her son found. By describing his face, or showing the crowd his cross, the locals can identify the dead man as Father Fynche, the Pastor of St. Bartholomew's.

It soon becomes evident that the locals do not have sufficient manpower to put out the fire, especially given that it has been so well doused in oil within. Another pair of men rush into retrieve the body of Fynche; the rest pull back to let the fire take its course.

Should the investigators make their way directly through the woods to the windmill as soon as a loop resets, they arrive just in time to meet the Pastor as he is approaching the windmill. At this point, Hawkins is already inside, waiting to murder Fynche. If the investigators' block Fynche's path or otherwise stop him from entering, Hawkins emerges with a black scarf covering most of his face and attacks the nearest investigator (most likely a surprise attack). Hoping that they stop to tend to their injured friend, he then makes a run for it into the woods, possibly prompting a chase scene for those wishing to pursue him.



ANCESTORS

When the investigators hear about William Levett, they should recognize the surname of Levett, as Tobias Levett is part of the smuggling operation. Indeed, William is an ancestor of Tobias (see Tobias Levett investigator in the PDF Pack).

Tobias can recall this without the need of a roll, but to remember any further details requires an **Intelligence** roll. Success means Tobias recalls looking through some family documents as part of his interest in history. In one set of documents, he remembers seeing a sketch of William Levett, a drawing of his house in Dunwich, and a short account of his life.

William Levett was a merchant. Even though his body was never found, it was presumed that he was killed in the storm of 1287, washed out to sea. Tobias knows that William's house was in the merchants' district and can identify it by sight, given the ornate carving of a lion's head above the front door. This allows the investigators to find William's house without needing to successfully follow Hawkins from Sarah's house later.

Tobias isn't the only investigator with local connections. The Devereux family has held land in Suffolk since the Norman Conquest (see Elizabeth Devereux investigator in the PDF Pack). The family name has power, even in 1287. Elizabeth, should she use her name in conversation, receives a bonus die on **Credit Rating** and **Persuade** rolls in circumstances where it would be appropriate.

Marie Martindale's farm was built after the second storm in 1328, so she has no roots in the city at this time.



Should Hawkins lose his pursuers, he makes his way back to Sarah's house, as planned, to set it ablaze too. If caught, he fights until subdued, whereupon he may be interrogated by the investigators. Only then can he be unmasked, revealing his identity.

Father Fynche, if rescued, will not later appear as a ghost at the church. Fynche explains he was coming here for a meeting where he expected to be handed a witch by the local merchant, William Levett. At first he doesn't know why Levett would betray him, but then a look of realization crosses his face. A **Persuade** roll may get him to reveal his thoughts, as he would otherwise keep knowledge of the crown to himself. He correctly concludes that Levett wished him removed so that he could try to steal the crown from St. Bartholomew's. He doesn't use the word "crown," but simply mentions a "holy relic of

St. Sigeberht" (which is not really a lie, as St. Sigeberht was one of the three Kings of East Anglia to be sainted). This realization prompts Fynche to return to the church to confront Levett.

APPROACHING THE CITY

The windmill is a little way southwest of Gilden Gate, beyond the Covent Garden area. If looking down from the windmill, the gates into the city cross the Palesdyke, a large ditch with a wooden palisade mounted on the city-side. Some prominent landmarks can be seen at this distance above the palisade. The towers and spires of numerous churches reach up into the sky, along with several other windmills in the southern portion of the city, and a beacon on Cock Hill to the north.

Waiting at the Gilden Gate is Walter Lucas, the beggar, who has been stirred by the activity of the locals rushing to put out the fire. He asks for alms as the investigators enter the gate. Lucas, once he has been given a token of generosity by the investigators, may explain to them anything they wish to know about the city, as per his description (page 18).

One piece of advice Lucas can offer, after noticing the investigators' odd clothing (evidently they come from far away lands, here on trading business, he surmises), is that they might be able to get rooms at **The Harbor Inn** (page 31) if they are looking for somewhere to stay.

THE CITY STREETS

As the investigators move through the Dunwich streets for the first time, they get a greater feeling for how the city was centuries ago, before it was largely claimed by the sea. The southern areas of the city were considerably more open, with windmills, trees, and open grassland upto four acres in size, than the north, where the narrow, twisting streets surround the port and market place. The city is mostly flat in the south, but slopes down unevenly from All Saints and Cock Hill toward the sea in the north. From north to south, the city is approximately one mile long, with a population of around 5,000 in 1287. This made it one of the largest settlements in East Anglia during the 13th century, before the storm hit.

It is evident that there is a significant disparity of wealth in the city. The poorer residents, of which there is a vast number, maintain a miserable existence by fishing and tilling fields, and live on the outskirts, in dilapidated, low-quality housing that has changed little since Saxon times. The richer residents, mostly merchants and other businessmen, live in finer, tall timber-framed houses near the quay (called the "Daine") in the northeast of the city. Clerics, shopkeepers, and craftsmen (metal workers, potters, and tanners) also

Dunwich



Areas of Interest

- 1. The "Daine"
- 2. The Port
- 3. Haven
- 4. Covent Gardens
- 5. The Palisade
- 6. The Palesdyke
- 7. City Jail
- 8. The Harbor Inn
- 9. The Market Place
- 10. The Guild Hall
- 11. Cock Hill Beacon

The Churches

- 12. St. Bartholomew's Church
- 13. St. Michael's Church
- 14. St. John's Church
- 15. St. Nicholas' Church
- 16. St. Martin's Church
- 17. St. Peter's Church
- 18. St. Leonard's Church
- 19. All Saints' Church

Chapels & Religious Orders

- 20. St. Katherine's Chapel
- 21. St. Francis' Chapel
- 22. St. Anthony's Chapel
- 23. Hospitaller's Chapel
- 24. Blackfriars' Cell
- 25. Benedictine Cell

Hospitals

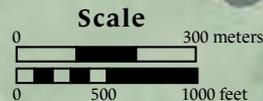
- 26. Maison Dieu
- 27. St. James' Chapel

City Gates

- 28. Bridge Gate
- 29. Middle Gate
- 30. Gilden Gate
- 31. South Gate
- 32. East Gate

For the Keeper

- 33. Sarah's House
- 34. Levett's House
- 35. The Witches' Pyre
- 36. The Burning Windmill



Dunwich - Keeper's map

use buildings in this area to both live and work. The upper floors of these buildings are typically slightly larger than the ones below so that by the third floor, they overlook the street below.

Inside the city, there are eight churches and three chapels (dedicated to St. Anthony, St. Katherine, and St. Francis), five houses of religious orders, and two hospitals, showcasing how vibrant and successful the port was for its time. The religious houses provided accommodation for travelers, such as the many pilgrims that passed through the city.

The Dominican (Black Friars) monastery is found in the southwest part of the city. Although it survived the storm of 1287, it would later fall into the sea at the end of the 14th century. Investigators familiar with Dunwich in the 19th century would know of the ruins of the Franciscan (Grey Friars) monastery, in what they know as Dunwich. However, the Franciscans did not come to Dunwich until 1290, when they worked amongst the sick and established their own monastery outside the Palesdyke.

The main entrance to the city is through Bridge Gate, with travelers arriving along King John's Highway (so named in honor of King John, who gave Dunwich its freedom in 1199). The highway links Dunwich to Bury St. Edmunds. Older Roman roads provide links to Norwich and Ipswich. Near Bridge Gate, before the Palesdyke, stands the E-shaped building of the Maison Dieu hospital. The other prominent feature of the city is St. James' Chapel, a leper hospital that was founded at the end of the 12th century.

Given it is the middle of the night. There is little activity in any of the churches (besides St. Bartholomew's). All businesses (with the exception of the Harbor Inn) are closed, and much of the city remains asleep. Priests from the other churches can be roused if the investigators look for sanctuary when the storm hits, or try to avoid the city guards. At first though, the priests would direct the investigators to the likes of the religious houses, as they specifically granted accommodation to travelers, but they do not turn away any who become insistent to stay immediately (even if it is on a stone floor, or wooden pew).

Traveling Beyond the City

The investigators may try to head further inland, away from Dunwich. If they travel far enough, they might well come to the **Edge of the World** (see page 37), in which case they should have the encounter as detailed in that section.

However, the investigators may also decide to journey to the likes of Walberswick to the north. The town is well within the distance of hearing the bell of St. Bartholomew's Church, so it is also caught in the pocket of time preserved by the Old Gods. The town has no part to play in the events unfolding in Dunwich though, so has no impact on the scenario.

Any investigators traveling there find the town asleep. It is the middle of the night. The town is nowhere near the size Dunwich, and none of the taverns are open. The Keeper might wish to have a couple of town guardsmen encounter the investigators wandering the streets, directing them back toward Dunwich if they are looking for somewhere to stay the night. Otherwise little of consequence should happen here. If they choose to linger in the area, the Keeper should consider this to be the moment when the bell of St. Bartholomew's starts to toll and a new loop begins.

THE CITY JAIL

As it is the middle of the night, moving through the empty city streets seems relatively easy at first. However, this runs the risk of attracting the attention of the city guards (see page 20). If they are arrested, the investigators are brought back to the city jail on suspicion of being involved in the arsons of the windmill and/or Sarah's house. The jail stands on the eastern side of the marketplace, near St. John's Church. In the center of the marketplace is a roofed structure, with open sides, under which approximately twenty stalls would be set up on market days.

The jail itself is not a particularly secure building but definitely looks the part, even though it is only a single story. The investigators are led in through the front door and thrown unceremoniously into iron-barred cells. Here, they are told they shall wait until the morning when the head of the city guard is able to question them.

Being brought here represents a dead end for a loop. Examination of the cell proves that the bars are loose and, with time, they could be pulled free—but time is something that the investigators don't have. Not long after they are brought into the cells, the bell of St. Bartholomew's is heard in the distance, followed by the flash of lightning across the horizon. The wind begins to build and as the sound of houses being destroyed in the high winds on the eastern side of the city grows, the loop finally resets and the investigators find themselves back in the woods.

THE HARBOR INN

The Harbor Inn is a short walk from St. Leonard's Church, a couple of streets back from the Daine. The sign depicting the outline of a ship in white paint swings in the gentle breeze that blows in from the harbor. In the more affluent part of the city, the inn stands apart from the others at this time of night because there are still lights on inside. As Walter Lucas said, the inn is still open due to the number of sailors inside, discussing what they should do now that their "lucky charm" (Sarah) has gone missing.

The innkeeper, George Hayman, watches over the sailors gathered around a wooden table in the open space before the bar. Henry Scott slouches in a booth, cradling a tankard of ale, mildly inebriated. Hayman welcomes the investigators inside, but insist that they keep the noise down if they intend on staying. His wife is trying to sleep upstairs and he doesn't want to incur her wrath when he finally retires for the evening. This will probably be in an about an hour or so, at which point he asks everyone assembled to leave so that he can get to sleep.

The six sailors, led by Samuel Harding, invite the investigators to sit with them as they continue their discussion. Theories are being voiced about the possible reasons why Sarah Browne might have gone missing. Maybe she has been paid-off by merchants in a rival port (Walberswick perhaps?) who seek to steal some of the success of Dunwich. After all, no sailors have come to harm when she has been on a ship, with not a single storm coming to pass, and the fish almost seeming to leap into the nets. Who would not want such a gift to work for them? There are those that do not question her loyalty to the city (remembering that her father was a prominent captain in his day), and thus wonder if Sarah might have been kidnapped. Such speculation bounces back and forth, in the course of which the Keeper can enlighten the investigators as to the background of Sarah and her father in the city—with the exception of her involvement with magic and the Servants of the Old Gods, which is, of course, not public knowledge.

If the investigators wish to learn a bit more about the city and the operation of the harbor, the sailors and the innkeeper are good people to ask. They explain that that the main imported goods that pass through the city are fish, furs, and timber from Iceland and the Baltic, fine cloth from the Low Countries, and wines from France. The main exports from the area in and around the city are grain and raw wool.

As the sailors begin to question the investigators as to why they are in the city (with the Keeper perhaps injecting a hint of suspicion in their questioning, as some wonder if these strangers might have something to do with Sarah's disappearance), Henry Scott is roused and staggers over to them. He proclaims that the investigators are "new," "different," and that they "weren't here before" (see **Henry Scott**, page 19).

Should the investigators tarry here too long, or the scene begins to drag, one of the sailors gets up from the table and heads outside, declaring he is going to relieve himself in the gutter. He returns a couple of moments later and raises the alarm, having seen a rooftop burning on the next street over. This is Sarah's house going up in flames,

thanks to Hawkins (should he not have been stopped at the windmill). If the investigators leave at any point, the Keeper can mention the obvious orange/yellow glow of the fire above the rooftops to them without the need of a **Spot Hidden** roll.

SARAH'S HOUSE

The investigators are most likely be drawn here after leaving the Harbor Inn and spotting the fire, obtaining the address from the Servants of the Old Gods, or attempting to intercept the arsonist after having experienced the fire in a previous loop.

If they travel directly to the house following the incidents at the windmill, or as soon as a loop resets, they can make it here before Hawkins can complete his task. If they lose him after a chase at the windmill, they might catch him in the middle of his preparations to torch the house. If interrupted, he flees through the back door, over a back wall and off into the maze of narrow streets. A chase scene may begin if the investigators react quickly enough. Otherwise, a **Tracking** roll is required to follow him through the labyrinthine alleys. If the investigators are successful, they follow Hawkins all the way back to Levett's house.

Sarah's cramped house is one of the more dilapidated structures around the extremity of the Daine area. There are many such buildings in the poorer quarter, not that far from the more affluent merchants' district. The house has two floors, with the bedroom upstairs. Many of her father's possessions remain in the house (his sailing gear and clothing) but show evident signs of disuse. If the investigators have interrupted Hawkins, then more discarded pots of oil can be found here, with oil smothering piles of wood and fabrics at strategic points in each of the rooms. Otherwise, there is little else of note to be discovered here.

Upstairs, the whole floor is comprised of Sarah's bedroom. The bed has been moved aside and a section of floorboards broken apart. Any investigator taking an interest in the broken sections of floorboard notices that there are burn marks in some of the fragments. Putting them together takes a few minutes and a successful **Intelligence** roll, whereupon they see that the section of floor had been inscribed with an odd pentagram-like symbol branded into the wood. If any investigator has the **Cthulhu Mythos** skill they can roll to see if they recognize it as a rudimentary Elder Sign. Otherwise, an **Occult** roll can confirm it resembles a pentagram, but there is something further in the detail that they don't recognize. This in turn raises the possibility of a connection to witchcraft, or at least a connection to Pagan beliefs.



The Elder Sign

An **Intelligence** roll can confirm that, given the rate at which the oil has soaked into the fabric of the building, compared to the damage of the floorboards, the floorboards were most likely torn up at some point earlier in the day, whereas the oil has only recently been deployed.

The hole in the floor exposes a hollow beneath the floorboards. Here, a canvas wrapping lies open, but the contents have been removed. This was where Sarah's parchments and scrolls were hidden, protected by the Elder Sign from the influences of any that might have sought to use rival magic against her. They were taken by Levett earlier that day, after the Servants of the Old Gods had visited the house looking for Sarah the previous night.

LEVETT'S HOUSE

The investigators can find their way to Levett's house in the merchant's district by a few different routes. They can follow Hawkins from Sarah's house, extract the address from Hawkins via a Hard **Intimidate** roll, or Tobias may recall his family history (see **Ancestors**, page 29).

Levett's house is an imposing three-story structure that looms over the street below. Candlelight can be seen coming

from the lower and middle floors as the investigators approach. An ornate wooden carving of a roaring lion's head looks down upon passers-by from above the front door.

Knocking on the door attracts the attention of the manservant, Miles Holt, who is in his late 30s and shows signs of having lived a life of hard, manual labor. He states simply that the master of the house is not at home. His objections cease with a successful **Intimidate** or **Fast Talk** roll, and he complies with everything the investigators wish. Holt can reveal that Levett has gone to St. Bartholomew's with a young lady who has been in residence for the last couple of days. If pressed, Holt states that his master kept the woman locked up on the upper floor, and that he had no idea what the situation was about.

Should Hawkins have made it to the house before the investigators, Holt denies all knowledge of there being anyone else in the house. However, if he is successfully intimidated, he will continue to deny any knowledge while also motioning with his eyes and fingers to one of the doors on the ground floor. Inside, Hawkins is waiting for the return of his employer. The remaining scrolls and parchments taken from Sarah's house are visible on a table, but Hawkins is hidden around the corner, having heard the noise outside. Hawkins



SARAH'S DOCUMENTS

The parchments and scrolls that Levett took from Sarah's house document her teachings from Katherine and the other Servants of the Old Gods. Most of them, concerning the Old Gods, have been given to the priests at St. Bartholomew's to convince them that Sarah is a witch. The few Levett has kept in his possession detail the spells that he has identified as being what made her "lucky" to the fishermen. Specifically, a spell called "Gather the Abundance of the Sea,"* which purports to "make the very fish that swim attract to the fisherman's net." However, other spells, at the Keeper's discretion, might lurk within, such as Contact Deep One.

The first obstacle the investigators have regarding the documents is time. To study everything will take six days. Secondly, while the echo of Dunwich allows the investigators to understand the words that are spoken around them, the text of the documents remains in Middle English, a language unlikely to be familiar to the investigators.

If the investigators take the documents back to their own time, they may be able to find someone who can read Middle English and learn what secrets hide within.

Note that the documents provide an ideal way for Keepers to insert plot hooks for future scenarios.

**Gather the Abundance of the Sea is a spell sometimes referred to as Attract Fish. This version of the spell costs 4 magic points (no Sanity loss). The caster must prepare bait (mixed with the caster's blood), which is then thrown into the ocean whilst a chant is sung. Within 1 hour, 2D100 + 100 fish, local to the area, congregate.*

attempts to hide and stab anyone in the back before fleeing, in much the same way as at the windmill. However, in the cramped environment of the dark town-house, facing multiple opponents, it is more likely he falls at this point and, if still living, be forced into revealing what he knows.

If subdued, Hawkins can fill in his side of the story regarding finding Sarah at the church, bringing her back to the house, the subsequent interrogation, knowledge of the crown and her plans, and likewise those of Levett. If using the pre-generated investigators, this would be an ideal point for the players to receive the handouts regarding their stance upon the legend of the crowns (see **Handouts: Amaranthine 2 to 7**).

ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S CHURCH

St. Bartholomew's, like the other churches in Dunwich, is built of a combination of stone and flint, in a typical cross configuration. The church is of the Catholic faith and stands a little way off King's Street. The pre-generated investigator Marie Martindale recognizes the front of the church as the one that she saw in her dream (through the door of which the figure in robes was beckoning—the ghost of Father Fynche).

Upon approaching, the investigators can see the light from many candles burning inside. The door is unlocked, but there is no one to answer should anyone knock. If Fynche has been murdered by this point, his ghost is standing in the aisle leading to the font, at the center of the church. The ghost silently waits and watches the investigators enter.

As described on page 18, the ghost does not act against the investigators unless they attempt to make their way down to the crypt. The crypt can be accessed via a spiral staircase beyond a door located behind the pulpit. The same staircase also leads up to the top of the tower.

The crypt is shrouded in darkness. The outer walls are lined with alcoves in which rest old coffins. At the center of the crypt, directly under the font, lies the stone slab that Father Fynche placed, bearing the carving of the three crowns upon a shield. Lifting the stone slab requires STR 100 (probably requiring an Extreme **Strength** roll if attempted by a solo investigator), although a number of investigators may attempt to move the slab by working together (combing their STR to reduce the difficulty).

Under the slab is the bare earth in which the crown is buried. Digging through the loose soil is easy enough, and the crown is buried a foot deep.

The crown is made of solid, tarnished silver, set with gemstones, antique intaglios, and cameos. It is of a plain, almost rough quality of workmanship, reminiscent of the style of crowns depicted on coins and in manuscripts of the period. A successful **History** or **Appraise** roll confirms it is most likely no later than 9th century in origin.

Pulling the crown from the ground immediately summons the ghost. It may also lead to a struggle among the investigators, should they be actively fighting for possession or destruction of the crown. Destroying the crown requires 20 points of damage. Smashing the crown against stone deals 1D4 damage to it, while dropping a heavy stone slab on top of it does 1D8+2 damage. Attempts to destroy the crown incur the ghost's wrath and it attacks those in the process of damaging the crown, stopping its attacks if the investigators' stop damaging the crown.

If the Pastor has not been murdered, then there is no ghost, and no-one present to defend the crown from the investigators or the Servants of the Old Gods. However,



St. Bartholomew's church – Fynche

if Father Fynche is with the investigators at the time, he needs convincing (a **Hard Charm, Fast Talk, Intimidate** or **Persuade**) that moving the crown is a good idea—whereas the ghost, in its single-minded determination, requires an Extreme success to be convinced. If the investigators back-up their argument with the information they may have received from Fynche in a prior loop, reduce the roll's level of difficulty by one step.

As an option, if the investigators have taken a long route to get to the church, either having to avoid the city guard, or having pursued other lines of investigation in the same loop, they may arrive while the Servants of the Old Gods are battling the ghost inside the church. As the Servants attempt to fight the guardian, finding their magic has no effect upon it, they are being withered away as they lose POW to its attacks. Walter Lucas, having heard the disturbance in the church, is cowering behind the pews before he limps toward the far end of the church and rings the bell to call for help. Through the stained-glass windows, the flames of Sarah's pyre begin to flicker into view. Her muffled cries are heard between the peals of the bell, and the loop resets soon after.

Having potentially seen this scene take place in a previous loop, the investigators could try to stop Katherine, Clare,

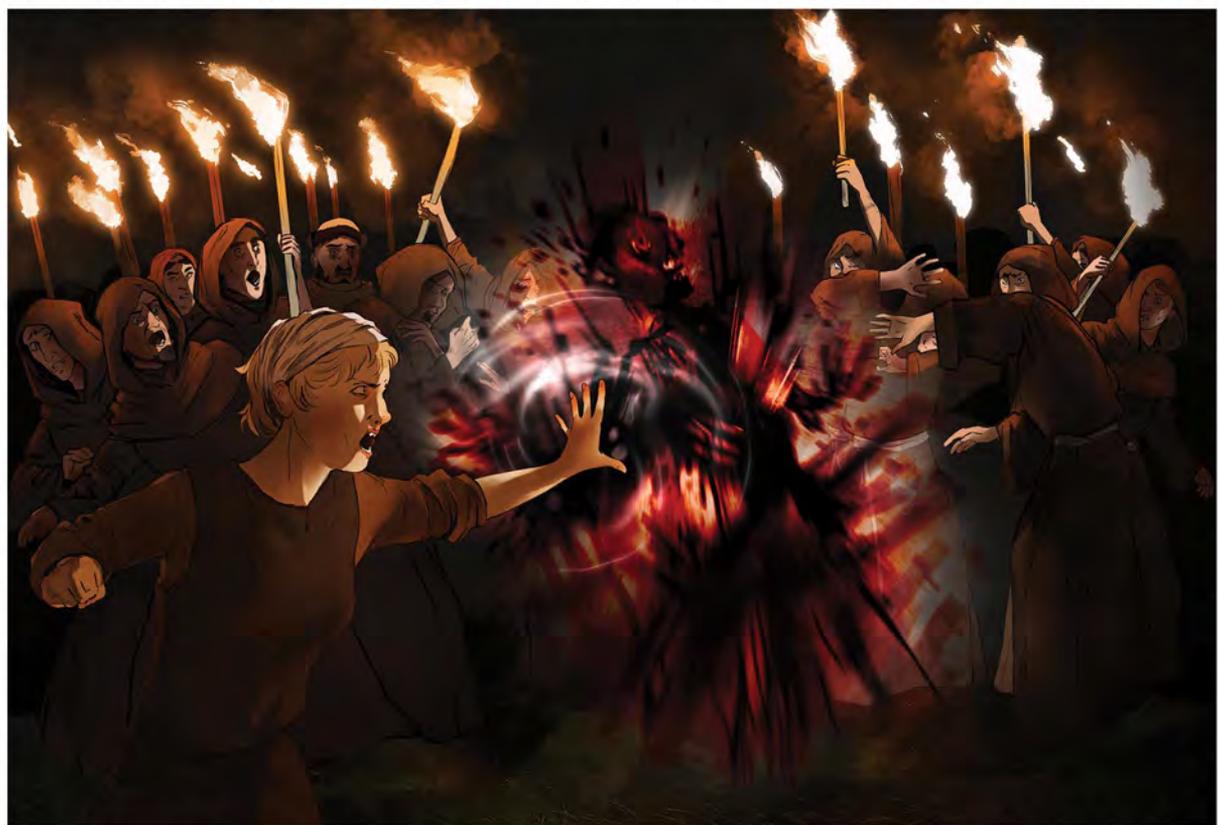
and Nathaniel from going inside. If Fynche is alive, the Servants of the Old Gods do their best to enter the church, quite content to kill Fynche should he get in their way—this creates his ghost (again) and ends with the same result. If the investigators tell the trio that they know where Sarah is, on the pyre in the courtyard behind the church, the trio abandon any thought of entering the church and go immediately to save their friend.

BURNING SARAH

After having brought Sarah to the church, declaring her to be a witch, and supporting his accusations with the documents taken from her house, Levett helps the priests take her to the courtyard at the back of the church, where they build a pyre to purify her soul. There are six priests in attendance, plus Levett.

How the scene plays out is dependent on how the investigators approach the situation, and what support they have. These are some possible approaches:

If the Servants of the Old Ones are with the investigators, they have no problem with casting Wrath of Ages on the priests (targeting five in each instance). As such, this turns



The Wrath of Ages is cast

into a more combative encounter. After being successfully hit by the spell, any of the five targeted priests who survive flee, leaving just one in opposition. Levett, as per his description, is not a combatant. He tries to call the priests back to the courtyard, but also flees when he realizes none of them are returning and he is severely outnumbered.

If Father Fynche is with the investigators, the scene becomes more diplomatic and less combat oriented. The Pastor tries to calm his fellow priests, but he still requires a convincing argument from the investigators as to why Sarah should not burn. Any proposed arguments are immediately condemned by Levett, and an opposed **Persuade** roll is required to see who can sway the priests in their favor (Levett has Persuade 60%):

- Should Levett win, the priests immediately light the pyre with their already burning torches.
- If the investigators win, then Fynche is convinced and halts the priests. Levett, raging in anger, rushes forward, grabbing a torch from one of the priests and attempts to light the pyre himself. A successful **DEX** roll is needed for an investigator to reach him in time, followed by a **Fighting (Brawl)** roll to stop him (manhandling or knocking him to the ground), at which point he submits.

If the investigators head to the church as soon as a loop resets, without saving the Pastor, they are well ahead of the Servants of the Old Gods and so must present their case alone. This takes the form of an opposed **Persuade** roll against Levett to convince the priests, but, as they are strangers in strange clothes, with no credentials, arriving in the dead of night, and claiming they are here to take the witch away, the investigators have a penalty die on the roll.

Should the investigators fail to talk their way through the situation, it may result in combat. In this case, while the priests and Levett try to hold the investigators back, one of the priests runs into the church and begins to toll the bell to call for help. All it requires is one priest to succeed with a **Throw** (45%) roll to pitch their torch onto the pyre. Sarah then makes her prayer (see **Sarah's Prayer**), bringing the loop to an end as she dies (again).

Should the investigators free Sarah, she is overjoyed that her prayer was answered (assuming she got chance to proclaim it—otherwise it's the answering of the prayer she *would* have made with her dying breath).

She suspects there isn't much time and they must leave this realm and return to the real world. She begins to lead the investigators out of the city, into the dark countryside.



SARAH'S PRAYER

To be read during the scene at Sarah's pyre, after the bell of St. Bartholomew's begins to toll:

"Believers of the lie, hear my words! He that is the dark behind the night. He that resides beyond our reach. I call upon thee! Answer this prayer from your devoted servant that my unfading wish, my undying desire, will be realized! The bell that tolls marks not my end alone, but the ruin of you all!"



EDGE OF THE WORLD

Should the investigators head outside Dunwich and keep walking, they notice some odd things. The farther they get from the city, the less wildlife they find, and the sky seems to become a lot darker. Successful **Spot Hidden** rolls reveal that the stars are slowly going out, one by one, the farther they walk. The stars begin to return to view only if the investigators make their way back to Dunwich.

Five miles from St. Bartholomew's, the world simply disappears. All that can be seen is the illimitable void beyond the reach of space and time, as described in **Denying Reality** (page 23). The feeling of something looking back at them and the overwhelming nature of the sight prompts a **Sanity** roll (1D3/1D10).

Should Sarah be leading the investigators, she takes them along King John's Highway, heading inland. The road simply fades away into nothingness ahead of them, becoming mist-like and insubstantial. She calmly says to her rescuers that this is the limit of her wish, the point beyond which the bell of St. Bartholomew's cannot be heard. Everyone within range of the tolling bell, the lifeline she chose, would come to her aid, thanks to the Old Gods. This will be their lifeline back to the real world. She gestures for the investigators to hold hands in a line as she guides them into the dominion of "He that is the dark behind the night." At this point, if the ghost has followed because the investigators are carrying the crown, it disappears. If the crown makes it across the void, the ghost will be there when it arrives.

If the investigators comply with Sarah, the Keeper should record the order in which they hold hands, beginning with

Sarah and working down the line. The Keeper need not make any rolls for NPCs, should any others besides Sarah offer to take places at the rear of the line. Only the rolls of the investigators matter.

As the group makes their way out into the void, they feel the ground dissipate beneath their feet as they begin floating forward into the darkness. Here, Sarah calls out to her god, asking to be shown the way home. In the distance, after a few moments of almost oppressive silence, the faint tolling of a bell can be heard in the distance, beneath them. The line of people turns through the void as Sarah pulls them toward the sound.

At this point, the investigators must make a **POW** roll. Success means that the investigator loses 1D4 magic points; failure raises the loss to 1D4+1, as the void seems to drain the very life out of them. Those who fail the POW roll also need to make a **DEX** roll to avoid letting go of the person in front of them in the line (which also dooms those behind them if they let go and lose their way). Success on the DEX roll means they have maintained their grip; failure means, in a moment of weakness, as their life force is drained, they let go.

Any investigator who let go of the person in front of them can make a Hard **DEX** roll on the subsequent turn, which costs them a further 1D4 magic points regardless of success or failure. Failure again means that the person in front of them is slipping away. The investigator can push this roll, as it is potentially a life-or-death situation, but they pay another 1D4 magic points, regardless of success or failure. If they succeed, they re-establish contact with the person in front. If they fail, they are lost in the void forever.

Anyone who is stuck behind an investigator who has lost their way in the void can let go of the doomed investigator and attempt to make an Hard **DEX** roll, paying a further 1D4 magic points in the process, to launch them, and everyone behind them, toward those still on track at the head of the line. The roll can be pushed if needed by paying the 1D4 magic point cost again. Subsequent failure means they too are lost in the void with no hope of rescue.

No one in the line can help anyone behind them, they can only push on and try to help themselves, and by extension, anyone who has successfully held onto them. The Keeper should resolve attempts to re-establish broken connections in the chain, working from the front to the back, in order.

After all attempts to rejoin the chain have been resolved, the remaining investigators make another **POW** roll. Success costs the investigator a further 1D4 magic points as they force their way through the darkness that is solidifying around them. Failure costs the investigator 1D4+2 magic points and prompts a **DEX** roll to maintain their connection to the person in front of them. The same rules apply to try and re-establish contact.



UNAIDED ESCAPE

There are a couple of ways that the investigators can find themselves in the void without Sarah to guide them out. They can either step-off the edge of the world if they travel far enough away from Dunwich (which is a conscious act, as the investigators can see the world falling away around them), or the echo of Dunwich fades away around them if a subsequent loop would be prevented from starting (see **Ending the Cycle** on page 23). If they are unlucky enough to be in this situation, they can attempt to find their way home, unaided, or try to return to Dunwich.

Essentially, the process works as outlined in the **Edge of the World**, requiring the magic point spend and successful **POW** rolls as previously described. The investigators must locate the way back home—they must hear the bell of St. Bartholomew's and then choose to head toward it.

Once in the void, the investigators can make a **Listen** roll to hear the bell of St. Bartholomew's tolling in the distance. If they fail, they can make another attempt, only this time requiring a Hard success, as they float further away. One last attempt can be made, if needed, requiring an Extreme success. None of these rolls may be pushed. Should the investigator fail any of these rolls, they can then attempt a **Spot Hidden** roll of equal difficulty to locate the way back to the edge of the world that leads to Dunwich. The investigators have but one further chance, they can project themselves back toward Dunwich, costing them a further 1D4 magic points. An investigator who fails all of their attempts to leave the void, is lost and fades away into nothingness.

Of course, if the investigators are clever and very resourceful, using something to bind their hands together (rope, clothing, rags, and so on), then they remain attached and no **DEX** rolls are required.

In all the cases, when an investigator loses more magic points than they currently have, they pay the remainder, and any subsequent loss, with hit points. In such an event, blood begins to pour from any wounds, or from eyes and ears. When any investigator reaches zero hit points, they fade away into nothing, becoming one with the void forever. Any investigators behind them can then attempt to re-establish the connection with the person in front.

Once resolved, the solidification of the darkness around the investigators intensifies. The tolling of the bell becomes

deafening, and in an almost ear-shattering blast, the darkness is dismissed and the investigators fall as if from a great height. They hit water and are enveloped in a turbulent, dark ocean. With a gasp, they pierce the surface, buffeted by heavy waves, in a storm in the middle of the night. The lights of the Suffolk coastline can be seen some half-mile away in the distance, and they can begin making their way toward the shore. Any items they may have brought with them (such as the crown) are still on their person when they arrive back in the real world.

If the investigators have somehow brought Tarquin with them, either by its own volition or with Clare, they catch sight of the familiar shooting out from the waves at high speed, unnaturally so for an owl. It circles for a few moments and then makes its way to the shore to meet them upon their arrival.

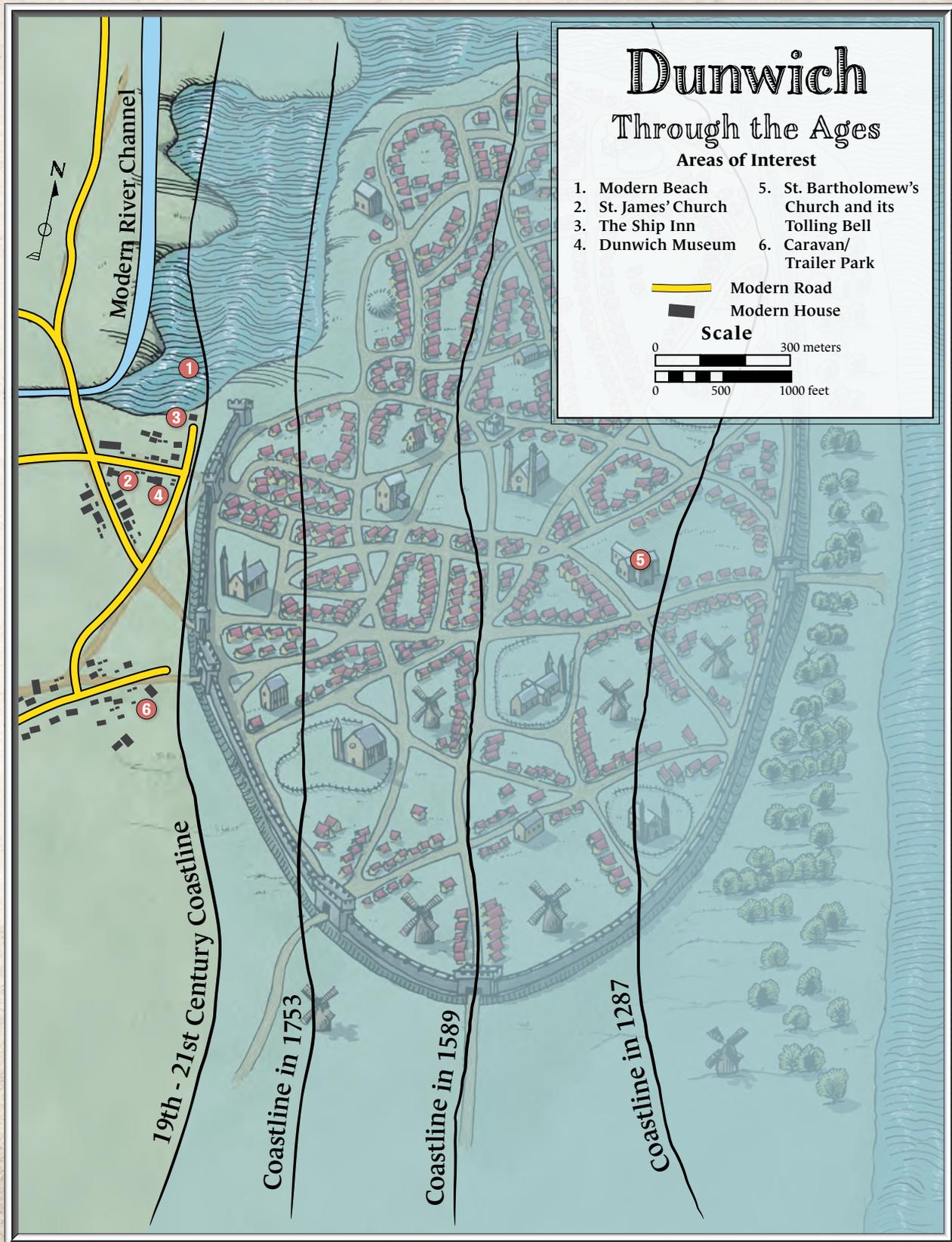
POINT OF RETURN

The bell of St. Bartholomew's tolls and opens the gateway to the realm of the Old Gods only when severe storms assault the coast. Such storms occur with irregular frequency, decades or sometimes centuries apart. It is only during these times that the gateway is open and the investigators can return to the real world. Each time the loop resets, the point of return changes to the next storm that would cause the bell to toll.

In the incredibly unlikely event that the investigators successfully discover the edge of the world and make their way across the void unaided back to the real world before the first loop reset occurs, they find themselves back where they first started, in 1895, as the storm continues. The smuggling operation continues as before.

In most cases, the investigators (should they manage to escape Dunwich) return to the real world after either the second, third, or fourth resets have occurred. In such cases, they find the world they have returned to is not as they expected:

- **Escaping after the first reset**, the investigators emerge a little after midnight on the morning of January 14th, 1916.
- **Escaping after the second reset**, the investigators emerge a little after midnight on the morning of February 1st, 1953. This was one of the worst storms to hit the North Sea area in the 20th century, resulting in more than 2,500 deaths. In England, a little over 300 people were killed along the coasts of Lincolnshire, Norfolk, Suffolk, and Essex, where more than 1,600 kilometers of coastline were affected and approximately 24,000 properties were seriously damaged. 1,000 square kilometers of coastland was flooded in England.
- **Escaping after the third reset**, the investigators emerge a little after midnight on the morning of February 16th, 1962. In this instance, the storm mainly affected the coast of Germany, but was felt across the southern North Sea.
- **Escaping after the fourth reset**, the investigators emerge a little after midnight on the morning of January 11th, 1978.



Dunwich through the ages - Keeper's map

The force of the storm in this instance was felt as far north as the Humber and as far south as Kent on the English coast. Even though the waters reached levels higher than those seen in the floods of 1953, due to improvements in flood defenses, the same devastating effect was not repeated, although many piers along the coast were severely damaged.

- **Escaping after the fifth reset**, the investigators emerge a little after midnight on the morning of November 8th, 2007. Cyclone Tilo, combined with already high tides, resulted in a storm that damaged coastlines across the United Kingdom, Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, Denmark, and Norway. Flood warnings were issued all along the east coast of Britain, with Norfolk and Kent being most affected counties.
- **Escaping after the sixth reset**, they emerge a little after midnight on December 5th, 2013. Cyclone Bodil brought about the worst tidal surge in the last 30 years, flooding areas all along the East Coast of England.

As mentioned previously regarding integration into an existing campaign, the Keeper can forego this time-jumping structure if they are using this scenario as a springboard into an ongoing campaign. The investigators simply reappear on January 25th, 1895.

However, Keepers wishing to continue the game in the 1920s can begin following the investigators emerging in 1916 (giving them a few years to acclimatize to the new world they find themselves in), or a storm of the Keeper's invention closer to the actual era. Likewise, placing the investigators into the modern day can be accomplished by skipping forward to the storms of 2007 or 2013.

In any case, when they emerge, if she is with them, there is still the issue of Sarah to resolve...

CODA: FUTURE SHORES

As the map shows, the sea had already claimed nearly all of what was once a thriving city in the time when the smugglers were bringing their illegal cargo ashore in 1895. The southern districts beyond the Temple were mostly destroyed in the tempests of 1287 and 1328.

Since then, the shoreline has continued to erode. The investigators will most likely return in the early 20th century, by which time the coast has retreated as far as All Saint's Church, where the last corner of the tower was moved to the churchyard of St. James' church in 1929 to prevent it too from being claimed by the sea. The Keeper should have an idea of the changes the coastline has undergone when describing the scene that awaits the investigators when they make it to the shore.

When the investigators (and any of the NPCs that accompanied them) land on the shore, there is likely to be a confrontation. Sarah doesn't know and doesn't care what time she has returned to. All she knows is that in 1287 she died and the storms destroyed the town. Her death satisfied her amaranthine desire to tear down the empires of the rich in Dunwich, and she believes she has avenged her father in that respect. As such, she is content to simply leave the investigators in peace after thanking them for giving her another chance at life. If any investigators take exception to this, an altercation may break out. If things get heated enough that combat occurs, Sarah targets the investigator leading the assault against her with the Wrath of Ages spell. Given the devastating effect of the spell when directed at a single target, she hopes this stops the others from launching an attack.

Assume that Sarah has 5 magic points left after escaping the void for the purposes of casting the spell. Any of the remaining Servants of the Old Gods have only 1 magic point left, and they are down to half their total hit points if they had previously cast the spell at the church.

Sarah (and any other NPCs) simply stand and wait for the investigators to be on their way. When a significant enough distance has developed between them, should any investigator look back, Sarah (and the others) are gone. The crashing waves of the sea make any attempt to follow their tracks impossible. They are loose upon the world now, thanks to the investigators.

If the investigators have brought the crown across the void, they may fight over its fate. The ghost of Fynche appears at a suitable moment and instructs them to bury the crown somewhere far inland so that the sea cannot threaten it again. The ghost resorts to violence if necessary to encourage the investigators to do this. Once it has their assurance they will bury it again, the ghost vanishes. For some weeks following, the investigators have the feeling that they are being watched. If the investigators attempt to destroy the crown, the ghost appears and attacks until they dispel it or stop damaging the crown. The ghost takes the crown if it is offered, vanishing immediately, and so places the crown in a safe place for a future generation.

A possible final scene might see the investigators making their way over the dunes to what's left of Dunwich, regardless of the time period. The only light at this time of night comes from the Ship Inn on St James' Street. Depending on the time period, the Keeper might describe the presence of automobiles and other unfamiliar technology. The door to the Inn opens as a man in his early 50s leaves, dressed in keeping with the time period. He sees the investigators, soaked to the bone, and ushers them inside before they "Catch their death of cold." Inside, he returns to the bar where the investigators catch sight of a calendar on the wall declaring the date.

As the Keeper welcomes the investigators to the future, here ends the scenario.

CONCLUSION

Suggested Sanity awards for investigators completing this scenario are:

- Preventing the crown from being destroyed: +1D4 Sanity points.
- Destroying the crown: -1D4 Sanity points.
- Returning the crown to the ghost: +1D4 Sanity points.

Note that the following award depends upon how the investigators have viewed Sarah and her actions. Keepers should apply the following reward or penalty as best fits your players responses to notion of Sarah the “evil” witch, or Sarah the “innocent” witch:

- Saving Sarah, believing she was innocently persecuted: +1D6 Sanity points.
- Saving Sarah, believing she is a dangerous witch: -1D6 Sanity points.

CHARACTERS

Only the relevant and necessary statistics are presented. The Keeper should feel free to modify or expand these as they wish.

SARAH BROWN,

age 29, Priestess of the Old Gods

STR 50 **CON** 70 **SIZ** 45 **DEX** 70 **INT** 60
APP 65 **POW** 80 **EDU** 55 **SAN** 40 **HP** 11
Damage Bonus: 0 **Build:** 0 **Move:** 9 **MP:** 16

Combat

Brawl 30% (15/6), damage 1D3, or by weapon
Dodge 45% (22/9)

Skills

Cthulhu Mythos 20%, Listen 50%, Navigate 40%,
Persuade 60%, Pilot (Boat) 60%, Spot Hidden 50%,
Stealth 40%, Swim 70%.

Spells

Sarah knows Wrath of Ages (page 13), Gather the Abundance of the Sea (**Sarah's Documents**, page 34), and may know 1D6 additional spells at the Keeper's discretion.

KATHERINE DOWNING,

age 32, Servant of the Old Gods

STR 45 **CON** 60 **SIZ** 55 **DEX** 50 **INT** 65
APP 60 **POW** 75 **EDU** 60 **SAN** 30 **HP** 11
Damage Bonus: 0 **Build:** 0 **Move:** 6 **MP:** 15

Combat

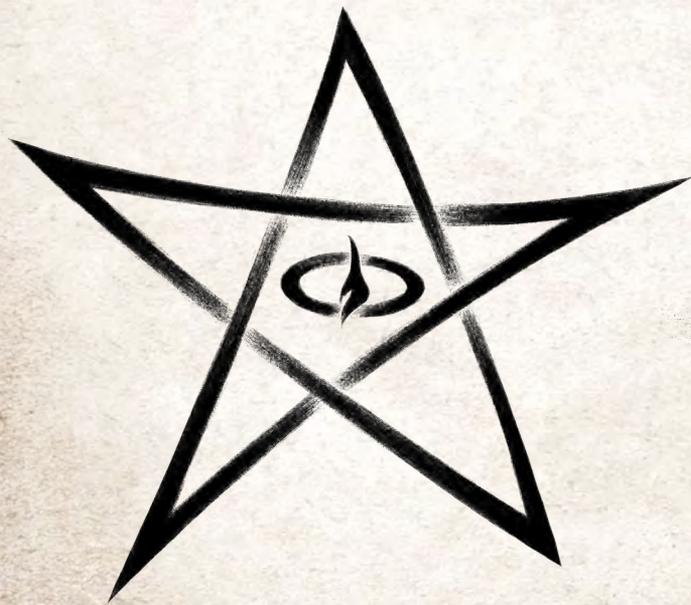
Brawl 30% (15/6), damage 1D3, or by weapon
Dodge 40% (20/8)

Skills

Cthulhu Mythos 30%, Listen 40%, Navigate 35%, Spot Hidden 45%, Stealth 60%, Swim 35%.

Spells

Katherine knows Wrath of Ages (page 13), and may know an additional 1D6 spells at the Keeper's discretion.



NAMELESS HORRORS

CLARE BOONE, *age 22, Servant of the Old Gods*

STR 50 CON 55 SIZ 50 DEX 60 INT 60
APP 55 POW 70 EDU 55 SAN 30 HP 10
Damage Bonus: 0 Build: 0 Move: 7 MP: 14

Combat

Brawl 35% (17/7), damage 1D3, or by weapon
Dodge 50% (25/10)

Skills

Cthulhu Mythos 25%, Listen 60%, Navigate 40%, Spot Hidden 50%, Stealth 45%, Swim 40%.

Spells

Clare knows Wrath of Ages (page 13), and may know an additional 1D6 spells at the Keeper's discretion.

NATHANIEL HALL, *age 26, Servant of the Old Gods*

STR 55 CON 50 SIZ 55 DEX 65 INT 60
APP 50 POW 60 EDU 50 SAN 45 HP 10
Damage Bonus: 0 Build: 0 Move: 7 MP: 12

Combat

Brawl 40% (20/8), damage 1D3, or by weapon
Dodge 45% (22/9)

Skills

Cthulhu Mythos 15%, Listen 50%, Navigate 25%, Spot Hidden 45%, Stealth 40%, Swim 60%.

Spells

Nathaniel may know 1D4 spells at Keeper discretion.

TARQUIN, *Shape-shifting familiar*

STR 70 CON 60 SIZ Varies DEX 90 INT 70
APP — POW 65 EDU — SAN — HP 15
Damage Bonus: 0 Build: Varies Move: 10 MP: 13

Special Powers:

Shape-shift: May change form in less than a second to resemble any creature between the size of a dog (Build -1) and a small cat (Build -2). Hints of its true nature always lurk beneath the surface (e.g. leathery skin beneath apparently normal fur). Grants the familiar the ability to fly, breathe underwater, or any other trait applicable to the form it takes.

Combat

Attacks per round: 1. Attacks with the natural weapons of the form it has taken (claw, talon, bite, etc.)

Fighting 50% (25/10), 1D4+1 damage (varies depending on form taken)

Dodge 70% (35/14)

Armor: 2-point leathery hide.

Sanity Loss: 0/1D3 Sanity points upon realizing its deception.

WILLIAM LEVETT, *age 31, Merchant driven by greed*

STR 40 CON 80 SIZ 55 DEX 50 INT 70
APP 60 POW 65 EDU 70 SAN 65 HP 13
Damage Bonus: 0 Build: 0 Move: 6 MP: 13

Combat

Brawl 25% (12/5), damage 1D3, or by weapon
Dodge 30% (15/6)

Skills

Credit Rating 80%, Listen 40%, Persuade 60%, Spot Hidden 40%.



AN AMARANTHINE DESIRE

RALPH HAWKINS, age 25, murderer for hire

STR 65 CON 70 SIZ 50 DEX 75 INT 55
APP 50 POW 60 EDU 45 SAN 51 HP 12
Damage Bonus: 0 Build: 0 Move: 8 MP: 12

Combat

Brawl 60% (30/12), damage 1D3, or by weapon
Knife (Use Brawl skill) 1D4+2+DB
Dodge 45% (22/9)

Skills

Intimidate 40%, Listen 45%, Spot Hidden 45%.

JOSEPH FYNCHÉ, age 42, Guardian of the Dunwich Crown

STR 45 CON 50 SIZ 50 DEX 45 INT 75
APP 50 POW 75 EDU 80 SAN 80 HP 10
Damage Bonus: 0 Build: 0 Move: 6 MP: 15

Combat

Brawl 25% (12/5), damage 1D3, or by weapon
Dodge 25% (12/5)

Skills

Listen 40%, Persuade 40%, Spot Hidden 40%.

Fynché as THE GHOST

- **Description:** Piercing and unblinking eyes, a menacing smile, flesh on hands and arms are burnt, bones visible through his dead flesh, chest is bare and skeletal beneath his robes.
- **Traits:** Exists only to protect the crown. Nothing else matters.

STR — CON — SIZ — INT 75 DEX 75
APP — POW 75 EDU — SAN — HP —
Damage Bonus: 0 Build: — Move: 8 MP: 15

Special Powers:

Ghost Attack: For all attacks, the ghost appears to claw at or otherwise strike its target. However, rather than rolling Fighting, the ghost rolls POW versus its target in combat. If the ghost wins, it reduces its opponents POW by 2D10. Physical attacks (i.e. weapons) have no effect upon the ghost, passing straight through it.

A successful Intelligence roll upon engaging the ghost in combat enables the investigator to understand they must engage the ghost in psychic combat, rolling their POW versus the ghost's POW. If the opponent wins, the ghost loses 2D10 POW. At 0 POW, the ghost fades away into nothing.

Attacks per round: 1

Sanity Loss: 0/1D6 to see the ghost.

PRIESTS OF ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S, Servants of the Lord

Use following for all priests.

STR 50 CON 60 SIZ 60 DEX 55 INT 70
APP 55 POW 70 EDU 65 SAN 70 HP 12
Damage Bonus: 0 Build: 0 Move: 6 MP: 14

Combat

Brawl 35% (17/7), damage 1D3, or by weapon
Dodge 40% (20/8)

Skills

Listen 45%, Spot Hidden 45%, Throw 45%.

Dunwich City Guard, servants of the people

Use following for all guards.

STR 80 CON 75 SIZ 65 DEX 60 INT 55
APP 45 POW 50 EDU 50 SAN 50 HP 14
Damage Bonus: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 7 MP: 10

Combat

Brawl 35% (17/7), damage 1D3+DB
Baton 35% (17/7), damage 1D6+DB
Knife 35% (17/7), damage 1D4+2+DB
Dodge 40% (20/8)

Skills

Listen 45%, Spot Hidden 45%.



A MESSAGE OF ART

1892, PARIS, FRANCE

INTRODUCTION

In creating humanity the elder things, intentionally or not, left fundamental flaws in their design. For one, human minds are too fragile to comprehend the cosmic horror of existence that lies out in the darkness of space. However, from the human mind comes a set of talents that many Mythos races apparently fail to possess (or have in lesser value): the arts, creativity, and imagination.

Scholars of the Mythos might well ponder on these questions. Have the mi-go indulged in poetry to describe their flight through space? Have the dark young of Shub-Niggurath ever sculpted the beauty of a flower? From what humanity knows of these races, the evidence would certainly seem to suggest that the answer to each question is a resounding, no.

The few instances of the arts seen demonstrated by Mythos entities are often linked with either humanity or madness in some fashion. The deep ones craft jewelry from gold, but they are a hybrid race that draws upon humanity to expand. The servitors of the Outer Gods play crazed music from their flutes in order to placate Azathoth, the insane, idiot god.

Why is this? The Ancient Greeks were the closest to understanding. They believed the source of creativity was the Muses. These beings granted artists a form of divine inspiration that ultimately allowed them to create their art, whether it take the form of sculpture, painting, music, poetry, and so on. Therein lays the truth: creativity is an alien force. As alien as the rest of the Mythos, that uses humanity as a conduit by which to enter our reality. Its motives might be as incomprehensible as a color out of space, but how it interacts with the human race can be explained.

Creativity and inspiration can be contagious. A piece of art can plant the seed of inspiration in a viewer, ultimately leading to the creation of another piece of art that goes on to have a similar effect. In this way, it is similar to a virus, spreading from one mind to the next.

For this scenario, the source of art and creativity is something alien, from beyond, that can be reached through the flaws in the human mind. The idea of art as a disease-like entity was an appealing concept for this collection of scenarios. Inspiration and ideas can't be shot down with bullets, or blown apart with dynamite. Furthermore, the idea of humans discovering that part of them was something alien evoked an atmosphere much in the style of one of the author's favorite science fiction work—*Quatermass and the Pit* by Nigel Kneale.

KEEPER CONSIDERATIONS

A Message of Art typically runs over one or two sessions, with the natural breakpoint being the transition between Act One and Act Two.

It is also very much a social, sandbox environment game. A large part of the action within is the interaction between the investigators and the non-player characters (NPCs), as opposed to traditional investigative scenarios. As such, it is best to make sure that this style of play suits your group before proceeding.

Keepers wishing to run the scenario over one session are encouraged to have the discovery of Antonin Pinot's body in Act One occur sooner rather than later, heralding the close of the party and the beginning of Act Two.

BACKGROUND FOR THE KEEPER

Paris, France, 1892. It was a period of peace across Europe. Scientific discoveries and technological advancements were being made while newly emerging artistic fashions clamored for attention. In Paris, the arts flourished. Many works regarded as masterpieces today were being crafted in this time.

Joséphin Péladan, a well-known art critic and founder of the newly established Salon de la Rose + Croix, has established the Mystic Order of the Rose + Croix (a cult-like movement) in Paris, following his departure from the existing Martinist Order in the city (the “Cabalistic Order of the Rosicrucian”). While Péladan remained a Martinist, he was also fascinated with Medieval Rosicrucian secret societies, and it was from such societies that he drew his inspiration for his Mystic Order. He named himself High Priest, or Sâr, of the Mystic Order.

PRE-GENERATED INVESTIGATORS

A Message of Art is a scenario designed for six pre-generated investigators (in the accompanying PDF pack for this book). If the Keeper is running a *Cthulhu by Gaslight* campaign, the scenario can be integrated with a little work using the player’s existing investigators.

To lead into the scenario, the investigators could attend one of the exhibitions that run throughout the preceding month and then obtain an invitation to the party, from Péladan. The Salon was advertised widely enough for visitors to the city to have been made aware of it (see **Background for the Keeper**). While it is not obligatory, it would certainly help to facilitate the action in Act One if the investigators also had some additional motive for attending the party and interacting with the NPCs. Drawing from the motives of the pre-generated investigators, goals could be any of the following:

- Obtain Pinot’s painting, “The Man and the Bull.”
- Try to repair the relationship between Buisson and Deneriaz.
- Uncover evidence of disharmony between the artists for a newspaper story.
- Gain entry into the Mystic Order to obtain access to Péladan’s occult library.

Péladan promoted esoteric-themed art, hoping that it might eventually overcome what he saw as “European materialism” exemplified by the influential artists of the Académie des Beaux-Arts that supported Impressionism. The Salon de la Rose + Croix was to be the vehicle by which Péladan hoped to fulfill his goal. It was common for Péladan to condemn the major contemporary figures of the Parisian art scene while praising lesser known artists, who featured myths, legends, dreams, and allegory in their works. These themes would characterize the art that the Salon would exhibit, produced by some of the most prominent Symbolist artists (painters, writers, and composers) in Paris.

Pierre La Rush, an aspiring sculptor, found his love of Realism made it difficult to be accepted into the Salon de la Rose + Croix, even though he saw the Salon as a way he and many other new talents could gain recognition. He eventually found a compromise, setting out to create depictions of beasts from classical mythology in the most realistic manner he could. The concept met with Péladan’s approval and La Rush was accepted into the Salon.

La Rush quickly formed an artistic partnership with Antonin Pinot, a skilled modernist painter in the Salon. Pinot also drew his inspiration from classical mythology, although he had previously devoted his efforts to producing stunning scenes from the Bible. Where Pinot would craft a two-dimensional piece on a subject, La Rush would expand this into the third dimension with sculpture. The partnership pleased Péladan. During these meetings, the concept of the Beatific Vision was discussed. La Rush was inspired.

In Christian theology, the Beatific Vision was the purest and most direct form of communication with God and the believer. The Martinists, like Péladan, sought what they termed as “reintegration” or “illumination” with the divine, and the Beatific Vision would be a significant milestone in this process. If La Rush could create a piece that could inspire the Beatific Vision, his name would go down in history. His enthusiasm for pursuing this idea earned La Rush provisional membership in the Mystic Order and access to Péladan’s collection of occult texts.

La Rush explored Péladan’s occult library and discovered a book on theurgy of the early Martinists. *Évocations du Dieu intérieur* (“Evocations of the Inner God”) outlined the rituals whereby which one could attempt to make contact with the Inner God, the manifestation of God’s omnipotent ability to be “present” within every human being. La Rush believed that by heightening his connection to God, he would increase his chance of being able to create a work of art that would inspire Beatific Visions. The book hints that the rite, when last performed successfully, was the catalyst for the Renaissance.

Isolating himself in his woodland cabin near Thoiry, some 22 miles (35 km) from Versailles, he performed the evocation and channeled the force that he found into a sculpture of his creation. Whereas Michelangelo had his David, La Rush would have his Bathsheba, the wife of David. The effect was astonishing. Bathsheba came to life before his eyes.

Made of marble, the statue was animate and able to communicate with him as though it was a real human being. In his eyes, La Rush had created the perfect representation of life, down to the last detail, and the touch of divinity had brought it to life. She was walking proof of the existence of God, and would go on to inspire the world. She even told him as much, although he failed to grasp the true meaning of her statement.

Believing that such a revelation had to be handled with the utmost care, La Rush decided that he should first introduce Bathsheba to the world as his wife, allow the artistic community to get to know her before the truth could be revealed. Bathsheba accepted this.

Our story begins on the night that the first Salon de la Rose + Croix comes to a close, Sunday 10th April, 1892. Members of the Parisian art community are coming together to celebrate this achievement. Bathsheba will be present at the party to plant the seeds of inspiration amongst them and facilitate a new artistic renaissance. It will be the beginning of a new age, born in blood and madness.

SEEDS OF INSPIRATION

Bathsheba, and any **Muse from Beyond** (page 75) that has broken through into our world as animate artwork, can plant seeds of inspiration in the minds of those they speak to. These seeds could potentially germinate and then go on to create another manifestation. To avoid being inspired, an investigator must fail an **Intelligence** roll. If the seed is planted, the investigator has a number of hours equal to their POW before they must create a piece of art that fulfills their creative inspiration (thus creating another manifestation), or fall ill, and eventually die.

Halfway through their allotted time, the investigator suffers headaches and nosebleeds. After three-quarters of their time has passed, the investigator suffers a penalty die on all actions due to the growing pain in their mind (except for creating a piece of art, which will relieve this pain). Furthermore, they experience visions of the Muses from Beyond floating in the shadows, eager to break into the light. This in turn provokes **Sanity** rolls and attacks from the creatures — should the investigator stray into the dark.

When time runs out, the investigator's mind is "opened to see beyond" and he or she becomes a conduit for the things there to bleed into our world. A number of entities break through, equal one-fifth of the investigator's POW, and remain in our world for 1D10 minutes before dissipating into nothingness. The physical result of this is the investigator's brain exploding out of their head, killing them instantly.

To successfully allow the seed to germinate, and be able to survive the process, the investigator needs to express their creativity in such a way to satisfy their inspiration. The investigator needs to roll an Extreme success for their **Art/Craft** skill. Each roll represents 1D6 hours of intense work. Each time they fail to achieve an Extreme success the investigator is left with a dissatisfaction for their work so far and a definite feeling that they must start afresh on a new piece.

Once the seed finally germinates, with a successful Extreme Art/Craft roll, the piece of art the investigator has created is brought to life. It is now another manifestation that can infect others. These manifestations exist primarily to proliferate, spreading their corruptive inspiration and generating more of their kind.

MANIFESTATIONS OF INSPIRATION

Once a Muse from Beyond has inhabited a vessel, it becomes a Manifestation of Inspiration. The first example of a Manifestation in this scenario is Bathsheba. Each Manifestation remains composed of the material from which it was created (i.e. a marble statue is still made of marble, a wooden carving is still wood). It is driven to inspire others, planting Seeds of Inspiration that might eventually allow more of its kind to enter the world. While they can appear human or normal on the surface, representing the depiction of what they were created to be, this is only a veneer. Just below the surface dwells a cold, alien intelligence that looks upon humanity as little more than a breeding ground to exploit and discard, as it requires.

Upon taking form in our world, the Manifestation is disoriented for a while. It recognizes its creator and obeys their commands, but needs time to acclimatize. It asks probing questions ("What will you call me?" "What do you wish me to do?"), before it finally becomes autonomous. After it has established a basic rapport with its creator, it seeks to see more of the world so that it can inspire others and thereby reproduce.

FICTION SHROUDED IN TRUTH

It should be noted that many of the details in this scenario are factual. Joséphin Péladan was a real person who founded the Mystic Order of the Rose + Croix. The Salon de la Rose + Croix did exhibit symbolist art as described. Six of these salons ran between 1892 and 1897, the first of which was held at Durand-Ruel Gallery, 11 Rue le Peletier. The artists detailed in the story are fictional, as are their works. Likewise, the location of Péladan's residence does not conform to reality.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

The following section outlines the background and role for each of the major non-player characters and monsters portrayed in this scenario. Statistics for each can be found in the **Characters** section at the of the scenario (page 73).

The Keeper should become familiar with the relationships between the NPCs and the pre-generated player investigators, as their interaction is important.

Key relationships to note are those between Buisson and Deneriaz, as well as Lavagne and Prideaux. A **Relationship Map** is provided (page 49), which shows connections between the various characters.

Joséphin Péladan (Host), male, age 34

The driving force behind the Salon de la Rose + Croix, Péladan is late to the party at his residence. He has stayed behind with select members of the Mystic Order to perform a **Divination Spell** (page 50) to confirm whether the Salon will be a major influence upon the future of European art.

When events at the party begin spiraling out of his control, he becomes increasingly nervous. To the investigators he presents himself as an all-knowing mystic, and is indeed a well-versed occultist that has some Mythos knowledge, although he doesn't necessarily believe it to be truth. He's worried that his experiment might not be working and that the Salon, while having had a temporary effect, is possibly not making the long-term impact he wants.

Péladan cannot be infected by Bathsheba because his mind is so distracted by the prospect of the Salon's failure and the panic of losing control later in the evening.

Over the course of the following days, the investigators could call upon Péladan to shed some light onto the events



Joséphin Péladan

unfolding around them. His limited Cthulhu Mythos skill can provide some insight into the concept of higher dimensions, should they describe a Muse to him. He doesn't know much more beyond the fact that these higher realms supposedly exist and that they are populated by strange and horrific denizens.

- **Description:** thick hair, moustache and long beard, dressed in fine clothes.
- **Traits:** confident mystagogue.

Roleplaying hooks:

- Wants the investigators to assist him in foretelling the future of his salons.
- Wishes to harness everyone's talents in support of his salons.

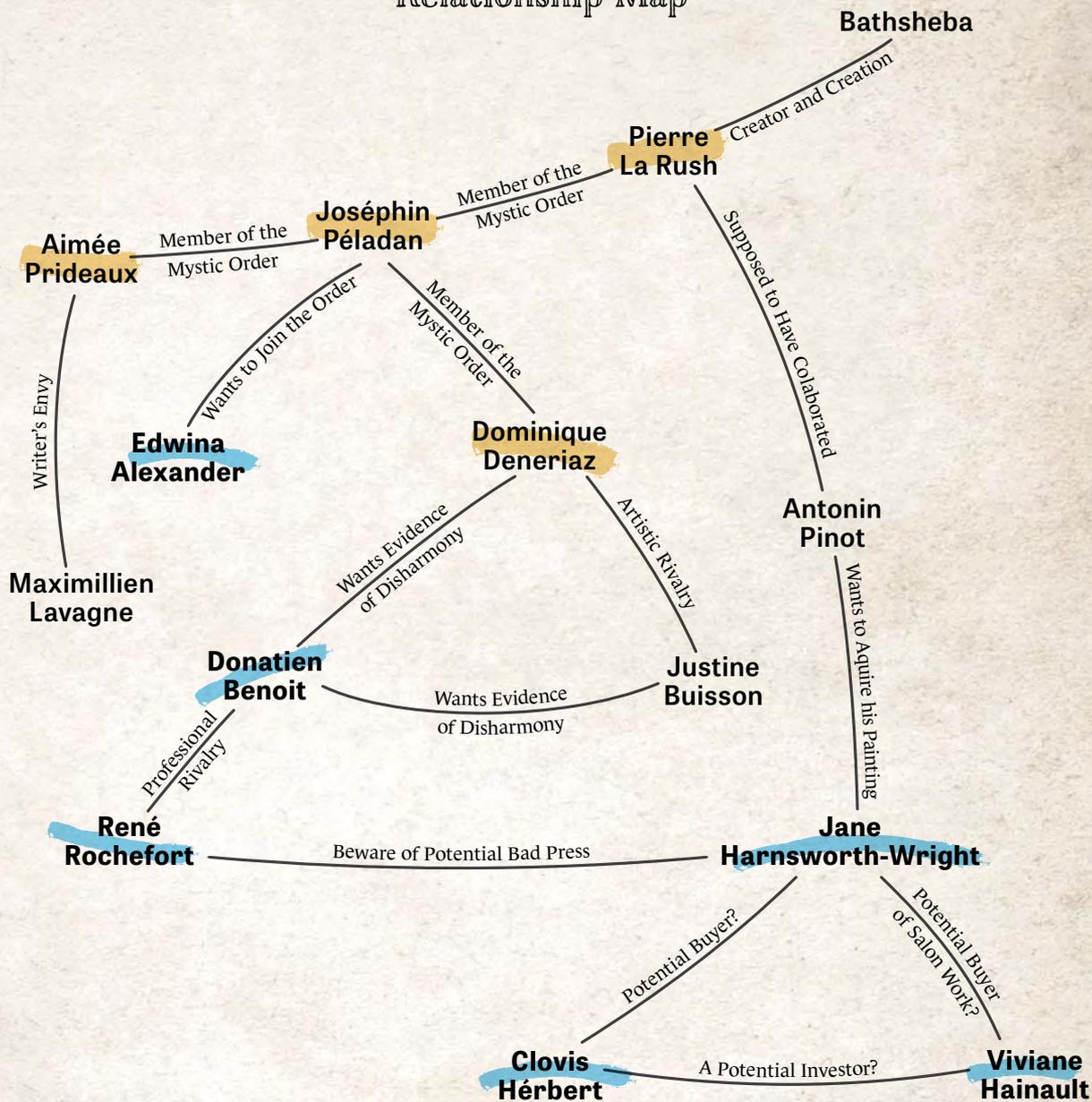
Antonin Pinot (Painter), male, age 45

An early modernist, Pinot is an accomplished painter previously known for his works depicting major scenes from the *Bible*. More recently, he has turned his work towards classical mythology, which earned him a place in the Salon.

In collaboration with La Rush, he has produced a piece called "The Man and the Bull" that depicts the minotaur stalking through the labyrinth under Minos. The painting at first appears to be a large black canvas, but when viewed up close,

A Message of Art

Relationship Map



key

Player Character Member of the Mystic Order of the Rose + Croix

NEW SPELL: DIVINATION

The central component to the spell is a bowl of water placed in an elevated position. Immediately around the bowl, incense burners are placed burning mild opiates. The receptacle is positioned in the center of a circle, twenty feet in diameter, marked with salt or chalk, and inlaid with a pentagram. The caster and four assistants stand at the points of the pentagram and chant prayers to Yog-Sothoth, beseeching the deity for a glimpse of their futures. The caster and each of the four assistants then offer a drop of their blood into the bowl, spending 1D6 magic points and 1 Sanity point each.

Upon successfully casting the spell, all who look into the bowl and breathe in the burning opiates can make a **POW** roll. Failure means that nothing has happened for the viewer, but costs an additional 1D4 magic points. Success means that the viewer sees an image from their near future reflected upon the gleaming surface of the water, and costs an additional 1D6 magic points. Any shocking images they might see could prompt further Sanity loss.

The bowl retains its power for 1D4 hours. During this time anyone, not just those who helped in the casting of the rite, can use it to discern a moment of their future. Viewers may attempt to see multiple glimpses of the future, making the POW roll in each instance, and paying the same costs detailed above for each success and failure.

A Note to Keepers: predicting the future in scenarios is troublesome, as events in play can often dramatically alter the course of an adventure. As such, choose with great care what visions investigators receive with this spell, potentially making them ambiguous and fuzzy enough to fit an array of potential circumstances later in play.

the combination of fine brush strokes, layered oils, and subtle changes of pigment reveal the detail of the minotaur emerging from the darkness of a stone-lined corridor. La Rush was commissioned to make an accompanying sculpture; a marble minotaur that would have stood in front of the picture. The shadow the sculpture cast was to overlay exactly with that of the beast in the painting; however, the sculpture was unfinished and the painting has successfully stood as a solo piece for the Salon, and is still at the gallery as the party unfolds.

Two nights ago (Friday 8th April), Pinot was visited by La Rush and Bathsheba to apologize for the lack of the sculpture.



Antonin Pinot

Pinot was not particularly upset, given that his work was still able to achieve success without La Rush's sculpture, and graciously accepted the apology. Indeed, "The Man and the Bull" has been one of the most popular works in the entire Salon. Relieved, the three of them spent an hour discussing the success of the Salon, which La Rush had failed to attend due to meeting his wife. They spun the lie that Bathsheba had been visiting Paris and that the two had become married after a whirlwind romance.

During the evening, Bathsheba saw a chance to inspire Pinot. A seed was planted in Pinot and, after La Rush and Bathsheba left, he began work at once to paint a phoenix rising from the flames.

Being a perfectionist, Pinot has not managed to produce a supreme work of art and so has not created a suitable vessel for the Muses when they break through. At the outset of the adventure, his time is almost up and Pinot is suffering tremendous headaches. He is destined to die at the party.

- **Description:** trimmed beard and moustache, dressed in a smart, expensive suit, first signs of wrinkles on his face.
- **Traits:** an almost regal dignity.

Roleplaying hooks:

- Very self-determined, he fights against what he believes is just simple fatigue.
- Easy-going, friendly demeanor.

A MESSAGE OF ART

Pierre La Rush (Sculptor), male, age 42

Pierre La Rush is an aspiring sculptor and has long stood in the shadow of his contemporaries, despite his desperation to make his mark on the world. Until this point, he has had some small success, but the admiration of the public and the appreciation of critics have always fallen to others. Technically, he is a capable artist, but his failing is that he holds onto Realism, separating him immediately from his peers who are riding the growing wave of Modernism towards success. The critics see that he is potentially a man of great vision, but one that has tragically enslaved himself to backward and outdated art styles.

La Rush has always believed that he is capable of creating a masterpiece. With each passing failure, his faith was eroded, until he was driven to step outside of his comfort zone and seek new sources of inspiration. In his search, he made contact with Joséphin Péladan. He is a fairly timid man, despite his great accomplishment.

- **Description:** unkempt goatee beard, dressed in a plain suit with an untidy bow tie.
- **Traits:** scruffy eccentric.

Roleplaying hooks:

- To show off his wife to society, starting with Péladan.
- To intrigue the investigators with hints about his great works of art (Bathsheba).

Bathsheba (Manifestation of Inspiration)

Bathsheba appears to be a beautiful woman of Arabic descent, in her early 30s, with flowing black hair. Slender and graceful, she glides across the room. She wears what appears to be a large diamond ring on one hand that is in actuality part of her construction, made of polished quartz. Her accent is hard to place, and a successful Anthropology roll yields inconclusive information, only serving to narrow her origin to somewhere in the southern Mediterranean region.

Dressed in a flowing ball gown and long opera gloves, it is immediately obvious to observers that she very much outclasses La Rush. Her marble skin has been expertly covered with paint and make-up to give her the semblance of normality, and with La Rush's excellent skills, she appears completely human.

Bathsheba talks softly and, as with all Manifestations of Inspiration, she is seeking to plant Seeds in as many people as possible.

- **Description:** stunningly attractive, with flowing black hair, and dark eyes.
- **Traits:** charming.

Roleplaying hooks:

- To sow Seeds of Inspiration wherever she can.

Pierre La Rush



Bathsheba



Justine Buisson (Choreographer), female, age 38

Justine rose to fame as a ballet dancer. After many years on stage she has moved on to choreograph ballet productions across France. Her shows have been adored widely by the public and critics alike.

At Péladan's request, Buisson has worked with Deneriaz (see following) on a series of performances throughout the Salon. The two artists are independent figures that do not believe their art needs to be supported by the efforts the other. However, the combination of their work has been truly stunning.

Buisson creates dances that compliment the music which accompanies them, but ultimately tell a story in their own right. She aspires to create a work of such magnitude and tell it through the medium of dance rather than music.

- **Description:** slender build, hair done up, wearing a high-neck dress, discrete ribbons in her hair.
- **Traits:** conservative demeanor.

Roleplaying hooks:

- An independent woman, confident of her ability, and looking forward to the future.
- Actively wants to avoid Deneriaz in both presence and conversation.



Justine Buisson

Dominique Deneriaz (Musician), female, age 35

Dominique was a musical prodigy and has been a known figure in the artistic community of Paris for many years. Born into old money that cultivated her talent from a young age, she has never wanted for anything. She had achieved success long before joining the Salon, which she joined primarily because it was something new and interesting; something that could potentially be a challenge for her. The experience has definitely proved to be challenging, but not in the way she desired. Since joining the Salon, her talent has earned her a place in the Mystic Order of the Rose + Croix.

As outlined above, she was partnered with Buisson at Péladan's request. Deneriaz's unique talent is that she crafts pieces of music that are tailored to the acoustics of the buildings in which they are performed. Characterized by an almost scientific precision, her work is spectacular on an emotional and fundamental level.

Deneriaz resents being partnered with Buisson because, like her partner, she believes her work does not need to be supported by the work of another.

- **Description:** short, otherwise average build and appearance, wearing an expensive, conservative dress.
- **Traits:** rude arrogance.

Roleplaying hooks:

- Arrogant confidence in her musical talent, which she wants to display to the world.
- Actively snubs Buisson whenever the opportunity is presented.



Dominique Deneriaz

A MESSAGE OF ART

Maximilien Lavagne (Writer), male, age 46

Lavagne is known to the Parisian art community as a writer of gothic short stories. While he would liken himself to a French Edgar Allen Poe, his work has not received the same publicity or acclaim, and is certainly not of the same quality. He is often desperate for money, and this is once again the case at the time of the party.

Lavagne convinced Péladan to allow him to read his works at the Salon, as his style and subjects were often in keeping with the themes Péladan sought to promote. His profile has been raised over the last month, but ultimately overshadowed by a greater talent at the Salon: Prideaux. Lavagne is jealous, believing a large factor in this to be that Prideaux is a member of the Mystic Order, whereas Lavagne is not.

Lavagne believes that Prideaux stands between him and the chance to achieve success. As such, he plans to frame Prideaux for a crime that he hopes will ruin her reputation and have her ejected from both the Salon and the Mystic Order. He has bribed one of the maids (Paméla Guillon) to help him break into Péladan's occult library during the party. He then plants one of the books in Prideaux's possession and alerts the Sûreté (police). Prideaux will be found in possession of the book, arrested, and Lavagne will have his revenge.

- **Description:** full beard and moustache, short hair, thick eyebrows, rugged face.
- **Traits:** easy to anger.



Maximilien Lavagne

Roleplaying hooks:

- Bitter that his work has not been acclaimed to the degree he believes it should be.
- Resentful of the success of others.

Aimée Prideaux (Poet), female, age 31

Gifted from a young age, Prideaux is the daughter of a historian at the University of Paris. Prideaux draws her inspiration from medieval romances, such as *Morte d'Arthur*, and her work is of exceptional quality. Péladan offered her a place in the Mystic Order, and she accepted graciously.

Supported by Péladan's contacts and influence as an art critic, her career has begun to truly blossom. She performed several readings at the Salon that were well received. She is completely unaware of the affect this has had upon Lavagne. She views the short story writer as a potential friend, even though he is distant in his dealings with her. They both share the same passion for writing, so she fails to comprehend why he should bear her any ill feeling.

- **Description:** beautiful, long curly hair, slightly crooked teeth, wearing a colourful dress that is almost casual.
- **Traits:** friendly but distant.

Roleplaying hooks:

- Dreamy and unobservant, often wrapped up in her own thoughts and fantasies.
- Charming, although perhaps a little naïve.



Aimée Prideaux

Handout: Message 1

A Message of Art: Setting the Scene

Sunday 10th April 1892. Paris, France. The Belle Époque, a period of peace across Europe in which scientific discoveries and technological advancements are being made amidst emerging artistic fashions. In Paris, the arts are flourishing.

The Salon de la Rose + Croix, is a new art and music salon, which has been hosted by Joséphin Péladan. Running from 10th March to 10th April 1892, with the center of the exhibition being the Durand-Ruel Gallery at 11 Rue le Peletier, in the 9th arrondissement of Paris. Several galleries and opera houses can be found in the district. It is the beating heart of the artistic community in the city.

The Salon de la Rose + Croix emerged from the Mystic Order of the Rose + Croix, which was also of Péladan's creation. The Mystic Order is a religious, almost cult-like, movement created in Paris after Péladan left a Martinist order. The majority of the Salon's artists are comprised of Symbolist painters, writers, and composers that are coming to prominence at this time.

Péladan himself is a well-known art critic who celebrates the works of artists who focus on the themes of myths, dreams, and allegory. The core of Péladan's doctrine is that art should be of an esoteric flavor. He hopes that this new wave of art might eventually overcome what he sees as "European materialism" exemplified by the influential artists of the Académie des Beaux-Arts that continue to support Impressionism. The Salon de la Rose + Croix is the vehicle by which he hopes to make this dream a reality.

ACT ONE: THE PARTY

OVERVIEW

The investigators gather in a nearby absinthe house where they meet Pinot and discover he is ill. It is expected that they move to the party at Péladan's residence, where they are introduced to the assembled artists.

Péladan is late to the gathering as he is performing a divination rite at the gallery. Bathsheba attempts to plant Seeds of Inspiration in as many artists and investigators as she can. Lavagne attempts to frame Prideaux for the theft of books from Péladan's occult library.

Pinot is discovered dead in the lavatory after his head explodes as a result of the Muses from Beyond breaking through. The Sûreté (police) arrive, question all those present, wherein Lavagne attempts to have Prideaux arrested, and the party comes to a close.

SCENE I: THE ABSINTHE HOUSE

Before starting, present the players with **Handout: Message 1**, which provides contextual information and sets the scene.

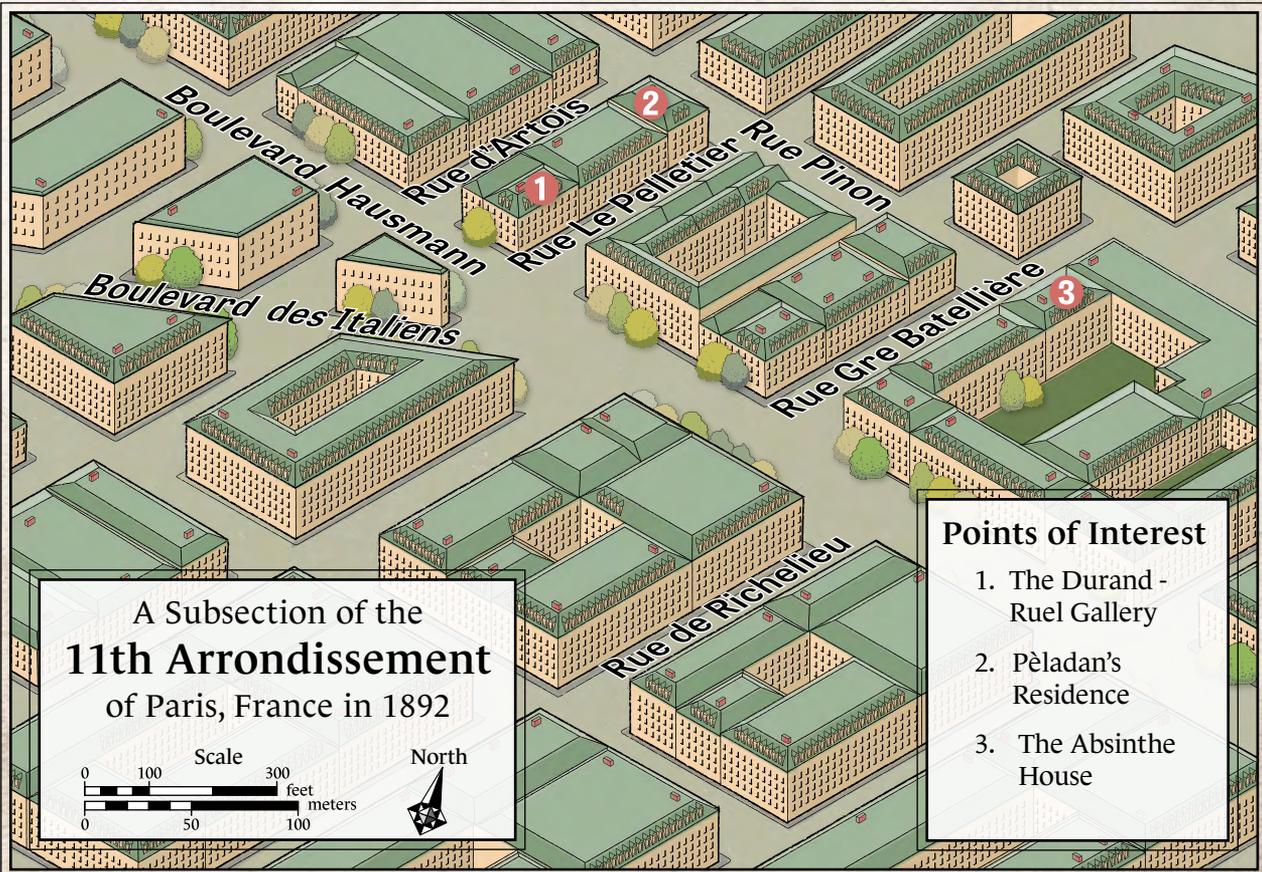
The curtain rises in an absinthe house on the corner of Rue George Batellière and Rue Pinon, a short way from both the Durand-Ruel Gallery and Péladan's residence where the party takes place. The party is scheduled to begin at 8 p.m., and guests that have arrived early have congregated at the absinthe house. At 7 p.m., the investigators are gathered in the absinthe house. The Keeper should begin by allowing the players to describe how their investigator is dressed and what they are doing in the absinthe house, as this will help to facilitate initial interactions.

Minor Salon artists come and go in the background (none of the named NPCs), until Pinot staggers through the front door and makes his way over to his friend Clovis Hérbert (a pre-generated investigator) and imposes upon him for a drink. His eyes are bloodshot, he is pale, and has sweat on his brow. He explains that he has a terrible headache and

A MESSAGE OF ART



Absinthe House



that he fears he might not be able to stay for the duration of Péladan's party, but he attends for a short while as it is expected of him. After a few drinks, his condition begins to improve slightly.

If engaged in conversation, Pinot mentions that La Rush was supposed to have been working on a minotaur sculpture to accompany his painting, "The Man and the Bull," but La Rush never completed it due to meeting his new wife in a whirlwind romance. He further explains that La Rush and the beautiful Bathsheba came to visit him two nights ago (Friday night) after the gallery closed, apologizing for his inability to complete the sculpture. This didn't bother Pinot much, as it allowed his work to stand as a solo piece (and take all the praise).

In closing, he comments that something Bathsheba said has inspired him to create his next piece. He has been hard at work on a painting of a phoenix rising from the ashes. It might be the fact he has been working too hard, pushing himself for the last couple of days, which had led to his current malady.

If any of those investigators looking for signs of friction in the Salon (*i.e.* Benoit, Hainault, and Rochefort) try to get any information from Pinot, he is reluctant to confirm any details, but after a successful social skill roll (*e.g.* **Charm, Persuade, Fast Talk**) he comments that they are asking the wrong person. If they want to know more, he says, they should ask of those who are more "musically inclined" than himself.

At 8 p.m., carriages roll by the front of the absinthe house, heading toward Péladan's residence. The other guests at the absinthe house begin to depart, giving the investigators their cue to head for the party.

SCENE 2: PÉLADAN'S RESIDENCE

ARRIVAL AND GREETING

The Rue Pinon is a narrow street running parallel to Boulevard Haussmann, one of the major roads through the 9th arrondissement. The entrance to Péladan's residence is through a large set of carved wooden doors set within an ornate porch. The building itself is four stories tall, with two small balconies looking out onto the street below.

As the investigators approach, a black horse-drawn carriage comes to a halt outside the front door. A few seconds later, La Rush and Bathsheba emerge. The Keeper should emphasize her stunning beauty and how all

eyes are drawn to her. She wears a large diamond ring on her finger, which an Extreme **Appraise** roll can confirm is more likely quartz than diamond.

At this point, Benoit (a pre-generated investigator) gets a feeling of *déjà vu*, as if he has met Bathsheba somewhere before. Ask Benoit's player for an **Intelligence** roll: if an Extreme Success, Benoit remembers her face from Pinot's painting "5,000," which is still on display at the gallery (see page 64), something he reviewed some months ago. A failure indicates that her face is somehow familiar, but cannot be placed. If Pinot is asked about the painting, he says he created the image himself, trying to capture the image of the most beautiful woman he could imagine. It is a remarkable coincidence that the two look alike, and he hadn't thought of it until the investigator brought it up.

The butler on the door, Fabian Coffier, takes invitations as the NPCs and investigators enter. He informs each, that the host, Monsieur Péladan will be joining them shortly. The guests are free to make themselves at home on the ground floor, in the large lobby, the lounge, or the library. The rear of the house, the servants' quarters, and kitchens are out of bounds, as are the sleeping quarters and private rooms on the floors above.

As Edwina Alexander (a pre-generated investigator) enters, Coffier also mentions quietly to her that Péladan has said to inform her that he is busy conducting a rite at the gallery. If any other investigators wish to overhear this, it requires a successful **Listen** roll. If Péladan has not returned to the house by 10 p.m., she is invited to attend him at the gallery. Other guests may attend at her discretion.

NPC MOVEMENTS

There are thirty guests in attendance at the party, comprised of numerous artists, musicians, fellow patrons of the arts, and notable guests of the Salon, as well as six maids in formal dress who carry a selection of wines on silver trays. To name all of them would flood the investigators with unnecessary information, but the Keeper may wish to create a few minor personalities.

The Keeper should keep in mind the NPC roleplaying hooks and react in whatever way makes for the most interesting story and social dynamic, calling for social interaction rolls (**Fast Talk, Charm, Intimidate or Persuade**) if judged appropriate.

Antonin Pinot

Upon entering the lobby, Pinot happily greets La Rush and Bathsheba. He explains that he is already hard at work on his next creation, thanks to Bathsheba, who smiles warmly



Rue Pinon

in return. Within a few moments, Pinot begins to feel unwell and clutches his head. Summoning up a smile, he says he will retire to the library. Here he remains for much of the night, though is happy to speak to anyone with all the charm he can muster. He has no idea why Péladan is late.

Aimée Prideaux

Prideaux spends most of her time in the downstairs library, which contains an impressive selection of reference texts, contemporary and classical fiction, but nothing of an esoteric nature (those texts are found upstairs in the occult library). She is happy to discuss the Salon, although she doesn't believe that there is any friction between the artists. A **Psychology** roll confirms that she is telling the truth as she knows it. To further emphasize this lack of observation, she states that she hopes Pinot and La Rush don't fall-out after the sculptor failed to present his work at the Salon. Evidently she didn't hear the greeting between the two in the lobby earlier.

If quizzed about where Péladan might be, she says she heard him say that he was going to stay a while at the gallery with some of the members of the Mystic Order, expressing his concern that he wanted to make sure that the Salon was

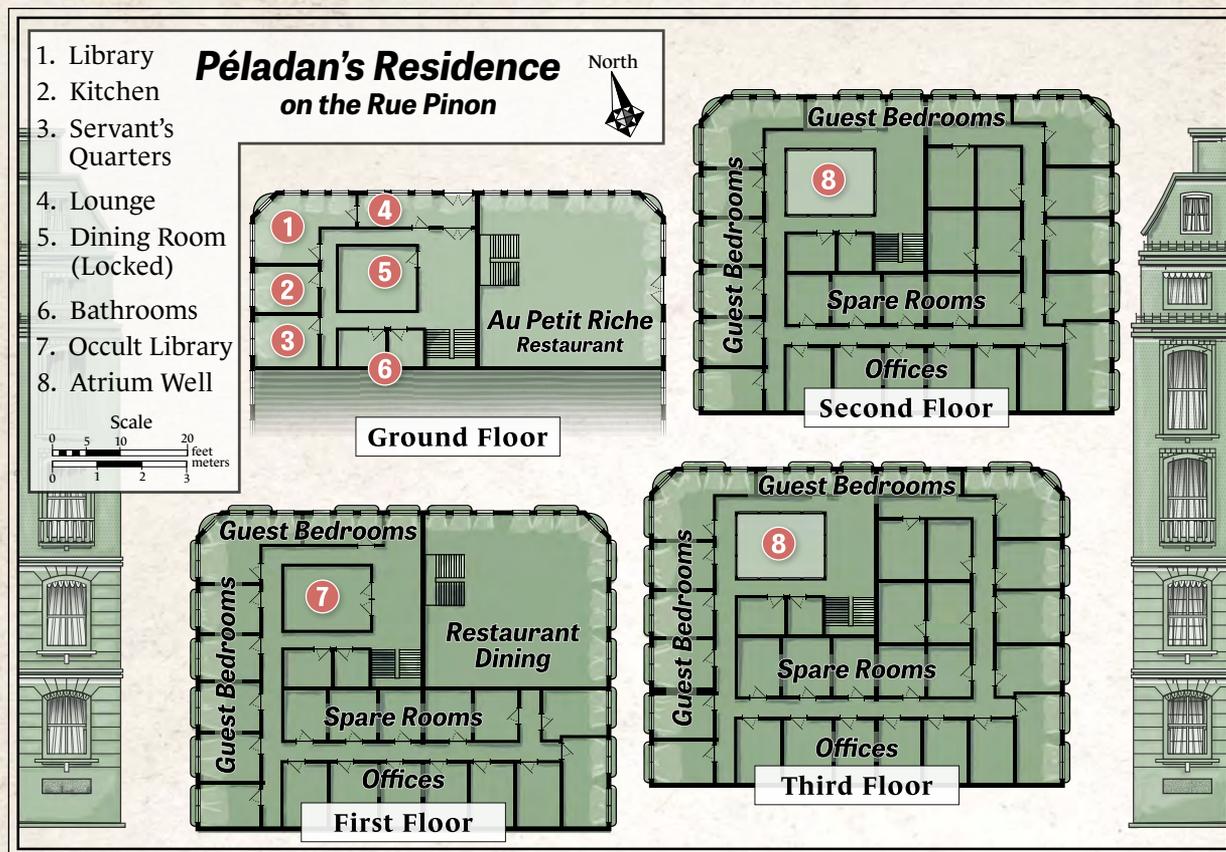
a success. She can only repeat what Péladan said, and she can only guess at the true meaning of the statement. However, she does know that Péladan performs rites from time to time as part of the Mystic Order's practices. Finally, as a member of the Mystic Order, she could confirm which other guests present are also members (Péladan, herself, Deneriaz, and most recently, La Rush).

If she spies something that takes her interest, or when a Seed of Inspiration is planted by Bathsheba, she retreats to a seat and write down her thoughts in a notebook.

Justine Buisson

Buisson divides her time between the lobby and the library after Deneriaz takes a seat by the piano in the lounge. She is amicable, willing to discuss any subject the investigators care to raise, although she does not want to discuss her collaboration with Deneriaz. If pressed on the issue, she states she has found the experience interesting and somewhat enlightening, but she much prefers to work as a solo artist.

Overall, she is polite in her responses, and diplomatic to a point, but does not mask the fact that she and Deneriaz do not get on. Buisson knows nothing of why Péladan is late to the party.



Dominique Deneriaz

Unlike Buisson, Deneriaz is more blatant in her dislike for her artistic partner. She takes a seat by the piano in the lounge and makes it quite clear from the start that Buisson is not welcome in the same room with a series of pointed looks. She rudely ignores any comments that mention Buisson, either by sharply changing the subject, or interrupting a statement to confirm her own superiority over that of the choreographer.

Maximilien Lavagne

Lavagne waits in the lobby for the first part of the night, mostly keeping to himself. As the investigators arrive, he is winding up his pocket-watch and setting it in time with the grandfather clock opposite the base of the staircase. As he finishes, he notices Paméla Guillon, the maid he has bribed, coming out from the kitchens with a tray of drinks. A **Hard Spot Hidden** roll reveals the two of them nod slightly to each other before Lavagne moves to the lounge where he has the occasional drink. The Keeper should take note of the sequence of events in **Framing Prideaux** (page 63).

He is willing to talk, promoting his own work, but his mood turns a little sour at the mention of the Mystic Order,

or more specifically, Prideaux. He can confirm which artists present are members of the Order (Péladan, Prideaux, Deneriaz, and most recently, La Rush).

If probed for information, he may mention the quarrel between Buisson and Deneriaz, and also takes the opportunity to smear Prideaux. After he has set her up, he advises the investigators to keep an eye on her, and that he has it under good authority from one of Péladan's staff that she is planning to steal some books from Péladan's occult library upstairs.

Pierre La Rush and Bathsheba

La Rush is attending the party to return Péladan's copy of *Évocations du Dieu intérieur* and to apologize for his inability to complete the minotaur sculpture for the Salon. He plans to reveal Bathsheba's nature to Péladan at the party ahead of the rest of the world, because Péladan would appreciate the greatness of his achievement on a much deeper, esoteric level, as well as to repair the relationship between them after failing the Salon.

Upon entering the lobby for the first time, the Keeper should ask for **Luck** rolls from the investigators. Failure indicates those who Bathsheba visits in conversation throughout the evening (see **Seeds of Inspiration**, page 47). If the investigators

who passed the Luck roll choose to seek out Bathsheba for conversation, then they run the risk of having a Seed of Inspiration planted in them as well.

La Rush (with the exception of going to return *Évocations du Dieu intérieur* to the occult library, see following), follows Bathsheba and takes a subservient role in conversations. While his wife talks, he is happy to partake of the drinks the maids offer, and gradually becomes intoxicated and more talkative. If any of the investigators show an interest in his work, he invites them to visit his house in Thoiry over the following days.

Bathsheba confirms that she and La Rush met recently and married after a whirlwind romance. Otherwise, she is evasive on details about herself. If pressed to give answers, she may later contradict herself when talking to others.

After Pinot has been found dead, La Rush and Bathsheba are the first to leave.

Bathsheba makes a point of talking to each of the named NPCs and investigators who failed their Luck roll. Following a conversation in which she seeks to learn their hopes and dreams, she leans in close to whisper an inspiring phrase. Those watching from afar can, with a successful **Psychology** roll, realize that her words have a profound effect on those who hear them. Speaking to each NPC afterward confirms that they are gripped by a new drive of inspiration.

Anyone that hears an inspiring phrase spoken to someone else (i.e. by making a Hard **Listen** roll to deliberately overhear) must also fail an Intelligence roll to avoid being inspired. If they have already had a Seed of Inspiration planted in them, they cannot have a second one planted, so do not need to roll.

The following details what is said by Bathsheba to each investigator and NPC to inspire them:

Justine Buisson: “You don’t need words to tell a story. Some stories, some concepts can’t be expressed by words.”

Buisson is inspired to create a dance routine that conveys emotions through dance.

Dominique Deneriaz: “Music is much like a language, don’t you think? They say that all language has a common root, a language from which all others sprung... I wonder if there is a universal melody from which all music originally came.”

Deneriaz is prompted by Bathsheba to look for this universal melody, a series of sounds on which all other sounds are built.

Maximillien Lavagne: “As you aspire to be like others, may others aspire to be like you. If you immortalize the greats in your work, so you will be immortalized by those who seek to follow you.”

Lavagne sets about trying to portray the Romanticists and Gothic storytellers, making them art in their own right.





The Lounge

Aimée Prideaux: “The renaissance drew inspiration from the Bible. Why settle for one figure when your cycle could be centered around twelve?”

Bathsheba suggests that she crafts twelve sonnets to represent each of the Apostles.

Edwina Alexander (pre-gen PC): “Humanity, like a house, was built from the bottom up. The answers that you seek lie at the bottom of our world.”

The following night, Edwina is gripped by dreams of flying through cold, freezing air, between mountains that stretch up impossibly high that they might pierce the very sky itself. Rounding one mountain, she sees a vast city stretching forth before her in the frozen wastes. Edwina is seeing a vision of the City the Elder Things. She must draw what she sees in her dreams to allow the Seed of Inspiration to germinate and save herself.

Jane Harnsworth-Wright (pre-gen PC): “No-one has a monopoly on painting a bull, nor can one man alone paint in oils. He has opened the door, will you not step through and create your own work in his style?”

The following night, Jane finds it difficult to sleep. As she lays in bed she visualizes everything standing out in the

darkness as it does in Pinot’s painting. She is inspired to draw what she sees, using different shades and cross-hatching to achieve a similar effect, depicting the world around her in total darkness on paper.

Clovis Hébert (pre-gen PC): “Not only should your work be as life-like as possible, but it should be about life. Capture the moment when life begins, and display it to the world in all its glory.”

The image of childbirth haunts Clovis’ dreams that night. He sees the image of a mother holding a newborn in her arms and is inspired to create this image on canvas.

René Rochefort (pre-gen PC): “The best writers write about what they know. What is to stop you from writing fiction based on the facts that you have reported on? What about the here and now?”

That night, René keeps seeing images from the party play out again and again in his dreams. He is compelled to write them down in prose, making a story out of the events surrounding the Salon and the party.

Donatien Benoit (pre-gen PC): “You reprimand those who you see as creating inferior art. What do you consider the

truest, most pure form of art? Enlighten those who look up to you and you may find yourself enlightened all the more.”

That night, Donatien's dreams are filled with images of the art he has reviewed for the Salon, focusing on the definition of perfect art. In the morning, Donatien can have another Intelligence roll to realize where he has seen Bathsheba before, only this time requiring a normal degree of success. Donatien is thus inspired to write an article in which he discusses what he believes to be the purest form of art, and tries to convince the reader that he is right.

Viviane Hainault (pre-gen PC): “We've seen evidence tonight that even potentially volatile situations can be defused. Pinot forgave my husband for not being able to finish his minotaur... Maybe you could finish it for him? That would repair a division with more than just words.”

That night, Viviane's dreams are haunted by images of the minotaur chasing her through the dark labyrinth. They are disturbing dreams, but inspiring in the vivid detail in which she sees the beast is depicted. Viviane is thus inspired to create a sculpture of the minotaur.

LA RUSH AND PÉLADAN'S OCCULT LIBRARY

Shortly after all the investigators have arrived and moved into the lobby, a successful **Spot Hidden** roll reveals that as Coffier, the butler, is giving the same speech to other arriving guests, La Rush takes his leave of Bathsheba, tapping something solid and rectangular in his pocket, and heads up the staircase from the lobby.

La Rush heads up to the next floor where he uses the key given to him (like all members of the Mystic Order) to enter Péladan's occult library. Here, he leaves the copy of *Évocations du Dieu intérieur* and then returns to the party downstairs.

The occult library is otherwise locked at all times. It is a square room in the heart of the building, with no windows. Lit by gas lamps and lined on all sides with a vast array of books; many of considerable age and value. Ladders run to a short balcony that runs around the entire room to give access to the higher shelves. There are a number of leather armchairs and reading desks, complete with their own lamps, dotted around the room. There is only one entrance to the library.

On the far side of the room, opposite the double doors, stands a glass cabinet. It is locked, but on the shelves within, a number of exceptionally old volumes can be seen. An **Appraise**, **Occult** or **Cthulhu Mythos** roll confirms these are the most valuable books in the collection. Most of the tomes are occult texts (e.g. *The Key of Solomon*, *Malleus Maleficarum*, *The Zohar*, etc.) but there are also Mythos tomes present (copies of *Illuminatos Cosmiques*, *De Vermis Mysteriis*

and *Pnakotic Manuscripts*). Only Péladan has the key to unlock the glass cabinet. *Évocations du Dieu intérieur* would normally be returned to this cabinet, but as La Rush does not have a key, he simply leaves it on the table closest to the cabinet so that it is in full view.

GETTING UPSTAIRS

Should the investigators wish to move upstairs, the main obstacle they face is Coffier the butler. To climb the stairs without him noticing requires a Hard **Stealth** check. Although, while he is introducing new guests to the party (which occurs as frequently as the Keeper desires), just a Regular success is required to avoid detection. Likewise, the same roll is required to return to the lobby without being detected. Failure indicates that they have been spotted by Coffier, or another guest if appropriate.

If Coffier spots any investigator trying to ascend the stairs, he politely calls to them, reminding them that the upper floors are off-limits to party guests. If they ignore him, he warns them one more time that this is at the express insistence of the host, and if they fail to comply, Coffier calls for the Sûreté (police). This is not a hollow threat. Coffier dispatches one of the maids to fetch two gendarmes. They arrive 2D6 minutes later. At this point, if the investigator fails to comply and return downstairs, they are arrested for trespassing.

Those arrested may find themselves being questioned about the death of Pinot and/or the book theft (if arrested later in the evening once the death and/or theft is revealed). Ultimately, Péladan has more to worry about later in the evening, so does not press any charges and the investigator(s) is released the following morning.

If an investigator should end up in this position, he or she should be placed in the same cellblock at the local police station as Prideaux is later taken to. Here, they may witness what happens to her.

If Coffier spots any investigator descending the stairs, he is definitely not be happy with them, but reminds them that the lavatory is located directly under the staircase and that the upper floors are off-limits, as are the offices and bedrooms of the host (should they use a classic excuse to explain why they were wandering upstairs). He turns his attention away with a disapproving look, but otherwise keep his eye on them every time they reenter the lobby. A second infringement of the request to remain downstairs results in him asking them firmly to leave, as they have overstayed their host's welcome.

OTHER ROOMS UPSTAIRS

The other rooms in the upper three floors are largely unimportant in the scenario. The staircase zigzags its way back and forth up



Évocations du Dieu intérieur

(English translation: *Evocations of the Inner God*)

A slim, leather bound book, 200 pages in length, unmarked on the spine or the front cover. A small print run of 300 copies, dated from 1799, there is no author accredited to the book, although on the title page it states "Taken from the works of Jacques de Livron Joachim de la Tour de la Casa Martinez de Pasqually by one of the Reaux-Croix". The Martinist Seal is printed below the title.

The book claims to be derived from notes that were cut from the final publication of Martinez de Pasqually's *Treatise on the Reintegration of Beings*. It outlines the belief of the Reaux-Croix concerning the spiritual realms and that the gateway to God is from within, rather than from without, through the concept of the Inner God. By focusing one's will to gaze deep within one's self, with the aid of Theurgy rituals described in the book, the ritualist can achieve the Beatific Vision.

One of the rituals has been bookmarked and details the process by which the ritualist can channel the power of the Inner God from within themselves into an external vessel. The book claims that such practice was common amongst the enlightened artists of the Renaissance, imbuing their works with divine power that went on to inspire others, and this was the spark that ignited the artistic revolution.

The ritual involves many hours of chanting and the precise creation of the vessel that shall contain the power of the Inner God. This takes place inside a prepared ritual space, adorned with images and patterns of sacred geometry. The chanting and willpower involved in the creation of the vessel awaken the Inner God, and the sacred geometry draws out and focuses that power into the vessel.

Notes on the Text:

Martinism is an esoteric branch of Christianity named after its originator, Martinez de Pasqually. Its philosophy concerns itself with the fall of the first man, his divine source, and the hope of finding a means by which to achieve "reintegration" or "illumination"—a reunification with the divine from which man first came.

Martinez de Pasqually (1727-1774) was a notable figure in the French occult scene of the 18th Century. He founded the *Ordre des Chevalier Maçons Élus Cohen de L'Univers* (Order of Knight-Masons Elect Priests of the Universe—Elus Cohens for short) in 1765. He had been an active Freemason since the age of 28. The order had three degrees of initiation, beginning with conventional Freemasonry, but culminating in magical practices that followed Pasqually's own doctrine. The highest degree was known as the Reaux-Croix. They studied Theurgy in order to attempt to make contact with spiritual realms beyond the physical world.

Theurgy is the practice of rituals, usually considered magical in nature, that are designed to invoke spirits or gods. The intent of such practices is to achieve "henosis" (unity) with the divine and therefore allowing the caster to perfect themselves.

Pasqually's *Treatise on the Reintegration of Beings* publicized his philosophy to the wider world. The aim of the group was to attain the Beatific Vision through their Theurgical experiments and rituals. After Pasqually's death, the Elus Cohens continued to operate until divisions between several temples occurred in the early half of the 19th Century. The order completely collapsed shortly after.

The **Beatific Vision**, in Christian theology, is the name given to the direct communication of God to mankind. This usually occurs when the individual achieves a form of redemption, sharing in the communion of saints, obtaining salvation in its purest form.

The concept of the **Inner God** (also referred to as the divine presence, or presence of God) relates to the omnipotent quality of God. God is believed to be present in all things, and therefore is directly present *within* humanity itself. Most beliefs hold that gods can interact with the world through this presence, and thus mankind can find a direct channel to God within itself. However, this interaction is normally subtle, with God influencing individuals in small ways to make His will made manifest.

from the lobby. At each floor, a corridor off the landing forms a rectangle encompassing the whole floor. The inner-facing rooms are mainly offices, studios, and storerooms, and are all locked. The outer-facing rooms with windows onto the street are the various guest bedrooms, sitting rooms, and other function rooms. These are open, but there is little of interest within.

FRAMING PRIDEAUX

Later in the evening, a **Spot Hidden** roll for any investigator in line of sight of the grandfather clock notices the maid (Guillon, Lavagne's accomplice) also synchronizing a watch with the grandfather clock. If confronted, she is nervous but otherwise acts normally. She states that she was checking her watch because she was not sure if she'd wound it up earlier as it has a habit of running slow. If the investigators mention the nod with Lavagne, she admits that it took place. If pressed, she also admits to knowing Lavagne. The look was exchanged as it would be inappropriate for a maid to greet a guest when she is supposed to be providing a service for a formal occasion.

A successful **Psychology** roll reveals that she is definitely holding something back. If the investigators continue to press the issue (using **Charm, Persuade, or Intimidate**), then she asks that they retreat to somewhere quieter, such as the corridor nearer the rear of the property. Here, she explains that Lavagne paid her a large amount (approximately 250 Francs, close to \$50, which equates roughly to a month's rent on a house), to stumble and drop a tray full of drinks when she enters the lounge at 9.30 p.m. Lavagne wanted her to fall with as many drinks as possible and, do so, over whoever is sat at the piano.

Guillon honestly does not know why Lavagne has paid her to do this, but suspects that it is because Lavagne does not like Deneriaz, who has been at the piano most of the evening. Maybe it is a practical joke, maybe something to spite a fellow artist. Guillon has an otherwise unblemished record of service with Péladan and hopes this one slip will not jeopardize her employment. She begs the investigators not to inform on her.

If the investigators threaten her or offer to pay Guillon an amount equal to Lavagne (250 Francs), she does not go ahead with the stunt. She retires to the servants quarters and feigns illness, and does not reappear; thus avoiding a confrontation with Lavagne.

The fall and the dropping of the tray, if it goes ahead at the appointed time of 9.30 p.m. creates a distraction that takes Coffier away from the lobby, along with all the maids as they go to help Guillon and attend to Deneriaz who is covered in wine. During this time, Lavagne breaks into the occult library upstairs.

If any investigator chooses to take immediate advantage of the distraction to head upstairs, call for a **Spot Hidden** roll. If they succeed, they see the double doors to the occult

library broken open. Likewise, if any investigator is already present upstairs, a **Listen** roll can discern the sound of the door being kicked in.

If the investigators confront Lavagne, he begins by trying to bribe them with books from the library. He has little cash of his own left after paying Guillon. If he's caught red-handed, unless the investigators decide to give in to greed, his attempt to frame Prideaux collapses at this point. What the investigators do with Lavagne is down to them.

If Lavagne manages to break in unobserved, he returns downstairs a short while later and slips the copy of *Évocations du Dieu intérieur* (chosen because it was in full view on the table near the glass cabinet) into Prideaux's coat. He then returns to his smear campaign against her. This act can be observed with a Hard **Spot Hidden** roll (unless the investigator has made a **Stealth** roll to follow Lavagne, and so no **Spot Hidden** roll is required). An investigator observing Lavagne may subsequently remove the book from Prideaux's coat with a **Sleight of Hand** roll. Upon examining the book, pass **Handout: Message 2** to the appropriate player. A full reading of *Évocations du Dieu intérieur* takes six hours, and the book contains the spell **Channeling God** (below).

NEW SPELL: CHANNELING GOD

- **Cost:** 10 magic points, 5 POW, 1D6 Sanity points.
- **Casting time:** 3D6 hours.

First, the ritualist needs to create the ritual space. Then, the ritualist begins to work upon creating a vessel for the power they are calling upon. The vessel can take any form: a painting, a piece of writing, a musical composition, a sculpture, etc.

It takes 3D6 hours of chanting whilst working upon the creation of the vessel, at the climax of which, the caster spends the 10 magic points, 5 POW, 1D6 Sanity points, and then makes a relevant **Art/Craft** roll, aiming to achieve an Extreme success. Any other degree of success or failure means the vessel is not of a quality good enough for the rite. Follow the rules for the initial casting of a spell in the *Call of Cthulhu: Keeper Rulebook*. Attempts to repeat the ritual require the creation a new piece of art and associated costs.

If successful, the vessel is entered by a Muse from Beyond and thus transforms into a **Manifestation of Inspiration**, see page 47 for further information.

LEAVING PÉLADAN'S RESIDENCE

At 10 p.m., Péladan has still not arrived at the party. He remains at the gallery, casting his Divination spell. Coffier prompts Edwina Alexander (pre-gen investigator) that she is welcome to join Péladan at the gallery. He further invites the other investigators to accompany her, as he fears that the host might be overexerting himself again and their presence may help to remind him that he is neglecting many of his guests this evening.

As the investigators leave, Pinot develops a heavy nosebleed, which he does not appear to notice until it is pointed out to him. He then makes his excuses and heads to the lavatory located under the stairs in the lobby, holding a bloodied handkerchief under his nose.

If the investigators decide to leave earlier, this is not detrimental to the course of the scenario. Instead, let events play out at the gallery and have Péladan return to the party with the investigators. This means that Péladan is in attendance when events happen (such as when Guillon spills her tray of drinks, etc.)

SCENE 3: THE DURAND-RUEL GALLERY

PÉLADAN'S RITUAL

The Durand-Ruel Gallery at 11 Rue le Peletier is only a few minutes walk from Péladan's residence. Blue-and-white posters of the Salon de la Rose + Croix hang either side of the main entrance. The door is locked, but knocking attracts one of the members of the Mystic Order inside who opens the door to greet them. The man in a plain black suit identifies himself as one of Péladan's assistants, Jermaine Rivette, and invites them inside.

The large entrance foyer is still decorated with images from the Salon's promotional campaign. He shows them through to the main hall of the gallery where Péladan and the other three members of the Mystic Order who assisted in the Divination ritual are present. The hall is a long, narrow room with a high ceiling. The lights on the walls illuminate the lower part of the room, and the upper reaches are shrouded in darkness. The three other members of the Mystic Order are gently taking down paintings from the walls and packing them into wooden crates to go into storage.

"The Man and the Bull" is in the process of being packed and, if asked, the members of the Mystic Order can confirm it is due to be taken to Pinot's apartment in central Paris the following morning. A Hard **Persuade** roll could arrange for them to

deliver it elsewhere if an investigator wished to convince them that they have already purchased the work of art. Producing Pinot's card (which can be obtained from Pinot, who says he would like to discuss it tomorrow when he is feeling better, if an investigator asks about buying the painting), as supporting evidence reduces this to a Regular difficulty level.

In a room off the foyer, Péladan is stood, looking down into the font positioned in the middle of (a now disturbed) circle of salt. He is searching the reflections in the water for any further insight into the future, and has nearly exhausted his pool of magic points. He looks drawn and very tired.

Péladan apologizes for his absence at the party, stating that he was hoping to determine if the Salon had been a success and in doing so gestures towards the font. He states that the future remains uncertain, but that he foresees more than one salon shall follow in what they have accomplished over the course of the last month. "I should have expected as much. Rome was not built in a day. It appears the shackles of convention shall not be cast aside for just one attempt."

If persuaded, Péladan may agree to guide an investigator over to the font to breathe in the fumes from the incense burners in an attempt to see what the future holds. The Keeper should consider events that have taken place at the party, the Seeds of Inspiration spread by Bathsheba, or Pinot's death. Those who have had a Seed of Inspiration planted in them by Bathsheba, should see themselves frantically trying to create a piece of art. Blood drips from their ears, the corners of their bloodshot eyes, and runs from their nose. These visions require a **Sanity** roll (1/1D6 loss).

Péladan is curious to hear what is seen, but does not necessarily comprehend that they are a literal visions, believing them to be metaphors. An astute investigator might suggest that they use Péladan's occult library to research the significance of the vision. Péladan would think this is a splendid idea.

If Benoit (pre-gen investigator) partakes in the effects of the ritual and has not yet realized that Bathsheba was in Pinot's painting "5,000," he see himself walking through the gallery, looking up at the painting, his eyes going wide as the image of Bathsheba is recognized. An **Intelligence** roll identifies the painting from the blurry look of it in the vision, and Benoit recalls that it still hangs in this gallery. The painting shows the image of Christ handing a loaf of bread to a kneeling woman with Bathsheba's face. This is a **Sanity** roll (0/1D3 loss) as the investigator realizes he has just fulfilled a vision of his own future. Note that if Benoit has already made the connection to the painting, then he receives visions with the same criteria as the others.

At this point, Péladan leads the investigators back to the townhouse, leaving the other members of the Mystic Order to continue wrapping-up affairs at the gallery.

SCENE 4: THE END OF THE EVENING

PÉLADAN'S ARRIVAL

The timing of the following events depends on the choices made by the investigators up to this point. Not all the investigators may go to the gallery. Péladan's arrival (either on his own, or with any investigators he brings back from the gallery) should occur at the same time as, or just before, Pinot is discovered in the lavatory.

As Péladan enters the lobby, he is announced by Coffier and a number of guests come out of the lounge and the library to applaud his arrival. He begins by thanking everyone that has come to attend the celebration and states that the Salon was a huge success, and that there will be more to come in the following years. He promptly begins talking to each of the guests, unless the suggestion was made to him that they should investigate the meaning of the visions in the occult library, in which case he heads upstairs. For dramatic timing, they should discover the doors to the library broken open (if Lavagne has not been stopped) at the same time as Pinot is found in the lavatory.

Before Péladan leaves the lobby, La Rush and Bathsheba speak to him. **Listen** rolls can be made to overhear the conversation. La Rush introduces his wife and apologizes for his failure to provide the sculpture of the minotaur to the Salon. Péladan while at first evidently angry with La Rush, is won over by Bathsheba's beauty and forgives him. La Rush also adds that he has returned the book to the occult library and, having performed what it had to offer, he has achieved a great success. Péladan is interested to know what this is and La Rush encourages him to visit their house in Thoiry two days from now (Tuesday 12th April). He says nothing more till then.

PINOT'S DEATH

Pinot has not left the lavatory since he went in at 10 p.m. A successful **Listen** roll may detect a muffled splashing sound coming from within, and then the sound of something splattering against the other side of the door. Getting closer, the coppery smell of blood wafts from underneath the door.

The investigators can choose to break down the door (just requiring a successful **STR** roll), or attract the attention of Coffier to unlock it. Inside, they find Pinot slumped over the toilet bowl. The back of his head has exploded, fragments of bone are embedded in the ceiling and the back of the door,



Pinot is dead

which is also covered by blood and brain matter. The inside of his head has been hollowed out by the explosion. This prompts a **Sanity** roll (1/1D6 loss). Anyone with **Medicine** or **First Aid** may deduce that there is no sign of an entrance wound. It is as if Pinot's brain exploded out of his head.

If the investigators acted quickly after hearing the sound of Pinot's head exploding, the Keeper can call for a **Luck** roll. Success indicates that the investigators have broken in to see the last of the **Muses from Beyond** (page 75). The investigator that enters the lavatory sees something moving in the shadow behind the body. Should they look further, they catch sight of the Muse as a diamond-shaped light that shifts and turns as it hovers in the shadows for a second before it disappears. This prompts a **Sanity** roll (1/1D8 loss).

Unless the investigators take immediate action to stop people looking inside, a maid passes by the open door, sees the body, drops her tray of drinks and screams. This brings everyone at the party to the corridor. Gasps and astonished looks fly around those gathered. Speculative words like "murder" and "suicide" can be heard as Coffier instructs one of the maids to summon the Sûreté at once.

Until the Sûreté arrive a few minutes later, Péladan attempts to calm his guests down. A **Psychology** or **Hard Spot Hidden** roll for anyone looking through the faces in the crowd can discern that everyone apart from Bathsheba has been shaken by Pinot's death. Bathsheba simply looks on with an emotionless, detached air. If they ask her about this later, she simply states, "Death is an inevitable fact of life. It is a tragedy that a talented man has died, and it is a tragedy that so much art dies unborn with him. Just because I do not always display emotion does not mean I do not feel it. I will mourn him in my own way." A successful **Psychology** check after this interaction leaves the investigator confused, unsure if there was any truth in the statement at all.

THE SÛRETÉ (POLICE)

A few minutes later, two members of the Sûreté arrive and survey the scene. Detectives are immediately summoned. All the guests at the party are asked to gather in the library and await questioning in the lounge. One of the Sûreté is stationed by the door into the corridor from the library to watch the guests.

Each guest is then called through in turn, and when they have finished giving their statement, they are directed to wait in the lobby. Péladan is called through first, followed by the investigators. The detectives ask about the events of the evening leading up to the discovery of the body. The Keeper should ask each investigator for a summary of everything they are telling the detectives that deviates from the facts of the evening (*i.e.* what they are holding back, anything that they are actively lying about, etc.)

If the investigators implicate anyone (e.g. Lavagne), the Keeper should feel free to dictate the Sûreté's response and

consider any alterations that will need to be made for the events of the following days. For example, if the investigators mention Guillon's actions over the course of the evening (the look between her and Lavagne, the synchronizing of the watches between the two of them, the falling tray evidently used to cover the sound of the break-in upstairs, and so on), the detectives call Guillon in for questioning. She promptly caves into any pressure from the law, and informs them of her deal with Lavagne. This leads to Lavagne being taken away for further questioning at the police station, his plan to frame Prideaux having completely backfired.

A doctor arrives to conduct an examination of the body. The doctor comments that he hasn't seen anything like this before. There is no entrance wound, and no sign of a weapon, so he rules out suicide. If it was murder, it was ingenious, and by no weapon he has seen before. His initial guess is that it was the result of natural causes, although more tests have to be conducted back at the morgue.

After the investigators have been questioned, Lavagne is the first of the guests to be interviewed by the detectives. After he enters the lobby, one of the detectives exits the lounge and goes to the closet down the corridor towards the servants' quarters, where the guests' coats have been stored. Should Lavagne's plans have gone ahead, the detective returns with the book Lavagne planted there (*Évocations du Dieu intérieur*). If the book has been taken by the investigators, then Lavagne subsequently emerges from the lounge looking confused and annoyed. Should the detective have found the book, a **Listen** roll allows the investigators to overhear Prideaux subsequently being called to the lounge. Minutes later, one of the detectives leads Prideaux into the lobby and hands the book over to Péladan, explaining that the book was found in the poet's coat. Accusations of theft and betrayal quickly flow from the host, and Prideaux is arrested. She is then taken to the local police station. In the confusion and his rage, Péladan puts the book down in the lobby where any of the investigators can pick it up with a successful **Sleight of Hand** or **Stealth** roll.

The detectives eventually announce that it only remains for the staff to be questioned and while Péladan is required to remain, the guests may depart. La Rush and Bathsheba are the first to do so, followed quickly by Lavagne. The evening thus draws to a close.

INTO THE NIGHT

Wrap-up the events of the evening by asking each player in turn what they wish to do following the party. If any of the investigators wish to read *Évocations du Dieu intérieur* in its entirety, should they have obtained it, they can have finished by the time the sun comes up, leaving them with a penalty die

POTENTIAL POINT OF CONCLUSION / DIVERGENCE

The Keeper should be aware that there is a potential point of conclusion to the scenario at the end of the party. The investigators might choose to confront Bathsheba following her reaction to Pinot's death. This could have disastrous consequences. Ideally, though, Keepers should have Bathsheba withdraw quickly before such a confrontation takes place at this point in the scenario. However, use the following if required.

Up to this point, the only point of physical contact with Bathsheba will have been restricted to her gloved hands. Any intentional physical contact with her exposed "skin" runs the risk of disturbing the paint and make-up. Successful physical contact should be followed by a **Luck** roll. A success means the make-up is disturbed enough to reveal the marble surface below.

While she will attempt to flee at this point, if the investigators attempt to stop her, she flies into a furious rage and begins to attack in an effort to silence them. La Rush in his drunken state will attempt to showcase the magnificence of his creation to the world at this point, although the crowd of guests will be running wildly around him, trying to escape. He states that he has created the perfect artwork, the embodiment of the Beatific Vision, and that she is the Inner God brought to life. "Michelangelo had his David, so I shall have my Bathsheba!" he declares. A successful **Know** roll for those interested, confirms that Bathsheba was the wife of King David in the Old Testament.

This fight could well result in the death of the investigators as they are probably completely ineffectual against the marble statue with only their bare hands. If they are ingenious enough to find a way to destroy her, this does not stop the Seeds of Inspiration she has planted.

The investigators could potentially interrogate La Rush to find out exactly what he did, and use Péladan's occult library—requiring a **Library Use** roll to find the right tome and a **Language (French)** roll comprehend what has been done to them as they read of the entities from the higher dimensions in the French translation of *Illuminatos Cosmiques* (Sanity roll, with 2D6 loss, and the gain of +4% Cthulhu Mythos for an Initial Reading).

The rest of the scenario could play out with the investigators trying to avert their fate and that of the other artists, but some Keepers might feel that after this confrontation, the climax of the adventure has been achieved and thus seek to wrap things up with a montage of what occurs over the following days.

Illuminatos Cosmiques

- Published in Italian as *Illuminatos Cosmica* in 1698, by Fedele Sepulcri; later, published in France as *Illuminatos Cosmiques*.
- Translator uncredited in this French edition.
- Sanity Loss: 2D6
- Cthulhu Mythos: initial reading; +4% / full study +6%
- Mythos Rating: 33
- Study: 42 weeks
- Suggested Spells: Invoke Invisible Servant (Summon/Bind Star Vampire), Prinn's Crux Ansata, Command Ghost, Voorish Sign.

Translated from the original Italian, this large, leather-bound tome is divided into numerous chapters on esoteric subjects ranging from magical rites to supernatural creatures of the Middle East. Running throughout the text is a discussion of the Arab world, drawn from the author's experience. Rather than having to navigate the complete text, Péladan can direct the investigators to one of the chapters on demons. Here, the text describes various forms of demonic powers. An example of a demonic incursion from "cosmic realms" is documented and bears a lot of resemblance to the symptoms displayed by the NPCs. It states that these entities can enter our world through the minds of man. They create a doorway that grows like a seed in the mind, causing erratic behavior and madness until it finally germinates, bursting open the head from within, allowing the entity through. How to reverse the process and stop these entities that wish to enter our world is unknown, according to the text.

on all physical actions if they fail a CON roll. This remains in place until they have had a few hours sleep. Having read the book completely, the investigator may learn and attempt to cast the spell contained therein (see **Handout: Message 2**).

Those wishing to fully read the French translation of *Illuminatos Cosmiques* (or any of the Mythos tomes) will be hard pressed in getting Péladan to agree to the request. Péladan is loath to loan out such a precious and valuable book; what's more, getting his agreement is very difficult due to the events of the evening—Péladan's time is monopolized by the detectives, and he doesn't really have the time nor the inclination to listen to the investigator's waffle. As such, very persistent investigators may attempt an Extreme **Persuade** roll to convince Péladan to lend them the tome.

If any of the investigators choose to act on the inspiration they may have been given by Bathsheba, they can attempt to create an artwork. If they roll an Extreme success for their **Art/Craft** skill, the piece of artwork becomes a **Manifestation of Inspiration** (pages 47 and 75). This generates action over the course of the following day. The Keeper should keep a note of the time as it determines when the effects of the Seeds begin to take hold of the investigators.

However, if all the investigators have managed to avoid having a Seed planted, the Keeper has a few options available. One of the NPCs that the investigators have interacted with the most during the party could come to them for help when they realize that something strange is happening. Likewise, Péladan can approach them, asking humbly for help when he notices something strange happening to the artists that have contributed greatly to the success of the Salon. In each instance, the Keeper can play to whatever the investigators wanted to achieve at the party, and give them a further chance to build upon this, as an incentive for them to lend their aid to the NPCs.

ACT TWO: THE AFTERMATH

OVERVIEW

During their sleep, following the party, investigators with Seeds of Inspiration planted in their minds experience dreams relating to what Bathsheba said to them. The NPCs that have Seeds begin to obsessively act upon their own inspiration, spiraling towards destruction. This should prompt the investigators that are experiencing the same symptoms to look for a solution before they meet the same fate, potentially leading to them confronting Bathsheba and La Rush, or trying to make their own work of art that will create a Manifestation of Inspiration.

ARTISTS' SEEDS OF INSPIRATION

To highlight the effect of Bathsheba's words, the NPCs she spoke to begin to obsessively focus on the new art they have been inspired to create. This obsessive reaction should not be forced upon the investigators as it would take away much of their freedom to investigate the events unfolding around them in Act Two. However, if they choose to focus on creating a new piece of art to satisfy their creative drive, they may well create a Manifestation of Inspiration and, in so doing, save themselves.

For the purposes of timing, each NPC can be considered to have a slightly below-average POW of between 40 and 50. This means that they have up to two days to complete a worthy piece of art or die. It also means that the NPCs begin to die before the investigators, giving them 10 hours or more to save themselves. Exactly when each NPC expires within that timeframe is at the Keeper's discretion. Meanwhile, their actions over the course of the day following the party are as follows.

Justine Buisson

Captivated by the idea of trying to create a new dance piece, she is dancing constantly. She begins in her apartment in central Paris then heads outside to dance under the spring sun, taking in the sights and sounds of the city around her to further fuel her creativity.

If the investigators talk with her, she is overwhelmed with the intensity of the emotions being evoked from the movements that she has already choreographed. She wants to dance with the investigators, but may become frustrated if they fail a **DEX** roll to successfully keep up with her.

Left uninterrupted she inadvertently spins into the road, directly into the path of a horse and carriage. She is badly wounded and taken to the nearest hospital where she remains for the next day. When she wakes, Buisson asks to see the investigator that talked with her the most at the party (or who has visited her since). She is desperate to get back on her feet and complete the dance piece. The headache becomes worse and worse until her time finally runs out.

Maximilien Lavagne

Lavagne's fate is determined by how his plan fared at the party regarding Prideaux. At best, he is a free man. At worst, he is in custody. In either case, he begins frantically writing, but after a few hours he knows that something is wrong. He is acting very much out of character, and the frantic nature of his writing is producing substandard work. He quickly leaps to the conclusion that Péladan is somehow responsible, using the rumored rites of the Mystic Order to corrupt his talent.

A MESSAGE OF ART

If Lavagne is in custody, he calls the investigators (most likely Benoit or Rochefort, given their media connections) and imparts his wild theory to them; showing them the pages of scrawled text he was driven to pen the previous evening. He begs them to petition Péladan to reverse the effect of his enchantment.

If Lavagne is a free man, he might decide to pay Péladan a visit and demand the enchantment is lifted. Ideally, this could take place when any of the investigators are present (or he may call them to accompany him as witnesses). He causes enough of a scene, to warrant the Sûreté being summoned, and he is taken into custody for assault unless the investigators intervene. If no investigators are present, they are summoned to him in jail, where he asks them to go to Péladan and petition him to lift the curse. Lavagne's time in either case runs out with him in a cell at the local police station.

Aimée Prideaux

Prideaux's fate is also determined by whether she is free or not. If she has been arrested, she spends the hours obsessively writing, using up all the paper given to her before moving on to

the flagstone floor of the cell, then the walls. It is this evidently disturbed action that prompts the Sûreté to call the investigators to shed any light on this behavior.

If Prideaux is free, she decides to stay the evening at Péladan's residence to help him with research into the meaning of the visions he saw at the gallery. However, she has become engrossed in her writing and begins to perform exactly the same behavior in the guest bedroom she has been assigned. This behavior prompts Péladan to call the investigators to help, rather than calling any authorities, which could attract negative publicity.

Persuade (or similar) rolls can get Prideaux to open up for a few seconds at a time to explain her condition, otherwise she obsessively writes without a break. If anyone tries to force her to stop, she flies into a screaming rage, clawing at them in an attempt to make them back off. If the investigators achieve an Extreme Success for the Persuade roll, she experiences a moment of calm—enough to stop and explain what is happening to her. As with Lavagne's case, this explanation is enough to lead Péladan to *Illuminatos Cosmiques* (see **Potential Point of Conclusion / Divergence**, page 67).

Prideaux's time runs out either in the cell at the police station, or in the guest bedroom at Péladan's residence.



Prideaux in her cell

Dominique Deneriaz

Following the party, Deneriaz returns home to her apartment in central Paris to work on what she calls, “the universal melody.” After several attempts, resulting in nothing more than an ear-piercing cacophony, she is driven to leave her apartment after her neighbors complain about the noise. She subsequently gathers an overnight bag, and returns to the Durand-Ruel Gallery.

Here, the gallery staff are continuing to pack the valuable and most critically received pieces of the Salon collection. Over the course of the day, the rest of the exhibit is being dismantled, but the piano that Deneriaz used is still there. She sits at the piano and works to find the universal melody.

The maddening din fills the air and the staff eventually call upon Viviane Hainault (or another investigator) in her role as patron to talk some sense into Deneriaz (they do not want to disturb Péladan again).

Deneriaz’s time runs out in gallery after she finally collapses from exhaustion. She is able to talk while she plays, but is reluctant to do so. A relevant social skill (**Charm, Intimidate, Persuade**) can get her to open up about the nature of her endeavor, at which point she launches into a passionate, stream-of-consciousness account of her theory, taken from what Bathsheba said to her at the party.

TALKING TO PÉLADAN

Péladan can be found at his residence, working in his occult library, trying to determine a hidden meaning to the visions he saw in the font the previous evening.

Obviously, if the investigators confront him about Lavagne’s accusations about being cursed, he can attribute the description of Lavagne’s condition to what he has read in *Illuminatos Cosmiques* (see **Potential Point of Conclusion/Divergence**, page 67). Péladan in turn points toward *Évocations du Dieu intérieur*, although who has possession of the book will have been determined by the events of the party. He can comment, if the book is missing, that La Rush might still have it. Péladan can thus direct the investigators to La Rush’s house in **Thoiry** (page 72).

HELPING THE NPCs

Once the investigators realize what is going on, they might want to help the artists to create a piece of art that can save them. Prideaux will be more open to help than Deneriaz or Lavagne.

Mechanically, if the investigators wish to assist an artist, they need to make a successful Extreme

Art/Craft roll to show they are contributing something of value to the artist’s piece. This grants the artist a bonus die to their roll. The investigator assisting rolls 1D6 to determine how many hours the endeavor takes, and then rolls for the artist’s Art/Craft skill after their own check to see if they are successful. Should the artist achieve an Extreme success, their artwork becomes a **Manifestation of Inspiration** (pages 47 and 75).

If this occurs, in the case of each artist, the ink flows from their notes and forms a pool on the floor. A figure then begins to emerge, made from the ink itself.

- **For Buisson:** the figure is a slender woman, dressed in a ballerina’s dress.
- **For Lavagne:** the figure appears in medieval dress (maybe even a suit of armor).
- **For Prideaux:** the figure is male dressed in a style in keeping with the traditional appearance of an apostle in Renaissance art.
- **For Deneriaz:** the figure is a beautiful woman carrying a violin.

Note: if an investigator rolls an Extreme Success for their assisting roll, it does not count towards fulfilling their own Seed, if they have one, because it is not a piece of art based on the vision they have received.

FALLOUT

The breakthroughs can be as subtle (such as in Buisson’s example, being in an otherwise empty room at the hospital when it occurs, and a nurse finding the body later), or as blatant as the Keeper wishes (again using the Buisson example, having the breakthrough occur in a packed ward, with other patients and nursing staff seeing the horror unfold before their eyes).

If the investigators don’t interact with certain NPCs, the events occur in the background but should filter back to the investigators quickly if any still have Seeds of Inspiration within them.

The long-term fallout of the deaths is beyond the scope of the scenario. The long-term angle may be of interest to a Keeper using this as part of an ongoing campaign. Given the deaths occur close together and all relate to members of the Salon, and more specifically, those who attended the party on the Sunday night, the newspapers and Sûreté take an interest, turning their attention on the investigators. This could potentially provide hooks for encounters used to lead into other scenarios.

INVESTIGATORS' SEEDS OF INSPIRATION

Over the course of the day following the party, the investigators should come to realize that their salvation rests in indulging their creative urge to form a piece of art. The pieces of art they create and the Manifestations of Inspiration they become are detailed below.

Following their creation, see **Manifestations of Inspiration** (page 47) for how they act. In each instance, the creator may summon their fellow investigators to behold the sight that they have created. If they do, then the Manifestation should wait until they arrive rather than proceeding out into the world to sow its Seeds. The degree of information each Manifestation imparts to the investigators is completely down to the Keeper.

Note that each investigator creating a Manifestation of Inspiration should make a **Sanity** roll (1/1D10 loss).

Clovis Hérbert

Clovis was inspired to paint the image of a woman holding a newborn baby in her arms. Failure of his Art/Craft rolls are represented by paintings in which the color is imperfect, or the image of the mother is not to his liking. Once he rolls an Extreme Success, the paint begins to slide from the canvas and forms a pool on the floor. From the vivid, multi-colored mass, a hand shoots into the air and slams down on the floorboards beyond the edge of the pool. A second later, another does exactly the same on the opposite side and a figure made entirely of oil paint begins to lift itself from the pool, as if it were from a hole in the floor.

Finally, it flops on the floor beside the pool, its surface drying, and features becoming recognizable as that of the mother that Clovis had just created. The surface of its body is a myriad of blended colors. It leaves patches of paint wherever it walks and upon whatever it touches during the first few hours of its existence, until its surface is dry.

These manifestations are harder to damage, being made of a viscous liquid. As such, they take only minimum damage from firearms, slicing, and blunt impact damage. They are particularly susceptible to fire and other heat sources, which add 1D10 to damage done to them. They add no damage bonus to their attacks.

Edwina Alexander and Jane Harnsworth-Wright

Edwina was inspired to draw the vision she had of the City of the Elder Things. Jane was inspired to capture a scene of a darkened room, and finally draws an image of herself

sitting in a dark room trying to draw a picture of herself drawing, forming a series of drawings within drawings that are almost entirely black, with the image formed by differences in shading.

As both of these investigators' Art/Craft rolls are focused on drawings. Failures are represented by sketches that are lacking in detail. Once either investigator rolls an Extreme success, the graphite of the pencil drawing falls from the paper, like grains of sand. More graphite than could feasibly have been used flows from the paper until a large pile has accumulated. Finally, once the paper is completely blank, the pile begins to shake and then rapidly grows, reaching upwards to a height equal to the investigator.

As it grows, its surface takes on a liquid quality, writhing and forming shapes like mouths and eyes. After a few moments, it turns and begins to take solid form, becoming a replica of the investigator that created it. They leave gray-colored dusty prints in their wake and on everything they touch.

These manifestations are fairly easy to damage given that graphite is relatively brittle. As such, they have no immunity or armor against particular forms of damage. They are particularly susceptible to blunt impact damage, which adds 1D10 to damage done to them. They add no damage bonus to their attacks.

René Rochefort and Donatien Benoit

René was inspired to create a short story based on the events of the party. Donatien was inspired to write a piece in which he outlines what he believes to be the purest form of art.

As both of these investigators' Art/Craft rolls are focused on writing. Failures are represented by discarded manuscripts and crossed out lines of text. Once either investigator rolls an Extreme Success, the ink on the page slides off and forms a pool on the floor. From there, the manner of its formation is much the same as outlined for Clovis' painting.

As the figures' surface dries and its features become recognizable, René sees his creation as being the image of Pinot (complete with the back of his head missing and empty brain cavity), and Donatien sees an image of Michelangelo's *David*. The surface all over their bodies is ink black. They both leave ink stains wherever they walk and upon whatever they touch in the first few minutes of existence, until their surfaces are dry.

As with those made of paint, these manifestations are hard to damage. They take only minimum damage from firearms, slicing and blunt impact damage. They are particularly susceptible to fire and other heat sources, which adds 1D10 to damage done to them. They add no damage bonus to their attacks.

Viviane Hainault

Viviane was inspired to create a sculpture of the minotaur. Failure of her Art/Craft rolls are represented by incomplete or abandoned pieces of sculpture in various stages of development. Allow the player to choose the material used. If they are stuck for ideas, the most commonly available material would be clay. Once she rolls an Extreme Success, the sculpture shakes as though the floor under it vibrates. Then, its head twitches and it snorts, turning its eyes towards her before becoming fully animate and lifelike, the material bending and moving unnaturally.

The material used determines how dangerous this manifestation is. However, as it will be made of a solid material in each case, firearms do minimum damage. If it is made of clay, blunt impact weapons only do half damage. Blunt impact damage from anything like a hammer or chisel causes an additional 1D10 damage to the manifestation if it is composed of any other standard material. Slashing or stabbing attacks do not penetrate the surface of stone or wood, so do no damage, but they do half damage against wet clay. Likewise, stone is immune to fire or heat, but wood and clay suffer an additional 1D10 damage. Clay has no damage bonus on its attacks, wood provides a 1D4 damage bonus, and stone provides a 1D6 damage bonus.

THOIRY

The climax of the scenario probably takes the investigators to La Rush's house in Thoiry. The common denominator for all the investigators and artists that have been affected by Seeds of Inspiration is that they have spoken to Bathsheba. From Péladan, they can establish a connection to the material in *Évocations du Dieu intérieur*, which was last borrowed by La Rush. Furthermore, the investigators may well have an invitation to visit La Rush's house if they have shown an interest in his work.

Thoiry is around 31 miles (50 km) from Paris. It is a small town, northwest of Versailles, surrounded by woodlands and lakes. La Rush's home is a large cabin in the woods at the end of a dirt track, besides a picturesque lake. The nearest train station to Thoiry is in Garancières, 4 miles (7 km) to the south. Investigators may make a short train journey from Paris and then hire a carriage to convey them by road through the countryside to La Rush's house.

As the investigators approach, call for Hard **Spot Hidden** rolls. Success reveals that the surface of the otherwise calm lake is suddenly disturbed, bulging in the center as if something large is moving up and down under the surface. La Rush has another of piece of art he created after Bathsheba, a kraken, carved from the trunk of a tree. It is partially weighted down (as the wood would



otherwise float), hidden below the waterline. He has created more pieces, having cast the ritual repeatedly, to demonstrate to the world that Bathsheba is not a fluke, and that his art mimics life to such an extent that it becomes life itself.

The door to the cabin is ajar and leads into a large lounge. Upon entering, there is a quick clattering of tiny feet as a small unicorn (another wooden carving about two feet tall, but unseen by the investigators) quickly runs away upstairs to the bedroom in the loft. The noise attracts La Rush who enters through a far door, hammer and chisel in hand, stone-dust on his apron.

La Rush greets the investigators, showing a degree of surprise if they have arrived unannounced. However, now that they are here, they can be the first witnesses to his new creation. He calls to Bathsheba, who is upstairs, informing her that they have guests. She returns the call, saying she will be down in a moment.

La Rush guides them through to the next room, his studio, which has been largely cleared. It has a long glass frontage that overlooks the lake (the stump and chips of the fallen tree from which he carved the kraken, and the unicorn can be seen a short distance away). In the middle of the studio stands his latest creation—the finished sculpture of the minotaur, made of solid marble. The sight prompts a **Sanity** roll (1/1D10 loss) as usual for Manifestations of Inspiration in their true form. It snorts, moving on the spot as it regards the investigators with curious eyes. At that moment, Bathsheba descends the staircase, also in her true form. La Rush proudly introduces her as his greatest creation, one that will change the art world forever and inspire the world to see the face of God within.

What happens from here is completely down to the players. Insane investigators might start a commotion or combat in which they try to destroy the inhuman beings. This would certainly be a way to prevent the outbreak of inspiration from spreading any further (should they succeed). However, it does not solve the issue for any investigators that have any Seeds of Inspiration still in them. In such an event, use the same statistics as Bathsheba for the minotaur, and standard statistics of **Manifestation of Inspiration** (page 75) for the kraken and the unicorn, if they are tracked down and attacked. The unicorn can be found covering in the bedroom upstairs, and the kraken can be lured to the surface by any investigator moving to the shore of the lake.

La Rush is more than willing to die to save his creations. Bathsheba certainly fights back if the investigators attack, but she will not start a fight. If the investigators have not come equipped to deal with her they may find (with a successful **Luck** roll) hammers, chisels, and other useful items in the studio.

If the investigators flee in order to later return to the house, they find La Rush and Bathsheba gone. The house is empty. It seems that Paris was not yet ready for the message of art. Somewhere else might be though, so they have gone to find a place where they can inspire the population. The search for La Rush and Bathsheba offers the possibility of a springboard into future scenarios.

CONCLUSION

Suggested Sanity awards for investigators completing this scenario are:

- Destroying all Manifestations from Beyond: +1D10 Sanity points.
- Believing any Manifestations from Beyond escaped: -1D6 Sanity points.
- Saving anyone infected with a Seed of Inspiration: +1D4 Sanity points per person saved.
- Allowing anyone infected with a Seed of Inspiration to die: -1D3 Sanity points per person that died.
- Destroying the copy of *Évocations du Dieu intérieur*: +1D4 Sanity points.

CHARACTERS

Only the relevant statistics are presented. The Keeper should feel free to modify or expand these as they wish.

JOSÉPHIN PÉLADAN, age 34, the mystic

STR 45 CON 60 SIZ 60 DEX 72 INT 95
 APP 60 POW 80 EDU 94 SAN 50 HP 12
 Damage Bonus: 0 Build: 0 Move: 8 MP: 16

Combat

Brawl 25% (12/5), damage 1D3
 Dodge 36% (18/7)

Skills

Cthulhu Mythos 20%, Credit Rating 70%, English 60%, French (own) 94%, Latin 40%, Occult 75%.

Spells: Péladan may know 1D4 spells at the Keeper's discretion in addition to Divination (page 50).

ANTONIN PINOT, age 45, doomed painter

STR 45 CON 65 SIZ 55 DEX 70 INT 85
 APP 55 POW 45 EDU 90 SAN 45 HP 12
 Damage Bonus: 0 Build: 0 Move: 7 MP: 9

Combat

Brawl 25% (12/5), damage 1D3
 Dodge 35% (17/7)

Skills

Art/Craft (Painting) 75%, Credit Rating 55%, Language (English) 40%.

NAMELESS HORRORS

PIERRE LA RUSH, *age 42, failed sculptor*

STR 65 CON 50 SIZ 65 DEX 82 INT 75
 APP 45 POW 55 EDU 75 SAN 30* HP 12
Damage Bonus: +1D4 **Build:** 1 **Move:** 8 **MP:** 11

**indefinitely insane.*

Combat

Brawl 30% (15/6), damage 1D3 + 1D4
 Dodge 41% (20/8)

Skills

Art/Craft (Sculpture) 80%, Credit Rating 35%, English 30%, French (own) 75%, Occult 20%.

Spells: Channelling God (see page 63).

BATHSHEBA, *La Rush's masterpiece*

STR 80 CON 105 SIZ 45 DEX 85 INT 100
 APP 95 POW 75 EDU — SAN — HP 15
Damage Bonus: +1D6* **Build:** 2* **Move:** 9 **MP:** 15

**Being made of stone increases damage bonus and Build.*

Combat

Attacks per round: 1

Brawl 50% (25/10), 1D10 damage + 1D6
 Dodge 42% (21/8)

Skills

All Languages 100%.

Spells: Bathsheba may know 1D4 spells at the Keeper's discretion.

Armor: None. However, firearms do minimum damage, fire and unarmed attacks have no effect.

Sanity Loss: None while disguised. 1/1D10 Sanity points when her true nature is revealed.

JUSTINE BUISSON, *age 38, independent choreographer*

STR 50 CON 70 SIZ 45 DEX 90 INT 80
 APP 65 POW 45 EDU 85 SAN 45 HP 11
Damage Bonus: 0 **Build:** 0 **Move:** 8 **MP:** 9

Combat

Brawl 25% (12/5), damage 1D3
 Dodge 80% (40/16)

Skills

Art/Craft (Dance) 70%, Credit Rating 45%, Language (English) 30%.

DOMINIQUE DENERIAZ, *age 35, arrogant musician*

STR 55 CON 65 SIZ 50 DEX 80 INT 90
 APP 55 POW 40 EDU 95 SAN 40 HP 12
Damage Bonus: 0 **Build:** 0 **Move:** 7 **MP:** 8

Combat

Brawl 25% (12/5), damage 1D3
 Dodge 40% (20/8)

Skills

Art/Craft (Piano) 80%, Credit Rating 55%, Language (English) 40%.

MAXIMILLIEN LAVAGNE, *age 46, writer seeking revenge*

STR 40 CON 50 SIZ 50 DEX 60 INT 65
 APP 60 POW 50 EDU 80 SAN 50 HP 10
Damage Bonus: 0 **Build:** 0 **Move:** 7 **MP:** 10

Combat

Brawl 25% (12/5), damage 1D3
 Dodge 30% (15/6)

Skills

Art/Craft (Writing) 70%, Credit Rating 40%, Sleight of Hand 30%, Stealth 30%.

AIMÉE PRIDEAUX, *age 31, talented poet*

STR 45 CON 70 SIZ 55 DEX 70 INT 95
 APP 60 POW 50 EDU 95 SAN 50 HP 12
Damage Bonus: 0 **Build:** 0 **Move:** 7 **MP:** 10

Combat

Brawl 25% (12/5), damage 1D3
 Dodge 35% (17/7)

Skills

Art/Craft (Poetry) 75%, Credit Rating 50%, Language (English) 60%.

MUSE FROM BEYOND

Denizens of beyond, these beings are the source of humanity's artistic creativity. Seemingly comprised of a myriad of ever changing colored lights and lines, they twist and turn in a mind-bending spectacle that hurts the eyes of all those who view them. The experience is not solely visual, as witnesses perceive a wrongness in the air, and their hairs stand on end as they feel a chill of disquiet.

A Muse may only attack a creature that has sensed it. If an investigator is undergoing the final stages of a **Seed of Inspiration** (page 47) germinating this can only occur when the investigator moves into patches of darkness, where only the one investigator can see them. If the Muses break through as the result of a failed germination, they may roam and attack without these constraints, and all present can see them.

Having broken through into our world as the result of a failed germination, they have nothing by which to anchor them to it and ultimately perish within 1D10 rounds.

The Muses do not attack for the sake of it. The Muses spin and turn in the air like blades, cutting with razor-like sharpness as they slice into their victims.

MUSES FROM BEYOND, *astral horrors*

STR — CON — SIZ — DEX 85 INT 100
 APP — POW 75 EDU — SAN — HP 10
 Damage Bonus: 0 Build: -2 Move: 9 MP: 15

Combat

Attacks per round: 1

Spinning Cut 50% (25/10), 1D10 damage
 Dodge 42% (21/8)

Armor: None, but may only be damaged by magical attacks.

Sanity Loss: 1/1D8 Sanity points to see a Muse from Beyond.

MANIFESTATION OF INSPIRATION

Manifestations are not overtly hostile. If someone unmasks them, they do not retaliate with violence, instead trying to use the revelation as a means by which to inspire others. Only if they are attacked, or if someone attacks a person harboring a Seed of Inspiration, do they fight back. Depending on the material they are made from, this can make them potentially deadly adversaries in hand-to-hand combat.

The artwork they embody has no set limits. However, certain pieces of art if they came to life are less easy to describe than others. As a rule of thumb, the Manifestation takes the form of the central piece of the artwork if it is a drawing, text, painting, etc. If it is a statue, the statue itself simply becomes animate, regardless of what it depicts (although ideally a living creature). If the two-dimensional piece depicts a subject that is not a creature (e.g. a landscape painting) then the medium used to create it forms into a replica of the artist. If the subject was an animal, the Manifestation acts very much like the animal it depicts, although it can communicate.

MANIFESTATIONS OF INSPIRATION, *art given life*

STR 80 CON 70 SIZ varies* DEX 85 INT 100
 APP — POW 75 EDU — SAN — HP 15
 Damage Bonus: varies** Build: varies Move: 9 MP: 15

*Size depends on the item created.

**Damage Bonus is determined by material: Stone +1D6, Wood +1D4, Paint or Ink none.

Combat

Attacks per round: 1

Brawl 50% (25/10), 1D10 damage +
 damage bonus (dependent upon
 material composition**)
 Dodge 42% (21/8)

Skills

Languages (all) 100%

Armor: None. However, if made of stone, firearms do minimum damage and fire and unarmed attacks have no effect. Other materials maybe especially vulnerable to certain attacks, such as oil paint to fire.

Sanity Loss: 1/1D10 Sanity points to see a Manifestation of Inspiration.



AND SOME FELL ON STONY GROUND

1920s, STOWELL, USA

INTRODUCTION

The scenario is suitable for two to six players, taking the role of townsfolk caught up in the midst of chaos.

This scenario is set in the 1920s, in Stowell—a friendly place of “small-town America” we all know from television and the movies. People buy groceries at the general store and greet each other on their way to work in the mornings. Kids play barefoot in the street. Any minor feuds, gossip, or rumors only serve to add a little spice to the otherwise happy-but-mundane lives of the townsfolk.

As you would expect, this is all about to change. A professor on the outskirts of town has discovered a way to transform people’s lives. He shares his discovery with his friends and neighbors and, before long, the small town is anything but typical. The residents are increasingly converted to either one of the masters (Blessed) or one of the slaves (Broken).

The town is a pressure cooker and partway through the game it will explode. When that happens, slaughter and mayhem ensue, leaving the investigators to fight for their very lives.

OVERVIEW OF THE STORY

The game opens with an action scene. This is then likely to be followed by a period of investigation as the investigators get to the root cause of what is wrong in the town. After that is resolved, the second half of the game takes the form of survival horror, and is likely to feature combat and chase scenes. The game has a natural end point, and built-in support should the investigators decide to leave town early.

If the Keeper pushes the pace of play then this scenario should be playable in one session. If you prefer a slower boil it could extend over two sessions.

ADAPTING THE SCENARIO

Notes on using existing investigators rather than the pre-generated ones are provided (see **The Investigators**, page 79). Note that the investigators (and players) are likely to feel more connected to the story if they have some personal investment in the town and its inhabitants.

The town of Stowell, in which the scenario is set, could be exchanged for the hometown of existing investigators.

BACKGROUND FOR THE KEEPER

Professor Melvin Hart is a bachelor who, for many years, has lived alone in an old house on the edge of town. As an amateur astronomer, Professor Hart has built a number of telescopes, and has converted his conservatory into an observatory. Recently, he fashioned a lens for his telescope that allows him to see things no man has seen before. Two weeks ago, using his new lens, he focused on a dim star that he was unable to find in any of his books.

As Professor Hart stared into the void, something touched his thoughts. He is now in tune with a consciousness that he refers to as the “Great Mind.” Every day for two weeks Professor Hart has gazed up at that same area of night sky, and each time he has understood the universe more fully. In game terms the experience has boosted his Cthulhu Mythos score tremendously.

NAMELESS HORRORS



Broken

The Great Mind is not selfish with its gift, and Professor Hart has shared the revelation with others. Some react well to it and their minds expand with fresh understanding. They are referred to as the “Blessed.” But some fall on stony ground and fail to take root. For them the Great Mind is incomprehensible or plain terrifying. These poor souls are referred to as the “Broken.”

The experience of looking through the telescope is something akin to viewing an optical illusion. It can take a moment for the person to really connect with what they are looking at. Then, Bam! It hits their mind like a freight train, sending them mentally reeling as they try to get a hold on reality. Their mind is suddenly tuned into the Great Mind, and they understand the universe in a way that was previously inconceivable. Touching the Great Mind might be compared to being shown a fourth dimension or hearing the voice of God.

Not everyone can cope with the experience. Some crack. Those who don't crack receive an understanding of the world and their place in it. This understanding bolsters them and they immediately start to see what they were doing wrong all this time. Whatever their profession or vocation, they suddenly become better at it. In time they

might become leading exponents in their field. Each one, in their own way, is exploring and extending their skills and knowledge, as granted to them by the Great Mind. Each is pushing forward in their own field of art and science, and one day soon they will come together to share their learning for the good of humanity. At that time the contents of their various minds will be correlated, and a new age will be born for all humanity. As Lovecraft wrote in 1926:

*The sciences, each straining in its own direction,
have hitherto harmed us little; but some day
the piecing together of dissociated knowledge will
open up such terrifying vistas of reality, and of our frightful
position therein, that we shall either go
mad from the revelation or flee from the light into
the peace and safety of a new dark age.*

—H.P. Lovecraft, *The Call of Cthulhu*

PRE-GENERATED INVESTIGATORS

Six pre-generated investigators have been provided (in the accompanying PDF pack for this book), however the scenario is easily adapted for groups wishing to use existing player characters—in which case the investigators are probably “out of towners.”

If you are creating investigators from scratch, hand one of the investigator backgrounds (see **Appendix A: Handouts**) to each player and encourage them to incorporate this in to their investigator’s backstory. The investigators’ professions should be anything one would expect to find in small-town America, but avoid having them adopt positions of high authority.

If the game is played with newly created investigators, each of whom is a resident of the town, what is it that brings them together as a group? This will depend somewhat on the type of investigators they choose to play. They might be school friends, drinking buddies, members of a singing group, attend the same church, and so on.

Depending on your players, you may wish to dictate what it is that bonds the investigators together, but it is perhaps preferable and more entertaining to pitch this question to the players, and let them decide as a group. Take note of significant details and try to incorporate them in to the story.

Then there are those who crack. For them the Great Mind is too bright and its touch burns their minds, leaving them afflicted. There are many ways in which the side effects manifest among the Broken ones. Some become violent and destructive, and have to be restrained. These people are locked away, to be used as experimental subjects by the town’s leading scientists, or butchered as sacrifices to the Great Mind. For others, the side effects are more manageable and they are kept as slaves to perform the menial tasks and chores that would otherwise waste the time of the Blessed.

Every night more people look through the telescope. With each day that passes the Blessed are taking control of the town, and more and more of its infrastructure is being delivered using the Broken slaves. Any calls for outside assistance from neighboring towns or cities are ignored once a call is made to Stowell’s police, who are keen to quash any dissent. The Blessed are keen that life in Stowell should be seen as normal to passers-through and those in neighboring towns. The public face of Stowell, such as gas stations and diners, is mostly under their control already.

THE INVESTIGATORS

The game begins two weeks after Professor Hart first made contact with the Great Mind. Events have escalated gradually, but are now reaching a crescendo. Over the last few days the investigators’ lives have each been affected in some way. Only now are they beginning to realize that something is seriously wrong.

Six backgrounds for the pre-generated investigators are provided in the accompanying PDF pack for this book (also included in the investigator sheets PDF pack). A later section (Pushing the Players, see page 85) provides the Keeper with ideas on how to escalate these events and incorporate them into the game.

Keeper’s Information about the Pre-Generated Investigators

Wesley Frost (pre-generated investigator)

Glenda Ferguson, the sister of Wesley Frost, lives in town. After attending church on Sunday, she and her family drove to the Professor Hart’s house, and each looked through the telescope. Both the sister and her husband are now Broken, but their twelve-year old twin daughters, Shirley and Maxine, are both Blessed.

Glenda is somewhat mindless, but Donald, her spouse, was rendered dangerous and has been sedated, and imprisoned in the cellar. Shirley and Maxine’s interest



Wesley Frost

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"It's time, Daddy!"



lies in nature. Previously they focused on flowers and birds, but now they are studying anatomy. Human anatomy. Their father's anatomy. The sedatives dull his pain and Donald's screams can barely be heard from the street. In time they will require further specimens. They fill the basement with experiments and dissections while their mother bakes cakes in the kitchen.

If visited, Glenda answers the door and invites visitors in for coffee and cake. Her demeanor is impassive but polite. Familiar visitors may notice that the family pets are absent (having been dissected already). Shirley and Maxine appear soon after, carrying a board on which they have dissected a frog. They enthusiastically engage visitors in discussion about the frog to test the visitors' knowledge. If they can learn from a visitor, they will do so; otherwise they either try to get the visitor to leave or attempt to capture them for later experimentation.

If captured and pressed for information, Glenda says nothing about Professor Hart or the telescope (she has been instructed not to). The girls are Blessed and so they do not divulge information about the professor either.

Betty Considine (pre-generated investigator)

Betty Considine has been having an affair with Arnold McDermott for some time, and the two of them plan to announce their love to everyone soon. Arnold has promised to split from his wife (Gladys) and set up a new life with Betty. That was, of course, until he and his wife used the telescope last week. Now they are both Broken. Arnold has been given to one of the Blessed as a slave (he is now working at Elmer's Steak House). While Gladys became mindless—**Freddie Jensen** (see page 93) took a liking to her and keeps her at his farm as one of his concubines.

The McDermott house has been left vacant for the last four days. The couple were expecting to come home for a late dinner; the table is laid for two, and a burnt piece of meat can be found, along with some dried out vegetables in a wood-fired oven that has long since gone cold.

Arnold may be seen by chance, running an errand for his new master. Gladys is only likely to be encountered if someone visits Freddie Jensen's place.

AND SOME FELL ON STONY GROUND



Betty Considine



Elois Bircher

Elois Bircher (pre-generated investigator)

The pastor of the local church, Reverend Fitzgerald, has always enjoyed his chats with Professor Hart and so was invited to look through the telescope. The pastor was Blessed and has interpreted the experience as direct contact with God. Since that time he has been talking with members of his congregation and arranging for them to visit the professor, and share the experience. Not everyone seems to benefit from the experience, but then as the Bible says in the parable of the sower, “and some fell on stony ground.” It’s clear to the pastor that it is God’s wish that those souls that become Broken must serve His chosen ones, the Blessed.

The pastor gives sermons in his church twice a day and welcomes all comers. Note that the passage quoted in the Player Handout for Elois Bircher has been slightly altered from that found in the King James Bible.

Reverend Fitzgerald surveys his congregation and selects a few to talk with after each service. He seeks to test them, to divine which will become Blessed and which will be Broken. His work is to understand human psychology, though he would not express it so mundanely. If he judges anyone worthy, he invites them to return to the church around midnight for a special Mass, during which he promises them that they will come closer to God. Those that attend are escorted to Professor Hart’s house and shown the telescope.

Bert Lowry (pre-generated investigator)

Raymond Lowry, the father of Bert Lowry, has become Blessed and spends all his time playing music. Lucile, Raymond’s wife, who knows nothing of the telescope, is at a loss for what to do, and has called Bert to visit.

When Bert visits he finds his mother crying at the kitchen table. Raymond pokes his head around the kitchen door smiling. “Hey, come listen to this!” He then retreats to the lounge, from where can be heard strange and wonderful sounds. On closer investigation he is found to have a selection of instruments, many improvised from household implements, and parts found in the garage (cheese grater, washboard, hubcaps, oil cans, etc.) On the surface, the music sounds like chaotic noise, but if one listens for a more than a few minutes, one is transported, and begins to hear complexities of rhythm and tonality. Longer, and one may even begin to experience synesthesia (experiencing the sound as colors).

Annabelle Hearn (pre-generated investigator)

Annabelle works washing plates at the steak house called Elmer’s. It’s a favorite among the Blessed, who seem to like their meat well aged and very rare. The establishment has been taken over by one of the top waiters, named Feliks Taaramae (of eastern European descent). Feliks (one of the Blessed) now oversees the running of the restaurant with an iron hand, commanding a selection of Broken slave workers.

NAMELESS HORRORS

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Bert Lowory



Annabelle Hearn

Those visiting the restaurant as a customer may not receive the usual high level of service. Members of staff, other than Feliks, are nervous if engaged in conversation beyond placing an order. If Feliks suspects his staff are saying too much about him or his restaurant, he gives them a severe beating later. The mindless Broken are used as cleaners, plate washers, and chefs—including Arnold McDermott, with whom Betty Considine (pre-generated investigator) is having an affair. Anyone from the latter group knows that they place loved ones at risk if they speak of the professor or the telescope. Leonard Elmer, the previous owner of Elmer's, now spends his time washing and rewashing the same plates over and over again.

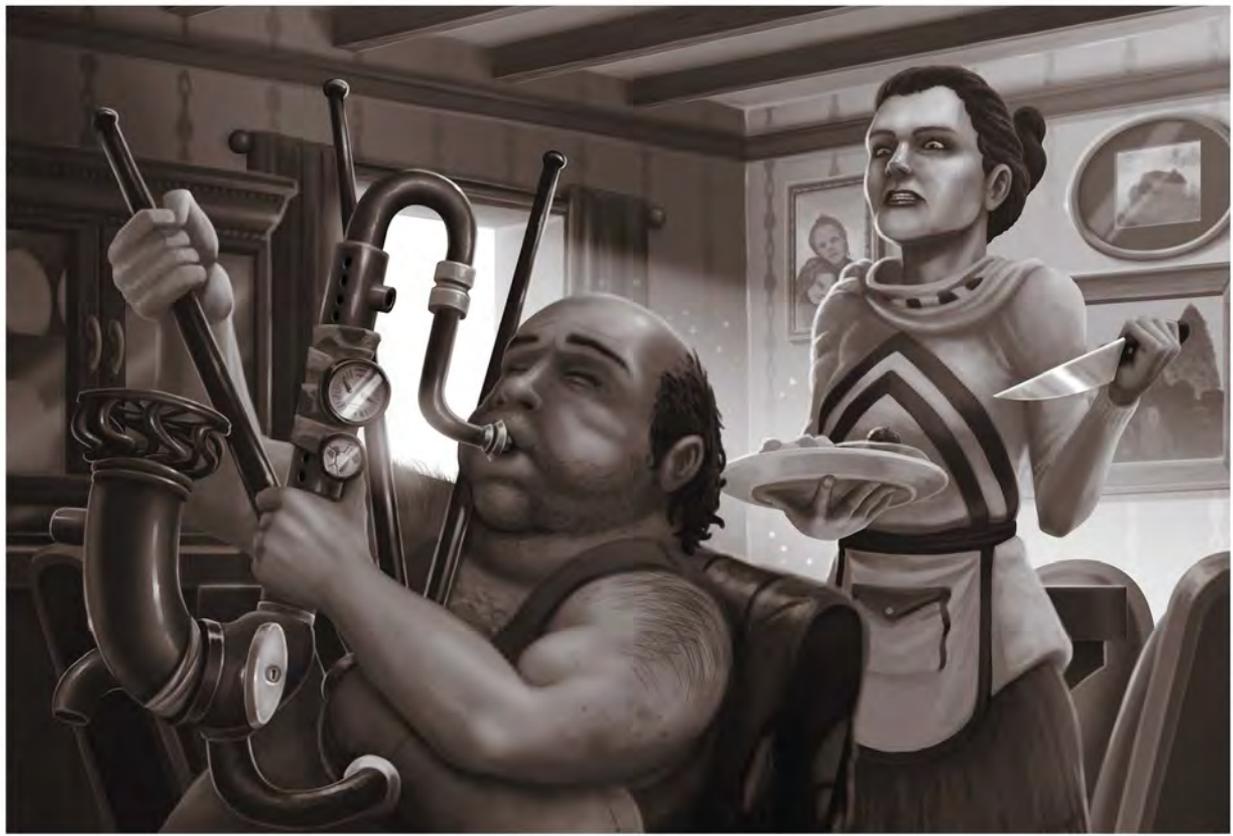
Fred Schenck (pre-generated investigator)

Fred is in receipt of a loan from the Stowell Bank, allowing him to purchase a home. The bank is run by Mr. Bingham, a kind and trusting man, who has run the bank as a force for good in the town; leastways he did until he became Blessed. Now he cares nothing for the underdog. His role now is to organize housing for the Blessed, and organize the Broken slaves so they can support the work of the Blessed.

Trying to arrange an appointment to see Mr. Bingham will be difficult. Confrontations with bank staff are unlikely to prove fruitful for those with a Credit Rating



Fred Schenck



Raymond blows some cosmic jazz

below 50. Those who do get an appointment, find Mr. Bingham an objectionable character, obsessed with profit. His renowned kindness is nowhere to be seen.

TIMELINE: A YEAR IN THE 1920s

See **The Townsfolk** (page 88) for details about each of the characters mentioned below.

- **Tuesday, February 14th (Day 0):** Professor Hart tries out his new lens and contacts the Great Mind.
- **Thursday, February 16th (Day 2):** Reverend Fitzgerald (Blessed) calls on his friend Professor Hart, and looks through the telescope.
- **Friday, February 17th (Day 3):** policemen Stanley Alexander (Blessed) and Martin Cavanaugh (Broken) are called to a disturbance by Professor Hart, as he struggles to cope with a crazed Broken person.
- **Monday, February 20th (Day 6):** Freddie Jensen (Broken) looks through the telescope.
- **Wednesday, February 22nd (Day 8):** Kenneth McCurdy is Broken (worker at general store).
- **Friday, February 24th (Day 10):** Raymond Lowry (Blessed, father to Bert Lowry, pre-generated investigator) looks through the telescope.
- **Saturday, February 25th (Day 11):** Arnold and Gladys McDermott (both Broken) look through the telescope (Betty Considine, pre-generated investigator, is having an affair with Arnold).
- **Sunday, February 26th (Day 12):** Glenda and Donald Ferguson (both Broken) and their twin daughters Shirley and Maxine (both Blessed) attend Reverend Fitzgerald's church, and are selected to look through the telescope (Glenda is sister to Wesley Frost, pre-generated investigator). Mr. Bingham the owner of Stowell Commercial Trust and Savings Bank is also Blessed today.
- **Monday, February 27th (Day 13):** Feliks Taaramae (Blessed) and Leonard Elmer (Broken) of Elmer's Steak House look through the telescope.
- **Tuesday, February 28th (Day 14):** today.

THE OPENING SCENE

Set the scene with several of the investigators together in one place. Perhaps they have met at one of their homes to discuss the situation.

One of the Broken slaves has escaped and is on the hunt. The investigators may recognize the slave as Kenneth McCurdy, a shelf-stacker from the general store. McCurdy prowls around looking for an open door or window, and seeks to sneak up on his prey—the investigators. If possible he lies in wait for one of the investigators to separate from the group (for example to make coffee or go to the bathroom) and then make his move. A successful **Listen** roll alerts the investigator to the presence of an intruder; otherwise they are attacked without warning.

McCurdy's clothes hang from him in tatters, rags that barely conceal his dirty, scarred body. His expression is desperate and violent; his eyes are dull and soulless. He attacks with the ferocity of an animal, seeking to feast on human flesh (use **Sample Broken Adult** for his characteristics, see page 102).

McCurdy attempts to use fighting maneuvers to seize an investigator to carry him or her away. McCurdy may injure the investigators, but the Keeper should avoid player character deaths so early in the game.

After a brief combat (perhaps two or three rounds), have the police deputy Stanley Alexander arrive and put three shots in McCurdy's back, killing him outright and without warning (no need to roll to hit or for damage). For more about Deputy Alexander and other non-player characters, refer to **The Townsfolk** (page 88). Stanley is one of the Blessed and is tasked with keeping a semblance of order in the town. It is not in the interests of the Blessed to have the townsfolk fleeing town, or making reports of murder and mayhem to the county authorities. Stanley does his best to allay any fears the investigators might have and assures them that someone will be round to collect the body shortly.

Within the hour a farmer, **Freddie Jensen** (page 93), arrives with his pickup truck. This is clearly not a mortuary or hospital vehicle, and Jensen does not conduct himself in anything approaching a professional manner.

Unless prevented, Jensen rolls the corpse in a sheet and carries it out to his truck. He then drives back to his home, where the corpse will provide food for his pigs, once Jensen grows bored with it.

Allow the players free rein following the opening scene. This scene may develop further if the investigators follow Jensen back to his farm, or seek to talk further with the police. Alternatively, the players may seek to follow up on some of the leads from their backgrounds.

Refer to Research and Clues for advice on how to improvise around the various encounters and situations. If the players do not take action, then you have a choice as a Keeper. One option is to allow time to pass. The more time that passes, the worse things become as more townsfolk visit Professor Hart. The second option is to escalate the events as described in **Pushing the Players** (page 85).

RESEARCH AND CLUES

There are too many possible routes through this scenario to detail each one here. This scenario uses the layers of the onion analogy, with Professor Hart and his telescope at the heart of the onion. However the players go about their investigations, they are likely to have to pass through a series of layers that run something like those below. Attempt to build the intrigue and threat, seeding clues that lead to the next layer of the onion.

Outer Layer of the Onion: Meeting Other Concerned Townsfolk

The investigators are not the only ones to have experienced the strange events that are taking place in town. There are many regular townsfolk who are neither Blessed nor Broken, but whose lives have been affected. Perhaps they have a parent, child, or spouse who has become Blessed and is now changed, or has become Broken and has disappeared, been enslaved, or is simply sat at home, drooling. They may be looking for missing persons (typically children or elderly relatives) who have fallen prey to dangerous Broken killers.

Encounters with concerned townsfolk are likely to lead to encounters with the Broken (Layer 2) or perhaps with the Blessed (Layer 3).

Second Layer: Meeting the Broken

The Broken take several forms. Some are desperate, having perhaps escaped their masters. Some are crazed killers that prey on the unwary; typically attacking the children or the old. The most reliable slaves are those that follow their Blessed masters without question. These will be found in the service of the Blessed, but even they may have lucid moments where they desire freedom. Freddie Jensen is tasked with the job of tracking down escaped slaves, and he shows them little mercy.

Encounters with the Broken are likely to lead to contact with the Blessed (Layer 3). As a result of insanity or fear, the Broken are unlikely to be forthcoming about the professor and the telescope, but they may well drop hints about “the eye in the sky,” “the terror from the stars,” or “the Great Mind!”

Signs of physical trauma may be apparent on the faces of some of the Broken, around the eye that they held to the telescope—this might include cataracts, lesions, bloodshot eyes, bruising, and so on.

Third Layer: Meeting the Blessed

Most of the Blessed have a personal goal and are engaged in research of some kind. It may not be apparent that what they are doing is in any way scientific or, in some cases, even rational. Some of the Blessed spend all day cooking the same cake again and again, others listen to birdsong or the sound of running water, while others study humans in a variety of ways (inside and out).

If engaged in conversation, the Blessed person pauses their research for a while to talk with an investigator. If an investigator successfully uses one of their social skills (**Fast Talk, Charm, Intimidate or Persuade**) upon one of the Blessed researchers, they may gain some insight into the professor and his telescope. It is suggested that the difficulty level of such rolls be raised to Extreme to reflect the reticence of the Blessed on the subject.

Other members of the Blessed have been tasked with organizing the community (such is the case with the police, the Reverend, and the steak house). These individuals are more wary of the investigators.

Fourth Layer: Running into Random Trouble

The town grows more dangerous day by day. If the players are wandering the streets they may be accosted by a variety of dangerous individuals: rogue Broken that have escaped confinement, or malevolent members of the Blessed, out looking for fresh meat to experiment upon, or they might be confronted by some vigilante townsfolk out for revenge.

Fifth Layer: Running up Against Organized Trouble

Aside from the random troubles (Layer 4), the Blessed may set their own hounds on to the investigators. The Blessed have two main forces at their disposal: the police and Jensen's gang. Either or both of these groups could search town for the investigators. Captured investigators are not killed out of hand. Their fates should be more interesting. They may be locked up in the police cells, given to a Blessed for experimentation, given to Jensen's gang, or be taken to the professor's house to be shown the view through the telescope.

Sixth Layer: Getting to the Root of the Matter

The player should eventually get to the root of the problem and discover that the professor and his home seem to be the common factor in what is occurring. Of

course they may not know about the telescope, or what is actually happening.

The Center of the Onion: Professor Hart's Place

Professor Hart's home is constantly protected by a few Blessed and Broken. If alerted to intruders, they take a defensive stance and call for back-up.

PUSHING THE PLAYERS

Each of the investigators has their own background that ties them to the story. As Keeper, you should be ready to use aspects of the investigator backgrounds against the players and escalate the situations as required to develop tension, and maintain the pace of your game.

Pushing Wesley Frost

- Glenda Ferguson becomes free and lucid for a short time, long enough to call the investigator and beg for help.
- Donald Ferguson escapes to roam the streets in search of food. He is in a terrible way when he encounters an investigator; given his injuries, he should not even be alive!
- Glenda's house is burnt to the ground due to an accident in the cellar. One of the twins dies in the fire. The other one comes looking for the investigator demanding that they take care of her. Of course she will soon be up to her old tricks with scalpels and bone saws.

Pushing Betty Considine

- Arnold McDermott's car may be found parked with many others at Jensen's farm. Jensen may take advantage and use the vehicle to drive around town.
- Arnold might be seen taking out the trash to the rear of Elmer's Steak house, or running an errand to obtain ingredients from the general store. He is reluctant to talk as he fears for his wife's welfare.
- Gladys McDermott may be encountered anywhere, having escaped the terrors of Jensen's farm. She is desperate and fearful, and keen to find her husband, Arnold.

Pushing Elois Bircher

- The Reverend Fitzgerald may be encountered in town, assisting the police with arbitrary judgments. These may extend as far as summary execution.
- A young woman stands on the street corner giving out flyers for Reverend Fitzgerald's sermons. The leaflet mentions that Raymond Lowry (father of Bert Lowry, pre-generated investigator) will be playing the church

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Jensen's truck



organ. She tries to get the investigators to commit to going, and says that that a better life awaits the Blessed ones.

- One of the congregation members who was seen talking to the Reverend (by Elois Bircher, pre-generated investigator) is met wandering the streets drooling and mindless. His right eye is bloodshot and the pupil is completely dilated.

Pushing Bert Lowry

- A concert is organized in the church and Bert's father, Raymond Lowry, plays the organ. After a few minutes of his playing, all the Blessed have a sense of wellbeing. The Broken experience the music as something akin to a psychedelic drug trip, as the music takes on shapes and colors. Any regular townfolk (neither Blessed nor Broken) find the music discordant and painful to listen to.
- This music is all that can be received on radio sets across town.
- The Blessed take control of the telephone exchange, and telephones yield the same noises, although they can turn it selectively on and off when they wish to make calls.

Pushing Annabelle Hearn

- Annabelle encounters other ex-employees who are planning a demonstration outside the restaurant, and want all the supporters they can muster.
- Various Blessed townfolk arrive at the restaurant for dinner each evening (for example, Shirley and Maxine, Rev. Fitzgerald, Raymond Lowry, or Mr. Bingham).
- Screaming customers run out of the restaurant as Leonard Elmer chases them with a cleaver in one hand and Feliks Taaramae's head in the other.

Pushing Fred Schenck

- Bailiffs working for the Stowell Commercial Trust and Savings Bank begin evicting people from their homes. The people are told to leave and take their possessions. Those who refuse have a poster stuck to their front door; reading: "Evicted by order of the Stowell Commercial Trust & Savings Bank. Vacate within 12 hours or face prosecution."
- Bank staff may be met outside of work, although they avoid contact with those in trouble with the bank. If pressured, they may panic, run, or scream that it's not their fault.
- At the end of the warning period, armed bailiffs return and evict householders by force. This may involve firearms on both sides, with some bystanders becoming involved.

A TOWN CALLED STOWELL

The town of Stowell is centered round several small industries, including a cannery and a lumber mill. The details of the key locations are noted on the nearby map; however, other locations (houses, business premises, etc.) are left to the imagination of the Keeper.

Al's Best Automobiles: sells the latest Chevrolet and Ford cars. There is also an auto repair shop and various gasoline stations across town.

Churches: several churches cater to the mostly Christian townsfolk. Other religions rely on home-based gatherings. Churches include the Methodist Episcopal Church (led by Reverend Fitzgerald), the Holy Family Catholic Church, and the Congregationalist Church.

Dentists: offering dentistry to suit a variety of budgets.

Jack's Parlor: sensible 1920s hair styling for every man.

Jensen's Farm: on the east side of town, at the end of a muddy track, lies Freddie Jensen's ill-kept farm. Gladys McDermott is held captive here. Arnold McDermott's car may be found among many others parked in the yard.

Luscious Laurie's: a beauty parlor and ladies' hairdresser that pampers a select clientele.

Mother Baker's: a diner on Main Street. It has started serving some new dishes since Mrs. Baker used the telescope. The syrup she's using on her waffles is truly remarkable. And there's something in those burgers that no one can quite identify, but it tastes like heaven. Mother Baker's is commonly mentioned, and she's getting a lot of custom. It may be that the players will assume that this is at the root of what is going on. It isn't.

Police Station: usually staffed during office hours. It only has four holding cells, as prisoners would normally be transferred to a county prison.



No one leaves hungry!

NAMELESS HORRORS

Professor Hart's House: on the west side of town stands an old house, home to the professor and his cats. See **Hart's House** (page 95).

Shops: bakeries, general stores, drug stores, candy stores, diners, and hardware stores.

The Recreation Ground and Goldmine: home to a collection of swings and roundabouts. To the rear of these can be found a rocky outcrop, around which several makeshift huts have recently been constructed. Overseen by **Claude Massey** (see page 89), a team of Broken slaves dig by day and night and have recently discovered a seam of gold.

Stowell Commercial Trust and Savings Bank: run by a (formerly) benevolent figure, Mr. Bingham, who was known for his willingness to help the small investors.

Stowell Hospital: has an in-patient ward and is able to treat a variety of ills, but more specialist care and serious operations may require a larger establishment in a nearby city.

THE TOWNSFOLK

There are three kinds of people in Stowell: those who have looked through the telescope and become Broken, those

who have looked and become Blessed, and those that have not looked at all. Each of the characters associated with an investigator's background is listed below (with the date of their using the telescope), along with some other townsfolk (for whom dates and other details, if required).

Characteristics for the main non-player characters (NPCs) can be found in **Characters** section at the end of the scenario (page 100).

The Blessed

Stanley Alexander, *age 29, police deputy*

- Blessed February 17th.

Keeps a watchful eye on the town. Uses Martin Cavanaugh (one of the Broken) as a front, instructing him on what to say and how to act.

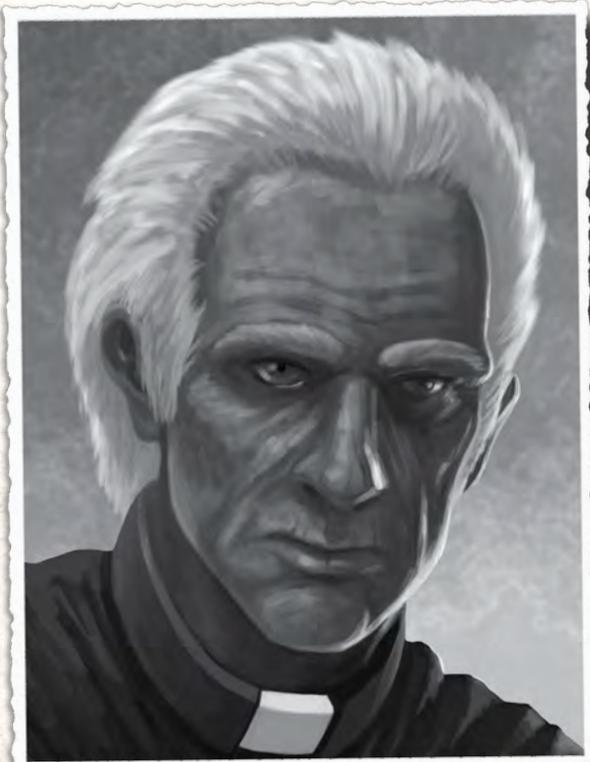
Thomas Bingham, *age 57, bank manager*

- Blessed February 26th.

Mr. Bingham was a generous lender, but has now tightened up the bank's finances. He employs a host of bailiffs to ruthlessly reclaim the bank's property. Fred Schrenck (pre-generated investigator) is one of the first to be evicted.



Stanley Alexander



Reverend Fitzgerald

AND SOME FELL ON STONY GROUND

Mrs. Brady, age 75, retired school teacher

- Blessed February 21st.

Mrs. Brady perhaps taught those investigators who attended the local elementary school. Mrs. Brady has developed a love of the growing phenomenon of radio, and has spent hours building crystal sets, and taking apart similar devices. Her passion for radio has become the focus of her improved skill, and she has developed an in depth understanding of electronics. She built a monitoring kit for Old Man Pearson to use on the phone lines.

Raymond Lowry, age 55, father to Bert Lowry (pre-generated investigator)

- Blessed February 24th.

Raymond worked at the Stowell Commercial Trust and Savings Bank. He now spends all of his time playing strange music at his home, and in Reverend Fitzgerald's church.

Maxine and Shirley Ferguson, both age 12, nieces to Wesley Frost (pre-generated investigator)

- Blessed February 26th.

Twin sisters, and daughters of Glenda and Donald Ferguson. Both are now obsessed with anatomy, carrying out experiments on a variety of life forms, including their father.



Melvin Hart

Reverend Fitzgerald, age 63, influential church leader

- Blessed February 16th.

A friend of Professor Hart's, Fitzgerald is the pastor of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Professor Melvin Hart, age 58, learned professor

- Blessed February 14th.

Professor Hart created the telescope that allowed contact with the Great Mind.

Claude Massey, age 29, geologist and prospector

- Blessed February 17th.

Claude always had a talent for geology, and the Great Mind has increased his understanding of the subject. He is using a team of Broken locals to excavate the rocky ground just beyond the recreation area. He has found a seam of gold there. Aside from its monetary worth, the gold will be very useful to several of the Blessed in their experiments.

Old Man Pearson, age 78, nimble old-timer

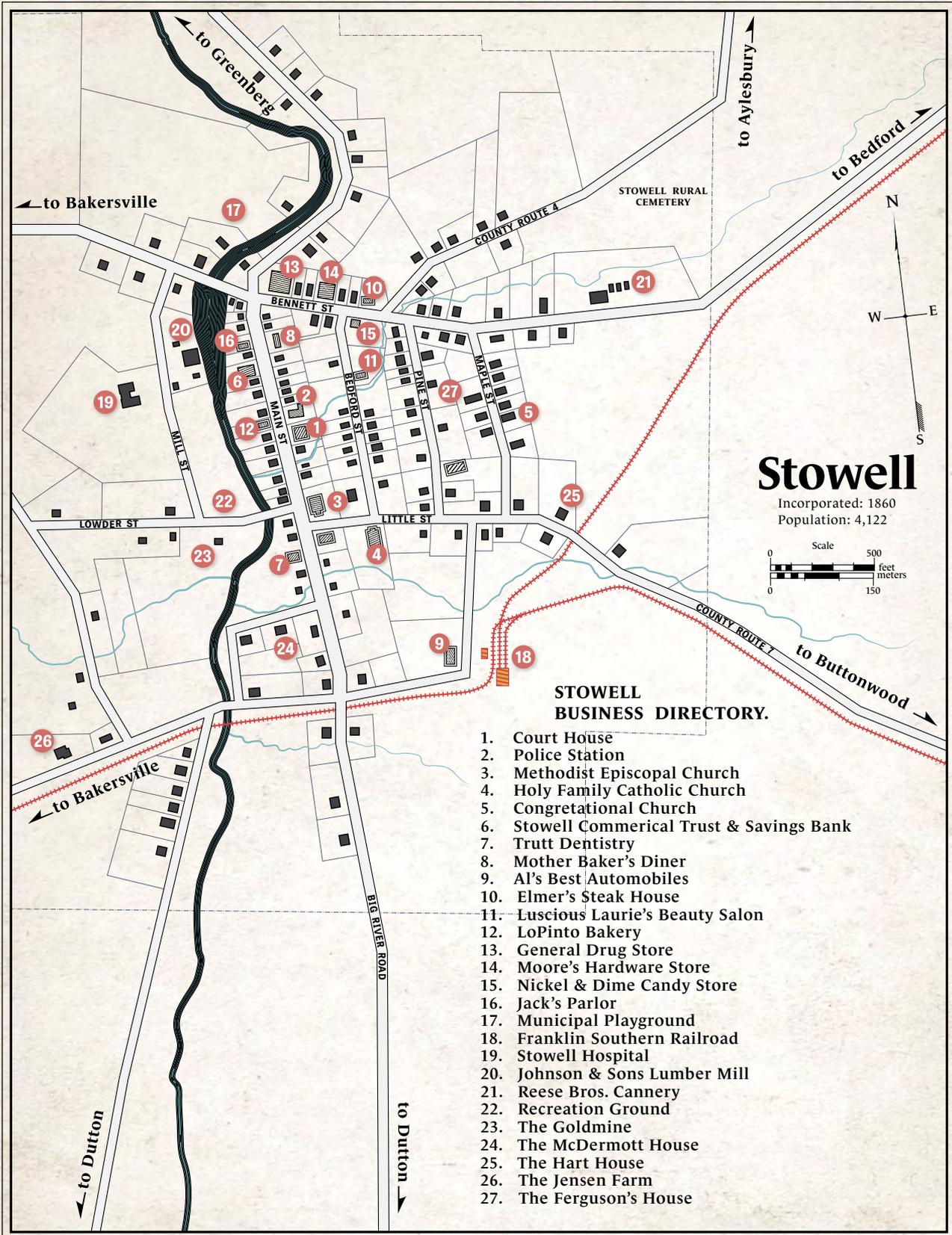
- Blessed February 20th.

Sat high up a phone poll, listening to the voices (or music) on the wires, Pearson smiles and waves down at passersby. Pearson used to run the local theatre, but as a kid he loved climbing, and that was the skill that



Feliks Tarramae

NAMELESS HORRORS



Stowell - Keeper's plan

AND SOME FELL ON STONY GROUND

developed when he looked through the telescope. He's now in his seventies, and when the investigators last saw him he walked with a stick. He has some monitoring equipment that Mrs. Brady knocked up for him: a set of wires and headphones that somehow plug into the phone cables. He may know a few rumors as a result of his eavesdropping on phone calls.

Herman Shea, age 35, master of disguise

- Blessed February 25th.

Herman's secret life as a crossdresser comes to the fore in his new life as a master of disguise. He is now able to take on the guise of any man or woman in town, and takes great delight in doing so. If Herman disguises himself as a townspeople with whom an investigator has only a passing acquaintance, an Extreme **Spot Hidden** roll is required to realize that he is not who he appears to be. If he attempts to impersonate someone well known to an investigator, a successful Spot Hidden roll is required to see through the disguise.

Feliks Taaramae, age 33, new manager of Elmer's Steak House

- Blessed February 27th.

Previously a waiter, Feliks is now in charge of the restaurant and seeks to perfect the menu, supplying all the Blessed with wonderful food.



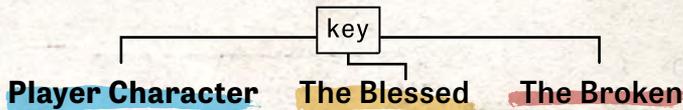
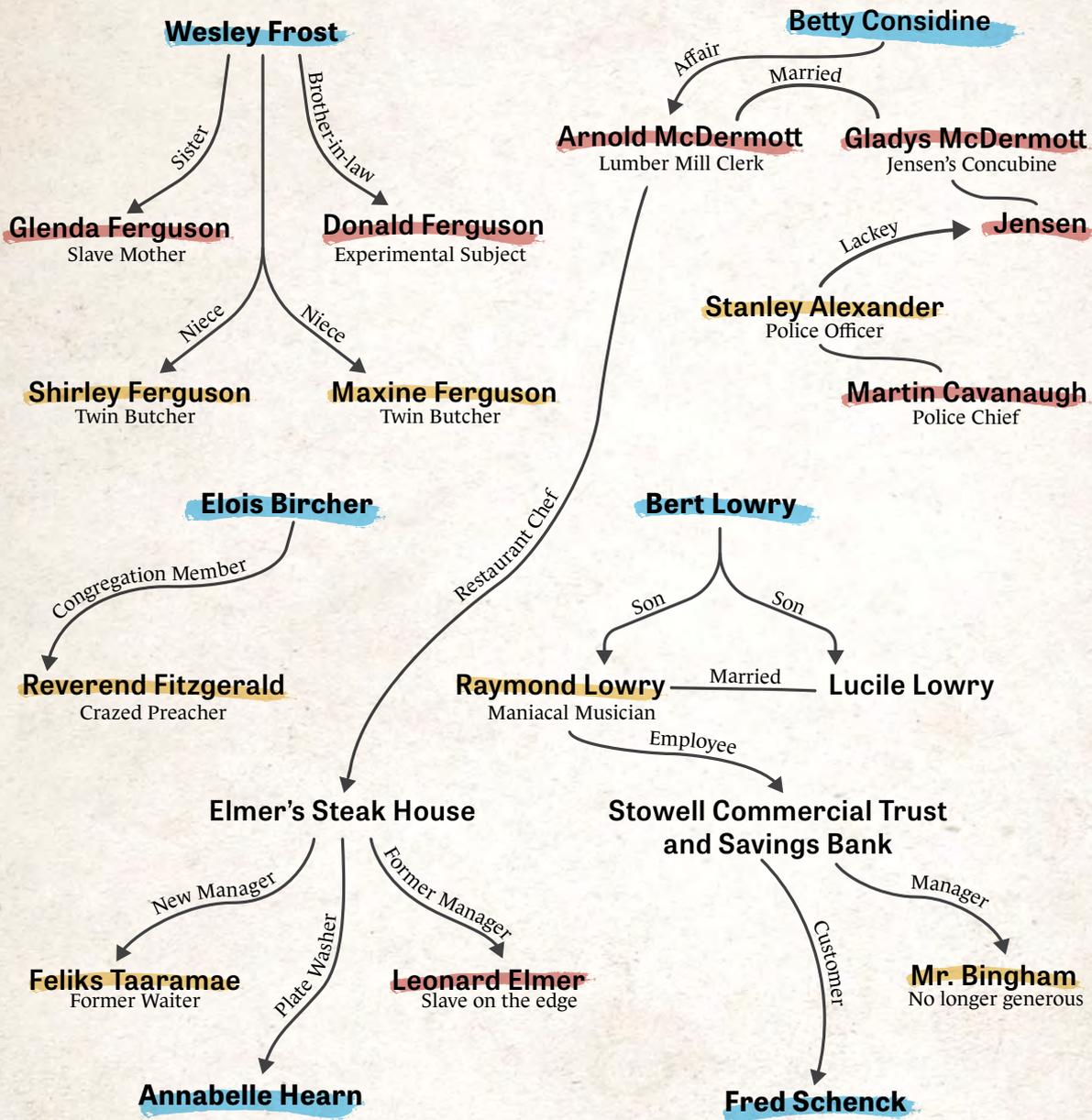
Brad and Todd – "brainiac" kids



The Blessed monitor the telephone lines

And Some Fell on Stony Ground

Relationship Map



AND SOME FELL ON STONY GROUND

Brad and Todd, both age 10, "brainiac" kids

- Blessed February 26th.

While only ten years old, Brad and Todd can be found animatedly discussing physics. The level of discussion is very high, with terms such as "universal wave-function," "random radioactive decay," and "quantum decoherence" used casually and with seemingly thorough understanding. If the investigators attempt to join the discussion, they may be mocked for their ignorance, or for perpetuating outmoded approaches to science and the world. As Keeper, unless you hold a physics degree, it may be difficult to feign the appropriate level of knowledge; simply tell the players that they don't understand it either, and throw in a few key phrases mentioned above. Aside from their advanced knowledge of physics, the kids are just regular ten-year-olds and will soon grow bored of interacting with the investigators, heading to Gregson's store for a soda.

The Broken

Kenneth McCurdy, age 48, crazed murderer

- Broken February 22nd.

McCurdy appears in the **Opening Scene** (page 84). He is a crazed and murderous middle-aged man who until recently worked in the general store.



Freddy Jensen

Freddie Jensen, age 32, deviant gang leader

- Broken February 20th.

Jensen is one of the more intelligent and devious members of the Broken. He runs a crew of four that do the Blessed's dirty work. Jensen follows the orders of the Blessed because he gets his pick of the Broken and likes the mindless ones, especially if they're pretty. His gang is made up of other Broken. Together they have taken over a smallholding on the outskirts of town. He provides services to the Blessed and is well rewarded. Jensen is one of the few Broken allowed to drive a vehicle. His farm is used as a parking lot for the vehicles that are no longer needed by the other Broken slaves. He also has a number of the Broken here for his own amusement, including Gladys McDermott. His gang are Roddy Matthews, Stanley McGarvey, and Roland Burford.

Roland Burford, age 17, Jensen gang member

- Broken February 21st.

Roland is a desperate teenager who got mixed up with the wrong crowd. He is the gang's lackey and butt of their jokes.



Leonard Elmer

NAMELESS HORRORS

Roddy Matthews, age 28, *Jensen gang member*

- Broken February 21st.

A contemporary of the investigators at school, Roddy comes from a working-class family over on the east side of town. His father worked in the lumber mill until his injury ten years ago. Roddy hangs out with the Jensen gang. He'll be accompanied by McGarvey, an old friend of his father.

Stanley McGarvey, age 49, *Jensen gang member*

- Broken February 22nd.

Stanley is a tough, intimidating man in his late forties. He is Roddy Matthews' muscle and carries a handgun.

Martin Cavanaugh, age 53, *police*

- Broken February 17th.

The local chief of police, Martin Cavanaugh, is told what to do by his Blessed deputy, Stanley Alexander, who keeps a close eye on him.

Leonard Elmer, age 49, *owner of Elmer's Steak House*

- Broken February 27th.

Now reduced to washing dishes, Leonard is waiting for his moment to take revenge.



Arnold McDermott



Gladys McDermott



Glenda Ferguson

Donald Ferguson, age 30, brother-in-law to Wesley Frost (pre-generated investigator)

- Broken February 26th.

Donald is being experimented on by his twin daughters, Shirley and Maxine. His wife, Glenda, is powerless to help him.

Glenda Ferguson, age 29, sister to Wesley Frost (pre-generated investigator)

- Broken February 26th.

Glenda is a housewife with twin daughters, Shirley and Maxine, and a husband, Donald. Glenda is now in servitude to her daughters.

Arnold McDermott, age 30, in an affair with Betty Considine (pre-generated investigator)

- Broken February 25th.

Arnold is now a slave at Elmer's Steak House, where he prepares green beans and a special sauce. He is kept in check by threats of harm to his wife.

Gladys McDermott, age 28, husband is having an affair with Betty Considine (pre-generated investigator)

- Broken February 25th.

Gladys is a captive at Jensen's farm. She serves as a housemaid and whatever else Jensen and his gang want her to do. She is likely to attempt an escape.

Not Yet Blessed or Broken

No details for the other townsfolk are provided, allowing the Keeper to devise characters as required, dependent on the investigator's actions. A selection of possible names for such townsfolk are:

- **Male:** Alfred Dahlhoff, Howard Finnerty, Sterling Gilby, Wayne Heitman, Lee Luxton.
- **Female:** Clara Bishop, Esther Franz, Mabel Hagen, Norma Larson, Minnie Lunstrum.

GOVERNMENT INSPECTORS

The government inspectors are an optional element, should you want to add an extra wrinkle.

A group of men dressed in dark suits may be seen moving from house to house and talking with people. If challenged,

they show identity cards that prove them to be government health inspectors. They have not yet used the telescope.

Their normal procedure is to interview a person and carry out a few tests, taking a blood sample, checking blood pressure, and so on. Their natural demeanor is evasive and condescending. Questions may receive a curt answer or none at all. They are not armed and would call on the local police if required to do so. In time they will visit the professor and look through the telescope.

HART'S HOUSE

Professor Hart lives in a wonderful old house on the west side of town. He is attended and served by a selection of the Broken, who cook and care for those that now live at his house. The professor has several cats of which he is immensely fond. A number of the Blessed also live here and have made it their business to assist the professor in his great work.

THE TELESCOPE

The telescope is housed in the conservatory to the rear of the professor's home. Somehow, regardless of the weather, the area of sky to which the professor navigates is always clear of cloud and rain.

The professor's telescope is trained on an area of sky close to the Pleiades. The Pleiades is an example of a young star cluster, and is commonly known as the Little Dipper. The cluster of stars formed about 60 million years ago. It is around 410 light years away in the direction of the constellation Taurus the Bull. The best time to view the Pleiades is from late October to February. The Pleiades cluster (M45) is sometimes referred to as The Seven Sisters and appears in numerous ancient texts, including the *Book of Job*.

The telescope only works if it is correctly aligned by Professor Hart. The person viewing spends a minute or so looking through the eyepiece, at which point they become aware of a presence. It may manifest as a vision or a sound. It is hypnotic and compelling, and the viewer is unable to pull themselves away from the viewfinder. Around half of those that look become Blessed, the other half are Broken.

Those that are Blessed feel an overwhelming sense of peace and oneness with a force greater than themselves: the Great Mind. From hereon they recognize other Blessed people on sight. The Great Mind brings out a different aspect in each person. The person's highest skill or keenest interest becomes their specialist subject for research and development. The Blessed explores that subject in every way possible, perhaps making new inventions or discoveries that in other circumstances could be of benefit to humanity.



Those who are Broken feel fear or anger when exposed to the Great Mind, and they fail to make a connection with it as the Blessed do. Some of the Broken become mindless and unquestioning. These are used as slaves, capable only of performing menial tasks. Most of the Broken are simply confused or depressed, and offer little resistance to being enslaved. They see little hope in escape and resign themselves to service. Lastly, there are those Broken who become dangerous, devious, or maniacal. Unfit for use as slaves, they are bound or imprisoned, and used as experimental subjects by the Blessed, or as sacrifices to the Great Mind.

The effects last until the connection with the Great Mind is severed (see **Destroying the Telescope**, page 96), at which point each of the Broken collapse, and, if they are not killed by the raging Blessed, recover some hours later with a headache.

INVESTIGATORS USING THE TELESCOPE

How you handle the effects of an investigator using the telescope depends on how you want to run your game.

The suggested default is to treat the investigators a little differently, so that looking through the telescope does not stop the players working as a group. To achieve this, looking through the telescope automatically makes them Broken, costing them 1D8 Sanity points. Describe to them the sense of contacting some vast, uncaring alien consciousness, and the momentary glimpse of the reality that is provided to them. This results in an investigator who is still playable.

The other option is to embrace a potential player versus player game and allow each player to roll to determine whether their investigator is Blessed or Broken. Call for a **Sanity** roll: those who fail it become Broken (as above); those who succeed become Blessed. The Blessed immediately gain 1D10 Cthulhu Mythos skill points and lose an equal number of Sanity points. Those who are Blessed would then be set against the other investigators in the second part of the scenario. This player versus player style may suit some groups but should be given careful consideration prior to play.

Destroying the Telescope

The Blessed do what they can to prevent the destruction of the telescope, but most of them are busy with their own work. Every night, new people are brought to look through the telescope, becoming either Blessed or Broken. The act of someone looking through the telescope at least once each night maintains the connection with the Great Mind.

The Blessed know that their connection with the Great Mind must be maintained and will become anxious if they

know that it is threatened. If they discover that it has been destroyed, they panic and work in vain to fix it or establish some new mode of connection with the Great Mind. Professor Hart cannot mend the telescope in time without the various spare parts in his workshop. They don't know what will happen if they fail, but fail they will—and a terrible fate awaits the town on the next dawn (see **The Dawn of Chaos**, following).

THE LULL BEFORE THE STORM

If the telescope is destroyed, or Professor Hart is prevented from using it for a whole night, then chaos reigns come the following dawn—but the investigators won't know that until it happens. They may think that they have solved the problem and simply go home. The only concern from the point of view of continuing the game is that the investigators might leave town before dawn.

If the investigators do decide to leave town before dawn then throw everything you have in their way. If they persevere and escape then they will have successfully avoided the horrors of the following morning. If that is the case, hand the players non-player characters to play (see **Pick-up Non-Player Characters**, see page 102).

KEEPER'S OPTION: EXTENDING THE SCENARIO

If you wish to have a longer game, allow for a new connection with the Great Mind to be created. If you adopt this option, be sure to up-the-ante and not just repeat the first half of the scenario again. This option should be carefully considered and developed by the Keeper before proceeding.

If the telescope is destroyed, Professor Hart works on a new one; a process that he can complete within a day if he has access to his workshop and supplies. Meanwhile other members of the Blessed, if they know that the telescope is wrecked, seek to establish their own way of connecting with the Great Mind.

Each of the Blessed has the potential to connect with the Great Mind in their own way. The form the connection takes must be dynamic rather than static, requiring the constant focus and interaction of the person making the connection. The professor used astronomy because that

was what he knew, but he must be in attendance to adjust the telescope correctly. Someone else might use dance, but the participants would have to join the dance, not just watch. Someone else might use artwork, however it must be the creation of the art that makes the connection, not simply the finished piece. The connection to the Great Mind could be forged through all manner of activities, including throwing a pot, chopping wood, archery, sex, singing, preaching, and so on. Whatever the method, it is difficult, and few will achieve it in time. The chance that any of the Blessed form a new connection is equal to 1% per hour between when the telescope is destroyed and the next dawn. Alternatively, the Keeper can decide that a new connection is automatically successful. Of course if the destruction of the telescope is kept secret, the Blessed will not know that they need to form a new connection until too late.

THE DAWN OF CHAOS

Nothing happens immediately following the destruction of the telescope, aside perhaps from some panic and outrage from the Blessed—if news reaches them. However, when no one looks through the telescope for a whole night (and no other form of connection is established), the link with the Great Mind is severed, and the Blessed go crazy. Each of the Blessed suddenly sees their knowledge of the Cthulhu Mythos in the cold light of dawn and be shocked, terrified, and traumatized by it. Their Cthulhu Mythos skill drains away and is soon no more than a half-remembered dream. In their trauma they are stripped of their humanity, seeking only to destroy the uncaring world in which they find themselves. Free of inhibitions or conscience, they know only hatred, anger, and despair. They recognize and ignore their own kind, targeting anyone who was not one of the Blessed.

At the same moment, as the sun rises, the Broken fall to the ground unconscious, waking a few hours later with a headache. The side effects of looking through the telescope will have ceased, and they return to their former selves, provided they have not been gutted where they lay by a crazed Blessed of course.

The scenario becomes an exercise in survival horror as the Blessed now hunt and attempt to kill everyone in the town over the next twenty-four hours. At dawn of the following day, after one day of mayhem, the Blessed literally burn out, each of them becoming ever more frenzied until their passions ignite or explode in a fury of red hot gore.

RUNNING THE DAY OF SURVIVAL HORROR

Condense the events of the day to a few scenes. First there is the initial onslaught as the Blessed arise and begin their attack. What happens next depends on the players. Typically they follow one of three options: take refuge in a secure location, flee town, or go on a killing spree.

IF THE INVESTIGATORS HAVE ALREADY LEFT TOWN

Any player that no longer has an investigator in town, due either to death or escape, should be given one of the pick-up characters (see **Pick-up Non-Player Characters**, see page 102). These characters should be drawn from those that have already been encountered in the game, such as close friends or relatives of the original investigators. If a significant NPC has featured in your game, perhaps one that was improvised during play, they might also make a good candidate. Essentially, ask yourselves which of the non-player characters' fates you would most like to see played out. A selection of characteristics and skill values are given for pick-up characters. You may wish to modify these to suit your needs. Remember these do not need to be as detailed and fully developed as an investigator normally would.

THE INITIAL ONSLAUGHT

Establish where the investigators are at dawn, when the initial onslaught begins. The Blessed are likely to be spread across town, but many of them maybe congregated at the professor's house. The fact that the Broken collapse at dawn may go unnoticed, as they are likely to be asleep in their beds—where many are murdered while they sleep.

If the investigators are sleeping, they could be woken by screams outside, or one of the Blessed bursting into their bedroom. The scene is likely to involve combat and perhaps a chase.

If the investigators are separated, have each subgroup inform you in secret (with a note) where they intend to go, unless they have already agreed a rendezvous point. This serves to reinforce the feeling of isolation.

The Blessed cut-off the telephones, so contacting each other that way is not an option; neither is calling for outside help.

TAKING REFUGE

There are numerous places where the investigators might seek refuge in town: the bank, a cellar, a church,

NAMELESS HORRORS



etc. Depending on the situation, ask for one skill roll from each investigator to establish whether they make it to the refuge safely:

- **Stealth** to go unseen and unheard to a secret location.
- **Spot Hidden** to ensure they are not being followed.
- **Climb** to scale a wall to an open window.

If any of the investigators fail the skill roll they might seek to push the roll. For example, Harriet is trying to sneak down the alley to the rear of the bank. She fails, and the Keeper tells her that halfway there she can see a figure crouching in the alley, looking the other way. Harriet now has the option to push the roll. If she succeeds, she reaches the hiding place safely. If she fails then something bad happens! Perhaps she reaches the hiding place, but unknown to her she is pursued.

If all of the players make successful skill rolls (including successful pushed skill rolls) to reach their hiding place then they are safe until midnight (assuming they took refuge before midnight). Now call for a group Luck roll: if failed, one of the regular townsfolk comes looking to use the same hiding place, drawing the Blessed to them; if passed, it must be made again at the end of each hour. If the investigators find a safe place and pass the rolls this may feel a little anticlimactic, if so, thirty-minutes before dawn, have a townsfolk turn-up anyway. That way lucky players won't have long to survive before the end.

THE KILLING SPREE

Use the statistics provided for the Blessed children and adults (see **Characters**, page 100). Vary your descriptions, and provide the NPCs with a variety of improvised weapons.

If an investigator is attempting to achieve an objective, such as getting to a vehicle or fighting their way across the street to a particular door, and this involves killing a Blessed, ask the investigator to make a **Luck** roll: if successful, their path is clear; if failed, then another Blessed stands in their way. The intention is to simulate the chaos of a crowd of enemies.

If you wish, you may grant another **Luck** roll if the investigator achieves a Hard success on a **Dodge** roll, granting that investigator a potential opening. If a group of investigators is attempting to achieve an objective, allow the one that strikes the killing blow to make the **Luck** roll. If successful, the way is clear for one investigator not presently engaged in combat to make it to the objective. Whether the player that made the Luck roll seizes the opportunity or helps their associates is a decision for the player. Either way, the successful Luck roll stands. One successful Luck roll is required for each of the investigators to achieve their objective.



Jensen's gang

For example, Harriet, Ben, and Suzie's cover has been blown and their hideout in the old stable is about to be overrun by Blessed. Harriet spies a truck on the far side of the yard, and the three decide to make a break for it. At the end of combat (round two), Suzie fells a Blessed with an axe, and succeeds in a Luck roll. She could now safely dash to the truck, but she sees Ben is on the ground about to be ripped apart by two Blessed. In round three, Harriet drowns a Blessed in a water trough, but then fails her Luck roll, so another Blessed attacks her. Suzie kills one of the Blessed assaulting Ben, and succeeds in another Luck roll. That's two successful Luck rolls now, enough for two investigators to get to the truck, but two of the investigators (Harriet and Ben) are still engaged in combat. On the following round Ben gets to his feet and finishes-off his other assailant. He fails his Luck roll, but he and Suzie are not engaged in combat, and are able to run to the truck. Harriet is left alone to fight her way through the Blessed as Ben starts the truck. She'll need to kill a Blessed (or make a Hard Dodge roll), and make a Luck roll, before she can get to the truck.

FLEEING TOWN

If the investigators seek to leave town on foot, have the investigators make skill rolls to find a safe exit route in a similar manner to **Taking Refuge**. Instead of gaining a safe hiding place, they find a safe route out of town, perhaps through some woods or along a riverbank. Their progress is slow and they will be followed. Have them make the same **Luck** rolls at midnight, and each hour after, eventually to be confronted with a townsman pursued by a group of Blessed.

If the investigators seek to leave town in a vehicle, treat the vehicle as the safe destination and use the guidelines for **Taking Refuge**. The Blessed are attracted to the sound of the vehicle's engine and give pursuit, both in person, and in vehicles.

Chase Locations

Here are some sample obstacles and barriers, should a chase occur in town:

- A group of disoriented and recovering Broken, or regular townsfolk in fear of their lives, form an obstacle in a room, alley, or corridor, and successful a **Dodge** roll must be made to avoid their blows.



- Starving dogs run wild, ready to chase and bite anyone running. Make **Dodge** rolls to avoid their slathering mouths.
- A sharpshooter positions himself up on a rooftop, taking potshots at anyone who appears to be crazed. If crazed himself, he takes potshots at anyone. Make **Luck** rolls to avoid being targeted. You may wish to treat these as grazing shots, limiting damage to 1D6.
- Burning barriers may be constructed to keep the hordes back. A successful **Jump** roll is required to leap over the barrier without taking damage.
- A deluge of rain pours down on Stowell, flushing filth and debris into the street. Make a **DEX** roll to maintain a safe footing.

Here are some obstacles and barriers for vehicle chases:

- A tree has been felled to prevent townsfolk fleeing. The tree would require a large vehicle (Build 6+) to push it out of the way, or tow it off the road.
- The rainstorm makes driving hazardous. Make a **Drive Auto** roll to avoid skidding into a ditch or hitting a tree.
- Blessed gather on the road and pretend to be fleeing townsfolk, waving down the vehicle for a ride. Make a **Drive Auto** roll to avoid hitting them, or to hit them, and take the collision damage.
- A police roadblock may have been erected by **Stanley Alexander** (see page 88). The barrier has 15 hit points.
- The road to Stowell is narrow and winding, requiring numerous **Drive Auto** rolls to negotiate bends.

CONCLUSION

Suggested Sanity awards for investigators completing this scenario are:

- If the connection with the Great Mind is broken: +1D6 Sanity points.
- For those that flee, condemning the townsfolk to a terrible fate: -1D6 Sanity point loss.

CHARACTERS

The following section outlines the background and statistics for the major non-player characters portrayed in this scenario. The Keeper should become familiar with the relationships between the non-player characters and the pre-generated player investigators, as their interaction is important. A **Relationship Map** is provided on page 92, which shows connections between the various characters.

PROFESSOR MELVIN HART, *age 58, inspired astronomer*

Melvin Hart is an avuncular gentleman who used to work as a teacher. He has a passion for astronomy and has constructed a number of telescopes at his home, one of which allows for contact with The Great Mind.

STR 45	CON 60	SIZ 60	DEX 72	INT 85
APP 60	POW 70	EDU 97	SAN 00	HP 12
Damage Bonus: 0	Build: 0	Move: 6	MP: 14	

Combat

Brawl	25% (12/5), damage 1D3
Dodge	36% (18/7)

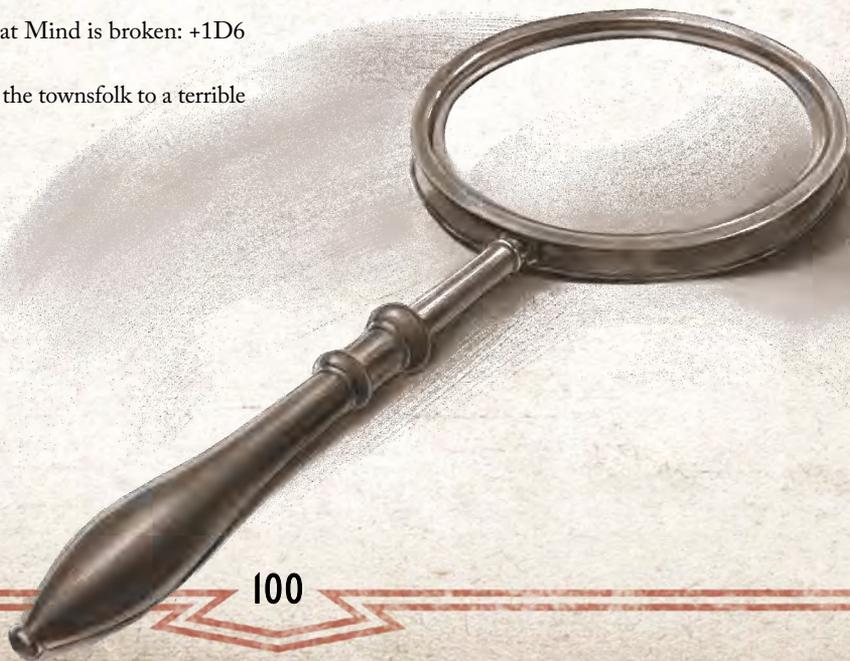
Skills

Charm 50%, Cthulhu Mythos 29%, Science (Astronomy) 99%.

- **Description:** aging gentlemen, dressed in a dated suit that is thinning at the elbows.
- **Traits:** smiles and gestures wildly as he speaks.

Roleplaying hooks:

- Wants people to look through the telescope to understand the wonders of the universe.



AND SOME FELL ON STONY GROUND

STANLEY ALEXANDER, age 29, police officer

Stanley recently received an informal promotion when he and his boss (Chief Cavanaugh) looked through Hart's telescope, leaving Stanley to keep the town in order with the assistance of his now Broken colleague.

STR 65 CON 70 SIZ 70 DEX 75 INT 65
APP 45 POW 50 EDU 55 SAN 30 HP 14
Damage Bonus: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 8 MP: 10

Combat

Brawl 50% (25/10), damage 1D3 + 1D4
.38 Revolver 50% (25/10), damage 1D10
Dodge 48% (24/9)

Skills

Cthulhu Mythos 8%, Drive Automobile 55%, Intimidate 50%.

- **Description:** large, rough looking chap in a police uniform.
- **Traits:** frowns a great deal, takes a long time to consider what is said to him.

Roleplaying hooks:

- Stanley demands obedience, and expects the investigators to go about their regular business.

FREDDIE JENSEN, age 32, deviant gang leader

Jensen is a corrupt and deviant individual. He has chosen to be in the service of the Blessed for the rewards that they bestow upon him (slaves and other goods). He takes orders from any of the Blessed, but views Stanley Alexander as the boss.

STR 75 CON 70 SIZ 65 DEX 60 INT 55
APP 35 POW 55 EDU 45 SAN 20 HP 13
Damage Bonus: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 8 MP: 11

Combat

Brawl 60% (30/12), damage 1D3 + 1D4
Shotgun* 40% (20/8), damage 4D6/2D6/1D6
Dodge 35% (17/7)

*Weapon is poorly maintained, malfunctioning on a roll of 96+.

Skills

Drive Automobile 35%, Fast Talk 40%.

- **Description:** rough looking, skinny pig-farmer.
- **Traits:** always seeks to belittle the investigators, and ensure they fear him.

Roleplaying hooks:

- Seek to take anything he wants—perhaps an investigator's car, wife, gun, whiskey, etc.

SAMPLE BLESSED CHILDREN

Use this as a basis for any Blessed children that are encountered. The Keeper should adapt the characteristics and skills to suit any particular child as required. Professor Hart has allowed a number of children to look through the telescope. Each is affected differently, and will pursue their own interests. Allot each one a specialist skill that they excel in.

STR 30 CON 50 SIZ 25 DEX 50 INT 55
APP 50 POW 50 EDU 30 SAN 40 HP 7
Damage Bonus: -2 Build: -2 Move: 9 MP: 10

Combat

Brawl 25% (12/5), damage 1D3 - 2
Dodge 25% (12/5)

Skills

Specialist skill 50% or over (any skill), Cthulhu Mythos 6%, Fast Talk 30%.

- **Description:** precocious and slightly eccentric.
- **Traits:** discuss their area of expertise, and quiz investigators concerning it.

Roleplaying hooks:

- Have been advised to conceal their gifts from those who are not Blessed—will lie and deceive to do so.

SAMPLE BLESSED ADULTS

Use this as a basis for any Blessed adults that are encountered. The Keeper should adapt the characteristics and skills to suit any particular adult as required. Each is affected differently and pursues their own interests. Allot each one a specialist skill that they excel in.

STR 60 CON 50 SIZ 60 DEX 55 INT 65
APP 50 POW 50 EDU 65 SAN 40 HP 11
Damage Bonus: 0 Build: 0 Move: 7 MP: 10

Combat

Brawl 25% (12/5), damage 1D3
Dodge 27% (13/5)

Skills

Specialist skill 50% or over (any skill), Cthulhu Mythos 6%, Persuade 30%.



- **Description:** somewhat odd, ranging from charming eccentricity to malevolent and disturbing.
- **Traits:** given to moments of deep thought.

Roleplaying hooks:

- Will seek to pour oil on troubled waters, attempting to persuade investigators that everything is being sorted out for the best. There is no cause for concern.
- Discuss their area of expertise, and quiz investigators concerning it.

SAMPLE BROKEN CHILDREN AND ADULTS

The same statistics can be used as for Blessed Children and Adults, however they do not possess the Cthulhu Mythos skill, and their motivations are more mundane.

PICK-UP NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

In the event that the investigators are slain or flee town prior to dawn when the Blessed rise up, a selection of non-player characters are listed here for player use. They do not need to be as detailed as full investigators. Encourage the players to personalize the characters as they wish.

GLENDA FERGUSON, age 29

Glenda is the wife of Donald (most likely now deceased), mother of twin girls (Shirley and Maxine, both Blessed) and sister of Wesley Frost (pre-generated investigator).

STR 40 **CON** 50 **SIZ** 60 **DEX** 80 **INT** 50
APP 70 **POW** 50 **EDU** 60 **SAN** 40 **HP** 11
Damage Bonus: 0 **Build:** 0 **Move:** 8 **MP:** 10

Combat

Brawl 25% (12/5), damage 1D3
Dodge 40% (20/8)

Skills

Art and Craft (Embroidery) 50%, Charm 70%, First Aid 60%, Listen 60%, Natural World 50%, Psychology 50%. The player may choose any other four skills to each be raised by 20 percentage points above their base values.

ARNOLD MCDERMOTT, age 30

Arnold is a clerk at the lumber mill. He is the husband of Gladys McDermott, and is having an affair with Betty Considine (pre-generated investigator).

STR 50 **CON** 60 **SIZ** 60 **DEX** 40 **INT** 80
APP 50 **POW** 50 **EDU** 70 **SAN** 40 **HP** 12
Damage Bonus: 0 **Build:** 0 **Move:** 7 **MP:** 10

Combat

Brawl 25% (12/5), damage 1D3
Dodge 20% (10/4)

Skills

Accountancy 60%, History 50%, Library Use 70%, Rifle/Shotgun 50%, Throw 60%, Persuade 50%. The player may choose any other four skills to each be raised by 20 percentage points above their base values.

GLADYS MCDERMOTT, age 28

Gladys is the wife of Arnold McDermott, and has suffered at the hands of Jensen.

STR 60 **CON** 50 **SIZ** 60 **DEX** 50 **INT** 50
APP 70 **POW** 80 **EDU** 40 **SAN** 40 **HP** 11
Damage Bonus: 0 **Build:** 0 **Move:** 8 **MP:** 16

Combat

Brawl 25% (12/5), damage 1D3
Dodge 25% (12/5)

Skills

Art and Craft (drawing) 50%, Disguise 50%, History 50%, Mechanical Repair 60%, Stealth 70%, Swim 60%. The player may choose any other four skills to each be raised by 20 percentage points above their base values.

AND SOME FELL ON STONY GROUND

LUCILE LOWRY, age 53

Lucile is wife to Raymond (Blessed musician) and mother to Bert Lowry (pre-generated investigator).

STR 60 CON 50 SIZ 40 DEX 50 INT 80
APP 70 POW 60 EDU 50 SAN 50 HP 9
Damage Bonus: 0 Build: 0 Move: 5 MP: 12

Combat

Brawl 25% (12/5), damage 1D3
Dodge 25% (12/5)

Skills

Art and Craft (needlework) 70%, Climb 50%, Drive Auto 50%, Navigate 50%, Ride 60%, Spot Hidden 60%. The player may choose any other four skills to each be raised by 20 percentage points above their base values.

LEONARD ELMER, age 49

Leonard is the owner of Elmer's Steak House.

STR 50 CON 40 SIZ 80 DEX 50 INT 70
APP 60 POW 50 EDU 60 SAN 40 HP 12
Damage Bonus: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 6 MP: 10

Combat

Brawl 25% (12/5), damage 1D3 + 1D4
Dodge 25% (12/5)

Skills

Art and Craft (Cooking) 70%, Credit Rating 50%, Handgun 60%, Law 50%, Listen 60%, Spot Hidden 50%. The player may choose any other four skills to each be raised by 20 percentage points above their base values.

JENSEN'S GANG MEMBER

Jensen and his gang have been portrayed as a mercenary band of thugs, carrying out the orders of the Blessed. It might be fun to now have one or more of your players take the role of a gang member as they return to normalcy. Perhaps they realize the error of their ways and seek redemption.

STR 60 CON 80 SIZ 70 DEX 40 INT 50
APP 60 POW 50 EDU 50 SAN 40 HP 15
Damage Bonus: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 7 MP: 10

Combat

Brawl 40% (20/8), damage 1D3 + 1D4
Knife 40% (20/8), damage 1D6 + 1D4
Dodge 40% (20/8)

Skills

Handgun 60%, Intimidate 60%, Locksmith 50%, Natural World 50%, Operate Heavy Machinery 50%, Sleight of Hand 70%. The player may choose any other four skills to each be raised by 20 percentage points above their base values.





BLEAK PROSPECT

1932, CRAWLEY, MASSACHUSETTS, USA

INTRODUCTION

This scenario is set in the town of Crawley, Massachusetts, in 1932. The Great Depression is in full swing, and the investigators are residents of a shantytown (commonly referred to as a “Hooverville” in the 1930s) on the outskirts of Crawley. This camp is occupied by those who believe they have lost everything, but it turns out they still have more to lose.

The residents of the shantytown are all suffering from a strange malady. People are lethargic and wasting away, and their skin is flaking off. None can identify the cause, and no one outside the camp will help.

The truth is that a secret organization, the Midas Circle, is preying on the residents of the shantytown, syphoning their life energy using unnatural means and leaving them as crumbling husks. Something unexpected has just intruded into the plans of the Midas Circle, leaving them exposed. Will this provide an opportunity for the residents of the shantytown to take their lives back or is it just a fresh avenue to destruction?

KEEPER CONSIDERATIONS

Bleak Prospect is an unpleasant, unforgiving scenario. Characters that have few resources and damaged psyches face powerful forces, and see and experience things that will keep them on the brink of madness. It is likely to end with all of the investigators dead, dying, or insane.

This is not to say that some form of positive outcome is impossible. A resourceful player may find a way to turn the

internal schisms of the Midas Circle to their advantage, or gain control of the Hawkes Device and use it for immoral but beneficial ends. Even then, their sanity will take a battering, and they may be on the path to becoming something less than human.

This is probably not a scenario for groups that like happy endings.

USING THIS SCENARIO

Bleak Prospect is presented as a series of locations and non-player characters (NPCs), an opening scene that lays out a bad situation, and a group of investigators with reason to uncover the truth. There is no expectation that the players will follow a particular course of action, and no fixed solution, although play-testing suggests that most groups will break into Prospect House and attempt to save Esther Freyn.

To use the scenario, simply present the situation in the opening scene and follow the actions that the investigators take—making sure to play the NPCs according to their motivations, and provide the players with the descriptions and conflicts outlined in the scenario. While there is no fixed outcome, there are some likely ones, and these are set out in the section titled **Wrapping it Up**.

Whenever a new character is mentioned in the text it may be useful to refer to their background in the section entitled **Dramatis Personae** (page 109).



PRE-GENERATED INVESTIGATORS

Six pre-generated investigators are provided for use with this scenario (in the accompanying PDF pack for this book). The investigators are all people who once had responsible positions and good lives, but have had it all fall away in the Great Depression. They now live in the Hooverville and subsist as best they can. Some may have casual work, but they have no hope of getting out.

Adapting the Scenario

There is nothing to stop your players creating their own investigators if this is their preference. Because of the time period and the required investigator backgrounds, it can be difficult to fit **Bleak Prospect** into an ongoing campaign. If you wish to do so, one possibility may be to jump a classic-era campaign forward several years and work out with the players how their investigators have suffered in the onset of the Great Depression.

The restrictions are that any characters need to be residents of the Hooverville, who have lost everything, and who have close ties with one or more of the other residents. It would be helpful if the group contained a person with medical training, and someone with a scientific background who may be able to make sense of the Hawkes Device, but this is not mandatory. Ideally, some of them should also have connections to members of the Midas Circle.

By definition, all the investigators are down on their luck, and begin the game with a Luck score of 20 points each, and a POW score no higher than 40.



BACKGROUND FOR THE KEEPER

In 1924, Doctor Aston Hawkes, a professor in the physics department at Miskatonic University, managed to get his hands on the unpublished papers of Crawford Tillinghast and decided to continue his work. Where Tillinghast had failed to contain the entities he manifested, Hawkes succeeded. The breakthrough came by eliminating the reliance on the human pineal gland, directly merging higher dimensions with our own. Hawkes resigned his position at the university to continue his researches at Prospect, his family home in Crawley.



FROM BEYOND

Bleak Prospect draws heavily on Lovecraft's short story, "From Beyond." In it, the unnamed narrator visits his friend, Crawford Tillinghast, and is shocked by the physical and mental deterioration that Tillinghast has undergone in the previous few months.

This decline appears to be linked to a device that Tillinghast has built, which stimulates the human pineal gland, allowing those affected to perceive other wavelengths in the electromagnetic spectrum, and so see into dimensions that exist alongside ours. These dimensions are populated with strange and loathsome entities—some large, some small, but all hostile—that swim through the ether as jellyfish do through water, even passing through one another.

It becomes apparent that when the device is active, the entities can see the human viewers as well and interact with them. It is suggested at the end of the story that Tillinghast's servants have been devoured after the cook attracted them by switching on an electric light.

As Tillinghast tries to draw the narrator's attention to the creatures that surround them, the narrator panics and shoots the device with his revolver. The psychic shock caused by the machine's destruction kills Tillinghast and leaves the narrator unconscious until he is revived by the police.



Hawkes discovered that there was a rich variety of fauna in the world that his device revealed. After being attacked by a specimen of one variety, which he named Species 17, he discovered that these creatures were capable of entering and leaving the human body with minimal physiological damage. Once a specimen had invaded the torso of a host, the flesh surrounding the specimen would become permeable, allowing the specimen to be removed again simply by reaching into the abdominal cavity.

Hawkes experimented on himself and his assistant, Theodore Sedgwick, showing that creatures of Species 17 fed upon something intangible in those they entered, but that if one drew enough of this essence and were then immediately placed in another human body, the creature would discharge the surplus into the new host. In terms of game mechanics, the creatures feed on POW and Luck, excreting the excess into the second host. See the section on **Species 17** (page 116) for details.



Lamprey

Hawkes pushed the experiment further by leaving a well-nourished specimen inside his own body for days, in the hope that this would allow it to discharge fully. Instead, the creature was fully absorbed into Hawkes and started to change him slowly. When the machine was next activated, Hawkes was so attuned to the other dimension that his physical essence was trapped there when Sedgwick turned the machine off. This event happened in 1926.

Sedgwick is less a man of science than his mentor, and has spent the intervening years exploring practical applications for the Hawkes Device and the creatures it manifests. He has built up a cabal of like-minded people, known as the Midas Circle, for their ability to turn anything to a profit. They use Species 17 to steal the life essence of others and feed it to themselves, giving them increased acumen, foresight, and luck. This has made them all wealthy and powerful, even in the face of the Great Depression.

THINGS FALL APART

On the night before the scenario starts, the members of the Midas Circle entered the shantytown camp, placed wax plugs in their ears, and used the shriek of the “**Ventriloquist’s Dummy**”—a

creature they snatched from another dimension (see page 116)—to subdue the residents. Nancy Carver witnessed this and was driven insane. The Circle then kidnapped two resident children, Billy Spitzer and Esther Freyn, taking them back to Prospect to syphon their energies at leisure.

When Sedgwick used the Hawkes Device to procure fresh specimens of Species 17, the thing that was once Aston Hawkes used the leakage of the device’s field to re-enter our reality. Being of unstable physical form, he possessed the nearest thing that was large enough to contain his essence: the building of Prospect itself. Casper Brinck and Roscoe Molloy were in the cellar at the time, preparing their captives. As the house shook, moaned, and began to change, they fled for their lives, leaving Esther and Billy behind.

Billy managed to escape in the chaos, but Esther had already been locked up and Billy was unable to free her, so he fled the shifting house. He still has a specimen of Species 17 in his abdomen. He is injured and half-crazed from what he has witnessed. It will take him some time to make it back to the Hooverville, and when he does, he will be barely coherent and consumed with guilt for abandoning Esther.

The Midas Circle has retreated from Prospect for the moment, but they each have their own plans following

the night's events, some of which may bring them into contact with the investigators. With every hour that passes, the thing that was Aston Hawkes cements its grip on the structure of Prospect.

THE MIDAS CIRCLE

The Midas Circle started in 1928, when Sedgwick realized that he needed collaborators to make full use of the powers that the Hawkes Device and Species 17 offered. He sought out a few men that he thought he could trust, who had the right combination of ambition and moral flexibility. Initially this was just Roscoe Molloy and Casper Brinck, but they recruited Alex Rossetti when they realized that none of them were especially suited to violence.

When the stock market crashed in September of 1929, the members of the Midas Circle were amongst the rare few who profited. Since then, no matter how bad things have become, they have continued to make money. Having consumed the luck and willpower of others, every business decision they make turns out to be the right one.

While the members of the Circle attempt to be secretive, the fact that a cluster of men who have beaten the odds all live in a relatively small town has not escaped attention. A number of newspaper and magazine articles have been written about their amazing ability to make money in the face of adversity. Their wealth allows them to control local

government and law enforcement, as well as the management of the Bentham Hospital. The members of the Midas Circle protect their interests vigorously, and those in their employ have standing orders to deal with any threats of exposure by whatever means necessary. There are a number of unmarked graves in Ebbet's Cemetery holding people who asked the wrong questions.

THE HOOVERVILLE

The Hooverville lies one mile from the Crawley town limits, on a scrap of wasteland just off the road to Arkham. There are no homes or businesses in the immediate vicinity, although the Blue Star Diner is about a mile further along the Arkham Road.

The camp contains a variety of structures, ranging from tents and lean-tos, to sturdy shacks made of scrap wood and metal. Most people fend for themselves, but there are communal campfires where people gather and share meals, often accompanied by music and alcohol.

Over the last two years, there have been strange rumors of men without faces lurking around at night. No one can really remember seeing them, but somehow everyone knows about them; they are regular features of the dreams

THE INVESTIGATORS' RELATIONSHIP TO THE MIDAS CIRCLE

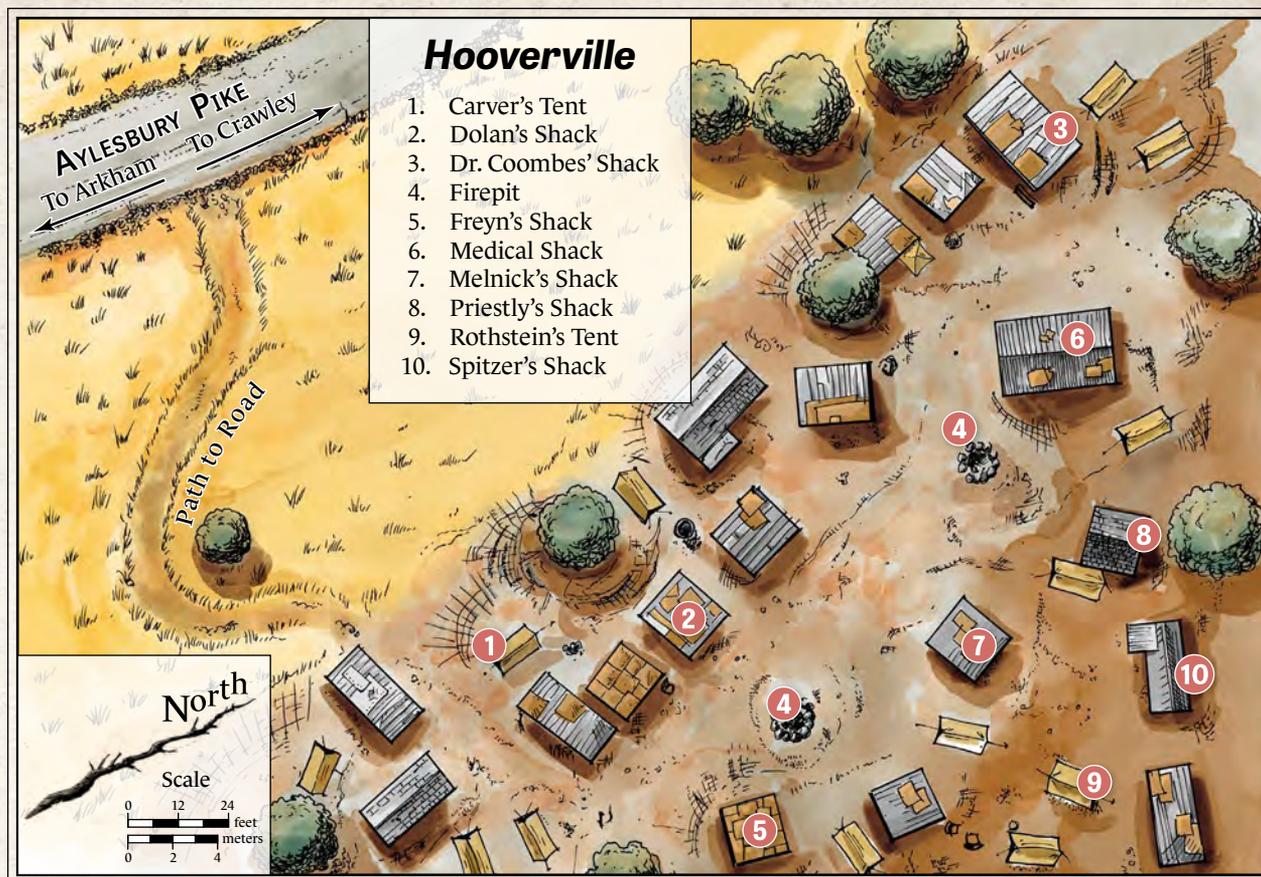
Some of the pre-generated investigators have history with members of the Midas Circle, leading to the investigators' unfortunate positions at the start of play. The Circle initially targeted anyone they perceived as a rival or a threat. They make dangerous acquaintances. Play up these relationships. Some investigators believe that the Circle is the cause of their problems for mundane reasons, which may lead to interesting confrontations. When Circle members encounter the investigators whose lives they have destroyed, they will certainly know who these people are, and will acknowledge this, possibly gloating.

HOOVERVILLE

"Hooverville" was the name given to the types of shantytowns that appeared across the USA as the Great Depression took hold. They took their name from President Herbert Hoover, under whose leadership the stock market crashed and the Depression started. Similarly, a "Hoover blanket" was old newspaper, used as bedding, and "Hoover leather" was a piece of cardboard used to line a worn shoe.

The quality of the dwellings in Hoovervilles varied greatly, depending on what skills and materials were available, but most consisted of shacks built from scrap wood, metal, and cardboard. They were usually built on waste or public ground, and while many were illegally situated, they were mostly tolerated as a necessity.

Conditions in Hoovervilles improved steadily as the result of the programs of the New Deal, and by 1940, they had almost completely vanished.



and nightmares of camp residents. The more skeptical residents have explained this as hysteria or delusions, but the rumors persist.

During this time, everyone has become sick. There is a wasting disease going around, and its victims are often found wandering and confused. This has stopped most of the residents carrying out even casual work, and food and supplies are scarcer than usual. With winter fast approaching, the next few months could prove fatal to many.

THE RESIDENTS

Everyone who lives in the Hooverville is there because their luck has failed them. In most cases, especially those of the investigators and their loved ones, this is because they have fallen foul of the Midas Circle and have had their luck stolen from them. Some, however, are simply normal victims of the Great Depression. Everyone in the camp is a potential target for the Midas Circle, and it does not take much time in the camp before a new arrival starts showing symptoms of the mystery disease.

No one escapes the Crawley Hooverville. While the residents can occasionally get some casual work, their luck or

health fails them eventually. Most of the residents are listless and confused, and have lost their will to fight.

There are 47 people living in the Hooverville—men, women, and children—and they have built a community of sorts. Of course, not everyone gets along, and some people pull their weight more than others, but on the whole, the residents look out for each other. Some of the key residents are described in the section titled **Dramatis Personae**.

Because of the camaraderie in the camp, non-player characters will be very happy to help the investigators with keeping watch, searching the area, or looking out for the sick and injured. When it comes to leaving the camp, the investigators will be on their own. Most of the residents are significantly sicker than the investigators, and are not up to energetic activities such as long walks.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

The following outlines the background and role of each of the major NPCs. Profiles for each can be found in the **Characters** section at the end of the scenario (page 133).

NAMELESS HORRORS

The Keeper should become familiar with the relationships between the NPCs and the pre-generated investigators, as their interaction is important. A **Relationship Map** is provided on page 117.

Harold Priestly

The husband of Agatha Priestly (pre-generated investigator) and the most frequent target of the Midas Circle (therefore accelerating his decline). He was once a vital young man and rising talent at the *Crawley Examiner*, but now he has been sucked dry, and his mind and body are failing. Following the last syphoning, his flesh is crumbling, his bones are fragile, and he is starting to fall to pieces. One of the specimens of Species 17 laid eggs inside him, and these are draining him for sustenance.

In Harold's work at the *Examiner*, he investigated the Midas Circle and asked the wrong questions. Sedgwick and his associates targeted him especially to reduce the danger of exposure, causing his health to fail faster than that of anyone else in the Hooverville. His fate shows the investigators what lies ahead for them and their loved ones.

No profile is provided for Harold Priestly as he will be dead before the opening scene is finished.

- **Description:** an emaciated shell of a man, barely able to move. His thin brown hair falls out in clumps and his skin is cracked and flaking. His eyes are locked wide in terror.
- **Traits:** speaks in a breathless, pained whisper.

Roleplaying Hooks:

- Asks the investigators to help, despite the fact that there is nothing they can do to help.

Billy Spitzer

Billy is a friendly, good-natured orphan who has adopted the people in the Hooverville as his new family.

Along with Esther Freyn, Billy was taken by the Midas Circle for syphoning the night before the scenario opens. When the thing that was once Hawkes started to manifest, it disrupted the Hawkes Device and Billy was able to escape in the chaos, although he was not able to free Esther.

Billy still has one of the Species 17 creatures living within him, and it is sucking him dry. If it is not removed within eight hours of the investigators finding him, he starts to crumble and die in the same manner as Harold Priestly. Because of exposure, minor wounds, and the creature within him, Billy drifts in and out of consciousness, and is barely coherent when he speaks.



Harold Priestly



Billy Spitzer

BLEAK PROSPECT

- **Description:** curly red hair and bright green eyes. Even though he exhibits the early symptoms of the mystery disease, he seems filled with boundless energy.
- **Traits:** relentlessly optimistic, and tries to maintain a happy smile despite obvious physical pain.

Roleplaying Hooks:

- Begg the investigators to help Esther.

Esther Freyn

The daughter of Maureen Freyn (pre-generated investigator), Esther has adapted better to life in the Hooverville than her mother has. She is shy by nature, but her friendship with Billy Spitzer and the hardship of life in the camp have brought her out of her shell, and she has been trying to help out as best she can.

As the scenario begins, Esther is imprisoned in a cell in the flooded cellar of Prospect House. The parasites have infested her and, unless they are removed, she will not survive for more than a few days. Because of the dark and the cold, she is not aware of the extent of her infection, only that she doesn't feel well. Esther is also terrified after being abandoned in such a horrific place, and is in fear of drowning in the thick muck that is rising around her.

- **Description:** a slightly built girl, with large brown eyes and stringy brown hair. She habitually wears her one good dress, which is ragged and patched heavily.



Esther Freyn

- **Traits:** Esther's experiences over the last few years have hit her hard, and she is a withdrawn, dreamy girl who will usually not speak until spoken to.

Roleplaying Hooks:

- Cries out for her mother in a strained voice, and gives voice to everyone's fears when she is near.
- Panic when the extent of an investigator's infection is revealed, (mime trying to pluck parasites from your flesh).

Nancy Carver

Nancy Carver was a legal clerk in the employ of Hiram Melnick (pre-generated investigator), until the legal practice went bankrupt. Carver is a bright young woman, but is deeply insecure by nature, and has resigned herself to her new life in the camp.

Since witnessing the arrival of the Midas Circle the night before the opening scene, and seeing their use of the "ventriloquist's dummy," Carver's mind has fractured. She is now unwilling to leave her tent, believing that there are monsters everywhere. It is difficult for her to understand what she saw, let alone talk about it. She can only picture the events in terms of men without faces who made a puppet sing, and that the song was the most terrible thing she has ever heard.



Nancy Carver

NAMELESS HORRORS

- **Description:** a once-pretty young woman with curly blonde hair, whose looks are marred by her hollow cheeks and the bags under her eyes.
- **Traits:** speaks quickly and incoherently since her exposure to the “ventriloquist’s dummy.”

Roleplaying Hooks:

- Begs the investigators to keep her safe from the faceless men and their puppet.
- Gives babbling descriptions of the horrors she has seen.

Ida Brodie

Brodie opened the Blue Star Diner on the Arkham Road in early 1930, and has been struggling to keep it open since. Business is poor, but she has too much sunk into it to give up. Her manner is stern, but those who get to know her learn that this masks a kind heart. Her own financial vulnerability has made her sympathetic to the people living in the Hooverville, and she provides them with leftover food and used coffee grounds.

While Brodie is willing to help as best she can, she will not tolerate the residents of the Hooverville coming to her diner while she has customers as she is worried about driving her paying customers away.



Ida Brodie

- **Description:** a willowy, middle-aged woman with an explosion of curly grey hair. She wears a neatly pressed waitress uniform.
- **Traits:** initially gruff, but listens to what people have to say. She performs acts of kindness with little fuss and no apparent good-humor.

Roleplaying Hooks:

- Cross her arms and glowers, even when offering help.
- Stops the investigators from disrupting her business and scaring off paying customers.

Sergeant Eamon MacCoole

Sergeant MacCoole is unhappy about the direction the police department has been taking over the last two years. He knows that the Chief of Police is corrupt and suspects that Theodore Sedgwick is behind some of the strange orders that have been coming down the chain.

- **Description:** a solidly built man, with short-cropped gray hair and a thick neck. Wears a perpetual look of dyspepsia.
- **Traits:** nervous and twitchy, given to looking over his shoulder to make sure no one else is listening.



Sergeant Eamon MacCoole

BLEAK PROSPECT

Roleplaying Hooks:

- Tries to warn about the danger if the investigators ask too many questions.
- Drop your voice when talking about MacCoole's suspicions, saying things like, "Between you and me..."

Norman Brunswick

Brunswick is the managing editor of the *Crawley Examiner*. He would like nothing better than to investigate the Midas Circle and expose what he is convinced are their corrupt and criminal practices. However, Theodore Sedgwick has bought the newspaper and is keeping Brunswick on a tight leash. Sedgwick has made it clear to Brunswick that if the *Examiner* publishes any article about the Midas Circle that is less than positive, Sedgwick will fire Brunswick and then use his considerable resources to destroy every aspect of Brunswick's life.

- **Description:** a short, portly, blustering man whose ruddy complexion makes him look one outburst away from an aneurysm.
- **Traits:** loses his temper at the slightest provocation and then lets it blow over immediately.

Roleplaying Hooks:

- Tries to get Agatha's forgiveness over having to fire her and Harold.



Norman Brunswick

Reggie Clover

Clover was a physics student at the Miskatonic University in the early 1920s, and assisted Hawkes and Sedgwick on a number of experiments.

After Hawkes disappeared, Clover became Sedgwick's first victim. Sedgwick experimented with leaving a specimen of Species 17 inside Clover, as well as infesting him with a number of other parasites, all against Clover's will. This destroyed Clover's health and mind, but after a spell in an asylum he is functional again.

Because Clover has a palsied face, a number of verbal tics, and problems concentrating on a train of thought for any length of time, the Midas Circle do not consider him a risk and have not bothered with killing him. Clover spends his time pushing a broom around the market, shuffling around town, or waiting in the newspaper office. Everyone he meets considers him "touched in the head."

- **Description:** seemingly prematurely aged, with flecks of grey in his short hair. His clothes are well kept, if cheap and old. One half of his face droops from Bell's Palsy.
- **Traits:** changes the emotional intensity of what he is saying randomly and inappropriately, laughing at tragedies, and shows distress about mundane matters.

Roleplaying Hooks:

- Tries to convince the investigators that Sedgwick is behind everything bad that happens in the world.



Reggie Clover

NAMELESS HORRORS

Theodore Sedgwick

Sedgwick is the leader of the Midas Circle and is well on his way to becoming something more and less than human. He wears a white silk kerchief tied around his face when others are around, claiming an old war wound has disfigured him. Anyone who has known him for more than a few years will know this to be a lie. Sedgwick is undergoing physical changes from exposure to the creatures, but is hiding this from his partners. He has convinced them all to wear white silk masks for their work, which also covers the fact that his face is quite inhuman. Most of his work is carried out from home, using letters, telephones, and intermediaries.

The skin of Sedgwick's face is turning a purplish-gray color, and has a number of what appear to be festering wounds. Sedgwick was alarmed to discover recently that some of these wounds have sharp little teeth in them, which have started moving of their own accord. Sometimes, when he has not fed on life essence for a few days, the wounds start to cry like hungry babies. Witnessing this provokes a **Sanity** roll (1/1D6 loss).

Sedgwick is the sole resident of an apartment building on Chamberlain Boulevard, which he owns, and has been adapted to meet the needs of his privacy. He has one trusted manservant, Cale, who deters any visitors, using a revolver if necessary.



Theodore Sedgwick

- **Description:** a pale, pudgy man, with slicked-back black hair, who wears only the finest of clothes. His face is usually covered with a white silk kerchief, which hides the discolored skin and festering wounds that cover his face.
- **Traits:** expects everyone to do his bidding without question, becoming incoherently angry when this does not happen.

Roleplaying Hooks:

- Threatens the investigators with destruction of the camp and everyone in it if they interfere with his plans.
- Turn your face away from the players when speaking, looking at them from the corner of your eye.

Roscoe Molloy

Molloy is one of Sedgwick's partners in the Midas Circle. He has seen Sedgwick grow richer than all the others, and thinks that he is holding secrets back for himself. Molloy has taken to visiting Prospect alone, trying to make sense of the Hawkes Device.

Molloy once worked for Thomas Dolan (pre-generated investigator) and targeted him specifically, as Dolan not only wanted his life energy but also to take over his business. Molloy now owns all of Dolan's former factories.

One of the many properties that Molloy owns is the Crawley Grand Hotel, and he lives in a suite there, using the hotel staff as servants. Molloy also owns a number of cars, but he drives his black Cadillac Sixteen Madame X sedan whenever the Midas



Roscoe Molloy

BLEAK PROSPECT

Circle are taking victims to Prospect, simply because it is the largest vehicle in his collection.

Molloy will be especially receptive to any plans from the investigators that can see him free of Sedgwick's control, and any conflicts along these lines gain a bonus die.

- **Description:** a tall, dapper man with a rough edge. He has a heavy brow, and big, hairy-knuckled hands. While he affects a friendly smile, it quickly becomes apparent that it is practiced and false.
- **Traits:** calls everyone "Friend" or "Pal," especially when threatening them. Cracks his knuckles while speaking.

Roleplaying Hooks:

- Verbally bullies and belittles anyone who gets in his way.
- Molloy will try to use the investigators to his advantage.

Casper Brinck

Brinck is the other original partner of Sedgwick's in the Midas Circle, and a lawyer by profession. He has started developing reservations about what the Circle is doing. Part of this is due to stirrings of conscience, but the final straw was Casper noticing things moving under his skin. He is frightened and looking for a way to undo what they have done. Investigators who appear to be able to help Brinck with this can receive a bonus die on any social conflicts with him.



Casper Brinck

Brinck has bought Hiram Melnick's (pre-generated investigator) former home, a small country house called Greenleys, just off the Arkham Road. It lies around a mile from Prospect House.

- **Description:** a thin, pale man, with high cheekbones and prematurely gray hair. He dresses with exquisite taste.
- **Traits:** despite his wealth and power, Brinck tends to look uncomfortable when he speaks to people. He rarely makes eye contact, and often stammers.

Roleplaying Hooks:

- Brinck will try to use the investigators to his advantage.
- Scratches and rubs his arms, as if they are itching.

Alex Rossetti

The Midas Circle decided they needed some hired muscle, as none of them really had the background to commit effective acts of violence. Rossetti, a former petty criminal, was a late addition to the Circle, and while he has prospered almost as much as the rest of them, his colleagues still treat him as a thug. This is breeding resentment and Brinck is trying to use this to turn Rossetti against Sedgwick.

Rossetti is especially receptive to any plans from the investigators that can see him free of Sedgwick's control, and any conflicts along these lines will gain a bonus die.

- **Description:** large and solid, with a broken nose and a scar over his left eye. His hairline is receding, giving him a pronounced widow's peak.
- **Traits:** stares hard at people in an intimidating manner.



Alex Rossetti

Roleplaying Hooks:

- Rossetti will try to use the investigators to his advantage.
- Scowls and taps his fingers with impatience.

Dr. James Cavendish

Dr. Cavendish took over from Dr. Coombes (pre-generated investigator) as the director of the Bentham Hospital. He is in the employ of the Midas Circle and follows their instruction not to allow anyone from the Hooverville to be treated by his staff. The Circle does not want any medical staff to raise questions about what has been done to their victims. Despite this, Cavendish follows his conscience and provides medical supplies to Dr. Coombes, paid for out of his own pocket.

Cavendish has a friendly, avuncular manner, and will be genuinely concerned about the plight of the investigators, even if he is unwilling to risk the future of the hospital to help them.

- **Description:** jowly, with thinning gray hair and cold blue eyes. He affects something of the look of an outdoorsman, sporting tweeds, and wearing a cap when outdoors.
- **Traits:** appears genuinely concerned about the wellbeing of others, even when he is powerless to affect it.

Roleplaying Hooks:

- Tries to learn more about the mystery disease without making any offers of help.
- Wring your hands and look distressed when discussing the plight of the Hooverville.



Dr. James Cavendish

Species 17

Species 17 resembles a cross between a lamprey and a cactus; gray in color, covered with a thick slime that gives it an iridescent purple sheen, and smells like spicy vomit. They are covered with sharp spines and needle-toothed mouths that scream like hungry babies. Such creatures need to be handled with thick gloves or forceps for safety.

If a specimen of Species 17 is present in a human body, the consistency of the body becomes otherworldly—enough that it is possible to reach into the body and remove it. The flesh of the host's abdomen becomes permeable, and anyone putting their hand inside has the sensation of reaching into a warm, thick stew. This is agonizing for the victim but deals no damage. The person reaching within feels the host's internal organs and the creature within. As mentioned above, handling the creature with bare hands is dangerous, and it will be unhappy about being removed from its nice, warm host.

The “Ventriloquist’s Dummy”

Only one of these creatures has been brought through into our world. It is used by the Midas Circle to disable those upon whom they would prey. Sedgwick prompts the creature to scream (see **Song of Madness**, page 134) by jabbing it with a hatpin while it sits in the crook of his arm.

The creature resembles a small monkey that has been turned inside out, the head of which is one huge mouth filled with teeth and writhing tentacles. It gives off a smell that is a mixture of swamp gas and custard, and it makes constant chattering and bubbling noises.

The Parasites

There are many creatures, small and large, that have made their way through the rift caused by the Hawkes Device. Many of the smaller ones are inimical to human life, and while they differ in physical form, they have much the same effect. Because they exist both in and out of our reality, the parasites can tunnel into living flesh without causing visible damage. Once within, they start sucking the life out of their host, moving on when the host inevitably dies.

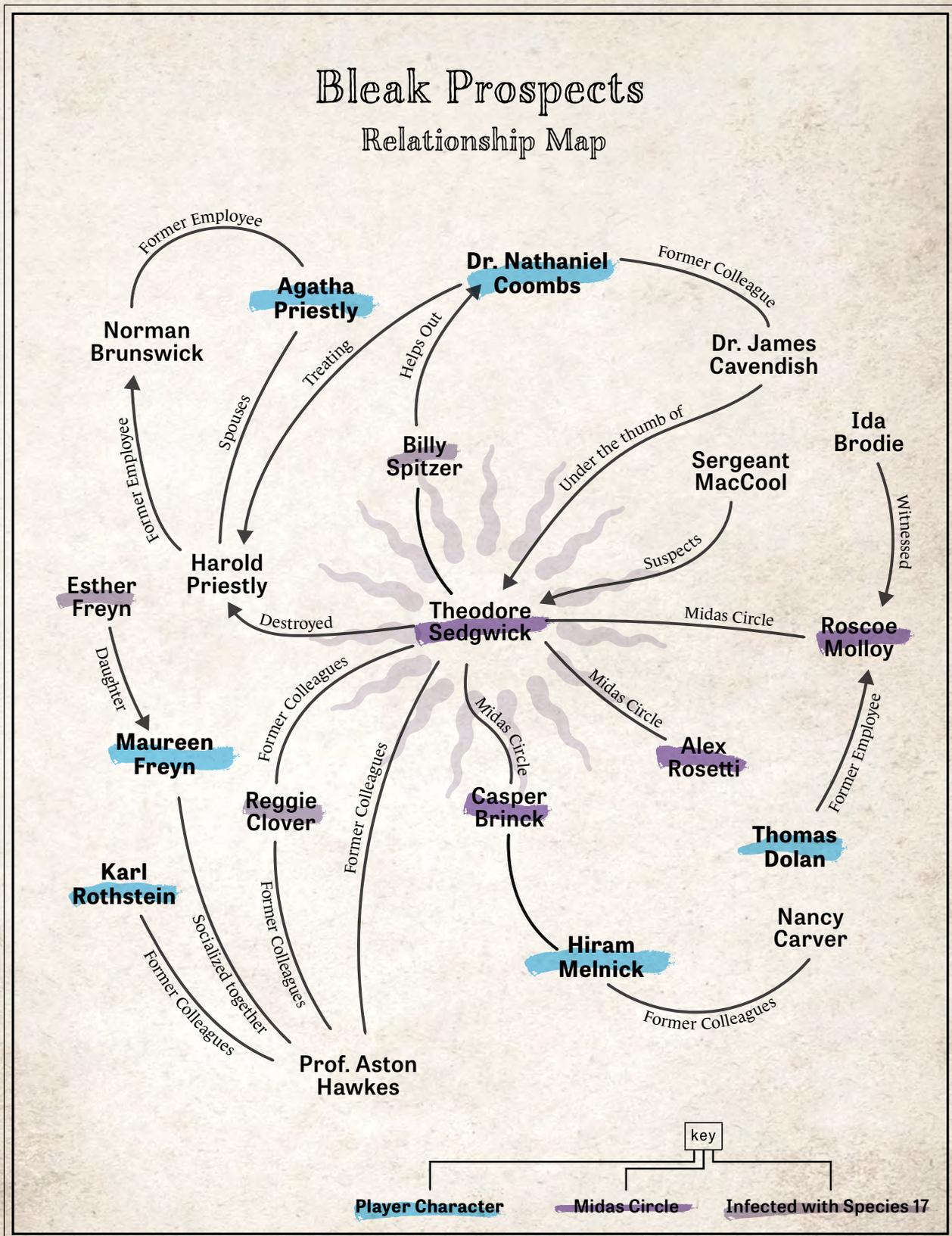
There is no way for a host or doctor to remove a parasite normally. The only hope is to present the parasite with a healthier host and give it the opportunity to pass into it, or possibly to modify the Hawkes Device to change the phase of either the host or the parasite, so that the parasite may be removed surgically. The latter course of action will also cause the parasite's burrowing through the host's flesh to cause 1D6 damage before it is removed.

The House That Was Hawkes

Aston Hawkes has been trapped outside what we would consider reality for over six years and is now completely insane. While Hawkes retains some of his humanity, he is host to a colony of

Bleak Prospects

Relationship Map



RUMORS AND CONSPIRACY THEORIES

While most people in the camp don't wholly believe the stories of the faceless men, it is still a popular topic of conversation, and everyone seems to have a theory. Some think that they are doctors from the hospital, come to perform experiments on the people in the camp; others that they are the ghosts of those who weren't strong enough to make it to the Hooverville and whose spirits are still seeking shelter.

As Keeper, play up the mystery and paranoia in the camp. People are afraid. Scared people do and say irrational things. The skepticism starts to drop once the disappearance of Billy and Esther is discovered, and word gets around about Nancy's encounter with the faceless men and their puppet. Have some of the residents demand explanations from the investigators. Come up with frightening rumors that can escalate things, such as how the faceless men will be back for the rest of the camp that night.

creatures from the other side, and his mind and impulses are as much theirs as his own. Each time the Hawkes Device has been started, he has tried to push through to our dimension, and the night before the opening scene marked his ultimate success.

Physically, Hawkes is now as out of phase with our dimension just as the other creatures that have come through the portal he created. To give himself more form, he instinctively anchored himself to the first thing he sensed that was large enough to contain what he had become: Prospect House itself.

The house is changing, becoming steadily more organic. Some rooms have taken the forms of organs, while others are still in transition and only have traces of strange fluids. The cellars are flooded with the waste products and parasites Hawkes has expelled from his new shell.

While there is little humanity left in Hawkes, there is still enough of an intellect to attempt communication. If anyone shouts intelligibly in the house—calling out for Esther, for example—Hawkes will answer them with a breathy, almost subsonic echo. Attempting to talk directly to Hawkes requires patience, as he is struggling to maintain enough of his new form to make words. Responses come slowly, with a single word every few seconds.

Hawkes is very hungry. The process of manifestation is demanding, and he needs raw materials to turn into new

THE MYSTERY DISEASE

Dr. Coombes (pre-generated investigator) has been researching the disease that has ravaged the residents of the camp, treating its victims as best he can, but has made little progress. So far, he has managed to identify the progression of the disease, but not its root cause, or any way of treating it. Attempts on his part have been complicated by the fact that this is not a disease—the wasting is a side effect of the syphoning of vitality by Species 17.

The first symptoms are flaking skin and lethargy. As it progresses, the lethargy gets worse, eventually incapacitating the victim. The patient's muscles waste away, becoming dry and brittle. In the final stages, the victim is so desiccated that they start to crumble, with bits of their body collapsing or breaking off. Death follows shortly after.

At the time of this scenario, no one has died of the disease yet, but this is about to change. Most people in the camp are in the intermediate stages, and are exhausted and fragile. The investigators, Billy Spitzer, and Esther Freyn are the healthiest, and are in the position of having to look after most of the others.

flesh. Hawkes has already absorbed all the vermin and insects in the house, and will either try to consume the investigators or plead with them to bring him flesh to make him strong again.

Killing Hawkes is difficult. The most direct way would be to burn the house down, but this would also be a death sentence for Esther Freyn, unless she has been freed from the cellars. Because of the moist nature of the structure, it requires considerable fuel to catch fire—see **Burning Diesel** (page 125). He is also vulnerable to attack in the master bedroom, which serves as his heart and brain.

It may be possible for someone to modify the Hawkes Device to send Hawkes back across the rift, but this would require a combined **Hard Physics** and **Electrical Repair** roll, as well as breaking the containment of the circle. Hawkes would be dispelled, but thousands of parasites from beyond would be trapped in the grounds of Prospect House.

Roleplaying Hooks:

- Demands that flesh be brought to him.
- Speak slowly, deeply and breathlessly.

OPENING SCENE

It is dawn on a chilly, November morning. The frost has come early this year and the ground is hard and hoary. People are beginning to stir, and some are gathered round a communal campfire, making what passes for coffee in the camp—a mixture of used grounds thrown out by the Blue Star Diner and roots dug up from the surrounding area.

Harold Priestly has taken a turn for the worse overnight. When someone goes to check on him in the medical shack, they hear that his breathing is labored and has a deathly rattling sound to it. He is staring straight up and there is a frozen look of panic on his face. A closer examination will reveal a thin patina of dust on his eyeballs.

Meanwhile, out by the campfire, the rumors are starting up again about the faceless men. A few people claim to have seen them around the camp last night, but no one is entirely sure as the experience was dreamlike.

Nancy Carver begins to cry. She rocks back and forth, saying that she saw them and that their faces were all white. One of them opened a box and took out a puppet and then he made the puppet sing. As Nancy recounts this, she loses control of her sobbing and starts shouting about the puppet

and how she doesn't want to think about the song it sang. A Hard **Psychology** roll calms Nancy down enough to the point where she can act rationally; otherwise she will retreat to her tent and hide under the covers, crying.

If calmed down, Nancy can remember a few details. The men were moving toward the campfire when one of them opened the box. Nancy was sitting out there with Billy Spitzer, as neither of them could sleep. She thinks the men turned up some time after 1 a.m. Given the right prompts, and a **Charm** or **Persuade** roll, Nancy realizes that the men were wearing white silk scarves wrapped around their heads, held down by hats. She is insistent about the puppet, though, saying that one of the men sat it in the crook of his arm, like a ventriloquist's dummy, and made it sing. That is the last thing she remembers. Any attempt to get Nancy to describe the puppet sends her screaming back to her tent.

There is no sign of Billy Spitzer in the camp. His bed has not been slept in. Esther Freyn is also missing; her bed is disturbed, as she slept there last night, but her shoes and overcoat are still in the tent she shares with her mother. Her mother, Maureen (pre-generated investigator), heard nothing in the night and has no idea where Esther is.



No one else is missing from the camp, but there are signs of a disturbance. The mud around the campfire and the Freyn tent is heavily trampled, and has been frozen in place by the frost. A **Tracking** or **Spot Hidden** roll reveals that there were four men walking around the area, all wearing expensive and well-maintained shoes, the likes of which no one in the camp can afford. The footprints can be followed 200 yards to the Arkham Road, where there are some tire tracks from a large automobile that head on to the road, away from Crawley.

The footprints and tire tracks were left by the members of the Midas Circle as they kidnapped Billy and Esther to take back to Prospect for syphoning. As mentioned in the Background section, this has gone wrong and Billy has escaped.

WHAT CAN THE INVESTIGATORS DO NOW?

At this stage, the investigators are faced with a mysterious threat and a few pieces of evidence. There is no single right course of action, so the Keeper should be prepared to support the players in whatever plan they choose.

Dr. Coombes may want to examine Harold Priestly, although he is soon to die.

Following the tire tracks will be difficult, but if any of the investigators go as far as the Blue Star Diner, they may learn that Molloy's car passed by last night. This could lead them to a confrontation with Molloy.

If the investigators go into Crawley and talk to the police, they will soon discover that Sedgwick is in control and is doing all he can to stop any investigation into disappearances at the Hooverville. Similar information can also be gleaned at the hospital.

While no one at the *Crawley Examiner* will provide help, it does provide an avenue to meet Reggie Clover and learn about his experiences with Theodore Sedgwick.

If the investigators decide against direct action, choosing instead to protect the camp, they will be visited after dark by members of the Midas Circle. This may provide an opportunity for the investigators to learn the truth about the faceless men.

Failing all other options, the investigators can encounter Billy Spitzer, who has escaped from Prospect House and knows that Esther Freyn is still a prisoner there. This should lead the investigators directly into deep trouble.



Examining Harold Priestly

The Medical Shack

The medical shack is the largest structure in the Hooverville. It is relatively solid, although it does a poor job of keeping the cold wind out. Dr. Coombes (pre-generated investigator) mitigates the cold by using a paraffin heater, but fuel is expensive enough that he only runs it on the coldest of days.

There are two beds in the shack, one of which is empty and the other occupied by Harold Priestly. An old metal cabinet contains most of the medical supplies. There is a workbench with an oil lamp and a salvaged microscope that Dr. Coombes uses to research the mystery disease ravaging the camp. Some old apple crates sit next to the bench, holding Coombes' notes and reference materials.

The resources that Dr. Coombes has managed to procure are meager, but he does the best he can with them. The shack contains supplies that have largely been donated by Dr. Cavendish of the Bentham Hospital. While Cavendish has been told by the Midas Circle that he is not to let his staff treat people from the camp, lest they ask the wrong types of questions, Cavendish has managed to sneak some supplies to Coombes to assuage his guilt.

EXAMINING HAROLD PRIESTLY

If anyone attempts to examine Harold physically, bathe him, or give him fluids, they discover that his flesh has become so fragile and brittle that it collapses at the first touch, turning to dust. Liquids dissolve his flesh, so mopping his brow or giving him a sip of water has horrific consequences, as bits of Harold's face turn to mush and start to trickle down his still-living remains. Harold can feel all of this, and moans in agony. Witnessing Harold's flesh crumbling or dissolving will provoke a **Sanity** roll (1/1D6 loss).

Harold is beyond saving. A successful **Medicine** roll can ease his passing, but, even then, he dies within an hour, or possibly much sooner if he is moved or manhandled. His breathing starts to become more labored, releasing small clouds of dust with every exhalation, before finally stopping. At this point his body cracks and crumbles.

A thorough examination of Harold's remains reveals a number of small, leathery pouches, each about the size of a thumbnail, lodged in his abdomen. The pouches have tiny dark shapes moving within, suspended in yellow fluid. These are the egg sacs of Species 17, and unless destroyed, they hatch within an hour of removal and the embryos attempt to slither to safety.

CRAWLEY

Crawley, Massachusetts, is a medium-sized town of 15,000 people, lying 30 miles to the southwest of Arkham. Before the Great Depression, Crawley thrived on the textile industry, but most of the mills and factories have shut down, with people leaving town in search of work elsewhere.

Crawley itself is pleasant and well maintained, with most of the civic amenities you would expect from a town of its size. Outside the town limits, the derelict factories turn the old industrial areas into eyesores. The exception to this is the road out to Arkham, which passes through green countryside, with farms, fields, woodland, and a number of country houses and estates, including Prospect and Greenleys.



SOCIAL STATUS AND PUSHED ROLLS

Given their outsider status, reduced hygiene, and visibly poor health the investigators will find it difficult for them to gain access to information and services that other people take for granted. This means that **Charm** or **Fast Talk** rolls may be required to, for example, get service in the diner, or not be thrown out of the library for vagrancy. Clerks and other functionaries will assume that the investigators are there to steal or find somewhere warm to sleep for the night.

If an investigator pushes such a roll, possible consequences could include being barred from the establishment, being thrown out by force, or the staff calling the police.



THE POLICE STATION

Crawley's only police station is a freestanding grey stone building, two stories tall, located on Ashcroft Street. The desk sergeant on duty when the investigators arrive is Eamon MacCoole. Like most of the Crawley Police Department, MacCoole follows the chief of police's instructions that no one is to investigate reports of crimes from the Hooverville, especially disappearances. While Sergeant MacCoole is not as hard-hearted as his exterior would suggest, and will be sympathetic to reports of missing children, he does not take down any details or permit the disappearances to be reported as a crime.

A Hard **Charm** or **Persuade** roll convinces MacCoole to reveal that there is a standing order not to help anyone from the Hooverville. If pressed, he shares his suspicion that this has something to do with Theodore Sedgwick, as he pays

regular visits to the chief, and new orders seem to follow immediately after.

If the investigators cause serious trouble, MacCoole advises them to flee, as he cannot guarantee their safety should they be arrested. MacCoole suspects that some of his colleagues have arranged for the permanent disappearance of people who asked the wrong questions.

BENTHAM HOSPITAL

The Bentham Hospital is on Tanner Street, set back in its own small, well-kept grounds. The edifice is built of brown brick and the arched main entrance is flanked by gray stone columns.

If the investigators go to the hospital to ask questions, Doris Cain, the nurse on duty at reception, stalls them and calls for orderlies to chase the investigators off the premises. Cain has her instructions about vagrants and has little sympathy for any stories the investigators may offer.

Should any investigators sneak into the hospital to see Dr. Cavendish, the hospital's director, or meet him outside of his work, he is sympathetic but unhelpful. A **Psychology** roll can reveal that he is frightened of something; a **Hard Persuade, Charm, Fast Talk, or Intimidate** roll can get him to reveal that he has been instructed by Theodore Sedgwick not to offer medical aid to the camp, although Cavendish has no idea why. Sedgwick has bought the land on which the hospital lies and has threatened to shut it down if Cavendish does not follow his instructions.

If the investigators can present Cavendish with evidence of infestations of alien parasites, he secretly admits the afflicted party or parties to the hospital, keeping them in a private room under his personal care. While Cavendish will be fascinated by the parasites and the symptoms they cause, there is little medical help he can offer outside of easing pain and distress with morphine.

THE CRAWLEY EXAMINER

The *Examiner* is the local newspaper for Crawley and the surrounding area. The offices lie in a two-story redbrick building on Hannover Street. The ground floor has large glass windows, which allow passersby to look at the work going on inside.

While Norman Brunswick, the managing editor, will see any former friends or employees, such as Agatha Priestly (pre-generated investigator), he evades requests for help, looking embarrassed as he refuses. A **Charm, Persuade, or Fast Talk** roll (Hard if none of the investigators are known to him), may convince him to let the investigators have access to the newspaper's morgue. While there is little of use in there,

a **Library Use** roll allows the investigators to confirm the link between the various members of the Midas Circle and to gain addresses for them, or to learn that Aston Hawkes disappeared from Prospect in 1926 and that his assistant, Theodore Sedgwick, was unable to help the police trace him.

While at the newspaper the investigators may run into **Reggie Clover** (see following).

MEETING REGGIE CLOVER

Reggie Clover pays regular visits to the *Examiner*, trying to get someone to believe his story about Sedgwick's unnatural experiments. Even if anyone did believe him, the *Examiner* would never publish a story critical of Sedgwick. Despite this, Clover visits the offices most times when he is not working as a cleaner at the fruit and vegetable market, waiting patiently in reception for an appointment that will never be granted.

If the investigators visit the newspaper to ask about disappearances or the Midas Circle, and Clover is in a position to overhear, he tells them he knows secrets about Sedgwick. He will also do this if he recognizes any of the investigators as former reporters or authority figures.

If the investigators show an interest in Clover, he tells them about his early days working with Hawkes and Sedgwick. The main pieces of information he can offer are:

- Hawkes managed to open a doorway to another world using a machine at Prospect.
- There were frightening and aggressive creatures on the other side.
- Hawkes had an accident and the machine swallowed him.
- Sedgwick took over and used Clover as a test subject, putting some of these creatures inside Clover's body.
- Sedgwick has kidnapped other people and used them as unwitting experimental subjects.
- Sedgwick has some way of making people forget what he has done to them.

Clover is not interested in taking revenge on Sedgwick, as he is too afraid of direct confrontation. He will not accompany the investigators to Prospect, as it holds too many bad memories.

If the investigators do not visit the newspaper, they may still encounter Clover elsewhere. Clover occasionally seeks medical attention at the hospital, where he is turned away, and often looks for information about the Midas Group at the town library. If the investigators visit none of these places, and you still wish to bring Clover into play, then he has been fired from his job due to his ill health, can no longer pay his rent, and arrives at the Hooverville looking for shelter.



Prospect house gate

THE BLUE STAR DINER

The Blue Star Diner lies two miles along the Arkham Road from the edge of Crawley, a mile farther on from the Hooverville. The building itself is a pre-fabricated unit, designed to resemble a railroad car, with aluminum walls and a curved ceiling. It has a single counter, with fixed stools; booths line one wall.

The diner is owned by Ida Brodie. While she is unhappy to have transients mingling with her customers, she often provides the residents of the camp with leftover food and is on good terms with the investigators.

Ida, a chronic insomniac, was working late last night, balancing the books. She noticed Roscoe Molloy's black Cadillac Sixteen drive past the diner just after 2 a.m., heading out of Crawley. While she didn't think much about it at the time, the incident has stuck in her memory because it is a recognizable car and it was late for anyone to be driving, especially heading out of town. While it was too dark for her to see any of the passengers clearly, it looked like the car was packed to capacity.

PROSPECT HOUSE

Prospect was the family home of the Hawkes family, and is a country house dating back to the late eighteenth century. Hawkes was the last of his line, and never married or had any heirs. With his disappearance, Theodore Sedgwick has bought the estate, and Prospect lies empty apart from visits from the Midas Circle. It is neglected and going to seed, but the Circle dare not hire anyone to perform maintenance and risk exposing their secret.

The iron gates are rusted, but there is a new chain and padlock on them. The padlock can be opened quietly with a **Locksmith** roll or simply smashed off. The rusted wrought-iron sign above the gates reads "Prospect." The gravel path that runs up to the main building is thick with weeds, however the largest of them have been cut back enough to allow motor vehicles to drive up to the house.

Tire tracks can be seen in the leaf mulch that lines the path, and an Intelligence roll will confirm that they match the tracks left by the Arkham Road, near the Hooverville.

A ten-foot tall stone wall surrounds the grounds. Walking the perimeter will take at least fifteen minutes for someone in good health. The wall can be climbed safely with a **Climb** roll, although if two or more people are present they can help each other over, granting a bonus die.

THE GROUNDS

There are thirty acres of grounds, including a summerhouse, a small lake, a number of collapsed greenhouses, some outbuildings, and an orchard, all of which are in the process of being reclaimed by nature.

The lawns are wild and overgrown, with weeds and saplings tall enough to obscure the vision of anyone walking through them, although the approach of winter is thinning them out. A few paths have been kept clear, apart from the gravel path, and it is possible to walk between the main house and the various outbuildings without cutting a way through the undergrowth. Despite this, enough of the plants brush against the skin of any investigator passing along one of these narrow paths to reveal that they are covered with slime and sticky secretions. The sound of rustling leaves can be heard all around, and occasionally small gray or white slug-like creatures can be seen slithering across the ground or along the stem of a plant.

With the breakdown of containment (see **The Hawkes Device**, page 126), some of the creatures summoned by the device have escaped and are loose in the grounds. They feed off any wildlife unwise enough to enter the grounds, or on each other. The desiccated corpses of deer and rabbits dot the grounds, partially dissolved by rain and dew, or ready to crumble to powder if touched.

A sound comes from the thick undergrowth to the side of the path running between the main house and the workshop. It sounds like a man sobbing, with the occasional muttered “help” mixed in, breathlessly, almost as a whimper. This is Johnny Rees, a vagrant who broke into the grounds this morning, looking for shelter and loose valuables. Rees has fallen prey to the parasites, and only the husk of him and the last traces of his mind remain. His flesh bulges and writhes all over, and his whole body twitches with the new life growing within him. As the investigators examine him, a fat, pale leech-like parasite crawls out through his eye-socket, barely displacing the eyeball itself, then down his face and back in through a nostril. Witnessing this and the general state of Rees calls for a **Sanity** roll (1/1D6 loss).

There is no way to save Rees, and spending any time doing so risks infection by the parasites (see **The Parasites**, page 116).

THE GENERATOR SHEDS

There are two large wooden sheds to the side of the main building, behind the squat stone structure of the workshop. Each contains two diesel generators, originally installed by Hawkes to provide power for his device in the workshop. Roscoe Molloy has kept the generators



Dead vagrant



DESCRIBING PROSPECT HOUSE

With the changes that Prospect has undergone, it has become a dangerous, frightening place. It is quite likely to be late in the day by the time the investigators get there, in which case the light is poor within the wild undergrowth. There are noises of movement all around, some of them disconcertingly wet-sounding. The undergrowth is repellently slimy and sticky, and anyone brushing against the plants in the dark, or reaching into a shadowed place, will find themselves touching pulpy, wriggling masses. There are strange smells, some sweet and almost appetizing, others astringent or nauseating, but few of them native to this earth.

Keep up the sensory descriptions as the investigators explore the grounds, improvising ideas. Prospect should never feel like a safe place to be.




BURNING DIESEL

Many *Call of Cthulhu* investigators see fire as the solution for all life's problems. If the investigators decide to make use of the diesel in the sheds to burn down Prospect, there are a few things to bear in mind.

Diesel is much more difficult to ignite than gasoline. Setting fire to liquid diesel (i.e., not in aerosol form) requires sustained exposure to flame, and the ignition takes the form of a growing, intense burn, unlike the explosion that results from gasoline. It takes 1D10 rounds to start a fire with diesel, assuming some kind of constant exposure to a significant flame (burning cloth, etc.); tossing a match into a pool of diesel simply extinguishes the match.

If Esther Freyn is still a prisoner in the house, burning down Prospect will kill her.



in good working order, and has also added some cables to the main house to provide lighting for the Circle's activities there; starting the generators will light them all up, although the lights in the cellars have been shorted out by dripping fluid.

As well as the generators, the sheds contain lanterns, lamp oil, rusty gardening implements, tools for maintaining the generators, and five large drums of diesel.

THE WORKSHOP

Hawkes' original workshop, now under the control of the Midas Circle, is in the largest of the outbuildings. It is a stone structure, square in shape, with walls 20 feet long and 10 feet high, and of obviously modern construction. There are no windows, and the only access is via a heavy, black iron door, which is padlocked from the outside (the padlock may be smashed off or picked quietly with a **Locksmith** roll). Two thick electrical cables run under one wall and out to the generator sheds (**Spot Hidden** to notice the cables while in the area of the outbuildings).

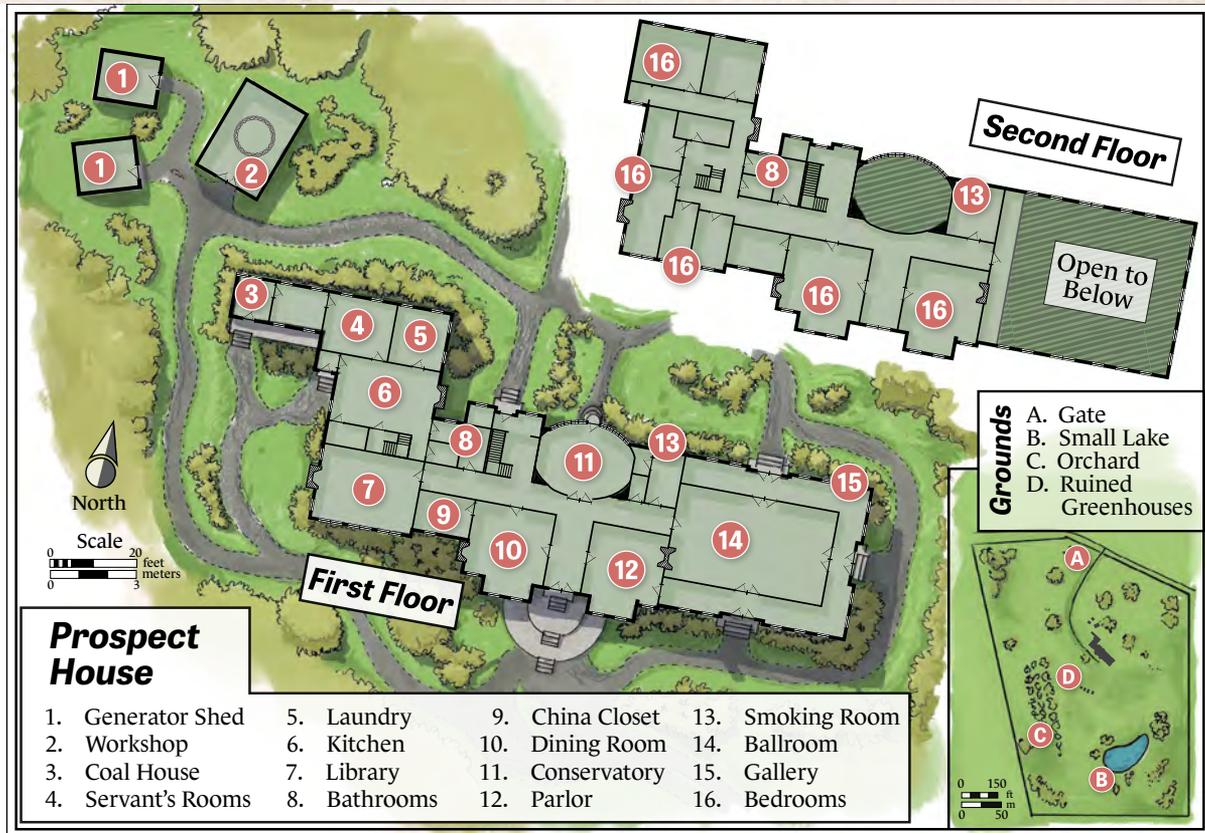
The inside of the workshop is dark. There are electrical lights on the ceiling and walls, but unless the generator is running, these will not be lit. The wall in which the door is set is surrounded by electrical panels, cables and switches. Some of these cables run through conduits to a huge iron circle set in the stone floor. The circle is twisted and has strange designs carved into it. The floor is badly stained and there is a reek of vomit,

ammonia, and strong spices in the air. The electrical equipment and the circle in the floor make up the Hawkes Device, which the Midas Circle have been using to punch a hole to the other dimension and manifest the creatures that live there.

Wooden workbenches run along two of the walls, covered with an odd array of items: there are thick leather aprons and gauntlets; welding masks; shiny metal forceps, over three feet in length; nets made of thick twine; a selection of knives, ranging from daggers to machetes; a wooden box containing thirty wax earplugs; and a half-dozen round metal canisters (used to transport specimens), two feet tall, eight inches in diameter, and made of polished aluminum, with lids that twist on tightly. This equipment is used to capture specimens of Species 17 when they float within the circle of the Hawkes Device, and to fend off other predators that may be attracted to the rift. All metals used in the construction of the smaller items are non-ferrous, to avoid them being sucked into the rift when the device is active.

Bolted to the back wall is a six-foot-tall glass tank, with rusted iron supports, and a padlocked iron lid. Trickles of condensation run down the glass. The tank is filled with what looks like murky water and shapes can be seen moving within. This is where the Midas Circle keep the creatures they capture for future use. There are three specimens of Species 17 floating within. The "**Ventriloquist's Dummy**" (page 116) is also floating in the tank, abandoned by the Midas Circle in their panicked escape from Prospect the previous night.

NAMELESS HORRORS



THE HAWKES DEVICE

The Hawkes Device works in a different way from the Tillinghast Resonator. The latter relied on stimulating the pineal gland to allow people to perceive overlapping dimensions, but the Hawkes Device collapses all available dimensions within a limited space. This means that the ability of creatures from other dimensions to interact with ours, and vice-versa, is not limited by human perception. This makes it significantly more dangerous, as containment is an issue. The device loses a bit of containment every time it is used, and smaller entities find themselves trapped in our dimension when the device is deactivated. These are the creatures infesting the grounds.

Activating the device is as simple as providing it with electricity. It requires the power of both sets of generators, and for the breaker switches on the wall of the workshop to be thrown to the on position. It then takes thirty seconds for the device to build up the power it needs to open a rift.

When the device is active, it creates a strong electromagnetic field that will attract ferrous metals, and cause hair to stand on end. The hum it creates is subsonic and almost bowel loosening, causing a profound sense of fear and wrongness. It then warps the interior as if through a heat haze, and bleeds a sickly yellow light. Then the creatures manifest—seeing this provokes a **Sanity** roll (1/1D6 loss).

Destroying the device while it is active causes it to lose containment, leaving an open wound between the two worlds through which the denizens of each can pass. Fixing this will involve repairing the device (requiring a combined **Physics** and **Electrical Repair** roll) and then shutting down

CREATURES

There are a wide variety of creatures on the other side, taking a wide array of forms. Most of them resemble deep-sea creatures swimming through the air—amorphous, tentacular, and phosphorescent. Some are smaller than a fist, while others are so large that only parts of them manifest in the field of the device. After five minutes, the field will be filled with a huge, inhuman eye staring out with unimaginable hunger, calling for a **Sanity** roll (1/1D10 loss).

the gateway safely, during which time the creatures on the other side take a lively interest in the investigators.

Understanding the workings of the device enough to modify or replicate it requires a combined Hard **Physics** and **Electrical Repair** roll, as well as several hours to examine the device itself.

THROUGH THE RIFT

If an investigator passes over the iron ring, they find themselves in an utterly alien landscape. Human sensory organs are not capable of making sense of the constantly shifting environment, and is totally disorienting. The shapes of bizarre life forms, shifting dimensions and skewed views of our reality are overwhelming, making it impossible for the brain to make sense of it all.

The world the investigator perceives is still ours in some respects but from the perspective of the creatures who live out of phase with it, passing beyond our perceptions. Experiencing this calls for a **Sanity** roll (1D3/1D20 loss).

If the investigator tries to escape, the player needs to make a **POW** roll for the investigator to find their way back across the ring and not get lost deeper in the other world. If they do succeed, they also need to make a **Luck** roll to avoid being riddled with parasites when they return (see **The Parasites**, page 116).

If the Hawkes Device is shut down while someone is inside the ring, they are lost forever.

THE MAIN HOUSE

Prospect House was built in 1893, and was once a grand example of Federal-style architecture. Its white-painted stone edifice is now peeling and cracked, and many of the windows are broken. Portions of the roof have collapsed, making parts of the house inaccessible. There are a number of possible ways into the main house:

- The front door is ajar, as the Midas Circle left in a hurry once Hawkes began to manifest.
- There is a locked door to the rear, which leads to the kitchen. The wood is so rotten that any attempt to smash it open will succeed.
- A set of broken French windows lead into the conservatory, which is filled with broken glass and rubble; with weeds poking up through the floorboards.
- Climbing in through a broken window will require a **DEX** roll to avoid the investigator cutting him- or herself on the shards of broken glass embedded in the frame. Failure results in 1D3 points of damage.

Most of the rooms in the main building are unremarkable and so are not described in detail. Consider each one to have the appropriate furniture and decorations, covered with dust sheets, but damaged by damp and mold. The plaster has collapsed in most of the rooms, even if the roof is still intact overhead, and there is rubble and signs of animal nests and droppings; no animals can be found in the house now, as they have either fled or been devoured by Hawkes.

The Thing That Was Hawkes is taking possession of the house slowly, and the infrastructure is becoming steadily more organic. Some rooms are still unaffected, while others have become part of his physiology, mirroring the functions that he remembers a human body as having. In time, the house will become something wholly living and alien that still thinks it is Aston Hawkes.

THE MAIN ENTRANCE

The hallway leading from the main entrance is largely intact, if water-damaged, and leads to a grand flight of stairs up to the second floor. Doors lead to the dining and sitting rooms, and corridors lead to the east wing of the house, and to the kitchens.

The carpet is sticky underfoot, walking across it produces squelching and slurping noises. The smell in the room is meaty and organic in a nauseating way. There is also a strong smell of excrement and bile coming from the rear of the house.

Those entering through the front entrance notice that the air inside is unusually warm for the time of year, and repellently moist. Gusts of this sticky air repeat in a slow cycle, as Hawkes breathes in and out. Any investigator realizing what this is should make a **Sanity** roll (0/1D3 loss).

THE DINING ROOM

Hawkes has started remaking the dining room as part of his digestive system. There is a strong smell of bile, and viscous greenish-yellow acid drips down the walls, pooling on the floor. A successful **Spot Hidden** roll reveals the partially digested corpses of two raccoons under the dining table.

If any investigators are foolhardy enough to set foot in here, Hawkes attempts to devour them; he is still rebuilding himself, and he is ravenous. As soon as the investigators are clear of the doorway, the doors and shutters of the room slam shut, plunging the room into darkness. The ground starts to bubble with bile, working its way through the carpets. For every round an investigator is exposed to this, they take 1D3 damage. Experiencing this provokes a **Sanity** roll (1/1D6 loss).



Inside the workshop

Unless an investigator has a light source, it requires an **Intelligence** roll to find one of the doors or windows within a round; otherwise it takes 1D3+1 rounds. An opposed **STR** roll versus Strength 120 is required to break through a door or shutter. Alternatively, a **Luck** roll will take an investigator to a part of the room where the floor is weak, allowing them to fall through to the cellar and escape imminent digestion.

THE BALLROOM

The ceiling has collapsed in the once-grand ballroom, and the floor is broken and covered in rubble, making it difficult to traverse quickly. A few floor-to-ceiling mirrors have survived, although they are cracked.

Hawkes has only just started to manifest in the ballroom, thus the room has barely begun to change. Black fluid that smells like blood trickles out of the cracks in the mirrors, and there are small pools of it on the ground. Every now and then, a human figure can be seen reflected in a mirror, indistinct and robed in shadow. There is nothing in the room that seems to be casting the reflection—seeing this provokes a **Sanity** roll (0/1 loss).

THE MASTER BEDROOM

The master bedroom is accessed by a set of double doors on the second-floor landing. One of the doors is open, swinging slowly in and out as the warm, moist air gusts past it. Only darkness can be seen within.

This is where the core of Hawkes' consciousness resides, and it is the most transformed room in the house. It has become his brain, lungs, heart, and mouth. These organs move to other parts of the house given time and new flesh.

Inside, the room looks as if it has been wallpapered and carpeted in wet red and purple velvet, including the furniture, the shapes of which can only be made out vaguely under their slimy covering. Every surface pulsates—witnessing this calls for a **Sanity** roll (1/1D6 loss).

If any investigators attempt to communicate with Hawkes, whether or not they know that this is him, his voice comes from the master bedroom. It is a low, breathy rumble that shakes the entire house, and speaks slowly and hesitantly. Hawkes is utterly insane, and his speech is fragmented and incoherent.

When Hawkes speaks, what looks initially to be a crack or tear in the wall opens up, expelling a blast of sticky air and globules of fluid. Wet tissue dripping with fluids can

be seen beyond the tear, as well as the first jagged white protuberances of what will become Hawkes' new teeth.

Should an investigator be foolish enough to anger Hawkes while in this room, he uses his tongue to grab them and pull them into his mouth before swallowing them (see **The House That Was Hawkes**, page 116). This then deposits them in the dining room, ready to be digested.

This room is also where Hawkes is most vulnerable. His brain resides above the ceiling and can potentially be destroyed, thus killing him. Also, see **The House that was Hawkes** on page 135 for details.

THE KITCHENS

The suite of rooms that make up the kitchens, pantry, and servants' quarters are in the process of transition. The walls have become largely organic, covered in pulsating red flesh, with patches of stained plaster and wallpaper showing through. The jambs of the doorways have also become organic, and twitch like sphincters. If this is the first exposure an investigator has had to the changes occurring in Prospect House, it provokes a **Sanity** roll (0/1D4 loss).

The linoleum-covered and bare stone floors are slimy with secretions. Running through these rooms requires a **DEX** roll or the investigator will fall prone and become covered with foul-smelling fluids.

THE CELLARS

The stairs to the cellars lie behind a door in the kitchen. The various excretions and run-off fluids from Hawkes' growing presence have flooded the cellar, shorting the electrical circuit, and so the stairs descend into complete darkness. The stench of bile, excrement, and decay is overpowering, and any investigators heading down will have to make a **CON** roll to avoid uncontrollable vomiting.

The stairs are slick with dark liquid and need to be descended carefully. Any investigator heading down carelessly needs to make a Hard **DEX** roll or tumble down, taking 1D3 damage, and landing in the foul pool below. They also need to make a **Luck** roll to avoid losing anything they were carrying in the liquid, including light sources.

The discharge has flooded the cellar to a depth of four feet. Anyone moving through the cellar has to wade through this; all movement rates are quartered (round down) while doing so. The liquid is acidic, due to the high concentration of bile, and will inflict 1D3-1 damage for every minute of exposure, as it eats away at the skin of those exposed, and fills their lungs with acidic vapors.

The thick, lumpy liquid is also infested with **Parasites** (page 116), which, in the dark, are difficult to differentiate



Master bedroom



DELUSIONS AND INVOLUNTARY ACTIONS

By the time the investigators have started to explore Prospect, there is a good chance that one or more of them will be temporarily or indefinitely insane. This means that the Keeper will have license to make Prospect even more threatening through delusions. These could include:

- Deciding that they or others are riddled with parasites.
- Not acknowledging the reality of being infested by parasites.
- Imagining a specimen of Species 17 to be a crying baby.
- Seeing manifestations of Hawkes outside of the main house.
- Seeing other investigators being possessed by Hawkes.
- Hearing Esther calling for help from other parts of the grounds, leading the investigator into danger.
- Maybe they hear Hawkes' voice as that of someone else (perhaps another investigator).
- Become convinced that someone they care about is trapped in the walls.

Similarly, involuntary actions due to failed Sanity rolls while indefinitely insane should lead the investigator deeper into trouble. They may drop a specimen of Species 17 that they were trying to contain, or place it within themselves or another investigator in a panic. Inside the main house, they may drop their lantern, or run deeper into the darkness, to rooms more completely controlled by Hawkes.

Take a cue from the investigators and ratchet-up the tension by playing on their fears and concerns.



from the other lumps of organic matter. Any investigator wading through it needs to make a **Luck** roll to avoid becoming infested.

The main cellar stretches under the length of the house, and there are two side cellars. One contains wine racks, while the other has been converted into cells by the Midas Circle to hold their victims as they are being syphoned. There are two separate cells, each with an iron-barred door—one cell is empty and the other holds Esther Freyn. Opening this door requires a **Locksmith** roll to pick the lock or a Hard **STR** roll to bend or break it enough for Esther to slip through.

As the caustic liquid has risen in the cellars, Esther has resorted to standing the bunk on its end, and climbing to the top of it to keep above the surface. She is exhausted, and in danger of fainting and drowning. If the investigators call out in the cellar or otherwise make noise, Esther cries for help, guiding the investigators to her. As Esther is covered in the viscous black liquid, it is not be obvious that she is infested with parasites until she is either clean or seen in better light.

KEEPING UP THE PACE

BILLY RETURNS

If the investigators are floundering and have no idea what to do next, they should find Billy Spitzer; he may be lying unconscious on the edge of the Hooverville or come staggering into camp if no one is looking for him. Be careful when you introduce this element, as it will probably cause the investigators to abandon all other avenues and head straight to Prospect.

If the investigators have other plans, such as lying in wait at the camp in case the faceless men return, Billy has found shelter for the day in an abandoned shed and can be encountered later if needed.

Billy is badly injured and exhausted, as well as half-mad with the things he has seen. His escape has left him with cuts and bruises all over his body, and he is suffering from hypothermia. Worst of all, he still has a specimen of Species 17 in his abdomen, sucking the life out of him. Unless it is removed in the next eight hours, Billy starts to crumble as Harold Priestly did.

Billy drifts in and out of consciousness, but on the occasions he comes round, he panics, saying that “they” still have Esther and that he couldn’t free her. He is guilt-stricken for abandoning Esther, and wants to head back to free her, despite the fact that he is no condition to even walk.

Apart from the fact that Esther is a prisoner, the other useful piece of information that Billy can share is that he was held prisoner in a derelict house in the country. As he left the grounds, he saw a rusted iron arch over the entrance to the grounds with the word “Prospect” wrought in it. Anyone who knows Crawley well recognizes the name of the old Hawkes estate, and investigators who lived in the area or knew Hawkes know exactly where Prospect lies.

SEDGWICK, BRINCK, AND ROSSETTI RETURN TO THE HOOVERVILLE

After the disruption to their plans the previous night, the other members of the Midas Circle wanted to lie low for a while, but Sedgwick would have none of it. He knows that the changes to his body accelerate when he goes without “feeding,” and does not want to risk entering Prospect to syphon Esther, so he has insisted that the rest of the Circle accompany him for another raid on the Hooverville.

The others are unhappy about this, especially as the “ventriloquist’s dummy” is still at Prospect, although they did have the presence of mind to hold on to two of the containers of Species 17 when they fled. This means that they will have to rely on stealth or violence to kidnap fresh victims. Molloy has adamantly refused to have anything to do with this, and has his own secret plan to return to Prospect.

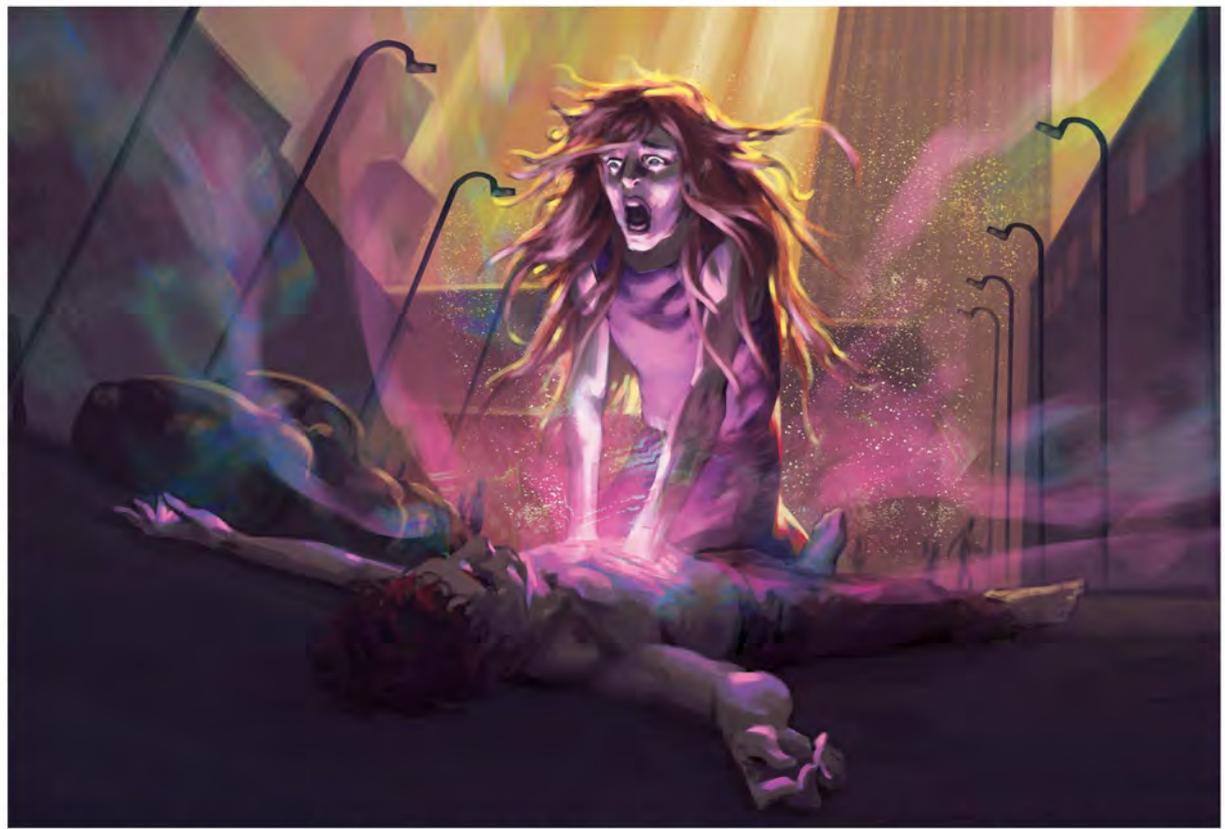
The other three members of the Circle return to the camp at 1 a.m., on the assumption that everyone will be asleep by then. They once again park the car on the main road, 200 yards from the edge of the camp, and move in as stealthily as possible. Given that there are three of them, and the frost on the ground makes the occasional cracking noise,

any investigators listening for them receive a bonus die on a **Listen** roll; any **Spot Hidden** roll will be as normal. Not having paid too much attention to who sleeps where, the Circle members head for the two nearest tents and attempt to abduct the occupants. These tents belong to Nancy Carver and Maureen Freyn (pre-generated investigator). Nancy, already on edge from her experience the previous night, is awake and starts screaming as soon as someone starts opening the flap of her tent. This is more than enough noise to attract the attention of the other residents.

Faced with exposure, the Circle members attempt to flee or, if blocked off, shoot their way out. Treat this as either a chase scene or a combat accordingly. Brinck does not want to kill anyone, and drops his gun and tries to escape when he sees anyone on either side get shot.

MOLLOY VISITS PROSPECT

While the other members of the Midas Circle are busy at the Hooverville, Molloy takes the opportunity to return to Prospect. He has two goals: to take away as many specimens of Species 17 as he can, and have one last attempt at understanding the workings of the Hawkes Device. Molloy has had enough of the Midas Circle, especially after the



horrors of the previous night, and wants to set up on his own in a new town.

If there is any sign of intruders, such as the lock having been smashed on the main gate, or the lights or generator having been turned on, Molloy is on his guard and has his revolver ready. He is prepared to defend himself and does not want to share the resources he came for. If there are no signs of intruders, he heads to the workshop and activates the Hawkes Device.

Should the investigators calm Molloy down or disarm him, and then talk to him, he is willing to make deals, especially if any of them have a better understanding of the Hawkes Device than he possesses. Molloy is quite willing to betray the other Circle members in any way that the investigators ask of him, and is also be happy to explain how Species 17 and the “ventriloquist’s dummy” can be used.

WRAPPING IT ALL UP

The climax depends almost entirely on the actions of the investigators. As Keeper, you should try to find an appropriately dramatic moment to end things, even if it means leaving a few plot threads dangling.

It is quite possible that all the investigators go insane or die in Prospect, in which case find a suitably dark point to describe their final fates. This also includes any investigators who end up infested with parasites, although their deaths will take longer unless they find a way to remove the parasites.

Should the investigators best the Midas Circle, take control of the Hawkes Device, or specimens of Species 17, find out how far the investigators are willing to take this new

power. Will they destroy it, use it to right wrongs, or become a new Midas Circle themselves?

If the investigators disrupt the plans of the Midas Circle by destroying the Hawkes Device, and rescue Esther, Sedgwick assumes that people from the Hooverville are responsible and so seeks revenge. Use the section titled **Sedgwick, Brinck, and Rossetti Return to the Hooverville** (page 131) for the Midas Circle’s plan of attack, only this time they go in guns blazing and try to set fire to as much of the camp as possible.

The investigators may decide to deal with Hawkes, attempting to destroy or free him, or simply try to come to some kind of understanding of what he is. Maybe investigators who go down this path find a new home in Prospect or beyond the rift created by the Hawkes Device.

Ask the players of any surviving investigators to narrate a brief coda, saying how the horrors they have endured, and the discoveries they have made shape the rest of their investigators’ lives. Don’t forget to include the impact on any family and friends who may still live in the Hooverville.

CONCLUSION

Suggested Sanity awards for investigators completing this scenario are:

- Saving Esther Freyn +1D4 Sanity points.
- Stopping the Midas Circle from preying on the camp +1D6 Sanity points.
- Destroying or releasing Aston Hawkes +1D4 Sanity points.
- Finding a cure for the parasitic infection +1D4 Sanity points.
- Letting Esther Freyn die -1D6 Sanity loss Sanity points.



CHARACTERS

The following section outlines the background, role, and statistics of the major non-player characters and monsters portrayed in this scenario. Note that, unless stated otherwise, any skills are assumed to be in the range of 20% to 50%.

HAROLD PRIESTLY, age 32, dying former reporter

No profile is provided as Priestly dies at the opening of the scenario.

BILLY SPITZER, age 14, enthusiastic helper

STR 40 CON 60 SIZ 55 DEX 70 INT 75
APP 60 POW 50 EDU 45 SAN 40 HP 11
Damage Bonus: 0 Build: 0 Move: 8 MP: 10

Combat

Brawl 30% (15/6), damage 1D3
Dodge 35% (17/7)

ESTHER FREYN, age 12, prisoner infested with parasites

STR 25 CON 50 SIZ 35 DEX 50 INT 65
APP 55 POW 50 EDU 35 SAN 30 HP 8
Damage Bonus: -2 Build: -2 Move: 8 MP: 10

Combat

Brawl 25% (12/5), damage 1D3 - 2
Dodge 25% (12/5)

NANCY CARVER, age 26, maddened witness

STR 50 CON 80 SIZ 45 DEX 50 INT 65
APP 70 POW 35 EDU 65 SAN 25* HP 12
Damage Bonus: 0 Build: 0 Move: 9 MP: 7

*Indefinitely insane.

Combat

Brawl 25% (12/5), damage 1D3
Dodge 25% (12/5)

IDA BRODIE, age 56, gruff diner owner with a soft side

STR 60 CON 50 SIZ 65 DEX 55 INT 55
APP 40 POW 45 EDU 45 SAN 45 HP 11
Damage Bonus: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 5 MP: 9

Combat

Brawl 25% (12/5), damage 1D3 + 1D4
Dodge 27% (13/5)

SERGEANT EAMON MACCOOLE, age 43, frustrated desk sergeant

STR 80 CON 40 SIZ 75 DEX 65 INT 60
APP 35 POW 55 EDU 55 SAN 55 HP 11
Damage Bonus: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 5 MP: 11

Combat

Brawl 45% (22/9), damage 1D3 + 1D4
Baton 45% (22/9), damage 1D6 + 1D4
Dodge 32% (16/6)

NORMAN BRUNSWICK, age 61, intimidated editor

STR 50 CON 60 SIZ 60 DEX 45 INT 75
APP 50 POW 65 EDU 75 SAN 65 HP 12
Damage Bonus: 0 Build: 0 Move: 4 MP: 13

Combat

Brawl 25% (12/5), damage 1D3
Dodge 22% (11/4)

REGGIE CLOVER, age 30, man with a story to tell

STR 45 CON 30 SIZ 45 DEX 35 INT 25
APP 15 POW 40 EDU 75 SAN 15 HP 7
Damage Bonus: 0 Build: 0 Move: 8 MP: 8

Combat

Brawl 25% (12/5), damage 1D3
Dodge 17% (8/3)

THEODORE SEDGWICK, age 34, Midas Circle mastermind

STR 65 CON 40 SIZ 65 DEX 65 INT 65
APP 05 POW 80 EDU 70 SAN 40 HP 10
Damage Bonus: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 8 MP: 16

Combat

Brawl 25% (12/5), damage 1D3 + 1D4
Dodge 32% (16/6)

ROSCOE MOLLOY, age 35, member of the Midas Circle

STR 50 CON 70 SIZ 80 DEX 60 INT 70
APP 55 POW 60 EDU 70 SAN 35 HP 15
Damage Bonus: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 7 MP: 12

Combat

Brawl 25% (12/5), damage 1D3 + 1D4
Dodge 30% (15/6)

NAMELESS HORRORS

CASPER BRINCK,

age 40, Midas Circle member with a conscience

STR 65 CON 50 SIZ 60 DEX 50 INT 65
APP 35 POW 65 EDU 60 SAN 40 HP 11
Damage Bonus: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 7 MP: 13

Combat

Brawl 25% (12/5), damage 1D3 + 1D4
Dodge 25% (12/5)

ALEX ROSSETTI,

age 27, underestimated hired thug

STR 85 CON 65 SIZ 75 DEX 60 INT 65
APP 40 POW 65 EDU 50 SAN 50 HP 14
Damage Bonus: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 8 MP: 13

Combat

Brawl 55% (27/11), damage 1D3 + 1D4
.38 Revolver 50% (25/10), damage 1D10
Dodge 45% (22/9)

DR. JAMES CAVENDISH,

age 58, cowed hospital director

STR 55 CON 65 SIZ 55 DEX 60 INT 75
APP 60 POW 45 EDU 90 SAN 45 HP 12
Damage Bonus: 0 Build: 0 Move: 6 MP: 9

Combat

Brawl 25% (12/5), damage 1D3
Dodge 30% (15/6)

Skills

First Aid 45%, Medicine 65%

SPECIES 17, *organic syphon*

Species 17 resembles a cross between a lamprey and a cactus, gray in color, and covered with a thick slime that gives it an iridescent purple sheen and smells like spicy vomit. They are covered with sharp spines and needle-toothed mouths that scream like hungry babies, and need to be handled with thick gloves or forceps for safety.

STR 40 CON 60 SIZ 20 DEX 70 INT —
APP — POW 70 EDU — SAN — HP 8
Damage Bonus: -2 Build: -2 Move: 6 MP: 14

SPECIAL POWERS:

Hard to handle: if an investigator handles a specimen of Species 17 with bare hands, the player needs to make a Luck roll or their investigator loses 1D3 hit points as their hands are shredded.

They then take a penalty die on any tasks that involve use of their hands until they receive the benefit of a successful First Aid roll.

Devour POW: when one of the creatures is first placed in a host it devours 1D3 × 10 POW and Luck (one roll for both).

If it is then removed and placed immediately in another host, it excretes 1D2 × 10 POW and Luck into the new host (it is possible that it excretes more than it has just ingested, as it has its own reserves). When a host has a specimen removed, the process is confusing and disorienting enough to leave them with temporary amnesia for 1D20 minutes.

Combat

Attacks per round: 1

Bite 60% (30/12), damage 1D4 - 2
Burrow into host* 60% (30/12) (fighting maneuver)
Dodge 35% (17/7)

*Automatic if the target is unconscious, held against their will, or willingly invites the creature in.

Armor: none, but take only 1 point of damage from firearms and impaling weapons due to alien flesh.

Sanity Loss: 1/1D6 to see a member of Species 17.

THE "VENTRILOQUIST'S DUMMY", *singer of maddening songs*

The creature resembles a small monkey that has been turned inside out, the head of which is one huge mouth filled with teeth and writhing tentacles. It gives off a smell that is a mixture of swamp gas and custard, and it makes constant chattering and bubbling noises.

STR 20 CON 80 SIZ 20 DEX 50 INT —
APP — POW 120 EDU — SAN — HP 8
Damage Bonus: -2 Build: -2 Move: 0 MP: 24

SPECIAL POWERS:

Song of Madness: when the creature is injured, it screeches hideously, and anyone who hears this cry is knocked unconscious for 1D6 hours unless they succeed in an Extreme POW roll. It is possible to lessen the effect using earplugs, as the Midas Circle do, but even then it causes dizziness, nausea, and headaches for at least an hour afterward.



BLEAK PROSPECT

Combat

Attacks per round: 1

Brawl 25% (12/5), damage 1D3-2
Dodge 25% (12/5)

Sanity loss: 1/1D6 Sanity points to see the ventriloquist's dummy.

THE PARASITES, *otherworldly infestation*

There are many creatures, small and large, that have made their way through the rift caused by the Hawkes Device. The only possible ways to remove a parasite are to either present the parasite with a healthier host, or to modify the Hawkes Device to change the phase of either the host or the parasite so that the parasite may be removed surgically (causing host 1D6 damage before it is removed).

SPECIAL POWERS:

Drain: a single parasite will rob its host of 1D6 points of every attribute except SIZE every day. SIZE decreases by one point every day until it is halved, to represent wasting. This effect increases linearly for every additional parasite present in a host (e.g. 2D6 from attributes, 2 from SIZE for two parasites, and so on).

STR 120 CON — SIZ varies DEX 70 INT 00
APP — POW 40 EDU — SAN — HP 1
Damage Bonus: n/a Build: -2 Move: 8 MP: 8

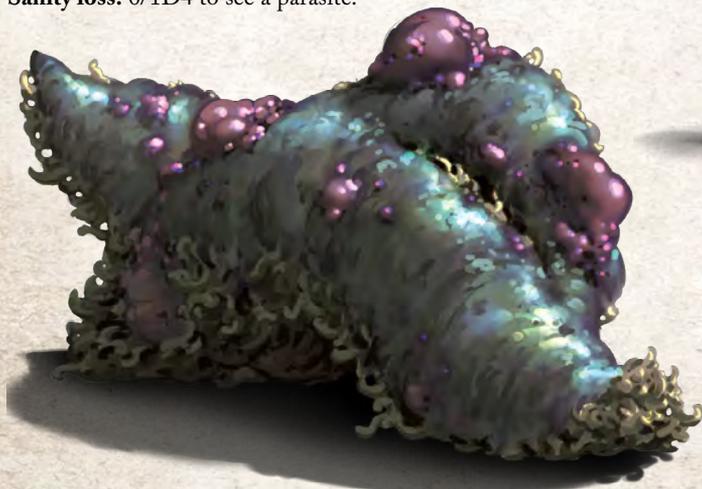
Combat

Attacks per round: 1

Infest* 40% (20/8), burrow into target
(fighting maneuver)
Dodge 35% (17/7)

*Automatic if the target is unconscious, held against their will, or willingly invites the parasite in.

Sanity loss: 0/1D4 to see a parasite.



THE HOUSE THAT WAS HAWKES, *once-human alien hybrid*

STR 120 CON — SIZ varies DEX 50 INT —
APP — POW 150 EDU — SAN — HP 30*
Damage Bonus: n/a Build: n/a** Move: n/a
MP: 30

*Only vulnerable in bedroom ceiling. Plaster provides 2 points of armor. Attacks in other locations do no damage to Hawkes. Burning down the entire house is the only other option for destroying the Hawkes House.

**Build 2 for the purpose of performing fighting maneuvers.

Combat

Attacks per round: 2

Devour (stomach acid) (mnvr) 60% (30/12), damage 1D8
Grab with tongue (mnvr) 60% (30/12), damage 1D4
and deposited in the dining room (see page 127)

Sanity loss: see relevant descriptions for the different manifestations in the main house of Prospect.





THE MOONCHILD

MODERN-DAY, MILTON KEYNES, ENGLAND

INTRODUCTION

The Moonchild is a modern-day scenario designed to be played with two to six players (six pre-generated investigators are included).

Twenty years ago a group of thirteen students conducted an occult ritual that ushered a malevolent force into the world. Following the ritual, the force held an evil influence over each of their lives, until one of them gave birth to the malevolent force in the form of a human child (the moonchild). Three members of the group sought to control and exploit the supernatural essence of the child, but instead it gained control over them. It now seeks to draw the rest of the group into its presence, so it can assert its mastery over them all.

Each of the players takes the role of one of the thirteen members (hereafter the Thirteen) that performed the original ritual and that are now being drawn to serve the moonchild.

The investigators are introduced to the scenario by a non-player character, Sarah Moore, who presents them with her hard-luck story. Unknown to the players, an antagonist, Bradley, is manipulating everyone, investigators and non-player characters alike. As the game reaches its climax the players will come to realize this, and should seek to either free themselves or destroy their antagonist.

While reading through the scenario the Keeper is advised to refer to the **Relationship Map** (see page 147) as an aid to understanding the various non-player characters and their relationships.

Content Warning: this scenario addresses several themes, including the abuse of a child (that child actually being a

Mythos entity), and certain pre-generated investigators' backstories include accusations of sexual misconduct, self harm, and drug abuse, while one has been diagnosed with cancer.

ADAPTING THE SCENARIO

The author has presented the scenario in his locality, the town of Milton Keynes and nearby Northampton, in England, in 2013. You should feel free to use the time and date as written or adjust them to your own preferences. The specific location is not important, only that it is a university or college town, with the potential to have a student group that shared an interest in the occult.

The benefit of setting the scenario in a place with which you are familiar is that it is easier to describe the locations, and you will literally feel more at home when running the game. The handouts have been written with this in mind, and specific place names have not been used, making it easier for you to set the game in the location of your choice. Specific dates have been listed in the investigators' backgrounds, since the timeline of events holds important clues. If you wish to change the year in which the scenario is set, carefully adjust the listed years.

Six of the group of Thirteen are presented as investigators. If you have fewer than six players, simply use the spare investigators as non-player characters (NPCs). If you have more than six players you might wish to rewrite some of the NPCs as investigators, or alternatively expand the group beyond thirteen (a number chosen because of its association with misfortune). The personal stories of the six investigators are told in the PDF Pack of pre-generated investigators.

Handout: Moon 1

Player Introduction

This scenario takes place in present-day Milton Keynes and Northampton, England. You are all in your early forties. Many years ago you were at Northampton College together—in fact you were all members of the college occult society. This was largely an excuse to socialize, meet in the bar, and listen to heavy metal music!

Well, of course you all left college and mostly lost touch with one another. Over the last few years, with the rise of social networks, you've each been contacted by old school and college friends whose names you'd almost forgotten. Whose idea was it to propose a reunion?

Your old friend Sarah Moore has been in contact, and seemed desperate to talk with you all. Our story will begin with you all sitting in a cafe as she tells you her story.

STARTING PLAY

Before handing out the character sheets, while you have the players' full attention, provide them with a brief introduction to the scenario. Read the text from the Player Introduction (**Handout: Moon 1**, above) or express it in your own words.

Hand out the investigator sheets. There are three male and three female investigators. If any of the players have a strong preference, it should be simple enough to change the gender of an investigator. Be sure to allow the players sufficient time to read their backgrounds and familiarize themselves with their character.

Once everyone is ready, ask them to briefly introduce their characters. Use the opportunity to ask the player about their investigator's family and relationships. Little is noted about such things in their character backstories. Encourage the players to improvise, and take note of any significant people in their lives, especially children.

Ask if there are any questions. Once everyone is ready, start the game with the section titled **Opening Scene** (page 154). Sarah delivering her story is a *fait accompli*, after which the Keeper is advised to follow and respond to the players' lead. The Keeper also has the option of giving the players' information or misinformation to direct them as desired, either via delusions or the Tarot and séance talents of the pre-generated investigators John Vinocur and Melinda Moody (see **Using the Tarot or Ouija Board**, page 139).

All the locations within the scenario are within an hour's drive of each other. If you are transposing the game to your locale then use this as a guide to travel times.

When portraying a non-player character, refer to their roleplaying hooks, which provide a quick reference of what that character wants. Play on this and, where possible, have the character try to get the investigators to help them in their aims.

Lastly, refer to **Wrapping It Up** (page 165) for advice on finishing the scenario.

KEEPER'S BACKGROUND

Back in the early 1990s there was an occult society at Northampton College. The members form the majority of the cast of this scenario and are also its central focus. The nominal leader of the group was a mathematics student named David Barber, a charismatic young man with an avid interest in the occult. David was also a schemer and a manipulator who typically sought two things: women and power. He believed that the occult society was a method of acquiring both.

Membership of the society ebbed and flowed; there was no shortage of hangers-on or sincere individuals seeking to



PRE-GENERATED INVESTIGATORS

Six pre-generated investigators are provided for use with this scenario (in the accompanying PDF pack for this book).

If you decide to alter or amend the player characters, or create your own, there are a few points that should be incorporated to ensure that the investigators are woven into the plot.

First, each of the investigators should have been involved in the ritual that took place around twenty years ago. They will each have a scar upon their right palm, but memories of that night will be vague, given that twenty years have passed, and they were likely to have been inebriated at the time.

Second, as a result of having participated in the ritual, their lives were blighted by the malevolent force until mid-2005, when Bradley was born. Up until that time, each player character's life will have been plagued in a different way; bad dreams, hearing voices, violence, addiction, depravity, abuse, and so on. The degree of the curse was never enough to be apparent that it was an outside force acting upon them—they would each attribute the bad luck and trouble to their own actions and misfortune. All that changed around the summer of 2005, but the change would have been gradual and subtle.

In retrospect, each player character can recognize that their lives improved around that time, and when writing character backgrounds this information should be couched a little differently on each sheet. The intention is that the players may slowly realize that all of their lives changed around the same time, and that this change corresponded with the birth of Bradley and Shaun.

In addition, two of the pre-generated investigators have a specific ability: Tarot cards, and Ouija board.

Using the Tarot or Ouija Board

John Vinocur can use a Tarot deck to ask the Keeper one question. The question should be answerable with a yes or a no, with any additional information given at the Keeper's discretion. Use of the Tarot costs the investigator 4+1D6 magic points, so it is not something that he will be able to use many times in the game. The information is coming not from John's psychic power or the Tarot cards themselves, but is being channeled to John's mind from the malevolent force inside Bradley. Bradley wants the investigators to come to him, and will seek to manipulate them to his own ends. If John Vinocur uses the Tarot cards, the Keeper should use this as an opportunity to feed the player information or misinformation with the aim of directing the investigators towards whatever seems most interesting and appealing to the Keeper.

Melinda Moody has a similar ability to gain information from the Keeper through her ability to commune with spirits. If Melinda uses her ability, she must expend 1D10 magic points and describe how she is achieving the contact, with the aid of an Ouija board, entering a trance or something equally evocative of the player's choosing. However it is achieved, the result is much the same: Melinda will believe herself to be communicating with spirits, perhaps a deceased relative of a friend, a spirit tied the present location, or whatever is appropriate at that moment. In fact, she will be in direct communication with the malevolent force inside Bradley. Each expenditure of 1D10 magic points allows for a few rounds (up to one minute) of contact. The Keeper should use this as an opportunity to deliver information or misinformation to the player in the way described above for the use of Tarot cards.



debunk the occult. As a method of increasing the loyalty of some members, David divided the society into a two-tier organization. A core of thirteen members was set apart from the general membership. This elite tier formed the society's committee; the implication was that being on the committee was a privilege. David was careful to ensure that those that shared that position were vain, proud, and competitive. Fortunately for David, locating willing members who possessed these traits was not a challenge.

For many months the group met weekly at the student bar to talk earnestly about politics, religion, and Australian soap operas. Individuals read about the occult in their own way; Colin Wilson's *The Occult*, Lyall Watson's *Supernature*, and Carlos Castaneda novels were among the favorite paperbacks circulated around the group. Entering one of their student dorms, one would be assaulted by the cloying smell of incense and the discordant sounds of early-70's psychedelic rock music. On occasion a small group would

travel to a stone circle or other auspicious site in search of ley lines and a taste of Mother Nature. The committee members were in deep enough to believe that they felt the energies and shared an understanding of what it was to be a Pagan; when in reality all they really felt was the intoxicating effect of real ale, and a slight euphoria at being part of a close-knit group. But this would soon change.

One evening in October 1991, David invited the committee members to take part in a magical ritual. They traveled out into the countryside to an isolated copse of trees, where they gathered around a small campfire until midnight, passing the hours with beer and songs. When everyone was feeling mellow, David led them in chants and rhythmic movement. Together they performed a ritual of devotion to the Mother Goddess and the Horned God.

Whether it was the effect of the alcohol or David's charisma, they each gave up their inhibitions and stripped to dance naked beneath the moon. The culmination of the ritual was a promise to serve the Horned God, represented by a goat's skull. The skull was actually that of a Jacob sheep that David had acquired long before, but the distinction was of no consequence. David drew a blade across his right palm, letting a few drops of his blood fall upon the skull, then invited everyone else to do likewise.

David was aware of the threat of AIDS and had applied some forethought to the situation, bringing with him 12 extra knives, one gifted to each of the other committee members. Each was a small, inexpensive pocketknife, but these were no normal blades. Each had been enchanted by David with the intent that whoever's blood was first let by the blade would fall under David's control. However, David had overreached himself and the enchanted knives failed to achieve this goal. The ceremony was not a complete failure; their devotions and promises to the Horned God were real. Seeds were planted that day that would come to fruition many years later, and form the whole basis of this scenario.

At the completion of the ceremony, the skull was buried in the cold, hard ground.

That evening was a watershed for the society; boundaries were transgressed and things were never the same between them. Those involved were embarrassed and shunned one another's company. Rumors of the evening's events spread around campus, and those involved stayed apart, and nursed their bandaged hands in isolation. David's followers turned away from him, and the society fragmented, only to be picked up the following year by a group of wannabe-occultists and heavy metal fans who took the whole thing as a joke.

In their own way, each of the Thirteen was damaged by that evening. Each had made a pledge, given a part of themselves up, and opened their minds to the unknowable. In so doing

something was formed that night. A nameless horror without shape or form, somehow came into the world (later in this story the horror takes a name, but for now it will be referred to as the malevolent force). It did not come from outside, it was not let in through a gate; it was somehow brought into being that evening. They created it, but it is not a part of them, and they hold no control over it. But it knows each of them, and seeks to corrupt and control them. It seeks to drag them into hell, whatever hell may be.

David's mental breakdown in his final year of college was attributed by some to the pressure of study, and by others to his unhealthy obsession with magic. David's exams were deferred until the following year, after which he moved into a series of temporary I.T. jobs.

TIMELINE

- **1991, October:** the Thirteen conduct a ceremony in the woods. The malevolent force begins.
- **1994, October 31st:** Michael conceived.
- **1995, July 26th:** Michael born.
- **2004, June:** Michael (age 8) diagnosed with cancer.
- **2004, October:** David partners with two women to attempt a cure for Michael (age 9).
- **2004, November:** Michael (age 9) given the all clear; his cancer has gone into remittance.
- **2005, June 27th:** Shaun is born to Sarah (David is the father).
- **2005, July 8th:** Bradley is born to Stacey (David is the father).
- **2013, October:** today. Michael is age 18. Shaun and Bradley are 9 years old. The game begins with the investigators talking with Sarah Moore.

THE MALEVOLENT FORCE TAKES HOLD

Following college, each of the Thirteen forged their own paths in life. Former friendships, along with any promises to stay in touch, were for the most part forgotten. Each of the Thirteen was haunted by the malevolent force. This would manifest as bad dreams, and impulses to carry out depraved or immoral acts. While the individual might want to believe that an outside force was responsible, their sanity insisted that what they were feeling was natural and was to be resisted. In their own minds they suspected that everyone shared and struggled against the dark thoughts that plagued them. Living in an ostensibly Christian country, they had grown-up being told

THE MOONCHILD



Ritual in the woods

that everyone was a sinner. Cartoons told them that they could expect to have an angel on one shoulder and a devil on their other. And so they coped with life as everyone must.

The malevolent force was able to cause some of the members to commit horrific acts, but found such secondhand gratification ultimately unsatisfying. If the malevolent force were able to take a human form, it believed things would be different. The force lacked the power to possess humans, but it might be able to enter a human embryo at the point of conception. The conditions would have to be just right, requiring certain magical rites be performed. The spark of new life would thus be extinguished allowing the malevolent force to invade the empty vessel of the newly conceived child.

The malevolent force worked on various members of the Thirteen, urging them to form couples and conceive children. Random acts of violence and immorality could be achieved, but orchestrating relationships, along with the requisite magical rites, proved far more challenging. Sarah Moore and Nathan Held provided a first attempt, but they abandoned themselves to passion and performed the rites poorly. The resulting child (Angelica) was a normal girl. In its anger, the malevolent force caused Nathan to hate the child and petition, unsuccessfully, for an abortion.

David and Bridgette were married and provided a seemingly perfect opportunity for the malevolent force, but Bridgette was too strong-minded to be persuaded. Then by chance, fate swung in the malevolent force's favor; David and Bridgette's son, Michael, was diagnosed with cancer. David was desperate for a cure and the malevolent force struck a deal with David. The malevolent force would cleanse Michael's cancer in return for David conceiving a child it could inhabit.

David was already participating in an extra-marital affair with Sarah Moore, and so the first few attempts were carried out with her. Their coupling eventually produced a child, but they did not perform the magical rites correctly, and nine months later Sarah gave birth to a normal boy, Shaun.

Knowing immediately that he had failed, David was compelled to try again, and this time he selected Stacey Kimble. Stacey had taken on the responsibility of caring for her elderly mother, but the malevolent force had made her resentful and bitter about the situation. The malevolent force then offered her a way out: it would put an end to her mother's life if she had a child with David. This time all went according to plan. Stacey conceived a child that was inhabited by the malevolent force, David's son's cancer went into remittance, and Stacey's mother passed away.

STACEY'S CHILD, BRADLEY

Stacey conceived a child by David, and the magical rites they performed snuffed-out that child's spark while it was still little more than a small cluster of cells. That was when the malevolent force moved into Stacey's womb. The thing that grew in her womb was not of this world. It was real to Stacey and David, and later to any other member of the Thirteen that would encounter it, but to anyone else it did not exist. The doctors said that Stacey was experiencing a phantom pregnancy. The pains and discomfort she felt were real enough, and when she eventually experienced the birth, alone at home with only David to support her, what came out appeared to the two of them to be a baby boy. They named that boy Bradley.

Stacey cared for her phantom infant, with support and progressively fewer visits from David. Since there was no record of a birth, and no one else could see the child, there were no official records or involvement with the authorities. Financially, Stacey was supported by David, though this was a stretch on his resources.

It soon became evident that Stacey could not cope with her situation. The guilt at having been complicit in ending her mother's life weighed heavy on her, especially in the dark of the night when the phantom infant spoke fluently to her about its plans. Stacey had continued to have contact with Mari Cubine (one of the Thirteen) and Mari now felt compelled to act.

MARI INTERVENES

At nine months of age, Bradley was walking and talking in the mode of a demon-possessed infant. Mari could see how the situation was destroying Stacey, and made plans to take the child to a safe place. It was evident to Mari that the child was evil, and that it was a threat to any who came into contact with it, but it was a child nonetheless. In her arrogance, Mari decided it was her mission to care for and educate the child, perhaps even exorcise the demons inside it. She discussed her plans with Stacey and David. All agreed that Mari's plan was for the best. Or rather, unknown to them, Bradley agreed and manipulated the adults into thinking it was their idea.

In her mind, Mari is convinced she was doing the right thing in taking the child to her country home and protecting it behind a strong cellar door. Mari believes the child is a threat to humanity and that she is performing a righteous act in keeping it isolated. In her efforts to understand the malevolent force, she has talked with the child and documented her findings. In this exchange of words, Bradley inveigled his way into Mari's mind until his hold over her was complete.

To assist her, Mari called upon the help of Nathan Held (an old friend of hers), who soon also fell under Bradley's spell. Nathan has an extensive collection of occult literature, and Mari sought to use this to aid her understanding of Bradley. Nathan and Mari would recite passages from the books and perform some of the rituals described. In their minds they thought they were increasing their understanding of Bradley, or trying to cast out the malevolent force, but in reality these sessions formed Bradley's schooling.

BRADLEY'S MARK

Each of the Thirteen members bears a scar on their right palm, dating from that night in the woods. As Bradley's influence takes hold, the scar burns and extends up their arm to their chest, as has happened to David, Stacey, Mari, and Nathan. Once the scar reaches the chest, the effect is irreversible. If the scar is removed by amputating the affected hand or arm, the character is immediately free of the malevolent force and is no longer affected by or able to perceive Bradley (see **Amputation**, page 164).

BRADLEY'S PLAN

Bradley seeks to bring each of the Thirteen into his service. However there is one of the Thirteen that Bradley is unable to locate. The elusive individual is Greg Draper, who cannot be located because he lost his arm in an accident. Bradley does not know what became of Greg and is reluctant to ask his servants to investigate, fearing that it might provide them with a way to escape his influence.

Recently he has reached out psychically to the remaining Thirteen, trying to subtly guide each of them to him. He is able to present delusions to each of the Thirteen in the manner of the insanity delusions described in the *Call of Cthulhu: Keeper Rulebook* (see **Bradley's Powers**, page 143). Bradley can also make use of the direct channel he has to investigators John Vinocur and Melinda Moody, via their pseudo-psychic powers of Tarot-reading and mediumship respectively.

Ultimately, Bradley seeks to bring each of the Thirteen to him so that he may speak directly with them. Only through direct speech or close physical proximity can he spread his mark (the scar) upon them and so cement his hold.

Bradley derives pleasure from experiencing the heightened emotions of those that he is in contact with. He most enjoys the flavors of fear, anger, guilt, and spite, and he seeks to foster those in all who bear his mark. Thus he does not want those that serve him to know that they are doing his bidding. If they believed that they were not responsible for their actions, they might not feel the same degree of emotion. The sweetest

taste of all comes when they do terrible things of their own volition, such as Nathan hitting Sarah when she turned to him for help last week.

Bradley has had much enjoyment through David, Stacey, Nathan, and Mari, but he is growing bored with them and wants new toys. The investigators look interesting, and if need be, Bradley sacrifices his present servants to gain new ones.

Bradley always seeks ways to gain control over his servants. David Barber will not act against Bradley for fear of Michael's cancer returning. Bradley knows about Nathan's sins and can use them against him. Mari still believes that she can save Bradley. If he can, Bradley tries to get the investigators on board with Mari, and if this fails, he seeks to have them commit shameful acts or use threats against them.

- **Description:** most people would take Bradley for a teenager—he has grown vigorously despite his limited diet and exercise. His back is hunched and his expression somewhat vacant. He is usually dirty and covered in scabs. His mouth is full of crooked, stained teeth that have never seen a dentist or a toothbrush.
- **Traits:** Bradley will dissemble, lie, and manipulate to achieve his ends.

Bradley's roleplaying hook:

- Wants each of the investigators to visit him, preferably one or two at a time.

BRADLEY'S POWERS

1: *Spread his Mark*

When one of the Thirteen (such as an investigator) enters Bradley's presence, he attempts to increase his hold on them. Using his power directly in this manner costs him 3 magic points, and both he and the target must make an opposed **POW** roll. On the first occasion that Bradley wins, the scar on the hand of the target burns and spreads to their forearm. On the second occasion Bradley wins, the scar burns and spreads from their forearm to their upper arm. On the third (and final) occasion Bradley wins, the scar burns and spreads from their upper arm to their torso. When the scar reaches a character's torso, it burns into their heart and they are forever a true servant to the malevolent force. To exercise this power, Bradley must speak directly to the character; what he says is unimportant.

If Bradley loses the opposed **POW** roll, the investigator is unaffected, and Bradley may not make another attempt against that investigator for 6 combat rounds.

2: *Magic Point Drain*

Bradley may drain magic points from servants that bear his mark upon their chests; this takes him one round of concentration per 5 magic points.

At the start of the game this includes David, Stacey, Nathan, and Mari. If their magic points are reduced to zero, he begins to drain hit points, converting them into magic points. If a servant is completely drained, he or she falls unconscious and is only dying if they are on zero hit points and also have a Major Wound. The servants heal wounds and recover magic points at the usual rate.

3: *Regeneration*

To the Thirteen, Bradley has a physical presence and they may attack him if they so choose. To people other than the Thirteen, Bradley has no physical form, so they cannot see him and do not have the option to attack him. If someone other than one of the Thirteen were to act in a way that would cause damage to Bradley, such as hurling a grenade into Bradley's room, the Keeper should use their discretion whether to apply damage. Bradley is a fictional construct; in reality one cannot present a physical form selectively, so situations may arise in the game that present contradictions. In the unlikely event that such things become an issue, the Keeper should remember that Bradley is a force of supernatural evil, and improvise accordingly.

Bradley can be physically damaged, but any such damage is purely temporary. Regardless of the amount of physical damage received, his form will recombine and regenerate over 1D6 rounds. The various parts slide and click back together, along with random fragments and scraps of the environment around him. This may result in his body accumulating parts of dead things that lie nearby, such as the fur of a dead rat, or the severed hand of an investigator. If the Keeper is looking for inspiration for this, John Carpenter's *The Thing* might provide a good starting point. Resourceful investigators might seek to bury Bradley in wet concrete or isolate him by some other manner; since his form is not truly physical he can pass through physical barriers at the same speed as he regenerates his form. He may appear to be trapped behind a cellar door, but that is his choice, and he could choose to leave at any time.

4: *Delusions*

Bradley is able to enter the minds of each of those who bear his mark (including the investigators). He may choose to present them with delusions, hallucinations, and dreams at any time and over any distance.

Minor delusions cost him one magic point: for example, to hide the scar that runs from Stacey's hand to her chest (which might be visible if the investigators visit her in hospital), or to fake a brief phone call to an investigator.

Major (but plausible) delusions cost Bradley three magic points, especially if a specific person is featured: for example, to see an illusory David blow his brains out with a shotgun.

Bradley can cause hallucinations of an implausible nature, but this costs him five magic points: for example, the investigator sees blood raining from the sky, or a police car full of monstrous ghouls.

The delusions or hallucinations that Bradley creates may be directed at one investigator, or a group of investigators (if they are situated together) for the same magic point cost. For example, Bradley could cause the investigators to see Shaun about to walk into a busy main road. This would cost Bradley three magic points and all investigators present at the scene would perceive the same hallucination, though bystanders would see nothing.

If an investigator or investigators seek to question the delusion, tell them they may attempt a **Reality Check**. If the investigator is insane at the time of making the Reality Check, it should be treated as any other Reality Check roll. If the investigator is sane at the time of failing the Reality Check, he or she should lose 1 sanity point, and commit one involuntary action (Keeper's choice). If the Reality Check is passed, they see through the delusions, but the link to Bradley will not necessarily be apparent to the investigator. If a character sees through a delusion, Bradley may not present that character with another delusion for at least ten minutes.

While those that do not bear Bradley's mark (the scar) are unable to perceive Bradley, he is aware of them, though he cannot affect them directly, only through the use of his servants.

5: Possession

Since taking a human form, Bradley has developed the ability to possess anyone born to one of the Thirteen original occult society members (so long as they bore his mark when the child was conceived). Thus Bradley can choose to possess Shaun, Angelica, or Michael, but only when their emotions are heightened, such as when they are angry or fearful. At present his power to possess is limited to one combat round per magic point. If any of the players decide that their investigators have children, this power would also extend to them.

Bradley can also use his regenerative power on those that he possesses, and this is how he cured Michael's cancer.

6: Command

The power of Bradley's command is akin to the spell Mental Suggestion. For the spell to take effect, Bradley must succeed in an opposed **POW** roll with the target. Extreme suggestions involving death or great harm require a second opposed POW roll, just before the suggestion is implemented. Bonus or penalty dice are granted depending

on the strength of Bradley's bond with the target: Bradley gets 2 bonus dice if the target bears his scar upon their chest, 1 bonus die if it is upon their upper arm, nothing for forearm, and a penalty die if only on their hand.

The cost for the spell varies with the suggestion. For ordinary, unthreatening suggestions (drop your weapon, stand quietly in the corner, etc.), the cost is 5 magic points. Riskier suggestions, but not ones antithetical to the target (go to a nearby city and set fire to a building, etc.), cost 10 magic points. Dangerous or suicidal suggestions (kill a companion, kidnap a politician, etc.) cost 15 magic points.

Bradley's hold over his servants is not complete; they can rebel for short periods should they wish. This is the reason that Bradley endeavors to make his servants think that his orders are their own ideas. The player can force their investigator to act as they wish at the cost of 1 magic point per round. When their magic points run out, they may continue to spend, using hit points in the place of magic points. If an investigator has a Major Wound already, he or she could ultimately die as a result.

RECENT EVENTS

Years have gone by and the children have grown. Michael has recently turned eighteen, and Shaun and Bradley are both nine years old. David Barber's mental health has deteriorated. He has had periods of hospitalization and is taking antipsychotic medication. His relationship with Sarah Moore has become strained to breaking point. David has an unhealthy obsession with magic and his own status as a guru. Over the years he has attempted to impart his knowledge to his wife Bridgette, his son Michael, his mistress Sarah and, more recently, her daughter Angelica.

David, Mari, and Nathan are in complete servitude to Bradley. Bradley continues to deceive the three of them. His control is subtle and manifests as if it were their own thoughts rather than his instructions. For example, David, Mari, and Nathan decided to try to use Bradley as a vessel to communicate with the Horned God (whatever that may be to them), using a spell found in the tome *Monstres and their Kynde* (see *Call of Cthulhu: Keeper Rulebook*). The spell involved a human sacrifice, which Mari acquired, capturing a homeless person and bringing him home for dinner. The spell brought the victim into Bradley's realm, so that the man and Bradley could see and touch one another. Together the three servants slaughtered the poor man before Bradley, who then feasted on the victim's body. Bradley fed the three servants the delusion that they had communed with some higher spirit for his own amusement.

Stacey Kimble has recently been admitted to a psychiatric hospital after being sectioned (committed) by a doctor. Stacey was found by police, lost and wandering the town late one night (she was being tortured by horrific visions from Bradley). She is now on a ward and able to receive visitors. Sarah learns of Stacey being in hospital through a seemingly chance conversation (actually an hallucination from Bradley) and pays her a visit. The two had not met in years and Sarah knew nothing of Stacey's situation. Stacey confided her entire story in Sarah, telling her about David and their child Bradley, and how Bradley has been taken into care (without mentioning who is caring for him). Bradley's intention here is to pique Sarah's curiosity and have her tell some of the investigators. Whether Sarah has met with Stacey before or after the opening scene is up to the Keeper. The game is likely to play a little faster if she has already met with Stacey and drops a few subtle clues.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

The following section outlines the background and role of each of the major non-player characters (NPCs) portrayed in this scenario. Statistics for each can be found in the **Characters** section at the end of the scenario (page 167).

The Keeper should become familiar with the relationships between the non-player characters and the pre-generated player investigators, as their interaction is important. A **Relationship Map** is provided on page 147, which shows connections between the various characters.

Entries are provided for each of the main NPCs in the scenario, along with suggested avenues of investigation for the Keeper's convenience. If no notable information could be gained under a particular heading, it is omitted for that character (for example, Shaun has no entry for "criminal records" because he has had no dealings with the police).

The information listed is factual within the story, but the Keeper should always remember that Bradley may manipulate, hide, or add information at any stage, using his power over the investigators to feed them hallucinations and delusions.

David Barber, age 41

David Barber studied Computer Science and Information Technology (B.Sc.) at Northampton College in the early 1990s, and was also a member of the Northampton College Occult Society. Following college, David worked for various firms and is presently employed by DHE Logistics, configuring client databases. While at college David had several relationships, two of which became long lasting.



David Barber

Bridgette is his wife of seventeen years, and Sarah Moore his mistress of twelve years. By the time David and Bridgette accepted the institution of marriage, their son was already one-year old.

David Barber's mental health has always been problematic. He has had short spells in psychiatric institutions, but for the most part has been able to maintain work and family life through the use of therapy and medication. David's symptoms manifest in paranoia and a belief in magic and demons.

Whenever David forms an intimate relationship with someone, the conversation eventually turns to magic and the occult. This was easy with Bridgette and Sarah, since they were both members of the Occult Society. He has also shared his beliefs with his son Michael, his son Shaun, and his stepdaughter Angelica. David tries to keep a lid on these topics when at work, partly through the knowledge that such things might lose him his job, and partly because of his paranoia.

Ten years ago, David convinced himself that the only way to save his young son's life (Michael was dying of pancreatic cancer) was to make a deal with a higher power to bear a son in their name. Exactly what this higher power was is unclear even to David, who alters the details according to who he is talking to. Sometimes it is the Goddess, other times it is the Devil.

NAMELESS HORRORS

David's work requires him to be on call, and he often uses this as a cover for his liaisons with Sarah, and more recently Angelica.

- **Description:** slightly overweight; clothes hang on David as if they are the wrong size, regardless of the care that Bridgette took in selecting them.
- **Traits:** finds it difficult to maintain eye contact and is of a generally nervous disposition that leaves people uncomfortable.

Roleplaying hooks:

- Wants investigators to help him sort things out so that Shaun can come to live with his family.

Bradley's Mark: hand, arm, and chest (completely enslaved to Bradley).

Researching David Barber

- **Medical records:** history of mental illness, and was diagnosed with schizophrenia in 1992. Since then his illness has recurred, but is generally managed through medication. His wife Bridgette keeps a careful eye on his health.
- **Social circle:** visits Mari's house several times a month to participate in magical rituals, and to check on Bradley. He is also known to several book dealers and purveyors of occult paraphernalia.
- **Home:** his home life revolves around his wife Bridgette and his son, Michael. In his study, in a locked cabinet, can be found his copy of the tome *Monstres and their Kynde*, along with his "books of shadows" (notebooks) written in a simple code that record various magical rites, ceremonies, and practices. His desktop computer also holds information. Due to his paranoia and knowledge of computers, accessing David's files is difficult (requiring a Hard **Computer Use** roll). A thorough search of the house may also reveal a transcription of the tome hidden among Michael's affects.
- **Work:** his demeanor at work is well practiced, and he is not considered to be anything out of the ordinary in the I.T. profession.
- **Online:** gives Bridgette an amount of money each month for housekeeping and manages his remaining money himself. David's online bank account has records of regular transfers to another account (Mari's) of several hundred pounds per month. David draws two hundred pounds a month in cash, which he gives to Sarah.
- **Locations:** spends the days at work and divides the rest of his time between his two homes, with his wife, or with Sarah. Occasionally he attends Mari's house. Some nights he takes a drive to a secluded spot with Angelica.

Bridgette Barber, age 42

Bridgette studied Economics at Northampton College, and was a member of the Northampton College Occult Society. Following college, she had a son (Michael) and soon married David. Bridgette always planned to have a career, but put it off when her son was born, then again, when he was diagnosed with cancer at the age of eight. Bridgette now works as a teaching assistant at a local school.

Bridgette is aware of David's mental health problems and cares for him. She is unaware of any extramarital affairs or of David's children outside of their marriage. Bridgette has a belief in the occult, but also possesses a level of skepticism, at times finding herself humoring David in his beliefs. She is aware that David has become more stressed recently.

- **Description:** Bridgette dresses smartly, always wearing a shawl of some kind around her shoulders.
- **Traits:** Bridgette is all hard stares and pursed lips.

Roleplaying hooks:

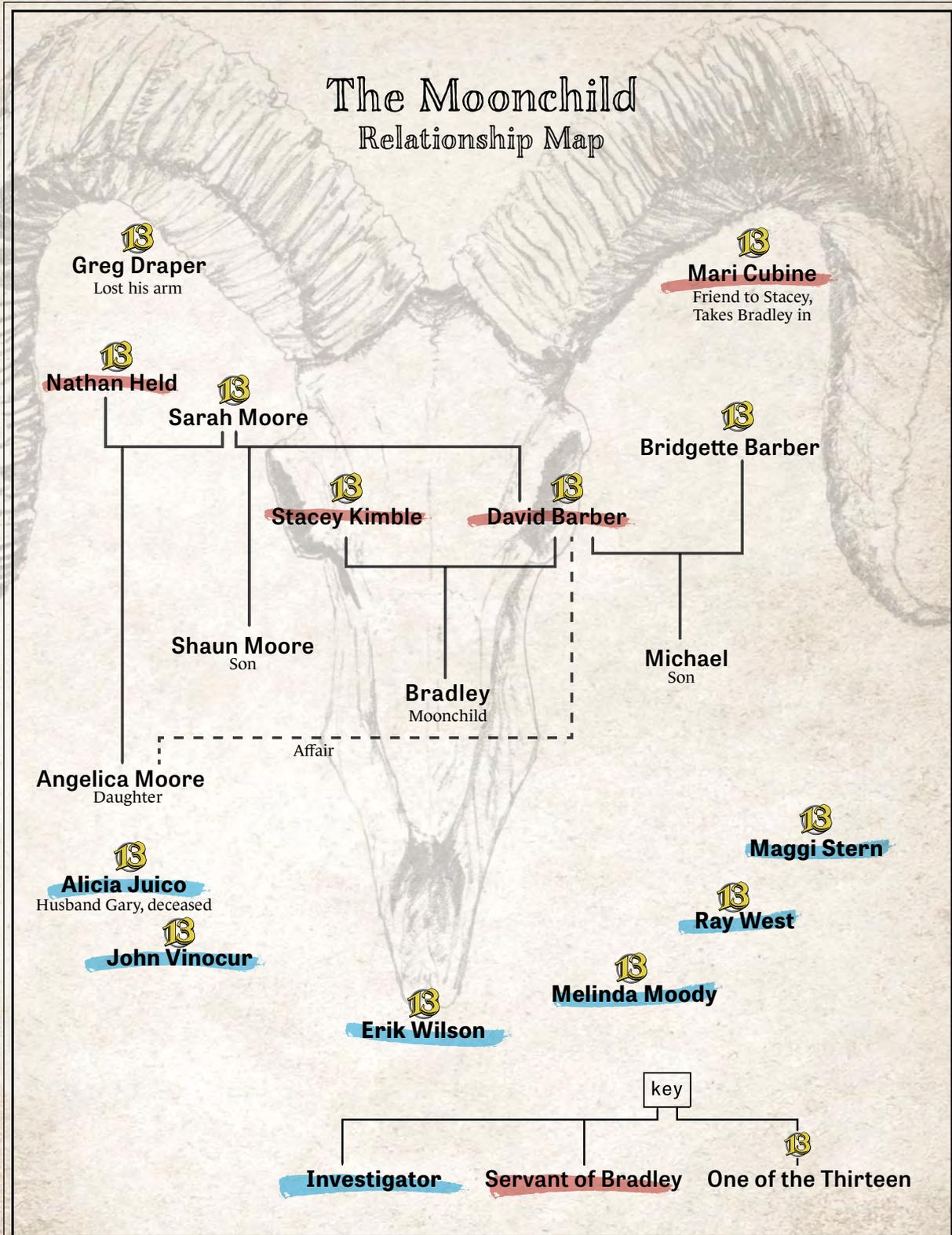
- Wants the investigators to go away and leave her family alone.

Bradley's Mark: hand only.



Bridgette Barber

The Moonchild Relationship Map



Researching Bridgette Barber

- **Medical records:** gave birth to Michael in 1995 and has had several miscarriages (part of the reason the malevolent force looked elsewhere for a mother).
- **Social circle:** has some casual friends at work and at the local gym. Most of her friends now live far away and have little contact with her.
- **Home:** see **David Barber** (page 145).
- **Work:** well known at the local primary school, where she works as a teaching assistant. The work is not well paid, but she enjoys it and would like to become a fully qualified teacher. Parents and fellow teachers vouch that she is polite and diligent.
- **Online:** has a minimal presence online.
- **Locations:** can usually be found at home, at the gym, at work or shopping.

Sarah Moore, age 43

Sarah studied History at Northampton College in the early 1990s, and was a member of the Northampton College Occult Society. Following college, Sarah found employment at Milton Keynes College, where she worked until last year. Her work had always been part-time, which allowed her employers to shrink her contract and eventually get rid of her when her attendance and manner became erratic as a result of her drug habit. She now exists on benefits, money from David, and petty theft.

Over the past two years, Sarah's life has deteriorated. Her son is being bullied at school, she has lost her job, her daughter is having an affair with her lover (David), and her drug use has escalated. She now lives in a squalid flat in an undesirable neighborhood frequented by drug dealers.

- **Description:** a shadow of her former self, Sarah is suffering the consequences of street drugs. Her hair is lank, her eyes dark and sunken. She wears sunglasses and gaudy make-up to cover her shame.
- **Traits:** Sarah is constantly fidgeting and on edge.

Roleplaying hook:

- Wants investigators to save her and her family from David Barber.

Bradley's Mark: hand only.

Researching Sarah Moore

- **Medical records:** has had two children, both at the local hospital. Her doctor is aware that Sarah is using heroin, and has tried to get her to quit or to enter a rehabilitation program. The doctor has informed social services, who are aware of the situation. Social workers have visited Sarah

several times and are putting together a case to have Shaun and Angelica taken into care if things turn worse. They are aware that Sarah has a partner, but know no more than that.

- **Criminal records:** has been cautioned for drug possession, but shown leniency on account of her children.
- **Social circle:** includes drug dealers, other addicts, and petty criminals. They are potentially dangerous people who are suspicious and reluctant to answer questions.
- **Home:** it is evident that Angelica and Shaun live at the house, and that David visits regularly. A thorough search of Sarah's home unearths evidence of Sarah's drug abuse, Angelica's affair with David (cards, photographs), and a scrap of paper with Stacey's name alongside the words, "Ward 2." David's face is very familiar to neighbors.
- **Online:** uses a smartphone to communicate with Angelica, Shaun, and David. Angelica has set up various online accounts for Sarah, but they are little used as a result of Sarah's lack of interest in such things. Several calls will be logged from Stacey Kimble in the last week.
- **Locations:** present in the opening scene at a cafe. Outside of school hours she spends most of her time at home caring for Shaun. During school hours she might be found scoring drugs, shoplifting, or visiting Stacey in hospital. Ultimately she is drawn to Mari's house to serve Bradley.



Sarah Moore

THE MOONCHILD

Nathan Held, age 44

Nathan studied chemistry at Northampton College in the early 1990s, and was a member of the Northampton College Occult Society. Following college, Nathan found employment as a librarian and has gained several professional qualifications in the field. He is a prolific reader and his job has made it easier for him to acquire a variety of rare occult tomes.

Nathan's demeanor is cheerful and amicable, but beneath this he is a cruel and twisted individual. His association with Mari Cubine provides an outlet for his depraved fantasies. Without the guidance and subtlety of Mari, he would probably be locked up or dead by now.

- **Description:** a large, overweight, middle aged man, Nathan habitually dresses in a shirt and tie. His cheerful and friendly demeanor covers up a callous nature.
- **Traits:** a big guy who speaks slowly and directly in a deep voice.

Roleplaying hook:

- Will seek to divide investigators so that they may be presented to Bradley one at a time.

Bradley's Mark: hand, arm and chest (completely enslaved to Bradley).

Researching Nathan Held

- **Criminal records:** was imprisoned twice in the late nineties for being drunk and disorderly, and for assault.
- **Social circle:** various criminals, drug dealers, and the like would recognize a photograph of him, but Nathan is known to be a dangerous individual among the local criminal fraternity, thus it is difficult to garner information on him.
- **Home:** a thorough search of Nathan's home reveals links to David and Mari (phone numbers and names). Nathan also holds some of the recordings of Bradley talking. The early ones are on tape cassette, the later ones on computer files (see **The Bradley Recordings**, page 166). There is also a host of illegal files on his computer (requiring a successful **Computer Use** roll to locate).
- **Work:** Nathan's parole officer managed to get him a job at the library and he has been working there part-time for ten years. No one at the library has much to say about Nathan other than that he turns up for work and has an interest in macabre books (serial killers, the occult, and so on). If pressed, the staff may add that several inter-library loaned books have gone missing, and while they suspect Nathan, they have never been able to prove it.



Nathan Held

- **Online:** part of several illegal file-sharing communities, evidence of this can be found on his home computer. His mobile phone is awash with unpleasant photos but Nathan is careful not to have anything illegal on his phone.
- **Locations:** can be found at home, the library, or Mari's home.

Stacey Kimble, age 42

Stacey was a member of the Northampton College Occult Society in the early 1990s, and was a member of the Northampton College Occult Society. Following on from college, Stacey took a job in the care sector, working in a retirement home. When Stacey's own mother needed care, she took on the task herself. Money soon became short, and Stacey found the years had gone by with nothing to show for it but a bedridden old lady who showed no gratitude.

Stacey had considered various ways of disposing of her mother, but was unwilling to acknowledge them as anything more than the idle daydreams that she supposed everyone had. In David's company she was able to air her secrets, and soon the plot was hatched. They would perform two rituals, one to "ease her mother's passing into the spirit world," and a second to bring the blessing of the Goddess upon their child. David told Stacey nothing about his son's cancer or his relationship with Sarah.



A few weeks later Stacey's mother did indeed pass away. The doctor recorded the cause of death as pneumonia, though Stacey attributed her mother's death to the spell that she and David had cast. Stacey was now pregnant with David's child, a child that she believed to be blessed by the Goddess.

July 2005, Bradley was born, but within a year it became evident that Stacey could not cope, and Mari took Bradley into her care. With Bradley out of her life, Stacey was alone. She blamed herself for the death of her own mother; she had failed her son, and was unable to entice David to visit. Stacey crawled into a bottle and has been struggling with addiction since.

- **Description:** Stacey is thin and looks ill. Her eyes are dull and her lips chapped. Her lank shoulder-length hair sticks to her sallow cheeks.
- **Traits:** constantly changing mood; one moment manic, the next depressed.

Roleplaying hook:

- Will beg the investigators to help her re-establish contact with her son, Bradley.

Bradley's Mark: hand, arm, and chest (completely enslaved to Bradley).

Researching Stacey Kimble

- **Medical records:** has a history of mental health issues and problems with alcohol. In late 2004 she presented herself to her doctor as pregnant, but this was later diagnosed as a phantom pregnancy (pseudocyesis). Some care and counseling were offered, but Stacey seems to have fallen through the net in early 2005, and was not seen by a doctor again until recently when she was admitted to the local psychiatric unit for assessment and care.
- **Criminal records:** has a history of petty theft, shoplifting, and drug use. She has not been imprisoned, but has been cautioned on numerous occasions, and is well known to the local police.
- **Social circle:** has few friends, and her neighbors regard her as troublesome, irrational, and perhaps dangerous. David has visited her home many times over the years (less so recently), and neighbors would recognize his face if shown a photograph.
- **Home:** lives in a cheap one-bedroom apartment. The walls are damp and the atmosphere unwelcoming. Her sole friend is a cat named Mr. Pootles, who enters through a cat flap and meows enthusiastically at visitors in the hope of being fed. A thorough search of Stacey's apartment might yield phone numbers for David and Mari. Stuck to the fridge are various photos of a baby, taken in the apartment. Anyone other than one of the Thirteen is not able to see the child in the photographs.



Stacey Kimble

- **Online:** uses a smartphone to access social networks and send text messages. She does not exercise much discretion, but her contacts mostly use nicknames rather than their real names.
- **Locations:** can be found on Ward 2 of the local hospital, held for evaluation by the psychiatric team. When she is discharged, she responds to Bradley's call, making her way to Mari's house where she can serve Bradley.

Mari Cubine, age 41

Mari studied Economics at Northampton College in the early 1990s, and was a member of the Northampton College Occult Society. Following college, Mari moved into banking, and is now the manager of a local branch.

While at college, Mari was close friends with Stacey Kimble. When Stacey was unable or unwilling to continue caring for her child, Mari was the one who took the child in. Stacey had confided the secrets of her son's occult conception to Mari.

Mari has Stacey's child, Bradley, held in a secure basement room beneath her house. She meets up with Nathan and David regularly, and together they have performed numerous unsavory experiments upon the child.

- **Description:** distinguished-looking, with hair and nails just so. She dresses sharply and clearly leaves any dirty work to other people.
- **Traits:** maintains a polite and professional facade; her lips smile but her eyes are cold.

THE MOONCHILD

Roleplaying hook:

- When the investigators find out about her and Bradley, she appeals to the investigators for assistance in exorcising the child.

Bradley's Mark: hand, arm, and chest (completely enslaved to Bradley).

Researching Mari Cubine

- **Home:** a thorough search of Mari's home reveals the child, Bradley, is held in the cellar, as well as various recording devices and boxes of recordings on tape and other media stored in a spare bedroom.
- **Work:** works as a manager in a local bank, and her meticulous appearance shields her from the scrutiny of her fellow workers.
- **Online:** member of numerous dating sites. She never sees the same man or woman for more than one date. Bradley takes great delight in her activities and pushes her to perform ever more degrading acts with strangers.
- **Locations:** can be found at the bank during office hours, at home, or on a date.



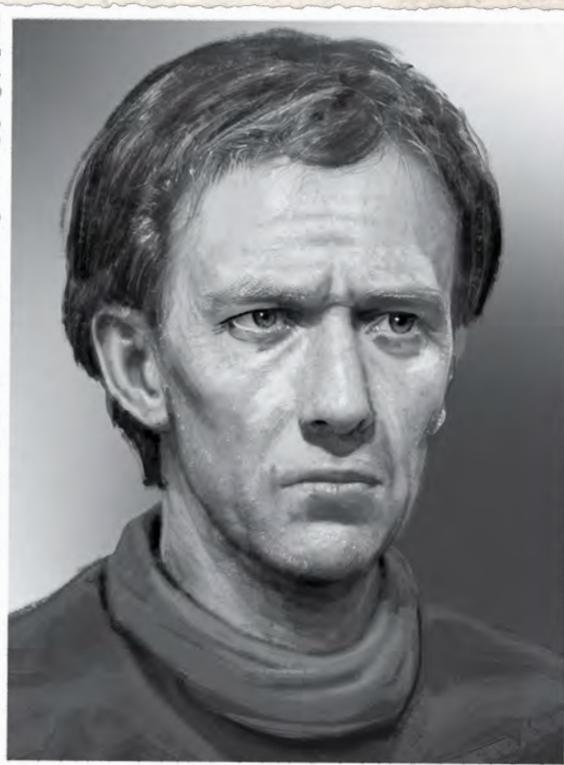
Mari Cubine

Greg Draper, age 43

Greg was a member of the Northampton College Occult Society in the early 1990s. He studied on the Art Foundation course and left college soon after that fateful night in the woods. He worked on his uncle's farm until his arm got tangled in some farm machinery. Bradley's influence caused Greg to act recklessly, though Greg ascribes the accident to a lack of awareness on his part.

The accident had a lasting effect on Greg's life. Of course he had to learn to live with a prosthetic lower arm and hand, but more importantly, the hand that was removed was the scarred one. Greg no longer bears Bradley's mark. From that time onwards Greg was free of the influence of the malevolent force, and perhaps more significantly, the malevolent force lost track of and forgot about Greg. Unless the investigators seek Greg out, he does not appear in this scenario. If the investigators discover Greg's injury, this may plant a seed in their minds. Should Bradley encounter Greg (perhaps through an investigator's eyes), Bradley will not necessarily recognize Greg, since he no longer bears Bradley's mark.

Greg now works as an undertaker's assistant, and has been in the job for ten years. There is nothing suspicious about him or his work, though if a Keeper wanted to weave in another story line, a criminal gang might be using the undertaker's facilities to dispose of bodies, or the undertaker might be selling corpses to rich buyers for purposes unknown.



Greg Draper



Researching Greg Draper

- **Medical records:** lost his lower right arm while working on his uncle's farm, back in the mid-nineties. This severed his bond with Bradley. He now has a prosthetic forearm and hand.
- **Work:** an undertaker's assistant. His profession is chosen purely to sow a little curiosity in the players' minds, since all too often in horror stories undertakers are suspicious characters.
- **Locations:** can be found at work, at home or at a bar with friends.

Note: no profile is included for Greg Draper, as it is unlikely the investigators encounter him directly; however, if required, consider him to have average characteristic scores.

Michael Barber, age 18

Michael is the eighteen-year-old son of David and Bridgette Barber. Aged eight, David was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer but fortunately made a full recovery. Michael and his mother attribute his cure to the treatment provided by the doctors, but David knows otherwise.

Michael is unaware of his father's extramarital affairs or of the malevolent force. If the malevolent force were somehow incorporated, and Bradley were no more, Michael's cancer would recur.

Michael and his father have discussed magic many times. Out of curiosity, Michael has secretly been studying his father's books and has recently put some of the spells to use. Already he's cursed a boy at school and won the affections of a girl with a love spell. In actuality these feats were achieved by Bradley while he possessed Michael, but it serves Bradley's purpose to have Michael believe himself to be a warlock.

- **Description:** a bright young man. He dresses in the same non-conformist uniform as the rest of his generation.
- **Traits:** very expressive with his hands as he talks.

Roleplaying hook:

- In private, he asks the investigators about the occult society and the ritual in the woods; he wants to learn magic too.

Bradley's Mark: none, but may be possessed by Bradley because his parents are members of the original thirteen occult society members.

Researching Michael Barber

- **Medical records:** developed pancreatic cancer when aged eight (in June 2004). His prognosis was poor, pancreatic cancer having a low survival rate. He was given treatment, then in November 2004 his cancer inexplicably went into remission, and he now has the all clear. Since the cancer



Michael Barber

treatment, he has not been ill, and aside from occasional routine hospital visits to monitor his cancer, he has not attended a doctor's surgery once.

- **Social circle/School:** has a group of friends at school. There are two recent events that might elicit some comments. First, his involvement with John Roll's beating in the changing rooms; there were no witnesses and the details are unclear, but Roll was known to be a tough bully, and has been a changed character since. Second, is Michael's relationship with Holly Thomas; everyone who knows them thinks this strange and fails to understand what she sees in him.
- **Home:** see entry for his father, David Barber.
- **Locations:** can be found either at school or at home. Holly Thomas, his girlfriend, may be with him.

Angelica Moore, age 18

Angelica is the child of Sarah Moore and Nathan Held. She lives with her mother, Sarah, and her younger brother, Shaun.

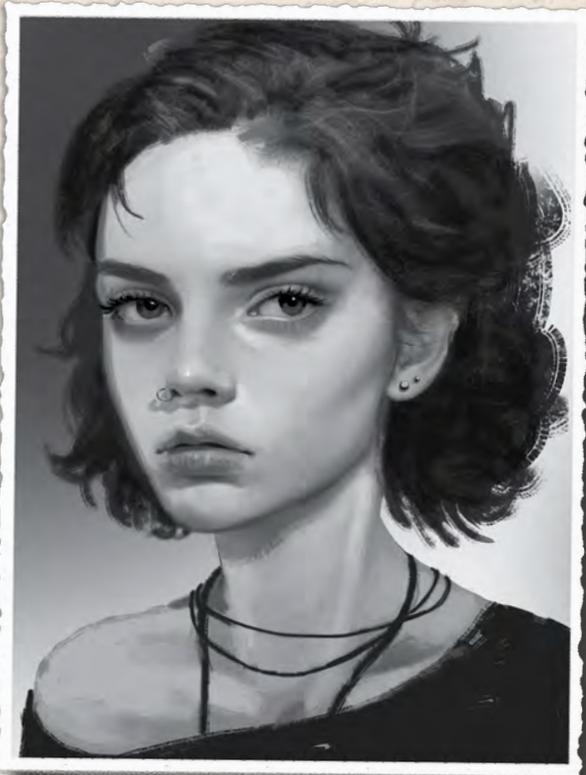
Angelica is not aware of the malevolent force. She is, however, an unruly teenager, growing up in a home with a drug-addicted mother, in an undesirable neighborhood.

Angelica has no contact with Nathan Held, although she is aware that he is her father.

Her mother's drug habit and inability to cope has forced her to adopt an adult role in caring for her half-brother Shaun.

THE MOONCHILD

Angelica Moore



Angelica's relationship with David Barber is complex. David has discussed magic with Angelica, and she sees David as something of a guru. She is enamored of him and the two of them have commenced a relationship behind Sarah's back. The strongest evidence of Angelica and David's relationship is held on Angelica's mobile phone, in the form of photographs and explicit text messages.

- **Description:** pale-skinned and wears a permanent scowl that only lifts when in David's company. Her youthful vitality shines through, despite her unhealthy lifestyle.
- **Traits:** the investigators are, at best, invisible and will be largely ignored.

Roleplaying hook:

- To Angelica, the investigators are establishment-minded, middle-aged drones. If a friendship is forged, she petitions the investigator to help her and David live the life she thinks they both want.

Bradley's Mark: none, but may be possessed by Bradley because her parents are members of the original thirteen occult society members.

Researching Angelica Moore

- **Medical records:** her birth certificate does not record the name of a father (her father is Nathan Held).

- **Social circle:** mixes with like-minded teenagers, dating, drinking, and using soft drugs. Her friends are unlikely to be forthcoming to middle-aged meddlers. She has boasted of her relationship with an older man to some of her friends, who are appalled and impressed in equal measure.
- **Home:** see entry for her mother, **Sarah Moore** (page 148).
- **School:** an average pupil, and the school is aware that her home life is challenging.
- **Online:** uses a smartphone, as well as various computers at school, and those of friends. She is very active on numerous social networks and takes little care over privacy.
- **Locations:** can be found at school, at home, or hanging out with her friends. She also attends secret liaisons with David, usually in his car, late at night in a secluded spot.

Shaun Moore, age 9

Shaun is a regular nine-year-old boy. He attends a local school then comes home and plays video games on the large television set that David bought him last Christmas. Shaun knows that David is his father and addresses him as "dad." Shaun loves his sister Angelica and thinks the world of her. He knows nothing of the malevolent force or Bradley.

Shaun's mother believes that her son is touched by the gods because of the magical rituals that she and David performed at his conception. She is unaware that they went awry. David lied to her and convinced her that the rites were to invite the blessing of the Mother Goddess upon their offspring, but Shaun is no more touched by the gods than anyone else; he is not a special or unique snowflake.



Shaun Moore

- **Description:** dressed in school uniform or cheap clothes, Shaun is just another kid and is easily overlooked.
- **Traits:** stares at people with his eyes wide open.

Roleplaying hook:

- Wants someone to help his mother; she's not well.

Bradley's Mark: none, but may be possessed by Bradley because his parents are members of the original thirteen occult society members.

Researching Shaun Moore

- **Medical records:** his birth certificate has David Barber listed as his father.
- **Home:** see entry for his mother, Sarah Moore.
- **School:** an average pupil, and the school is aware that his home life is challenging. There are a few isolated reports of Shaun having acted uncharacteristically. These all occurred when he was briefly possessed by Bradley, resulting in short outbursts of violence towards other children, or foul-mouthed abuse to an adult. The teachers are unable to reconcile such behavior with the pleasant young boy that they know, and Shaun does not remember the events.
- **Locations:** can be found at school or at home.

OPENING SCENE: SARAH MOORE'S STORY

Start the game with all the investigators sitting in a cafe with Sarah, who is telling them the following story, read the following aloud or paraphrase.

This is the point at which the game begins. Expect the players to start asking questions, both of Sarah and about the situation in general. While delivering Sarah's story, use **Handout: Moon 2—Family Tree** to illustrate the various relationships.

Sarah's story is desperate and ill-thought out. The idea that Bridgette would welcome a strange child into her family is unlikely, as is her insistence that David is placing curses on various people. Gary was not even a part of the original Thirteen occult society members, though this may not be noted.

When playing the role of Sarah, feel free to elaborate and lie. She says anything to get the investigators to act on her behalf. Sarah's unspoken concern is for her daughter. She knows that David is having a relationship with Angelica, and she stops at nothing to break that up. Anything, that is, except confront them herself, for she knows that doing so would drive a wedge between her and her daughter. If she had to pick, she would choose to keep David over her own

daughter, but she fears that the worst is about to happen; not only will she lose both of them, but they will leave her and laugh about her behind her back.

Sarah has done her best to make herself look respectable, but she is thin, drawn, and tired-looking. Anyone can see this, but those who look carefully may pick up the signs of drug addiction. Anyone who specifically states that they

SARAH'S STORY

"You remember David Barber? He got married to Bridgette soon after we finished college. Of course you remember them—how could you forget? We were all in that stupid club, weren't we? Well, David and I have had our own relationship now for about twelve years or so. Bridgette doesn't know about us.

"About ten years ago David came to me with the idea that he wanted to have a moonchild with me; a child of the Goddess."

(At this point, in the role of Keeper, explain to the players that the investigators all have some occult skill and will know the term "moonchild" to mean a child conceived during a magical ritual).

"Anyway, he persuaded me, and I gave birth to a son nine months later. He's a special boy, blessed by the Goddess, and here to do her work. I'm sure you'd like him." She smiles.

"Recently things haven't been going so well between me and David. David has become so aggressive and unreasonable. He wants to take my son Shaun away from me. He says that Shaun would be better off living with him and Bridgette! He's crazy!" (She becomes hysterical and has to calm herself before continuing).

"But that's not the worst of it. He says the Goddess has spoken to him and demands further payment. The Goddess demands payment in blood, and David has chosen the members of the old Occult Society as his targets. He's already cursed Stacey Kimble; she's in the madhouse. And just look at me!" (Sarah does indeed look unwell but in reality this is due to her drug addiction and lifestyle).

(Sarah looks with sympathy towards the investigator Alicia Juico). "I'm sorry Alicia, this may be hard to hear, but how do you think Gary died? Surely you can see that it doesn't make sense! David killed him! For the sake of my son and your own lives, I beg you to help."

THE MOONCHILD

are studying Sarah should make a **Hard Spot Hidden** or **Psychology** roll; on a success, the investigator identifies some indication of drug addiction. Sarah is also sporting a black eye, though it is now fading a little. She received it from Nathan when she turned to him for help regarding David, a week ago. If anyone asks about her black eye, she hints that David did it, though a successful **Psychology** roll indicates this is a lie.

If Erik's (pre-gen investigator) player does not mention his cancer, Sarah may pick up on it somehow (Bradley prompts her to do so) and asks Erik if he is ok.

As stated in **Recent Events**, you may wish to have Sarah discuss her visit with Stacey during the opening scene, or you may want to leave this for later. Mentioning it now presents the players with more information and may make for a faster game. By default, Sarah simply mentions Stacey being in the psychiatric hospital, but has not yet visited her to discover her history with David.

Likely Courses of Action following the Opening Scene

From this point there are several courses of action the players might take:

- Visit Sarah's home to meet with Shaun and Angelica, and to find out more about the situation (see **Sarah Moore's Home**, following).

- Visit David and his family (see **David Barber's Home**, page 158).
- Although less likely at this stage, they might visit Stacey in hospital (see **Stacey in Hospital**, page 161).
- Carry out research about any of the characters (see **Research**, page 162), including using divination (see **Using the Tarot or Ouija Board**, page 139).
- If the investigators choose to ignore Sarah's story and take no action, Bradley exercise his powers over the investigators in some way (see **Bradley's Powers 4: Delusions**, page 143).

SARAH MOORE'S HOME

Sarah lives in a two-bedroom house in a depressed housing estate, with her daughter (Angelica, 18), and her son (Shaun, 9). Angelica is rarely at home during the day. Shaun's time is divided between school and the massive television that David provided last Christmas.

The house is cramped and dirty. Even if Sarah has tidied for guests, the scuffed linoleum floor will be sticky and thick with dirt in the less accessible areas. Anything of value, aside from the television set, has already been sold to feed Sarah's heroin habit. A curious sickly-sweet smell pervades the house, which has no particular origin or significance, but should not be present in a family home.



Sarah at the cafe



Sarah Moore's home

If the investigators search the house, a successful **Spot Hidden** roll in the kitchen reveals a photograph that has slipped down the side of the refrigerator. It shows David, Sarah, Angelica, and Shaun. If Sarah sees the photograph, she becomes enraged. A successful Hard **Spot Hidden** roll for the photograph or **Psychology** roll for Sarah's reaction indicates a suspicious closeness between David and Angelica, hinting at intimacy.

Sarah's bedroom is a mess of crumpled clothes, strewn among cardboard packing boxes that sit where they were placed when moving in. The boxes have only been opened by Sarah in her search for items of value to sell or pawn for cash. Little of value remains. Some occult paperbacks may be found here, but nothing remarkable. A search of Sarah's room is potentially dangerous: a fumbled or a failed pushed skill roll may result in an investigator suffering a wound from a (drug) syringe needle. A successful **Spot Hidden** yields a scrap of headed notepaper (naming the local hospital) on which is handwritten, "Stacey, Ward 2."

The second bedroom is shared by Angelica and Shaun. This room is equally untidy, filled with broken but colorful plastic toys, alongside the paraphernalia of a teenage girl's life. Various hair-care products, torn magazines, dirty

clothes, and unattended schoolbooks adorn every surface. A locked metal cashbox has been concealed in the base of an ill-assembled flat-pack wardrobe (a successful **Spot Hidden** roll locates the box). This is where Angelica hides her valuables. Evidence of her affair with David can be found here; a Valentine's Day card from David, a pair of earrings together with a gift tag reading, "To my little flower, love D," (in David's handwriting).

Sarah will be more stressed at home than at the cafe, and if provoked she may become angry or even violent. Alternatively, she may retire to her bedroom and take drugs of some kind. Sarah continues to lie and manipulate in her efforts to have the investigators confront David on her behalf. As stated in the **Opening Scene**, her scheme is not entirely rational or well-planned.

Shaun, if not at school, is likely to be playing a video game in the lounge. He does not pay adults much heed. Various people come here to buy, sell, and use drugs; Shaun is used to seeing grown-ups come and go, and they generally pay him little attention. The Keeper has the option to have Bradley use his powers to possess Shaun for a brief time if it serves his purposes (see **Bradley's powers 5: Possession**, page 144).

If the investigators spend some time at Sarah's house, Angelica is likely to come home while they are there. She lets herself in and checks on Shaun, ensuring he has eaten. Depending on the time of day, she may bring something for him to eat, either takeaway food or something to go in the microwave. Angelica is likely to be surly and uncommunicative with the investigators. She goes to her room and spends considerable time getting ready to go out, either with friends, or for a secret liaison with David Barber.

It is also possible that David Barber or Nathan Held might visit while the investigators are present. David visits several times a week and is surprised to meet the investigators there. Sarah has been in touch with Nathan recently and the two of them met a week ago. Sarah appealed to Nathan with the same story that she is now feeding the investigators. She pushed Nathan, and old enmities boiled to the surface; Nathan hit her and left. If he returns now he may pretend to care about her, but the man really doesn't have a caring bone in his body, and is unlikely to take kindly to people meddling in what he sees as his business.

Likely Courses of Action following this Scene

- Visit David and his family (see **David Barber's Home**, following).
- Visit **Stacey in Hospital** (page 161).
- Visit Nathan or Mari if they have learned about them (see **Mari Cubine's Home**, page 159, and **Nathan Held's Home**, below).
- Carry out research about any of the characters (see **Research**, page 162), including using divination techniques (see **Using the Tarot or Ouija Board**, page 139).
- If the investigators choose to ignore Sarah's story and take no action, Bradley exercises his powers over the investigators in some way (see **Bradley's Powers 4: Delusions**, page 143).

DAVID BARBER'S HOME

David and his wife Bridgette live with their son Michael in a regular, three-bed semi-detached home on a pleasant, leafy, and modern housing estate. Bridgette is house-proud and keeps the home tidy and clean. The house contains everything one would expect in a modern middle-class home.

The master bedroom belongs to David and Bridgette. Nothing of note can be found in here.

Michael has the second bedroom. Hidden among his possessions is his own hand-copied version of *Monstres and their Kynde* that he has secretly transcribed from his father's original. Michael believes that he has magical powers, but in reality his powers stem from Bradley. Michael has used his newfound

magical powers on a few of his peers. Fellow pupil, John Roll annoyed Michael and now has a broken collarbone; he won't be playing sports anytime soon. Bradley seized on Michael's anger, possessed him, and threw John across the changing room. There were no witnesses, and John has been too frightened to say what really happened that day. On another occasion, Michael found himself strongly attracted to Holly Thomas, one of the popular girls, who Michael considered to be out of his league. Bradley seized on Michael's feelings of arousal and possessed him, making him approach Holly and say just the kind of dirty things she wanted to hear. Since then she has been seeing Michael, but when things get passionate between them, Bradley always steps into the driving seat. Michael is aware that sometimes he does things and feels that he is watching himself do them, but he isn't aware that he is being possessed by an outside force.

The smallest of the three bedrooms is used by David as a study, and contains his collection of occult books and paraphernalia. David's most valuable books and journals are stored in the locked metal filing cabinet in the study. The most valuable of these tomes is *Monstres and their Kynde*.

How the investigators present themselves and what actions they take at the Barber residence is completely up to them. It may help to portray Michael and Holly as unreasonable and uncooperative to give the investigators something to work against. If enraged, Michael might be possessed by Bradley.

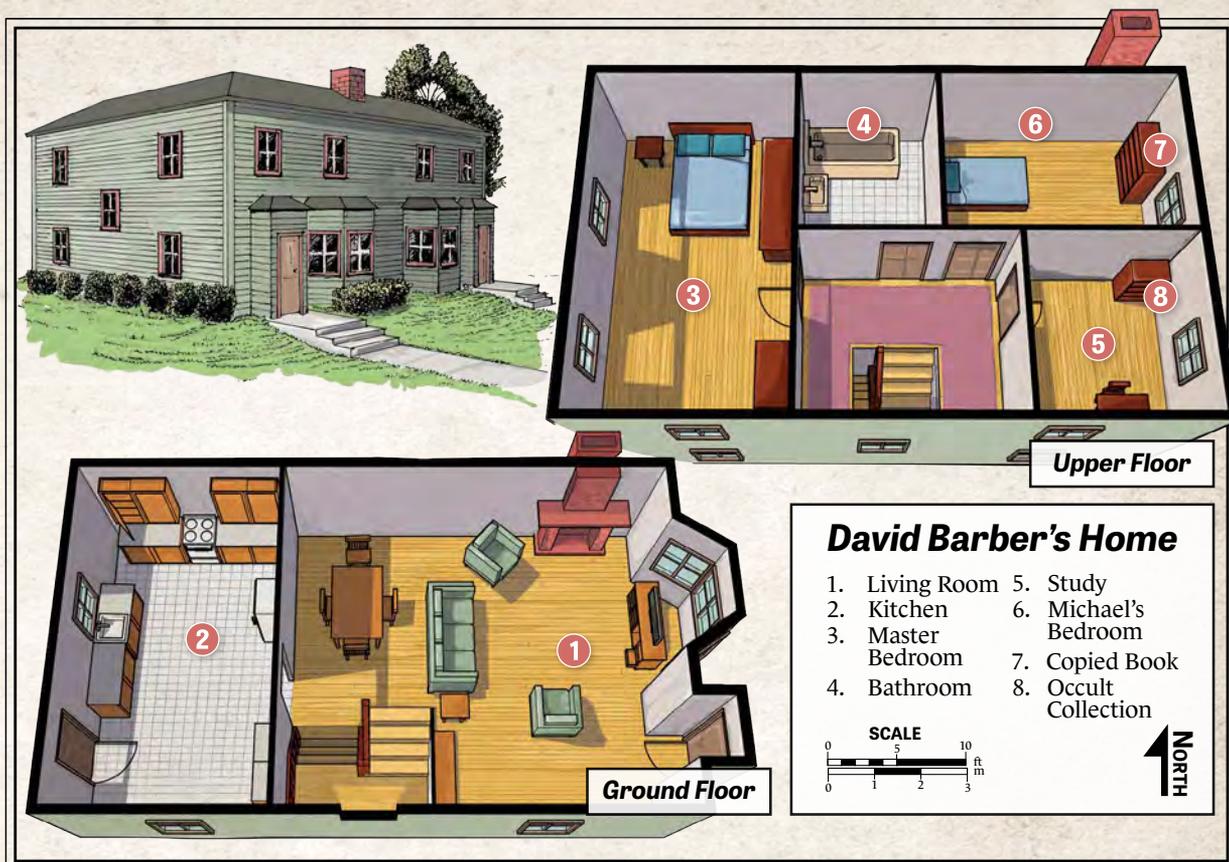
Likely Courses of Action following this Scene

- Visit Sarah's home to meet with Shaun and Angelica, and to find out more about the situation if they have not already done so (see **Sarah Moore's Home**, page 155).
- Visit **Stacey in Hospital** (page 161).
- Visit Nathan or Mari if they have learned about them (see **Mari Cubine's Home**, page 159, and **Nathan Held's Home**, following).
- Carry out research about any of the characters (see **Research**, page 162), including using divination techniques (see **Using the Tarot or Ouija Board**, page 139).
- If the investigators choose to ignore Sarah's story and take no action, Bradley exercises his powers over the investigators in some way (see **Bradley's Powers 4: Delusions**, page 143).

NATHAN HELD'S HOME

Nathan has a small apartment in the city center. A stock of valuable and rare occult books can be found amongst the empty take away cartons and dusty piles of DVDs. Casual evidence around the flat provides clues to those that know what they are looking for; the names Mari and David are listed alongside appointments on the wall calendar, phone and email records likewise provide the same links. A notebook beside his bed contains

THE MOONCHILD



photographs of Angelica at various ages. The photographs are not posed and appear to have been taken with a zoom lens from a distance, without her knowledge. The collection is creepy, and whether they imply a fatherly love or something more sinister is unclear. Included alongside the collection are candid photographs of Mari Cubine in various states of undress. She is unaware of the existence of these photographs.

A box of audio cassette tapes may be found, some of which have been chewed up by Nathan's cassette player, which is in pieces. The cassettes are part of **The Bradley Recordings** (see page 166). Similar recordings can be found on his computer along with some video clips of Bradley being interrogated. Watching the video clips is a disturbing experience in itself, but alongside the abuse, there is an occult aspect, demanding a **Sanity** roll (1/1D3 loss). A host of illegal material can be found on Nathan's computer that could see him locked away if presented to the police.

Likely Courses of Action following this Scene

- It can be assumed that the investigators have already visited Sarah and David.

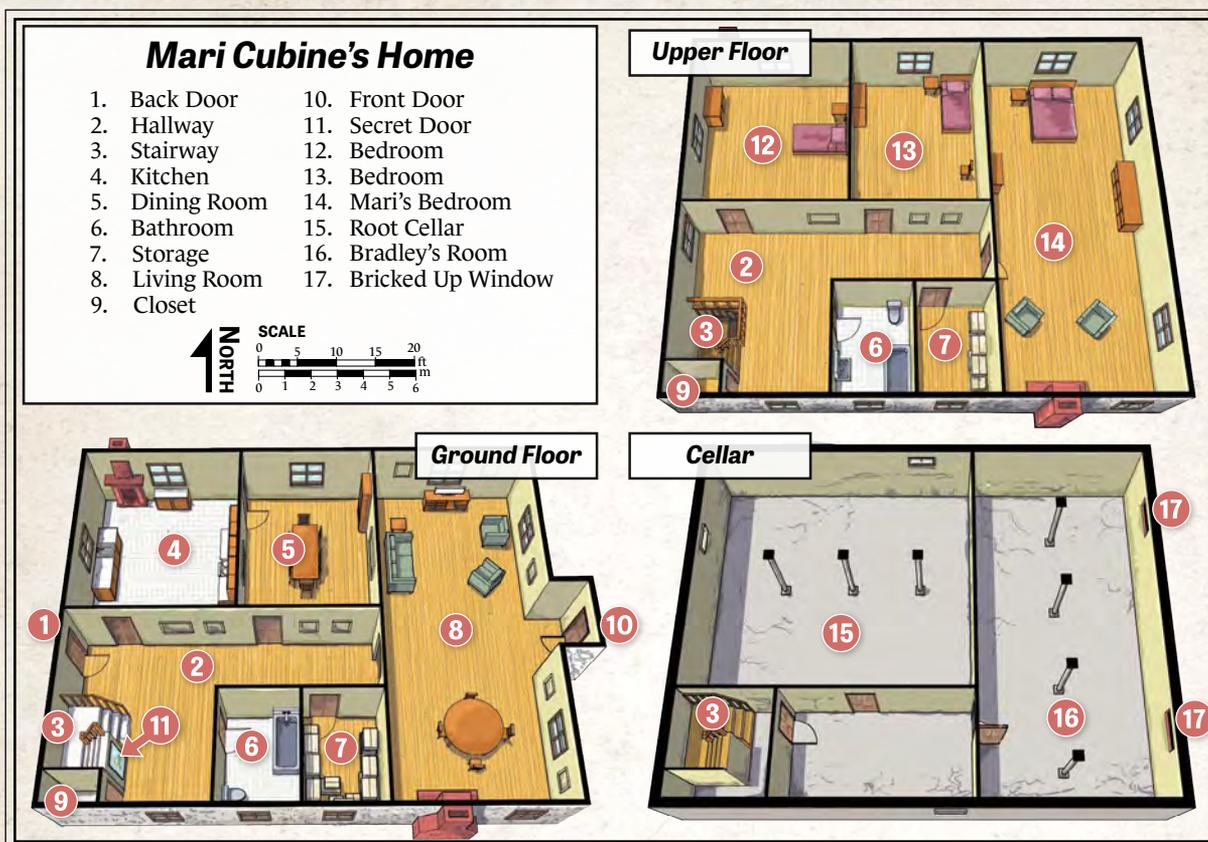
- Report Nathan to the police (see **We Call the Police**, page 163).
- Visit **Stacey in Hospital** (page 161).
- Visit Mari if they have learned about her (see **Mari Cubine's Home**, following).
- Carry out research about any of the characters (see **Research**, page 162), including using divination techniques (see **Using the Tarot or Ouija Board**, page 139).
- If the investigators choose to take no action, Bradley exercises his powers over the investigators in some way (see **Bradley's Powers 4: Delusions**, page 143).

MARI CUBINE'S HOME

Mari works in a bank and has a good income. She lives in a detached house on the edge of a country village. The property has thick stone walls and a sizable garden that has been mostly left to grow wild. The house itself is clean to the point of being Spartan. Bradley is housed in the cellar and his presence would not be apparent to casual visitors.

The kitchen is well stocked for one person, with fine ingredients, expensive wines, and a range of fashionable cookbooks. One cupboard, however, is filled with tins of

NAMELESS HORRORS



STACEY IN HOSPITAL

Stacey is a patient on Ward 2 of the hospital's psychiatric unit. This is not a secure unit, and while Stacey was originally sectioned (placed here by a medical doctor without her consent), she could now choose to leave. However, Stacey is well enough to realize that the hospital is a good place for her and has no immediate intention to leave.

A thin white scar runs from Stacey's hand all the way up her arm to her chest. The doctors have asked her about this, but Stacey is unforthcoming, and, with it clearly being an old scar, the doctors did not press the subject. If Bradley decides, he may disguise the scar from the investigators eyes by spending a magic point and altering their perceptions.

Stacey's being in hospital suits Bradley. He tortured her mind until she was hospitalized, and he intends for the investigators to visit her to hear her sad story.

Stacey tells of the child she had with David Barber. If pressed, she confesses that they carried out magical rituals at his conception. She describes Bradley as a normal boy and ascribes all the trouble she had with him to her own shortcomings. She misremembers Bradley's fate and says he was taken into care. A successful **Psychology** roll reveals she is holding back, while a successful **Persuade** or **Charm** gets her to confess that she colluded with David to end the life of her elderly mother as part

of the magical rituals they conducted around the conception of Bradley.

If the investigators successfully befriend Stacey, she says that her son is being cared for by Mari. If this occurs, Bradley drains her of magic points and then hit points, and within a few rounds she fall unconscious (see **Bradley's Powers 2: Magic Point Drain**, page 143). Make it clear that something strange is happening; it's as if they can see the vitality being sapped from her.

Likely Courses of Action following this Scene

- To visit Sarah's or David's homes if the investigators have not already done so (see **David Barber's Home**, page 158 or **Sarah Moore's Home**, page 155).
- Visit Nathan or Mari if the investigators have learned about them (see **Mari Cubine's Home**, page 159, and **Nathan Held's Home**, page 158).
- The investigators might carry out research about any of the characters (see **Research**, page 162), including using divination techniques (see **Using the Tarot or Ouija Board**, page 139).
- If the investigators choose to ignore Sarah's story and take no action, Bradley will exercise his powers over the investigators in some way (see **Bradley's Powers 4: Delusions**, page 143).



Stacey in hospital



RESEARCH

There are a variety of routes that the investigators might pursue, including reading medical records, speaking with doctors and other health workers, social workers, work colleagues, and so on. Certain stories may have made the newspapers or caught the attention of journalists. Work colleagues, family or friends might all be useful sources of information. If an avenue of enquiry appears feasible, the Keeper should allow for information to be gained with or without the use of skill rolls, depending on the nature of the enquiry and the person being asked.

As this scenario is set in the modern day, resourceful investigators might seek to gain phone records or hack into computer networks. It should also be remembered that electronic devices (mobile phones, laptops, digital cameras, etc.) hold a wealth of information that is often protected with only a simple password, if at all. The **Computer Use** skill can be used for gaining access to such information.

Gaining confidential information from a professional, such as a doctor, almost always requires a skill roll of some kind. Options include **Persuade**, if the time can be taken to put forward a convincing argument; alternatively **Fast Talk** might allow one to pose as another medical professional and gain the doctor's trust that way. Then of course there are the options of **Intimidate** or **Charm**. Intimidate might be as base as threatening the doctor with violence, or be slightly more subtle in the way of blackmail. Charm, on the other hand, might be used by pretending to be a caring and upset relative, striving to exploit the doctor's good nature and gullibility.



CLUES

This scenario is presented in a sandbox format. Once the starting scene has played out, the players are at liberty to go where they will. The Keeper should keep an open mind to where clues might be presented. If the players choose to search a room or question a non-player character, the Keeper should always consider if there is the potential for a clue of some kind, and whether a skill roll is required.

A successful **Psychology** roll might indicate that a non-player character is withholding information or lying, but it will not necessarily indicate the truth. What the players do when they know someone is lying can be very interesting!



BRADLEY'S INFLUENCE

The investigators have been called together because Bradley wants it to happen. He planted the idea in Sarah's mind and had her contact the investigators to tell them her story. After hearing Sarah's story, the players are likely to react in some way: they may direct the investigators to Sarah's house, to meet with David, or perhaps to talk with Stacey in hospital.

There is likely to be a lot of social interaction between the investigators and the key NPCs (Sarah, Shaun, Angelica, David, Bridgette, Michael, and possibly Stacey too). Roleplay this and remember to use social interaction skill rolls when appropriate, depending on what the player is saying and how their investigator is acting. Where possible, tempt the players to push the rolls; failed social interaction rolls are your license to have NPCs react dramatically or violently.

Play-up the social injustices and leave Bradley out of the picture to begin with. Bradley is happy to sit back and watch characters interact. He can read their thoughts and experience their emotions; to him it is a form of entertainment. At some point, whenever you as Keeper see fit, Bradley can present any of the investigators with delusions. Bradley particularly enjoys it when those that bear his mark (the scar) experience extreme emotional states, and he drives them toward that.

Viewed from a meta-game context, Bradley's ability to disseminate clues and red herrings to the players is a method by which the Keeper can guide and orchestrate the action and pace of the game. If the game is proceeding well then the Keeper should let the players pursue their existing courses of investigation, but if the game begins to slow or stall, the Keeper has the option of using Bradley's ability to steer the players in a particular direction.

Some examples of what Bradley might do

- Use hallucinations to distract investigators from contacting the police, or to misdirect their attempts to do so.
- Sow clues about the missing homeless person (see **Recent Events**, page 144). The investigators might hallucinate a news report that shows the missing man and a photofit that looks a little like David, or they might be approached by someone seeking a missing person with a description of the car he was seen getting into. Remember these are delusions and the facts surrounding them don't have to add up.
- Send Nathan to capture an investigator and bring him or her before Bradley.

SHINING A LIGHT ON THE DARKNESS

Each of the investigators has had a dark time in their lives, when the malevolent force held a strong influence over them. This began at college, following the ritual in the woods, and

continued until Bradley's conception nine years ago. During those years, each of the investigators committed acts that they are ashamed of. These actions are implied in their character backgrounds, but what exactly they did is left up to the player to decide. The intention here is to allow the player some creative input, and to avoid imposing an investigator background with which a certain player may have personal difficulty or an objection to portraying.

During play, the investigators' dark secrets may be revealed. Bradley could reveal some aspect of an investigator's past via a séance or Tarot reading, or he might reveal the information to other members of the Thirteen somehow. When meeting face-to-face with Bradley, he may seek to mock or belittle an investigator with his knowledge of their past. However the truth comes out, the Keeper should ask the player to explain exactly what it was that they did. In all likelihood the player will come out with terrible things, perhaps worse than the Keeper might expect!

The six pre-generated investigators have dark secrets listed in their character backgrounds. The Keeper should hint at these when it comes to drawing out the truth from the player. The questions below are framed as if from Bradley, and are deliberately provocative:

- **John Vinocur:** you used to cut yourself and take drugs didn't you, John? Did you ever hurt other people? What about the drugs? They cost a lot, didn't they? Tell us what you did to pay for them, John.
- **Alicia Juico:** what did the voices tell you to do? You did some of those things, didn't you? Oh, you've tried to forget, but you hear them pleading in your dreams, don't you?
- **Erik Wilson:** tell us about the bad times when you were using too much coke. What did you do to those people who didn't do what you wanted? Did you drug them first?
- **Melinda Moody:** Tyrone was a good man. Why did you drive your husband away? Of course he hit you, dear; he hit you because you were bad. Tell me about how you made Tyrone's life a living hell.
- **Ray West:** you like writing, don't you, Ray? Do you have a bedtime story for me? You write about your fantasies, don't you, Ray? Couldn't sleep could you, Ray? What did you do in those late night hours?
- **Maggi Stern:** you like the magic don't you, Maggi? Those people at the meetings used you, Maggi. Why did you let them do that to you? Is it because you liked it? Tell us about what you did, Maggi.

SAMPLE NAMES

During play you may have to improvise some additional characters and provide names for them. A selection of names is listed below for your convenience:

Male: Gabriel Graham, Tim Buescher, Kevin Cooper, Edwin Binder, Bill Lassek, David Jorgensen, Carlos Levin, Glen Connaughton, Douglas Kharlamov.

Female: Jennifer Missett, Lisa Pollon, Monica Isle, Nikki Grace, Kim Gruber, Andrea Holt, Elyse Sekuler, Elizabeth Fain, Maggi Goldstein.

WE CALL THE POLICE

Most of the NPCs are reluctant to call the police unless it is clearly their only option. For example, Bridgette might do so if members of her family are threatened, but she knows her husband is a little unpredictable and wants to avoid causing him stress, as well as being fearful of him being arrested. Mari and Nathan clearly want to avoid all contact with the authorities. Sarah has a drug habit and thus a natural aversion to law enforcement.

Of course the investigators may choose to call the police, and that would be the logical and seemingly the right thing to do given the evidence of abuse that they are likely to encounter. Always remember that the police require a good reason to be called out and will prioritize based upon the situation that is reported to them. It takes some time for the police to respond to a call, and when they arrive they will not jump to the conclusion that the person who called them is necessarily an innocent party.

Bradley is not keen on having the police involved in his life. He recognizes that there are human powers that, while they might not be able to harm him directly, might incarcerate his servants. Of course that would not be so bad in itself—Bradley can see all sorts of terrible things that his servants might do, and have done to them in prison, but he prefers to have a closer relationship with them. For that reason he does what he can to prevent anyone who bears his mark from contacting the police. For example:

- The caller dials the number incorrectly and files a report with a pizza house. They hear the responses they would expect from the police, but the police will never arrive (costing Bradley one magic point).
- The caller seems to dial the police, but Bradley intervenes and the police officer on the other end of the line seems to know about the situation and sinisterly warns them not to call again, and that it is all under control (costing Bradley one magic point).
- The characters attempt to visit the police station to file a report. Instead of going to a police station, Bradley confuses the characters, who enter a dry cleaning shop and attempt to file their report to the person behind the counter (costing Bradley three magic points).
- The characters actually encounter a real police officer (perhaps the dry cleaners call the police). Bradley causes the police officer to appear to speak in tongues, or to appear to be attacking



them, or even to look like a bestial monster in police uniform (costing Bradley three or five magic points, depending on the extremity of the delusion).

If the police do attend Mari's home, they need sufficient evidence or reason to enter. On doing so, they will not be able to perceive Bradley, but a forensic search would reveal evidence of at least one murder having taken place in recent weeks (of the homeless man sacrificed to Bradley). This would result in the arrest of Mari, David, and Nathan. If the police were in possession of Nathan's computer, this would lead them to Mari's house and a similar outcome.

If Mari, David, and Nathan are arrested, Mari's house is cordoned-off as a crime scene. Bradley will be most upset. He then draws Stacey and Sarah to him and has them take him to a different location, perhaps Sarah's house, where he could play with Shaun. What fun they would have together. In time he would then continue his plans to draw the investigators to him and complete his hold over them.

AMPUTATION

It may well occur to the players that the only way to be truly free of Bradley's influence is to amputate their own limbs—a hand, a forearm, or a whole arm, depending on how far the scar has reached.

If the amputation is performed without proper preparation, the procedure deals 1D6 damage for a hand, 1D6+1 for a forearm, and 1D6+2 for a whole arm, followed by the loss of 1 hit point each minute due to blood loss. Either a successful **CON** roll by the victim or a successful **First Aid** roll by the victim or another person stems the bleeding. These rolls may each be attempted once per minute until either the character dies or the bleeding is stopped. Regardless of the amount of hit points lost, the character should record a Major Wound.

If the amputation is performed with proper preparation (and a successful **Medicine** skill roll), the procedure deals the same amount of damage and an automatic Major Wound, but the bleeding is controlled and no further damage is taken.

If the procedure was not carried out in sterile environment (such as an operating theatre) the healing roll for the Major Wound should be made with a penalty die. Any fumbles indicate an infection or complication.

Several options for how the amputation might be carried out

- One could approach a medical practitioner, but no doctor would agree to such an operation on a healthy limb. A resourceful individual might find a way of persuading a doctor to carry out the amputation; if so, the procedure could be conducted with a minimal risk of infection and blood loss.

- An unqualified person could carry out the amputation. Very few people would be willing to do such a thing without good reason. Some individuals might do it if the price were right, or if they were sufficiently intimidated. Even then they may not be able to cope with the reality of cutting through flesh and bone, and the operation may be botched or abandoned part way through.
- Lastly a character could attempt to cut their own limb off. People have been known to do this in extreme situations, where death is the clear alternative. Even if this were the case, many people profess that they still would not be able to do such a thing.

When it comes to whether someone can amputate a hand or arm there are two options, either the character is crazy and desperate enough to do it, or they are rationally convinced that it is the best course of action. For the former, the character needs to attempt a **Sanity** roll and fail the test (i.e. the lower their sanity is, the more likely they are to fail the roll and thus cut off the limb). If they are using their strength of mind and willpower to force themselves to carry out the act, require them to make a successful **POW** roll (a medical professional would be able to forgo this roll when operating on a patient).

Leave the option of whether to roll **Sanity** or **POW** up to the player. Should they fail they may attempt to push the roll. Where a pushed roll is failed, try to come up with a horrific consequence: perhaps they imagine they see the scar spreading to their other limbs and hack themselves to pieces, or in their frustration and anger they assault someone else with the weapon, or, for something a little less extreme, they break down weeping at their own inability to complete the act (leaving the limb horribly injured but not severed).

Don't forget that this is a horror game and an improvised amputation is horrific! Skin and muscle cuts easily, but tendons and ligaments can be tough. Bone will need to be sawn through. Arteries must be severed and will bleed profusely. It's really not for the faint-hearted!

Post Amputation

Once a character has had the scar separated from their body they are free of Bradley's influence. They are no longer able to perceive Bradley. If they are in the same room as Bradley, they see and feel nothing but empty space where he stands. Bradley will be able to see them as he can see the rest of the world, but he will no longer feel any connection with them. Other characters and servants of Bradley might hunt down any amputees, perhaps to bring them before Bradley as a sacrifice.



ALTERNATIVE ENDING OPTION

An alternative ending that a Keeper might consider is if the investigators go back to the site of their original ritual in the woods in 1991. Ask the players to make a group **Luck** roll (though a generous Keeper might forgo the Luck roll). A success indicates that the skull used in the original ritual is still buried where it was left.

Dousing the skull in the fresh blood of each of the remaining Thirteen and then casting it in to a fire releases them from their curse and puts an end to the malevolent force. Bradley screams and effectively disintegrates into nothingness.



WRAPPING IT UP

Regardless of that the investigators do, Bradley will probably still have the power to possess the children whose parents bore his mark at their conception. This includes Shaun, Michael, Angelica, and any children that the players introduced. If all surviving investigators are amputees, they will be powerless to affect Bradley, and those children's lives will be forever cursed.

Since the investigators cannot permanently kill Bradley, there may not be a climactic battle. Some of the investigators might amputate limbs, others might fall to Bradley's will, others still might flee far away. If you feel you've come to a suitable ending then wrap the story up with a brief epilogue for each investigator. Alternatively, an optional way to deal with Bradley is considered in the box named **Alternative Ending Option**, nearby).

Ultimately the players must decide whether their investigators wind up as servants to an evil spirit, or whether they gain their freedom either by death or amputation. Whatever they do, they cannot save the children. As the Bible says, if your right hand is causing your trouble, it's better to cut it off than have your whole body dragged into hell. If only things were so easy in a Lovecraftian universe.

CONCLUSION

Suggested Sanity awards for investigators completing this scenario are:

- Ridding the world of the malevolent force in all its manifestations: +1D6 Sanity points.
- The investigators have fled, with the malevolent force known to still exist: -1D6 Sanity point loss.

REFERENCES

TOMES AND SPELLS

There are many occult books that can be found in this scenario; too many to list. Any of these might be found at David's, Nathan's, or Mari's home. Here are some titles for you to mention:

- *Enochian Magic*
- *The Book of Baphomet*
- *The Dragon of Two Flames*
- *Natural Satanic Witchcraft*
- *The Sinister Tradition*
- *The Horned Altar*
- *Lords of the Left-hand Path*
- *The Qabalab Workbook for Magicians*
- *Liber Lunae: Book of the Moon and Sepher ha-Levanah*
- *Monstres and their Kynde*

Monstres and their Kynde is the only Mythos tome on the list. It is in English and was written in the sixteenth century. It does contain spells and the Keeper is free to choose those (see *Call of Cthulhu: Keeper Rulebook* for the entry on this tome). One spell that the tome includes in this scenario is The Ritual of Transcendent Conception, a work of sex magic involving incense, rhythmic chanting, and drug use that induces a hypnagogic state. Anyone studying the spell and succeeding in an **Intelligence** roll can deduce that the spell opens a way to the newly conceived embryo, that some "higher power" might flow into the child.

THE BRADLEY RECORDINGS

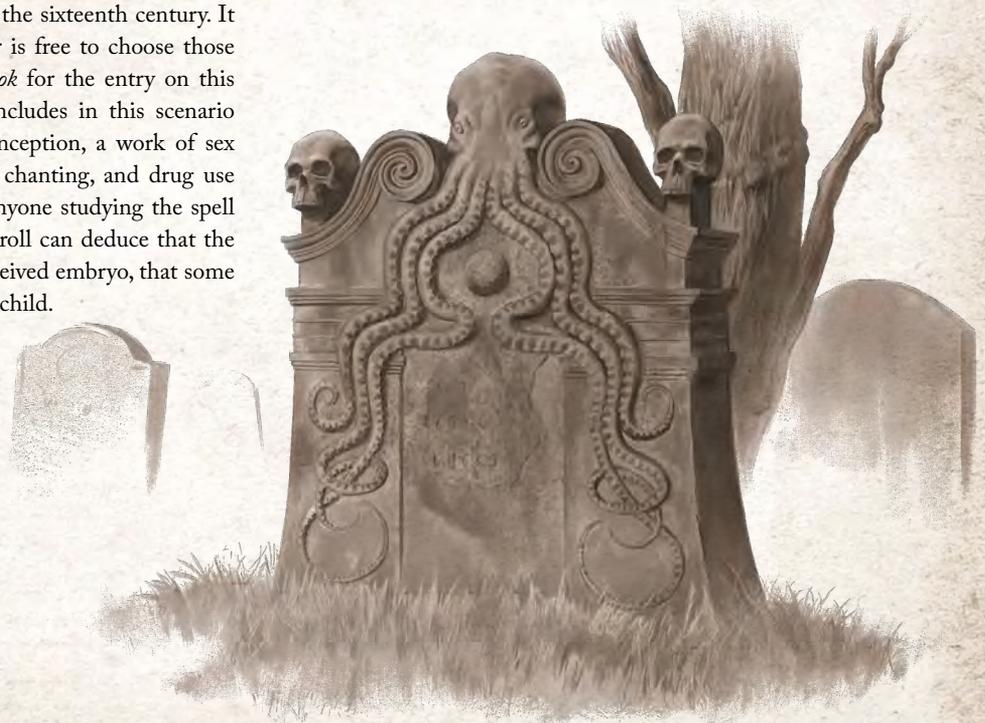
Over the years, Bradley has been interviewed and interrogated by Mari, David, and Nathan. Sometimes the talks have been amicable, at other times it has descended into confrontation, screaming, and profanity. Mari, David, and Nathan speak in English, while Bradley speaks in a variety of languages including English, Latin, Aklo, Ancient Sumerian, and Dutch. The recordings are on a mixture of cassette tapes and digital files, amounting to hundreds of hours, and these are not well cataloged.

Bradley can only be seen or heard by those that bear his mark. Those who do not bear his mark will hear only the interviewers' voices (Mari, David, and Nathan). Listening to a selection of recordings over a couple of hours would provide enough for the equivalent of an Initial Reading of a tome, requiring successful Listen roll. Anyone passing the Listen roll gains 2 points of Cthulhu Mythos skill and loses 1D6 Sanity.

Anyone who suffers a bout of madness as a result of reading a transcription of the Bradley Recordings will slash their own palms and make a pact with the malevolent force. Thereafter that person bears Bradley's mark (see **Bradley's Mark**, page 142), with all that entails.

The Bradley Recordings

- Study: 1 month. Sanity loss: 1D6
- Cthulhu Mythos: +2% Initial, +4% Full Study.
- Mythos Rating: 18.
- Suggested Spells: Dominate, Command Animal.



CHARACTERS

The following section outlines statistics of each of the major non-player characters and the monster (Bradley) portrayed in this scenario.

DAVID BARBER,

age 41, a man on the edge

STR 65 CON 50 SIZ 70 DEX 55 INT 65
 APP 55 POW 80 EDU 80 SAN 30 HP 12
 Damage Bonus: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 6 MP: 16

Combat

Brawl 25% (12/5), damage 1D3 + 1D4
 Dodge 36% (18/7)

Skills

Credit Rating 40%, Drive Auto 35%, Intimidate 45%,
 Persuade 60%.

BRIDGETTE BARBER,

age 42, faithful wife and mother

STR 55 CON 70 SIZ 50 DEX 65 INT 50
 APP 65 POW 90 EDU 70 SAN 50 HP 12
 Damage Bonus: 0 Build: 0 Move: 8 MP: 18

Combat

Brawl 25% (12/5), damage 1D3
 Dodge 33% (16/6)

Skills

Charm 30%, Mechanical Repair 35%.

SARAH MOORE,

age 43, mother and drug addict

STR 50 CON 50 SIZ 60 DEX 70 INT 55
 APP 45 POW 80 EDU 75 SAN 60 HP 11
 Damage Bonus: 0 Build: 0 Move: 7 MP: 16

Combat

Brawl 25% (12/5), damage 1D3
 Dodge 35% (17/7)

Skills

Credit Rating 05%, Fast Talk 60%, Sleight of Hand 55%,
 Stealth 40%.

NATHAN HELD,

age 44, depraved librarian

STR 85 CON 40 SIZ 80 DEX 35 INT 85
 APP 45 POW 60 EDU 90 SAN 40 HP 12
 Damage Bonus: +1D6 Build: 2 Move: 7 MP: 12

Combat

Brawl 40% (20/8), damage 1D3 + 1D6
 Dodge 20% (10/4)

Skills

Persuade 60%, Psychology 55%, Sleight of Hand 45%.

STACEY KIMBLE, age 42, woman in trouble

STR 40 CON 40 SIZ 40 DEX 30 INT 65
 APP 40 POW 50 EDU 75 SAN 40 HP 8
 Damage Bonus: -1 Build: -1 Move: 7 MP: 10

Combat

Brawl 25% (12/5), damage 1D3 - 1
 Dodge 15% (7/3)

MARI CUBINE, age 41, bank manager

STR 55 CON 40 SIZ 60 DEX 65 INT 65
 APP 75 POW 50 EDU 85 SAN 40 HP 10
 Damage Bonus: 0 Build: 0 Move: 7 MP: 10

Combat

Brawl 25% (12/5), damage 1D3
 Dodge 35% (17/7)

Skills

Credit Rating 65%, Intimidate 45%, Persuade 60%.

MICHAEL BARBER,

age 18, aspiring teenage warlock

STR 75 CON 50 SIZ 60 DEX 65 INT 75
 APP 40 POW 65 EDU 65 SAN 60 HP 11
 Damage Bonus: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 9 MP: 13

Combat

Brawl 25% (12/5), damage 1D3
 Dodge 32% (16/6)

Skills

Climb 60%, Intimidate 40%, Sleight of Hand 40%, Spot
 Hidden 50%, Stealth 40%.

ANGELICA MOORE, age 18, besotted teenager

STR 35 CON 60 SIZ 45 DEX 60 INT 55
 APP 60 POW 70 EDU 50 SAN 60 HP 10
 Damage Bonus: -1 Build: -1 Move: 8 MP: 14

Combat

Brawl 25% (12/5), damage 1D3 -1
 Dodge 30% (15/6)

Skills

Charm 50%, Psychology 40%, Spot Hidden 60%.

SHAUN MOORE, age 9, regular kid

STR 25 CON 50 SIZ 30 DEX 40 INT 55
 APP 65 POW 60 EDU 30 SAN 60 HP 8
 Damage Bonus: -2 Build: -2 Move: 8 MP: 12

Combat

Brawl 25% (12/5), damage 1D3 -2
 Dodge 20% (10/4)

Skills

Play video games 55%.

BRADLEY, age 9, the malevolent force incarnate

Most people would take Bradley for a teenager. His back is hunched and his expression somewhat vacant. He is usually dirty and covered in scabs. His mouth is full of crooked stained teeth that have never seen a dentist or a toothbrush.

STR 90 CON 90 SIZ 65 DEX 80 INT 95
 APP 25 POW 100 EDU 40 SAN 00 HP 15
 Damage Bonus: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 9 MP: 20*

*May drain more from his servants, see Special Powers.

SPECIAL POWERS:

- **Bradley's Powers 1:** Spread his Mark (page 143).
- **Bradley's Powers 2:** Magic Point Drain (page 143).
- **Bradley's Powers 3:** Regeneration (page 143).
- **Bradley's Powers 4:** Delusions (page 143).
- **Bradley's Powers 5:** Possession (page 144).
- **Bradley's Powers 6:** Command (page 144).

Combat

Brawl 55% (27/11), damage 1D3 + 1D4
 Dodge 60% (30/12)

Armor: none, but regenerates to full hit points over 1D6 rounds when reduced to zero hit points.

Skills: Listen 50%, Speak any language 100%.

Sanity loss: 0/1D3 to see Bradley in his present state

**OPTIONAL
 NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS**

Six of the thirteen occult society members are presented as investigators. Any of those that are not used may be incorporated into the game as non-player characters. If there are only two players, it is assumed that John and Alicia will be used as investigators, and so they are not listed as potential non-player characters. Investigators may wish to carry out research on these non-player characters; if so, use the following entries. If any of the following are used as player characters, their entries should be ignored.

Researching Erik Wilson—NPC

- **Medical records:** has been recently diagnosed with stomach cancer. As part of his assessment he owned up to having used a lot of cocaine in the late nineties and early two thousands, but has been clean for nine years. His prognosis is not good.
- **Criminal records:** two women pressed charges against Erik for sexual harrismment prior to 2004, but the cases did not come to court due to insufficient evidence.
- **Social circle:** friendly with Alicia Juico, and lent her the money to start her antiques business. Erik has had several short-term relationships with women, but was never able to commit long-term.
- **Online:** gregarious on a variety of social networking sites.
- **Locations:** can be found at work or socializing in polite society. Ultimately he will be drawn to Bradley and sworn to his service.

Researching Melinda Moody—NPC

- **Medical records:** numerous minor injuries that relate to undocumented but suspected domestic abuse during her marriage.
- **Social circle:** single. She meets with a Buddhist group every Wednesday evening to meditate and socialize. They all have only pleasant things to say about her.
- **Home:** following a thorough search of Melinda's house it is clear that she is a keen journalist, a Buddhist, and that she has an interest in Ouija boards. Journals document some of her findings, and investigators will find their own names listed in them, both journalistically and via séances. Much of the information comes (unknown to her) from Bradley; some will be true, including secret information about the investigators that no one else should know.
- **Online:** has a host of contacts online and her computer logs will show that she has been conducting research on the other members of the occult society. The Keeper should feel free to throw in details about some of the other characters here.
- **Locations:** Melinda's investigations could potentially take her anywhere at any time. Ultimately she will be drawn to Bradley and sworn to service.

THE MOONCHILD

Researching Ray West—NPC

- **Social circle:** knows a variety of bibliophiles and bookstore owners. They would be able to vouch that he is a good customer and has a keen interest in the occult.
- **Home:** full of books of all kinds; he even has a small section devoted to non-occult books. He does not possess any Cthulhu Mythos tomes.
- **Online:** a dedicated search may turn up some his fiction (written under a pen-name); it is of a disturbing and confessional nature, the details of which are left to the Keeper's imagination. Some of it may involve thinly veiled analogs of the investigators.
- **Locations:** can be found at work, browsing bookstores, or at home reading. Ultimately he will be drawn to Bradley and sworn to service.

Researching Maggi Stern—NPC

- **Social circle:** known by locals who were involved in the occult prior to 2005. They knew her as a rather desperate individual that would do anything to get her kicks.
- **Home:** lives above her shop. Her living quarters are quite mundane, and any occult books or artifacts are dusty and long unused.
- **Work:** the Enchiridion shop has records of sales to David and Nathan, various books and occult materials.
- **Online:** does much of her business online, and her feedback is mostly positive. Maggi is active in online forums and social media, mostly related to her business.
- **Locations:** can usually be found either at home or in her shop. Ultimately she will be drawn to Bradley and sworn to service.





THE SPACE BETWEEN

MODERN-DAY, LOS ANGELES, USA

INTRODUCTION

This scenario is set in modern-day Los Angeles and follows the last stages of the troubled production of a movie called *"The Space Between."* The production has been bankrolled by the Church of Sunyata. The cast and crew, including the investigators, are made up entirely of members of the Church. Rumor has it that the script is an allegory of Church teachings, and the finished film may be used as a recruitment tool.

The film has been shooting for five weeks and was just on the verge of completion when Verity Harrow, the female lead, went missing. This has brought production to a halt, but the investigators' real problems are just beginning.

Designed for up to six investigators, **The Space Between** can be played over one or more sessions.

BACKGROUND FOR THE KEEPER

Origins

In 1967, a fantasy writer by the name of Ralph L. Chandler wrote a book that united his interests in psychology, biofeedback, and Zen Buddhism. This book, entitled *Mu: A Scientific Approach to Enlightenment*, built a dedicated following and sold more copies than all of Chandler's other work combined. Chandler promptly abandoned his career as a novelist and reinvented himself first as a self-help guru, and then a spiritual leader.

The core of Chandler's work is that the human mind is a maelstrom. The secret to enlightenment is to rid oneself of

PRE-GENERATED INVESTIGATORS

The Space Between is designed for up to six pre-generated investigators (in the accompanying PDF pack for this book). It will cause no problems if the players prefer to create their own investigators for play however. The only requirements are that investigators be members of the Church of Sunyata, involved in the film production in some way, and have a reason to get involved when things start going wrong. Personal reputation, financial investment, advancement within the Church, jealousy, and revenge are all strong motivations here. It will be useful if at least one investigator has a strong link to Jared Woodward, and another to Craig Steele. Links to Brian Musgrove are also useful, but not as essential.

Requiring a bit more work, an alternative option is not to have the investigators as members of the Church at all. Instead, they are perhaps drawn into investigating the Church, its members, and the *The Space Between* production. Perhaps one of them is a distant relation to Verity Harrow or Jared Woodward, called by nearer members of the family who are concerned about the recent events.

this chaos through a process called "Emptying," with the ultimate goal being to become "Truly Empty," filled with nothing but the peace of the cosmos. His approach incorporated Zen meditation, augmented by one-on-one counseling sessions. While there was nothing ground-breaking about this, the fact that it was explained



Creation church Sunyata

in pseudo-scientific terms made *Mu* appealing to the science fiction fans, engineers, and hippies who made up Chandler's readership. It didn't take long for the influence of *Mu* to extend beyond this core. In late 1973, Chandler took things further and founded a church.

Creation of the Church of Sunyata

Some critics maintain that the only reason Chandler created the Church of Sunyata was tax exemption. Chandler declared that he had seen beyond the original scope of *Mu* and now understood that the secret of saving humanity from its worst impulses lay in religious practice. Either way, both Chandler and his teachings started changing.

Chandler withdrew from the world to meditate and write. Rumors circulated that he had gone mad or had developed a serious drug problem. While the Church denied these allegations, there was an element of truth to both. In his researches into religious and occult writings, Chandler encountered a number of references to the Mythos, finally leading him to acquire a copy of the *Arcticurals of Passing*. The book poisoned his mind, taking his meditations in unwholesome new directions. Chandler's work became filled with references to the Hungry Void and alien intelligences that live in the spaces between the stars.

He became convinced that the path to true "Emptiness" lay in inviting these intelligences to devour all our human weaknesses.

While Chandler descended into madness and stimulant abuse, the Church prospered. An enthusiastic young follower of Chandler, Brian Musgrove, took control of the daily operations of the Church in 1978, freeing his mentor to concentrate on writing scripture. Musgrove was more pragmatic than Chandler, and the Church grew rapidly. Realizing that recent scripture from Chandler would frighten the uninitiated, Musgrove instituted a new structure to control access to the more esoteric aspects. The holy books made available to Church members were restricted according to their level of understanding, and progress depended on whether those above believed them ready to accept new teachings. Very few were deemed sufficiently strong to cope with the top-level teachings, and most remained unaware that these even existed.

One criticism leveled at the Church under this new regime was that it took financial advantage of its members. The courses and counseling sessions came at considerable cost, and many who plateaued before learning the inner teachings felt like they had gained little of value for a great deal of money. Despite the accusations, these were still boom times for the Church, and its membership grew throughout the world.

The other problem that faced the Church was that it could not throw off the label of “cult.” With various governments taking an interest in the tax affairs of the Church, and former members writing exposés, Musgrove decided that the Church needed respectability more than anything.

Embracing Celebrities

Musgrove decided that the best way of getting good press for the Church was celebrity endorsement, so in 1985 he instituted a campaign to recruit people from the entertainment industry. The Church could offer them two things: self-improvement techniques that would allow them to maximize their potential, and a network of people in the industry who could bolster their careers.

In order to keep these new recruits within the Church, Musgrove elected to teach them a small subset of Church scripture. The Church opened a luxurious Celebrity Retreat in a mansion in the Hollywood hills, where special courses and counseling sessions could be carried out. A handful of celebrity recruits were deemed suitable to learn the inner teachings. One of these was the actor Craig Steele, who had appeared in many blockbusters over his long career. He has become, in many people’s eyes, the public face of the Church of Sunyata.

True Emptiness

Ralph L. Chandler died in 1995. The official cause of death was heart disease; the connection to his amphetamine habit was covered up. While much of his work had been collected and edited into Church scripture, he left a large quantity of notes that were deemed too incoherent to use.

Steele spent years going through these notes. He had reached the top level of the Church hierarchy, had had many private discussions with Chandler about his teachings, and had been bequeathed Chandler’s personal library, including the *Arricurals of Passing* and Chandler’s extensive analysis of it. All this allowed Steele to make a conceptual breakthrough, becoming the first person to understand what it truly means to be “Empty.”

Steele’s epiphany came as he was using a floatation tank, meditating on some of Chandler’s final writings. In a single moment that lasted an eternity, he experienced the empty space between all things as a concrete truth. Everything that made up Craig Steele was instantly gone. The thing that exited the tank wore Steele’s skin, but within it was the Hungry Void.

This happened almost two years ago, and to date the only person who Steele has made Truly Empty is Brian Musgrove. Few Church members have the depth of understanding required. This barrier made Steele search for other avenues.

The first approach was a combination of ritual and surgical techniques. By skinning a person alive and then calling upon the Opener of the Way to fill their husk with the Hungry Void, an echo of what they once were animates the skin. This has not

proved as successful as Steele had hoped, as “the Emptied,” as he calls them, still have some human cares and doubts. The second solution involves directly exposing the human mind to the truth of Emptiness through a visual medium. By editing subliminal images of a Mythos nature into a film, Steele believes a viewer’s mind can be touched by the Hungry Void, replacing all its woes with glorious Emptiness. He has called upon Jared Woodward, a successful film director and high-level Church member, to make his vision a reality. Woodward has been shooting this film—*The Space Between*—for the last six weeks, and this is the production in which all of the investigators are involved.

The Death of Verity Harrow

Steele and Woodward’s plan involved filming the ritual and surgical conversion of Verity Harrow into one of the Empty, and subliminally cutting single frames into the scene of the film in which the character of Yvette Sommers first appears. This, they believed, would create a conduit whereby the Void could touch viewers. Once Woodward and Harrow had filmed the scenes where Clarissa (Harrow) meets Yvette on the basalt cliffs in her dream, they were free to perform the ritual.

Harrow was a willing participant. As a devout Church member, she was desperate to become Truly Empty, even when Woodward told her what would be involved. She met Harrow and Steele on the soundstage on the night of April 3rd, and they Emptied her.

The three of them drew a circle and various sigils on the set of the basalt cliffs, using Harrow’s blood. While Steele read from Chandler’s exegesis, Woodward used a ritual knife from Steele’s private collection to skin Harrow alive. The process was agonizing, and it took almost half an hour for Harrow to die. The camera filmed every second of it.

Once Woodward had Harrow’s skin, he sewed it back into human shape using sutures while Steele called the Opener of the Way. Eventually the Hungry Void entered Harrow’s skin and she awoke, Empty.

Steele took the Emptied Harrow to the Celebrity Retreat while Woodward bleached the set and disposed of the leftover parts in a nearby storm drain.

No one has seen Harrow since then. Steele is keeping her out of the public eye as she is still adjusting to her new state, and her actions are unpredictable. It is difficult for the Empty to pass as human—they have no eyes and the empty sockets, as well as their mouths, show the void within. Harrow has been reported missing and the police are investigating.

Woodward has not left his apartment since the ritual. The official word is that he has no need to turn up until Harrow reappears. He is busy editing the footage in preparation for an early test screening, despite filming not officially having wrapped yet. The ritual and the understanding of what he is doing have hit his sanity hard, and he is losing himself in work and cocaine.



DRAMATIS PERSONAE

The following section outlines the background and role of each of the major non-player characters (NPCs) and monsters portrayed in this scenario. Statistics for each can be found in the **Characters** section at the end of the scenario (page 200).

The Keeper should become familiar with the relationships between the NPCs and the pre-generated player investigators, as their interaction is important. A **Relationship Map** is provided on the page opposite, which shows the connections between the various characters.

Tom Bolender, *security guard*

Bolender is a former beat cop who took early retirement and has been working for the Church since. While he is a devoted member of the Church, he is very worldly, and openly admits that he sees Emptying sessions as a way to make himself happier rather than as steps towards spiritual enlightenment. He is responsible for the security of the soundstage, and has taken the disappearance of Harrow hard.

Bolender does not see the police as enemies and will assist their investigation, including letting **Detective**

Neumeier (following) onto the set, unless an investigator stops him.

- **Description:** an amiable man, with very short gray hair, and a large gut that hangs over the waistband of his pants. He has a tendency to waddle when trying to move quickly.
- **Traits:** given to slaps on the back and hearty laughter.

Roleplaying Hooks:

- Cooperates with the police, almost naively.
- Suggest investigators have an Emptying session if they become stressed.

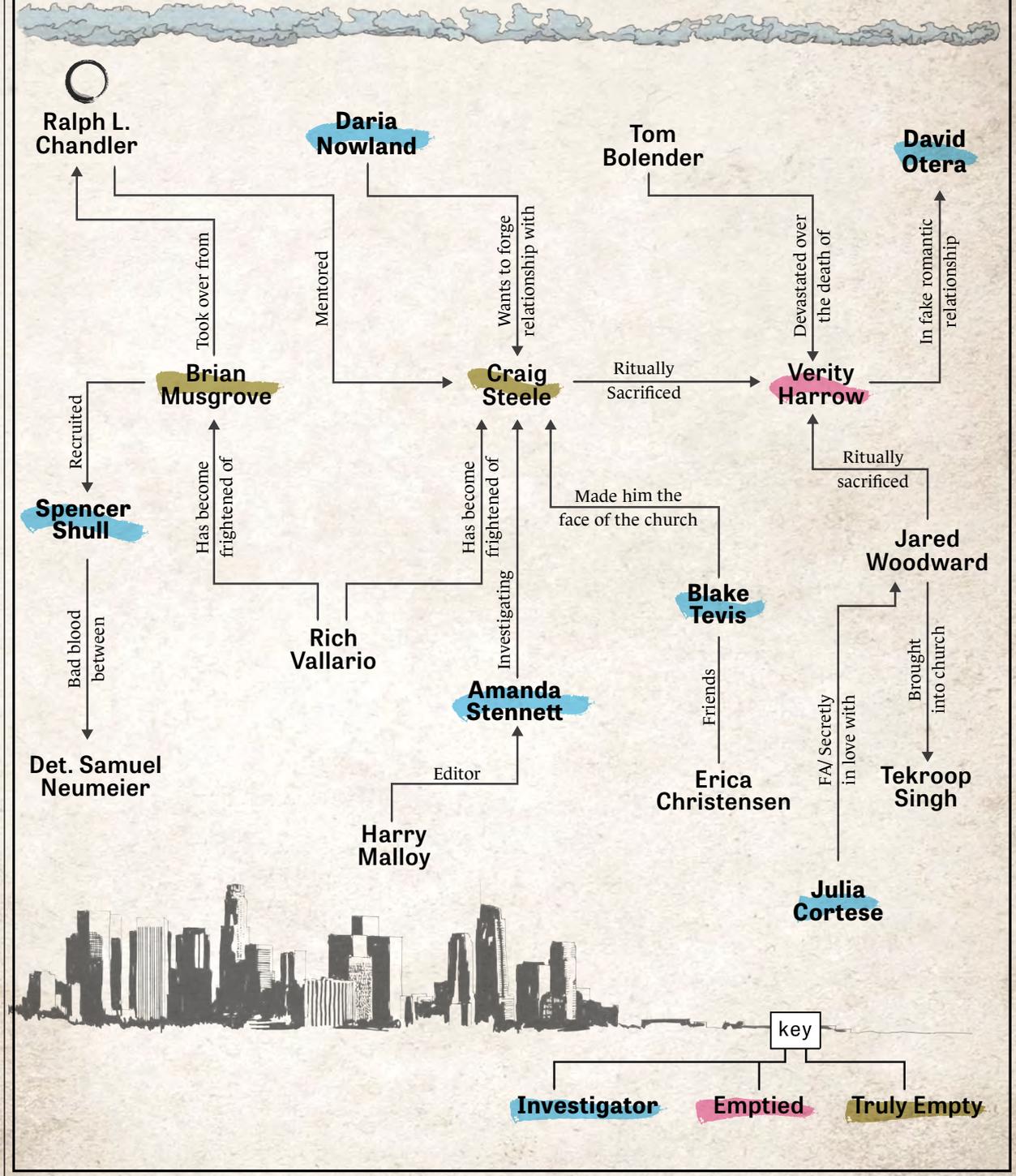
Tekroop Singh, *assistant director*

Singh is a long-time collaborator of Jared Woodward's, and he has joined the Church largely to protect their professional relationship and friendship; he has no real interest in the teachings of the Church.

- **Description:** a slightly built man of Indian heritage, with a neat beard and a tendency to wear garish shirts. He has a constant look of pain from stress headaches, and he unconsciously taps walls and furniture with his fingers when he speaks.

The Space Between

Relationship Map



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Tom Bolender



Tekroop Singh

- **Traits:** outwardly calm, but given to outbursts of anger when under stress.

Roleplaying Hooks:

- Put pressure on the investigators to bring Jared Woodward to the set.
- Mock the investigators, and speak against the Church when things get tough.

Detective Samuel Neumeier, LAPD

Hard-bitten and relentless, Neumeier is a long-serving member of the LAPD, a detective in the Robbery-Homicide Division for the past six years. He sees the Church of Sunyata as dangerous, believing that it has too much influence in the Los Angeles media, political arena, and even the LAPD. He knows he cannot break the Church's control in any of these areas, but gives them a bloody nose when he can.

- **Description:** short, but solidly built. He has a grey crew-cut and a boxer's nose. His voice is gruff, and he coughs a lot.
- **Traits:** given to colorful and frequent profanity.

Roleplaying Hooks:

- Use any means at his disposal to persuade the investigators to grant him access to the film set.
- Ask the investigators difficult questions once he has access to the film set.



Detective Samuel Neumeier

Jared Woodward



Jared Woodward, *film director*

Woodward is a former Hollywood wunderkind, now passed his peak. He joined the Church of Sunyata in 1998, after making *Past Due* with Craig Steele. Woodward's rise through the Church has been meteoric, and he has moved beyond the practices of the Celebrity Retreat and onto the inner teachings. Some critics believe that his studies within the Church have affected his style, and Woodward has mentioned in interviews that he is now much more interested in the use of negative space in composing scenes.

People who know Woodward find his personality mercurial; he is intelligent, driven, and perceptive, but given to periods of bleak introspection or angry, cruel, outbursts. While most people who have worked with him have been happy with the end result, few of them would consider themselves his friend.

Learning the truth at the center of the Church of Sunyata has not helped Woodward's sanity. He has seen the Hungry Void within the Steele's eyes and it terrified him. Steele has shared enough of Chandler's unpublished writings that Woodward understands as much as it is possible to know and still remain human. His agreement to make this film for Steele is motivated more by fear and madness than any desire to bring true Emptiness to people; Woodward has seen what it really means to be Empty, and he is afraid of it.

- **Description:** tall and gaunt, with unruly sandy brown hair. His face is prematurely lined, and his gaze is always flitting around, as if he is looking for something.

- **Traits:** rubs his nose regularly and sniffs a lot.

Roleplaying Hooks:

- Will come up with increasingly desperate reasons why he should be left alone to work.
- Ask investigators to get him more drugs (cocaine).

Mandy Solek, *receptionist*

Solek knows that there is something remarkable happening at the Celebrity Retreat, something that will usher in a new age for the Church, but she is not privy to the details.

There is a 9mm pistol in the drawer of Solek's desk, and while she has never had to point it at a human being, her devotion to the Church means that she has few qualms about shooting its enemies.

- **Description:** unremarkable but pretty, with shoulder-length brown hair, and a broad smile. She wears a navy blue suit, with a modest skirt, and is impeccable in her grooming and make-up.
- **Traits:** asks a lot of personal questions. While it may seem like Solek is snooping, she is simply interested in the people she meets.

Roleplaying Hooks:

- Either smile and greet the investigators as if they are the most important people, or
- Treat the investigators as a danger to the Church and apprehend them.



Mandy Solek

Verity Harrow,
emptied actress, filled with the Void

Harrow's movie career took off after she entered the Church of Sunyata and the network of contacts it offered. While she has only had leading roles in small films, her star was on the rise. Harrow believed that being the lead in *The Space Between* would finally allow her to achieve celebrity, but when Steele and Woodward approached her with the opportunity to become Empty, and to help others do so, she decided that her duty to the Church came first.

Harrow remembers everything that was done to her, and she is on the brink of madness. She regrets letting Woodward and Steele talk her into being Emptied, and is terrified by what she has become and the realization that the last bits of her are being eroded away.

Physically, Harrow appears, at first glance, to be the same person she was before her conversion. She hides what she has become by wearing large sunglasses and a colorful scarf wrapped around the lower part of her face. If these are removed, it is immediately apparent that there is nothing but darkness and dancing pinpoints of light within her.

The other secret that Harrow's scarf covers is the large scar down the back of her neck where her skin was cut and peeled off. It is crudely stitched, and the edges of the wound shift disconcertingly when she moves. When Harrow speaks now, her voice is breathless and carries a slight echo, but is still recognizable as hers.



Verity Harrow

Seeing one of the Emptied for what they are, through their eyes, mouth, or by piercing their skin, provokes a Sanity roll (1/1D8 loss).

See **The Emptied** for more details (pages 180 and 201).

- **Description:** blonde hair, wholesome good looks, and a natural grace and elegance. Before Woodward and Steele cut her skin off and discarded her flesh and bones, she had vivid green eyes and an even, white smile.
- **Traits:** touches and handles everything around her, as if trying to convince herself that it's real.

Roleplaying Hooks:

- Appeal to the investigator's sympathy. This woman needs help.
- Don't make eye contact—stare blankly past the players as you speak.

Craig Steele, truly empty actor, filled with the Void

Steele has been a star since the mid-1970s. He first came to prominence through his television work, before moving on to feature films. Even after his appeal as a teen idol faded in the early eighties, he continued to work as an action star and then character actor, and was a staple of Hollywood movies until he retired from performing three years ago.

Steele was one of the first celebrity recruits to the Church and quickly became synonymous with it. His charisma won other converts from both the entertainment industry and his fans. He still carries out the occasional interview about Church matters, although these have been limited to print and radio recently.

Steele's ability to appear human is limited; he wears false teeth to give himself the impression of a normal human smile, but an Extreme Spot Hidden roll determines that there is no tongue in his mouth. He also wears large, wrap-around sunglasses to disguise the fact that he has no eyes.

The entity that wears Steele's skin is cool, inhuman, and utterly charming. It has perfected the art of presenting itself as Steele, and even his closest aides believe that he has simply become more eccentric since his retirement.

Seeing one of the Truly Empty for what they are, through their eyes, mouth, or by piercing their skin, provokes a Sanity roll (1/1D8 loss).

See **The Truly Empty** for more details (pages 180 and 201).

- **Description:** a once boyishly handsome man, now overweight and jowly. Steele's hair has thinned greatly, and although he is no longer vain about his appearance, he wears a hairpiece to cover this, as it is what people expect. He wears dark wraparound sunglasses when in the presence of humans.

Craig Steele



- **Traits:** due to his extensive files on Church members, Steele often knows extremely personal details about individuals, and drops them into conversation to remind them who is in charge.

Roleplaying Hooks:

- Asks questions of investigators to determine if they are a threat.
- Don't make eye contact—stare blankly past the players as you speak.

Brian Musgrove,
truly empty leader of the Church of Sunyata

At the start of play, Musgrove is the only person apart from Steele who has been truly Emptied. Like Steele, he is an embodiment of the Hungry Void, wrapped in human skin. Despite this, he has maintained his position as the head of the Church of Sunyata from the seclusion of his office.

Musgrove is not as adept at feigning humanity as Steele. His voice echoes strangely when he talks, and he covers his mouth with one hand while speaking to conceal its contents.

See **The Truly Empty** for more details (pages 180 and 201).

- **Description:** a tall, trim white man in his mid-fifties, with short salt-and-pepper hair. He wears a white, collarless shirt with subtle vertical stripes and a plain black suit. He only wears shoes on the rare occasions he leaves the office. His eyes are always covered by black-framed sunglasses, which look far too big for his narrow face.

Brian Musgrove



- **Traits:** as when he was human, Musgrove is quiet but intense, given to direct, piercing questions and a bluntness that verges on rude. He never raises his voice, but his manner is authoritative and intimidating.

Roleplaying Hooks:

- Intimidating and belittles others for time wasting.
- Don't make eye contact—stare blankly past the players, and cover your mouth as you speak.

Rich Vallario,
Church member desperate to impress

While Vallario has been a devout member of the Church since childhood, giving much of his free time over to volunteering for the Church, he is increasingly troubled by what he has seen. He has noticed that Brian Musgrove never goes home any more, and that he hasn't taken off his sunglasses in public for months.

- **Description:** a loud and enthusiastic man in his early thirties, who wears a bowling shirt and neatly pressed chinos. He is somewhat overweight, and his short-cropped dark hair has a noticeable bald spot.
- **Traits:** often complains about minor slights and inconveniences, as if they are part of a conspiracy against him. These complaints are usually prefaced with the words, "Aw, man..."

Roleplaying Hooks:

- Attempt to get the investigators' confidence by offering an Emptying session.
- May ask an investigator if he or she has noticed anything strange about Steele or Musgrove.

THE EMPTIED

At the start of play, the only character to have been Emptied is Harrow. Given that Steele is keen to test the procedure, seeing it as an effective way of converting opponents, it is likely that other characters become Emptied during the course of the game. If an investigator is Emptied (through the fast-track surgical procedure, see box on page 184), give the player **Handout: Space 2—You Have Been Emptied**.

THE TRULY EMPTY

At the start of play, the only characters who are Truly Empty are Steele and Musgrove. Between the appearance of Yvette Sommers in the editing suite and the scheduled test screening, it is quite likely that other characters join the ranks of the Truly Empty as the game progresses. If an investigator becomes Truly Empty through the touch of Yvette Sommers, make the changes to their statistics detailed in **Handout: Space 3—You are Truly Empty**.

THE HUNGRY VOID

If the skin of one of the Emptied or Truly Empty is ruptured, the Hungry Void within leaks out. This starts at melee range and then expand at a movement rate of 8 for 1D6 rounds,

passing through walls, doors, and any other solid objects. At the end of this time, it contracts back within the shell it occupied. If the Empty person is still above zero hit points at this stage, they are able to contain the rupture; otherwise, the void continues to contract to nothingness, leaving only empty skin.

The Hungry Void takes the form of living tendrils of darkness. Small specks of light, like distant stars, can be seen within, giving a vertiginous feeling of looking into infinite space. Its presence sucks the energy out of its surroundings, making lights dim and flicker, and causing the temperature to drop below freezing. Frost forms on metal surfaces and people will see their breath in the air.

Yvette Sommers, film character, and an Avatar of the Void

Sommers appears to be a human woman, tall and slender, with long, dark hair. She wears an ankle-length dress, which is night black but flecked with what seem at first to be gems or sequins. These flecks glow or catch the light and move slowly.

Up close, the illusion of Sommers' humanity falls apart. As with the Emptied, her eyes and mouth are filled with the Hungry Void, giving a glimpse into the vast expanse of nothingness that makes up her being. She contains an infinity, and seeing this creates an overwhelming sense of vertigo and provokes a Sanity roll (1/1D8 loss).

Despite her human appearance, Sommers does not attempt to communicate. Her actions are completely soundless, and her expression never changes from one of complete neutrality. She exists only to bring Emptiness to those she meets. She does this by touching a person, pulling all that they are into the Hungry Void and filling their skin with her Emptiness. Anyone undergoing this becomes Truly Empty.



Rich Vallario



Yvette Sommers

BREAKING NEWS

You have been **EMPTIED!**

When you awake, things have changed. The turmoil of emotions you once felt now seems like voices from a distant room. You know who you are, or were, but how much of you is still there?

You still look like yourself, except you no longer have any eyes. Looking into a mirror just shows you the endless reaches of space that lie within your skin. Similarly, your mouth, when you open it, reveals no teeth or tongue, only the Hungry Void. Your skin is hollow and flexible, like a half-inflated balloon. Pressure causes your fingers and limbs to bend in inhuman ways.

They told you that you would be peaceful when Empty, but that was a lie. You can still feel the last shreds of your humanity hanging on, but you know that the Hungry Void will devour you in time. And then what will you be? Is there any way to hold on you who you are? Is there anyone who can help you? You need to find some way to cope with what has been done to you.

Keep your current stats with the following exceptions:

- Half your Sanity, rounding down.
- Half your Constitution and Strength, rounding down.
- Add 50 to your Power.
- Adjust your hit points (Constitution + Size, divided by 10).



Handout - Space 2

BREAKING NEWS

You are **TRULY EMPTY!**

While you know the name, memories and nuances of the human whose skin you inhabit, and can impersonate them perfectly, you are not this person. You are the Hungry Void wrapped in a human shell. You are the eternity of space and time, with no more kinship to humanity than a person has to the bacteria that live in their guts.

The humans have called upon you and your kind to bring them peace, and you can grant this by devouring all they are. The void that fills you also fills the skins of Craig Steele and Brian Musgrove, and you share consciousness and purpose with them. You will see that the film of The Space Between reaches as many human minds as possible and that they feed your shared hunger.

You still look like the human whose skin you wear, except you no longer have any eyes. Your empty sockets show the endless reaches of space that lie within your skin. Similarly, your mouth, when you open it, shows no teeth or tongue, but only the Hungry Void. Your skin is hollow and flexible, like a half-inflated balloon. Pressure causes your fingers and limbs to bend in inhuman ways.

Keep your current stats with the following exceptions:

- Your Sanity is now 0.
- Your Power is now 150.
- Half your Constitution and Strength, rounding down.
- Adjust your hit points (Constitution + Size, divided by 10)



Handout - Space 3

THE PRODUCTION

THE SOUNDSTAGE

The filming of *The Space Between* has been taking place on a rented soundstage on the Schriver Studios lot in the west San Fernando Valley. There are four other soundstages on the lot, three of which are currently in use by television productions. While the lot is not owned by the Church of Sunyata, the owner, Milt Schriver, is an old friend of Craig Steele and has told all his staff to give the crew VIP treatment.

The soundstage is a long, white building with a curved metal roof. There are 18,000 square feet of open space inside, a suite of offices in an outbuilding, and a number of trailers parked outside.

A cyclorama fills the back wall, which is being used as a green screen for shots of the basalt cliffs. A platform, built up with resin and painted to look like black stony ground, sits in front of the cyclorama. This is where Harrow was sacrificed. While Steele and Woodward attempted to clean up the blood, there are still traces of it in the cracks and crevices.

The main set is a portion of the apartment complex where the character of Clarissa Hollows lives. This includes her apartment, with a balcony that looks out over a green screen, the living room of Yvette Sommer's apartment, the corridor that links them, and an elevator bank. Clarissa's apartment is furnished haphazardly, whereas Yvette's is minimalist in design.

53 people work on the production. While the set has been busy throughout the production, it is now quiet, and some of the crew have stopped turning up, leaving 26 people on site as the game begins.

TIMELINE

- **March 8:** filming begins on *The Space Between*.
- **April 3:** Verity Harrow apparently leaves the set and vanishes. She is killed in a ritual performed by Jared Woodward and Craig Steele.
- **April 4:** Woodward retreats to his apartment to finish editing the rough cut.
- **April 8:** a mutilated body is found in a nearby storm drain, prompting Detective Neumeier to investigate the set.
- **April 9:** the test screening of *The Space Between* is scheduled for 8 p.m.
- **April 11:** DNA analysis will provide proof that the body found in the storm drain is that of Verity Harrow.
- **September 25:** unless the investigators prevent it, *The Space Between* goes on general release.

Handout: – Space 1A

HOLLYWOOD MOVIE NEWS

AN OVERVIEW OF THE SCRIPT

On the surface, *The Space Between* tells the story of Clarissa Hollows, who has recently divorced and moved to a new city to try to rebuild her life. Her isolation and emotional turmoil cause her to start examine aspect of her life, which confuses her further. She becomes friends with her next-door neighbor, a woman named Yvette Sommers. Yvette teaches Clarissa to Empty herself of her Woes using a number of thinly-veiled Church techniques, although she never mentions the Church by name. Clarissa finds herself dreaming of Yvette, and in the dreams the allegories and techniques Yvette has shared become tangible realities which empty her mind and her life of all their problems. The climax of the film is Clarissa discovering that the apartment next door has been empty all the time.

Handout: – Space 1B

EXCLUSIVE REPORT

CHURCH JARGON

- **Sunyata:** the Buddhist concept of emptiness.
- **Sunyata Central:** the Church headquarters on Ventura Boulevard.
- **Woes:** the human troubles and concerns that clutter the mind and block enlightenment.
- **Empty:** free from Woes and all human concerns.
- **Emptying:** the counseling process whereby someone is talked through examining their Woes and negating them.
- **Full:** filled with Woes and in need of Emptying to operate at peak efficiency.
- **Shadows:** people who are not Church members.
- **Infections:** enemies of the Church.
- **Cleansing:** the process of neutralizing an Infection by any means necessary.

Handout: – Space 1C

HOLLYWOOD MOVIE NEWS

THE CAST AND CREW

While dozens of people work on the production, the ones you are most likely to interact with are listed below. If you are using the pre-generated characters provided, names marked with a (*) are investigators.

Jared Woodward, writer, director and editor

Originally an indie-film wunderkind, Woodward has been making movies in Hollywood for over 20 years, and his work is generally well-received and financially successful. He is believed to be quite senior within the Church.

Woodward has not been on set since Harrow disappeared four days ago and is reported to be working in his private editing suite. You know that a screening of a rough cut of the movie has been scheduled for tomorrow evening (April 9th). The guest list includes selected Church members, including yourselves, and a handful of friendly journalists.

Woodward can be erratic and difficult to work with, but his position within the Church and the boost that his movies have given to various careers have earned him respect.

Craig Steele, producer

A retired big-name movie star and senior member of the Church, possibly even second-in-command, Steele is the person most outsiders would associate with the Church of Sunyata. It is common knowledge that this production is important to him, and there are rumors that he had a hand in the screenplay, or at least gave the story outline to Woodward. While he does not appear in the film, and has only visited the set twice, his influence is felt in all aspects of the production and people know to go to him with major problems.

Verity Harrow, female lead

An up-and-coming actress in her mid-twenties who made the move out of television a few years ago, but has yet to get her big break in movies. Some outsiders have made disparaging comments about her acting talent, saying that she only gets roles because of her involvement in the Church.

Harrow disappeared after leaving the set four days ago and no one has heard from her since. The police are now treating her disappearance as suspicious. Rumors are circulating that she has left the Church, gone on a drug binge or committed suicide, but the Church has refused to dignify any of this speculation with a response.

David Otera (*), male lead

Like Harrow, Otera is a minor star whose career stands to be transformed by *The Space Between*. The role he plays—Clarissa Hollows' ex-husband, Trent—is relatively minor, but there are some intense scenes where he uses emotional blackmail to try to win Clarissa back. Otera's standing in the Church is good, and while he has not reached the upper echelons, he is considered to be a rising star.

Otera has been romantically linked to Verity Harrow, and has been under pressure from the press and police since her disappearance. He maintains that he knows nothing about what has happened to her.

Julia Cortese (*), personal assistant to Jared Woodward

A young, bright and active go-getter, Cortese is another member of the Church who is considered to have a bright future. Her devotion to Church teachings and her ability to ease the process of working with Woodward have earned her much respect. When Woodward is in an especially obsessive frame of mind, he will not communicate with anyone except through Cortese. For the last few days, Cortese represents the closest thing that Woodward has had to a presence on the set.

Amanda Stenett (*), production assistant

Stenett is the Set Production Assistant, which means that she coordinates the communications between everyone involved in production. She is at the center of all the activities on set, and while she is not in charge, everyone knows and relies on her.

Stenett is a relatively new recruit to the Church. While she lacks the knowledge and status of more established members, she has shown herself keen to learn.

Tekroop Singh, assistant director

A long-time colleague who Woodward recently convinced to join the Church, Singh is still quite junior in the hierarchy, but his association with Woodward affords him respect.

In Woodward's absence, Singh has been shooting pick-up shots on the set, but most people have realized that this is just to raise morale and stop production being closed down.

Tom Bolender, head of security

Bolender is a former LAPD beat cop. While he is a devoted member of the Church, he is very worldly and openly admits that he sees Emptying sessions simply as a way to make himself happier. He is responsible for the security of the soundstage, and has taken the disappearance of Harrow hard.



OPENING SCENE

It is the morning of April 8th. There has been confusion on the set since Harrow's disappearance on April 3rd. Woodward has not shut the production down. Under the guidance of the assistant director, Tekroop Singh, the second-unit team has been filming pick-up shots, but, for the most part, people are trying to look busy and wondering if they're going to be paid. The Church has sent public relations (PR) flaks, lawyers, and fixers to the set to deal with bad publicity or legal complications.

As play starts, the investigators are gathered round the craft table, having coffee. This is an opportunity for the players to introduce their characters. You should also give the players **Handout: Space 1** (parts A, B, and C), which provide information about Church jargon, an overview of the script, and a who's who of the cast and crew for reference. Allow a little time for this information to be digested.



WHAT DOES THE PRODUCTION CREW KNOW ABOUT THE FILM?

No one, apart from Woodward and Steele, has seen a full version of the script. The cast and crew are given the sides and notes that they need on a daily basis. Since discovering the potency of the new scenes he is working on, Woodward has decided that the only important part of the film is the dream sequence involving Yvette Sommers. The rest of the film has been written and mostly shot, however, and there is some consensus among the crew as to what it is about.

One thing the crew will have noticed is that, despite filming being nearly complete, no one has been cast as Yvette Sommers. All of her scenes with Clarissa have only been filmed with Harrow, and the assumption is either that Yvette will be a CGI creation or that Harrow has been playing both roles all along.

Woodward is editing the film himself. He is shooting on 35mm film stock, and is not editing digitally, which has raised a few eyebrows.

There is a test screening of the rough cut scheduled at the Celebrity Retreat tomorrow (April 9th), and many members of the production have been invited, including the investigators. Woodward arranged this a few days ago, leaving many invitees puzzled why there is a rough cut before the shoot has wrapped.

It is common knowledge that Craig Steele has taken a great personal interest in this production and is acting as a producer.



All the investigators have met at some point during the filming. Even those who are not part of the production have attended the set in their professional capacity. The introductions should take this into account and include not only physical descriptions but any details that the other investigators may have noticed.

You could create some instant history between the characters by asking each player to suggest one of the other investigators who has given them a new insight into Church teachings, and one other who has been a poor example of Church values and why.

TEKROOP SINGH BECOMES DESPERATE

While the investigators are drinking their coffee, Singh joins them to ask if any of them have heard from Woodward. Singh is trying to keep up a brave face, pretending that this is not unusual behavior from Woodward, but he is twitchy and distant while talking (a successful **Psychology** roll reveals he is frustrated). He eventually wanders off, leaving his coffee untouched.



WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE EMPTY?

Emptiness is a different experience for the Truly Empty, who have come to it through epiphany, like Steele and Musgrove, and the Emptied, who have had it imposed on them, like Harrow.

The Truly Empty have complete understanding of what they have become, and all their human cares and concerns are no more than memories. They have passed beyond humanity and are living embodiments of the Hungry Void. They remember who they were before, but only in academic terms. Someone who has become truly Emptied in this way is no more the person they were before than they are a person whose life-story they have read. They exist to bring Emptiness to those around them.

In the case of converts like Harrow (the Emptied), there is still some of what made them human left behind. This manifests as terror and dismay at what they have become, and doomed attempts to hold onto what is left of their humanity. As months pass, this last human essence will die, but until then they still think of themselves as the person they once were.



If nothing happens to change the stagnation during the first day, Singh has a meltdown, shouting at other crewmembers and throwing things. He makes a number of comments about how everyone in the Church is insane and that their minds are obviously “all empty in the wrong way.” Singh demands that someone (cue the investigators) get Woodward out of his apartment and back to the set to finish his work. He is furious that Woodward has not been returning his calls. He’d also like someone to find just where Verity Harrow is hiding out.

The Keeper can use Singh to drive the investigators into action. He’s frustrated and angry, so the investigators are an ideal target to push around.

ATTEMPTING TO CONTACT JARED WOODWARD

If any of the investigators contact Woodward, he answers the phone but seems skittish and distracted. He shows no interest in the production and does not answer any questions about it. If asked about Harrow, he starts crying. At any mention of the police, he becomes more coherent and instructs whoever he is speaking with to, “Burn the set for the basalt cliffs.” Woodward does not give any further details and hangs up the phone immediately, not answering if called back.

THE POLICE INVESTIGATION

After the investigators have had a chance to discuss the problems the production is facing, Tom Bolender, the chief security guard, runs over looing anxious, asking for someone in charge. One of the guards on the main gate has radioed to say that there are police cars on the way to the soundstage.

Earlier that day, a homeless woman discovered the skinned remains of Harrow in the storm drain where Woodward disposed of them. While the remains are unrecognizable, the proximity to the set is enough for Neumeier, the homicide detective assigned to the case, to decide they must be related.

The remains comprise most of the body of a woman aged between 25 and 40. The body has been skinned and dismembered using a variety of sharp knives and saws. The cuts are brutal and clumsy, suggesting no medical training on the part of the killer. Initial tests indicate that she was alive throughout much of the process. The skin and hair of the victim were not found with the rest of the remains and are still unaccounted for.

With the current backlog at the lab, it takes three days for DNA tests to confirm that the remains belong to Harrow, but the medical examiner has already determined that they belong to a woman of approximately the same age and build.

Neumeier has decided not to wait for firmer evidence before investigating the set. He does not want to give the Church time to carry out a cover-up.

Detective Neumeier arrives in an unmarked car, and is accompanied by two uniformed officers in a black-and-white car. Neumeier tries to barge his way onto the set and get permission to search immediately.

If any of the player characters are former members of the LAPD—Spencer Shull (pre-gen investigator), for example—then there is a good chance that they know Neumeier. If your players are happy establishing background details during the game, ask the player concerned why Neumeier hates their character. If your players prefer to leave details like that to the Keeper, mention that Neumeier raised a complaint against the character for using LAPD resources for benefit of the Church. Either way, there is bad blood between the investigator and Neumeier, and Neumeier wants to settle old scores.

The police do not have a warrant yet and Neumeier hopes to bully someone into letting his team onto the set. If this is not forthcoming, Neumeier makes threats about arresting people for obstructing justice, or how he’ll go to the press and talk about how the Church is trying to cover up a murder. If this fails, he leaves the site for a few hours while he tries to find a judge who will sign a search warrant.



DEALING WITH THE POLICE INVESTIGATION

The role of the police investigation in this scenario is to keep pressure on the investigators. It is not meant to be the major threat—that comes from the film itself and the entities wearing the skins of Steele and Musgrove. The police provide a ticking clock that may end in the production being shut down and the Church’s reputation being damaged.

While it is probable that the investigators do illegal things, you should avoid having them arrested unless this completely breaks the suspension of disbelief. Not only is it no fun for the players of detained characters to watch from the sidelines, but the investigators are on a tight schedule and even a few hours in a holding cell is a major disadvantage. If an investigator is arrested for a minor crime, Erica Christensen, the general counsel for the Church, has them bailed within the hour.



Neumeier is not confident about getting a warrant. He knows this is a fishing expedition and he cannot say exactly what he is looking for. On top of that, he suspects that more than one of the local judges are sympathetic to the Church and may look for any excuse to refuse the warrant.

If an investigator wants to try to interfere with Neumeier getting a warrant, a combined **Credit Rating** and **Persuade** roll allows them to get hold of a judge and convince them that Neumeier is harassing the Church without good cause.

The two police officers with Neumeier were the ones who first saw the body in the storm drain. One of the officers, Dwight Greer, is relatively new to the force and is still shaken up by the state of the remains. Greer is obviously distressed, and if an investigator shows an interest and tries to calm him down, they get a bonus die on any **Persuade** or **Fast Talk** roll to get information out of him. Given an excuse, Greer talks in hushed tones about the remains, "They skinned her, man. That's some creepy shit there."

The other officer, Sergeant Sonia Palermo, has been serving for over ten years and is much more hard-bitten. She does not share Neumeier's hostility toward the Church, but she is gruff and business-like in conversation. Neumeier believes that someone on the set could be a murderer, and that is enough to put Palermo on her guard.

If Neumeier gets his warrant, or if someone gives him permission to search the soundstage, he calls in a team of crime scene investigators to search for evidence of violence. They will use UV lights and Luminol to sweep for blood stains. Unless someone has destroyed the evidence, they find dried blood on the platform for the basalt cliffs set and, a few hours later match it to the body found in the storm drain. Neumeier then shuts the set down and tries to bring in as many people as possible for questioning, including Woodward and Steele. Steele expects the investigators to disrupt this as much as possible to give Woodward time to finish his work.

VERITY HARROW'S APARTMENT

Harrow lived in an old apartment complex on Havenhurst Drive in West Hollywood. There is a gated entrance that leads to a tiled central courtyard with a pond and a number of trees.

When the investigators arrive, a car with tinted windows is parked on the street outside. A **Spot Hidden** roll reveals a man dressed in a security guard's uniform sitting behind the wheel. If the man is examined more closely, a **Know** roll from anyone who has visited the Celebrity Retreat can identify him as Tyrone Goode, one of the security guards there; the car is part of the pool kept at the Retreat.

Goode will be reluctant to explain why he is waiting outside Miss Harrow's apartment building, as he fears it will cost him his job. It will take a Hard **Fast Talk** or **Intimidate** roll to convince him to tell the truth.

Harrow has promised Goode a thousand dollars to drive her here so that she can pick up some belongings. Goode offered to collect the things for her, but Harrow insisted on coming along. It is obvious that Goode is unhappy about sharing this information, and he asks the investigators not to mention it to anyone else as he knows that Mr. Steele had given instructions that Miss Harrow was not to leave the Celebrity Retreat.

Goode mentions that he has been waiting for over an hour, and was about to head into the apartment to check on Harrow. He is happy to let the investigators do this instead (assuming they are either known to him from the Celebrity Retreat or members of the Church). Alternatively, a successful **Charm**, **Fast Talk**, or **Persuade** roll gets him to agree.

Harrow's apartment is on the second floor, opposite the main gate, and is accessed by an external flight of stairs. The front door of the apartment is unlocked, and there is a pile of police tape lying beside it.

The apartment has cream walls and tasteful modern furniture selected by an interior designer. It is not an apartment that speaks of the personality of its owner, although there are a few framed photographs of family and friends.

All the lights are on. Every drawer is open, and the contents have been taken out and placed carefully on surfaces. Harrow has spent the last hour handling almost everything she owns, looking for an emotional connection.

The sound of a woman crying comes from the master bedroom. It sounds oddly dry and breathless, almost like panting. Harrow is lying on the bed, in the dark. If an investigator turns on the lights, Harrow immediately puts on her sunglasses and scarf while facing away from anyone else in the room. A successful **Spot Hidden** roll provides a glimpse of her face in the mirror on her dressing table, revealing that something is wrong with her eyes; no **Sanity** roll is required until an investigator gets a good, close look (see **Verity Harrow**, page 178).

As soon as Harrow recognizes any of the investigators, she assumes that Steele has sent them to take her back to the Celebrity Retreat, and asks them to give her some more time. She also assumes that they know all about what has been done to her, and is confused if the investigators ask where she has been and what happened to her. Once Harrow has let slip that she has been at the Celebrity Retreat for the last few days, she quickly shuts up, realizing that the investigators are not part of Steele's plan. A Hard **Charm** or **Fast Talk** roll convinces her to reveal that Steele and Woodward were responsible for her disappearance, and that they have told her to stay out of the public eye (until she learns to conceal her new condition).

THE SPACE BETWEEN

Harrow does not know the precise details of what *The Space Between* is supposed to do. She has been told that it will help bring an understanding of the true nature of Emptiness, but she is unaware of the existence of Yvette Sommers as more than a simply character in the film, and she believes the basalt cliffs to be special effects.

Now that Harrow has had time to reflect on her situation, she is reluctant to return to the Celebrity Retreat. It will be easy for an investigator to convince Harrow to hide somewhere else, or even go on the run, but she does not want to make any public statements. Harrow is frightened of the Church and even more frightened of what she has become.

OTHER WAYS OF BRINGING HARROW INTO PLAY

It is possible that the investigators do not visit Harrow's apartment. If this is the case, they can meet Harrow elsewhere.

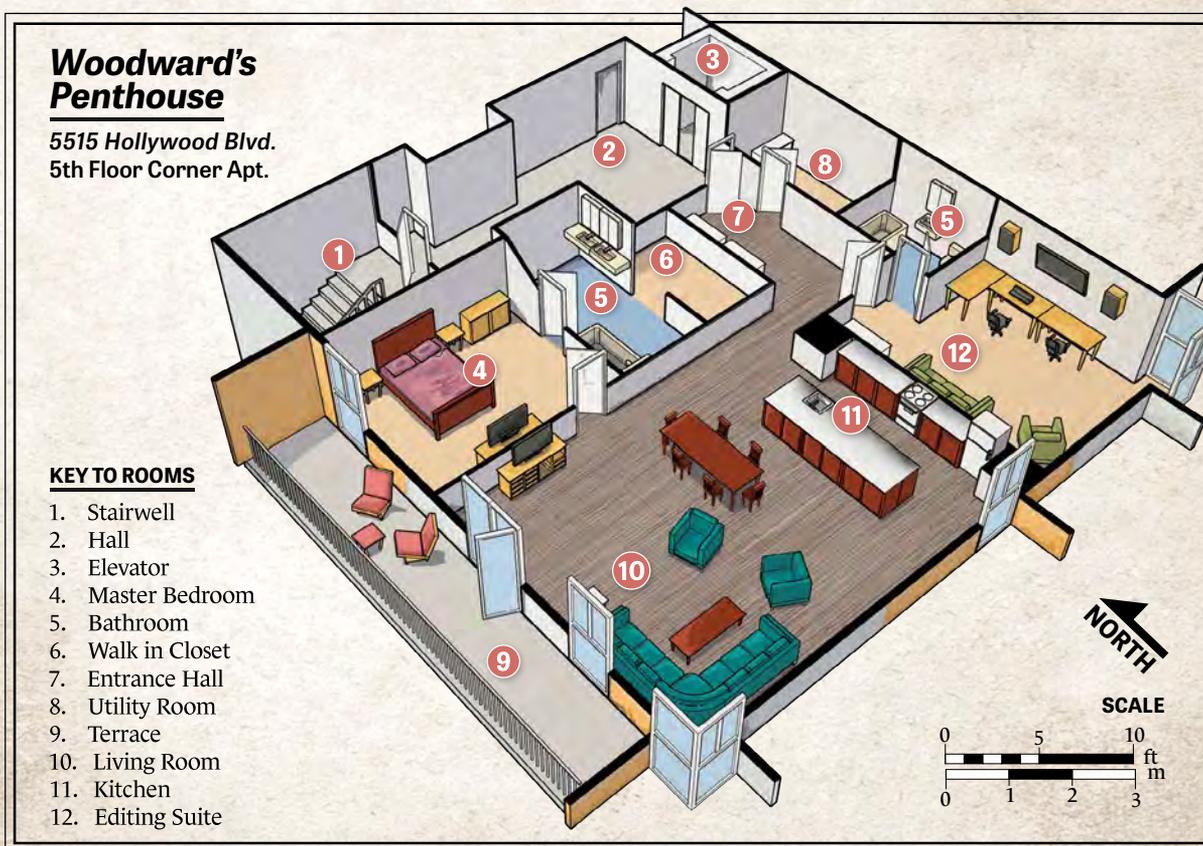
Harrow has left a number of items in her trailer outside the soundstage, including her favorite silk scarf. She can ask Goode to take her there after visiting the apartment, sometime after the end of the working day. Any investigators taking advantage of the peace and quiet to do some snooping can hear noises coming from Harrow's dressing room. Harrow

is turning out all of the drawers. She will be frightened by the interruption and attempts to flee. Despite the sunglasses and the scarf she is wearing, it is obvious who she is.

Alternatively, the investigators may encounter her in the **Celebrity Retreat** (page 192), after Goode, fearing for his job, has taken her back there by force. She is having an argument with one of the security guards in the corridor, saying that she wants to get some fresh air in the gardens. The security guards have been instructed to keep her in her room, following her earlier unauthorized disappearance, but Harrow is panic-stricken and insistent. She seizes upon the appearance of the investigators and asks them to help her get out. When encountered, she is still wearing her sunglasses and scarf, as she knows what kind of reaction she will get even from Church faithful should they see her true nature.

JARED WOODWARD'S APARTMENT

Woodward lives in a penthouse condominium in West Hollywood, on Hollywood Boulevard. The uniformed staff who work the concierge desk know any investigators who visit Woodward regularly, but they are under strict instructions not to let anyone up while Woodward is working. The concierge



NAMELESS HORRORS

working the desk when the investigators first arrive is Manny, a middle-aged Hispanic man with a salt-and-pepper mustache, and sad eyes. Manny is friendly, but efficient in following orders, and will call the police if anyone attempts to force their way into Woodward's home.

It takes a successful **Fast Talk** or **Intimidate** roll to be allowed up to Woodward's apartment without his permission, although Julia Cortese (pre-gen investigator) is allowed to pass without challenge.

Woodward has locked himself in his editing suite and is working obsessively to get a rough cut of the film ready for the test screening on the evening of April 9th. The suite is in a converted bedroom.

Unless disturbed, Woodward spends the entire time editing until the screening. The film is beginning to alter his perceptions and the nature of the editing suite; for much of the time Woodward is working, he is trapped within this alternate reality.

Any visitors to Woodward's apartment have to let themselves in—if they have a key (as Julia Cortese does), pick the lock, or find someone who can unlock the door for them, such as the concierge. Woodward does not hear any knocking on his door from the editing suite, as his consciousness is on the basalt cliffs (see **The Editing Suite**, following).

Should anyone try telephoning Woodward to ask him to let them in, he answers the phone, but is frightened and incoherent, saying that "She" won't let him go, and not to come in or interfere, as "She" will not like it. Any questions about who "She" is are met with a sobbing and laughter. There are sounds of wind and breaking surf throughout the call, as if from a beach.

Woodward has not slept or bathed since the ritual, and has been living on food deliveries, vodka, and cocaine; his apartment reflects this. There are food containers and dirty plates lying on the floor, along with soiled clothes, and empty vodka bottles. The curtains are drawn and most of the apartment is in darkness. There is a patina of white powder across the surface of his glass coffee table, along with a sizable plastic bag of cocaine, a razor blade, and a half-rolled 100-dollar bill. The odors of spoiling food and stale sweat hang in the air.

THE EDITING SUITE

Anyone who has been to Woodward's apartment knows which room is the editing suite. The door is closed, and there is no sound coming from behind it. The metal door handle is unnaturally cold to the touch and is covered in frost. Those knocking on the door hear nothing—their knuckles rap



Editing Suite

on the wood of the door soundlessly, although the wood is perfectly normal to the touch (**Sanity** roll, 0/1 loss).

The door is unlocked. The room is dark apart from some twinkling lights. Cold air blows out. There is a smell of ozone, or the sea. Any attempt to fumble for the light switch will just find empty space. Calling out for Woodward will be met with no reply, and the investigator's voice will echo disconcertingly.

Once an investigator passes over the threshold of the editing suite, they will find themselves on the basalt cliffs (see boxed text, **The Basalt Cliffs**). Woodward can be seen about 100 yards ahead, kneeling on the black stone. **Yvette Sommers** (page 180) stands before him, her face impassive. Woodward's head is lowered and he is sobbing, begging her to spare him. Viewing this scene provokes a **Sanity** roll (0/1D2 loss).

Behind the investigator, where the doorway was, is a sheer wall of glassy black stone. As soon as the investigator makes his or her presence known, Woodward runs to them, pleading for help. He explains that he is not ready and that he no longer wants to be Empty, not now that he has seen what that truly means. As he does this, Yvette Sommers

slowly walks over toward the investigator. There are several ways to resolve this situation:

- If the investigator jumps back immediately upon entering the room, before they have attracted the attention of Yvette Sommers, they find themselves back in the corridor of Woodward's apartment.
- If someone outside the editing suite opens the door once Woodward has been drawn away from Yvette Sommers, the spell is broken and the investigator who was on the cliffs finds himself standing in the suite with a terrified Woodward.
- Should the investigator try to will himself away from the cliffs, ask the player to make a **POW** roll. With success, the reality of the cliffs melts away and the investigator and Woodward find themselves back in the suite.
- Once Yvette Sommers closes in on the investigator, Woodward grabs the investigator's hand and runs for the cliff. He attempts to drag the investigator over the edge, onto the jagged rocks and surf below. Should the investigator go along with this, they both recover consciousness on the floor of the editing suite some short time later. If the investigator wants to break free to avoid being dragged to an apparently certain death, call for an opposed **STR** roll versus STR 40.

If all of the above options fail, the investigator is at the mercy of **Yvette Sommers**—follow the directions in the section about her (page 180), including a **Sanity** roll (1/1D8 loss) to see her true form and then, most probably, refer to the box entitled **Playing One of the Emptied**.

THE BASALT CLIFFS

The dream sequences in *The Space Between* take place in a natural amphitheater on top of an imposing black cliff. The walls of the amphitheater are glassy black rock, too smooth and tall to climb. The walls form a semicircle, and the exposed edge looks down on jagged black rocks hundreds of feet below. A dark sea, limned with eerie phosphorescence, breaks on the rocks, sending spumes of cold white spray up towards the starry heavens.

The sky above the cliffs is filled with stars, arranged in no recognizable constellations (confirmed with a **Know** or **Astronomy** roll). If someone watches the sky for a few minutes, they notice that the stars are moving slowly, drifting randomly like pollen on water.

Whenever the cliffs are encountered, they quickly become a full sensory experience. Someone looking at them on film finds the smell of the sea and the coldness of the wind permeating their senses. The darkness of the cliffs and the sky above fill their peripheral vision, and then there is nothing else to be seen other than the cliffs. Experiencing this provokes a **Sanity** roll (1/1D8 loss).

PLAYING ONE OF THE EMPTIED

One or more of the investigators might be Emptied during play. While this results in the death of the investigator in almost every way that matters, there is no reason why the character should be taken out of the game.

There are two types of Empty character: the Emptied and the Truly Empty. If an investigator goes through fast-track surgery, they become one of the Emptied. If touched by Yvette Sommers, they become Truly Empty. Present the player with the appropriate handout (**Handout: Space 2 or 3**).

Treat Emptied investigators as indefinitely insane—there is still enough of what made them human left to suffer. The Truly Empty are beyond such things, and the intelligence that fills their skins has no concept of madness and therefore are not required to make Sanity rolls.

If anyone enters the editing suite again, they find it to be a normal room, dominated by a large Steenbeck editing desk, with 35 mm film spooled through it. The desk has a built-in backlit screen showing a frame of Clarissa Hollows meeting Yvette Sommers on the basalt cliffs. Those watching the image for long enough see Yvette Sommers turn toward the viewer and start walking forward; call for a **Sanity** roll (1/1D6 loss).

The room is untidy, and there are open canisters of film scattered around. The desk is covered with sections of film that Woodward has been editing manually, using an X-Acto knife and tape. There are a number of single frames that have been edited out—the dominant color in them is red. Closer examination shows close-ups of a naked woman, lying on her front, having the skin peeled from her back with a large curved knife (**Sanity** roll, 0/1D4 loss). The frame of each of these cells is painted with tiny red sigils. There is a small metal bowl to one side, containing what appears to be blood, with a fine paint brush lying across the rim, and a jeweler's eyeglass sitting beside it.

Woodward's laptop is also in the editing suite, in a leather carrying case. It is password-protected, but a **Computer Use** roll will bypass this. One directory on the laptop contains detailed production notes for *The Space Between*, some of which touch upon the true purpose of the film and the rituals involved. Steele and Musgrove also have copies of most of these documents.

Any attempt to scan through these documents quickly will require a **Language (English)** roll. If successful, or if the investigator copies the files and reads them elsewhere at leisure, give the player **Handout: Space 4—The Truth Behind The Space Between**.

THE CHURCH HEADQUARTERS

The main headquarters of the Church of Sunyata is located in a ten-story glass and steel structure on Ventura Boulevard. The office building, known colloquially as Sunyata Central, is home to the global administration of the Church, and over five-hundred people work there.

The lower three floors are given over to seminar rooms, meeting rooms, Emptying suites, and various displays about the teachings of the Church. There is an inner courtyard and atrium, the centerpiece of which is a fountain that plays water over a glass sphere in the middle, giving the impression of a huge bubble.

Any member of the public is free to come into the building to learn about the Church, and there are usually recruiters outside who invite passersby to do so. Church members may come in for Emptying sessions at any time, as long as they pay.

A FREE EMPTYING SESSION

The first time any investigators come to the headquarters, they are greeted enthusiastically by Rich Vallario, who is working on the plaza, inviting people in for free trial Emptying sessions. Vallario is an active volunteer who tried unsuccessfully to get a job on the set of *The Space Between*.

Vallario is desperate to become involved with the production, but he is also troubled by some things he has seen recently. To both ends, he tries to convince an investigator to join him for an Emptying session, which will be free as a personal favor for his "very good friend."

Should the investigator accept, Vallario takes them to an Emptying suite on the second floor. Vallario starts the session as normal, asking open-ended questions about what "woes are filling" the investigator, but, as the session goes on, Vallario focuses in on the production, making oblique suggestions that these woes may be lessened if the investigator had "more help" on the set.

Whether or not this ploy works, Vallario moves on to stranger questions like, "Does Craig Steele scare you?" and "When was the last time you saw Brian Musgrove's eyes?" If challenged by the investigator, Vallario tries to laugh it off, saying that his mind was wandering. A successful **Fast Talk**, **Intimidate**, or **Persuade** roll convinces him to share his suspicions that something strange is going on at the highest levels of the Church, and that Musgrove and Steele are acting strangely.

THE SECURITY DESK

While the lower three floors of the building are freely accessible via staircases and escalators, visitors need to check into the security desk before being allowed access to the small bank of elevators that go to the administrative levels above.

There are two armed, uniformed security guards on the desk at all times, and visitors need to pass through a metal detector. The guards admit anyone involved with the running of the Church without any special authorization, but should an investigator mention that they are there to see Musgrove, the guard calls up to Natalie Collier, Musgrove's personal assistant.

Collier goes home at 7 p.m. every evening, so those seeking a meeting with Musgrove after then are turned away unless they can make a Hard **Fast Talk**, **Intimidate**, or **Persuade** roll, or find some way of sneaking past the guards.

The entire building is covered by security cameras and most floors are alarmed out of hours, so attempts to pass undetected require a Hard **Stealth** roll.

Use the statistics for **Church Security Guard** (page 200) for the guards on the desk.

HOLLYWOOD MOVIE NEWS

THE TRUTH BEHIND THE SPACE BETWEEN

While the notes you have discovered are confusing, badly organized and filled with unfamiliar terms, you have managed to piece together a few key points.

- There is a literal state of Emptiness that Craig Steele believes he has discovered.
- He believes that this involves all sense of self being consumed by “The Hungry Void”.
- The main purpose of *The Space Between* is to bring this of Emptiness to its viewers.
- There are subliminal images of a ritual nature edited into the film.
- The ritual in question involved the sacrifice of Verity Harrow.
- Steele and Woodward believe that watching the film will bring a viewer into direct contact from an intelligence from the space between the stars.

THE LEGAL DEPARTMENT

Should the investigators need legal help, Erica Christensen's office can be found on the fifth floor, which is taken up with the legal department.

Christensen is a small, round-cheeked woman in her late fifties, with short grey hair and rimless glasses. She has worked as a Church lawyer for 27 years, and is now their general counsel. While utterly devoted to the wellbeing of the Church, Christensen is a pragmatist and not overly spiritual by nature. She knows nothing about the true nature of *The Space Between*.

In her time with the Church, Christensen has championed the use of punitive lawsuits to bankrupt opponents, leading to the Church being widely feared. She holds a great deal of sway in Los Angeles, and her department has an almost supernatural ability to make legal problems go away. She uses these resources to get investigators out of trouble with the law, but equally uses them to destroy the lives of any investigators who betray the Church.

BRIAN MUSGROVE'S OFFICE

Musgrove's personal assistant, Natalie Collier, acts as gatekeeper to his office. Collier is a severe, heavy-set woman in her late thirties, with black hair tied back into a bun so

tight that her eyebrows are permanently arched. She wears a dark, sober skirt suit, a white satin blouse, and a pair of half-moon glasses that she looks over when she speaks.

If a visitor does not have an appointment, Collier dismisses them. It requires a Hard **Charm**, **Fast Talk**, **Persuade**, or **Intimidate** roll to convince her to buzz Musgrove on his intercom.

Musgrove's office is decorated in a minimalist style. The walls are sterile white, and there is a huge glass window that commands a spectacular view of Los Angeles.

His desk is made of glass and chromed steel, and is kept clear apart from his laptop and a sleek desk telephone. There is little in the way of paperwork in the office, as Musgrove prefers electronic documents. While most of these documents are stored on Church servers, everything relating to *The Space Between* is on his laptop—Steele and Woodward also have copies of most of these documents. The documents are password-protected, but a successful **Computer Use** roll allows an investigator to find a suitable cracking tool.

Scanning through these documents requires a **Language (English)** roll to get the gist. If successful, or if the investigator copies the files and reads them elsewhere at leisure, give the player **Handout: Space 4—The Truth Behind The Space Between**.

Next to the window is a small zen garden with a rake that the human version of Musgrove used to tend as stress relief. The gravel has now been raked into strange geometric patterns that give people headaches if they look at it for more than a few seconds.

There is a chrome table running the length of one wall. It holds glass vessels of various designs. All the vessels are empty, except for one: this is an elaborate bottle with a spiraling, attenuated neck, and a glass stopper. It appears to be filled with black liquid in which glowing white specks are floating. The air around the bottle is noticeably cold, and there is frost on the bottle itself.

This bottle contains an isolated portion of the Hungry Void. Musgrove has been decanting portions of himself into the bottle to see if he can use it to Empty a human. So far, his test subjects have been sucked into the bottle and lost forever, necessitating cover-ups and hush money. If the bottle is broken or unstopped, the Void will be released—see **The Hungry Void** (pages 180 and 202).

Musgrove spends most of his time in the office. As he no longer needs to sleep, eat, or perform any other biological functions. As most of his meetings are conducted over the phone, he can generally be found sitting at his desk. When there is nothing that requires his attention, he sits perfectly still—he doesn't breathe.

THE CELEBRITY RETREAT

The mansion in which the Celebrity Retreat is housed was built in the 1920s and has been home to some famous names. The Church of Sunyata bought the property in 1987. The Retreat sits in four acres of grounds, surrounded by lawns, a statue garden, a koi pond, and a copse of Japanese cherry trees. It is peaceful and soothing, apart from the 15-foot stone walls surrounding the compound, and the patrols of armed guards.

The main entrance to the compound is a set of motorized iron gates. A security guard is stationed in a booth by the gates at all times. Due to the preparations for the test screening, all visitors need to be authorized by Steele or Musgrove.

The main building is in the Spanish Colonial style, comprising two main floors, with white stucco walls, and a red clay roof. The lower floor contains the administration offices, a ballroom, a screening room, a library, and a dining room, and the upstairs houses a number of bedrooms for visitors. The internal walls are white stucco, and the rooms are furnished with antiques.

The North Wing, built in the late 1990s, houses Emptying suites, floatation tanks, and meditation rooms. The architecture does not match the original building, looking more modern. The walls are painted antiseptic white or pastel colors. There is a smell of sandalwood throughout.

RECEPTION

The reception desk is staffed constantly to cater to the needs of visitors, and the receptionist serves as the communications hub for the entire complex.

The reception area is separated from the rest of the building by glass doors that allow visitors to see into the corridor beyond, but not to enter until the receptionist buzzes them through. The room is furnished with overstuffed white sofas and armchairs. Glass-topped tables hold Church literature and back issues of *Variety*. The walls are covered with photographs of celebrity Church members, and one wall is dominated by an oil painting of Ralph L. Chandler wearing an air force uniform.

A locked steel door leads to the security office, which also has a door connected to an internal corridor. The receptionist is able to summon security with a buzzer, and video cameras monitor the entire area.

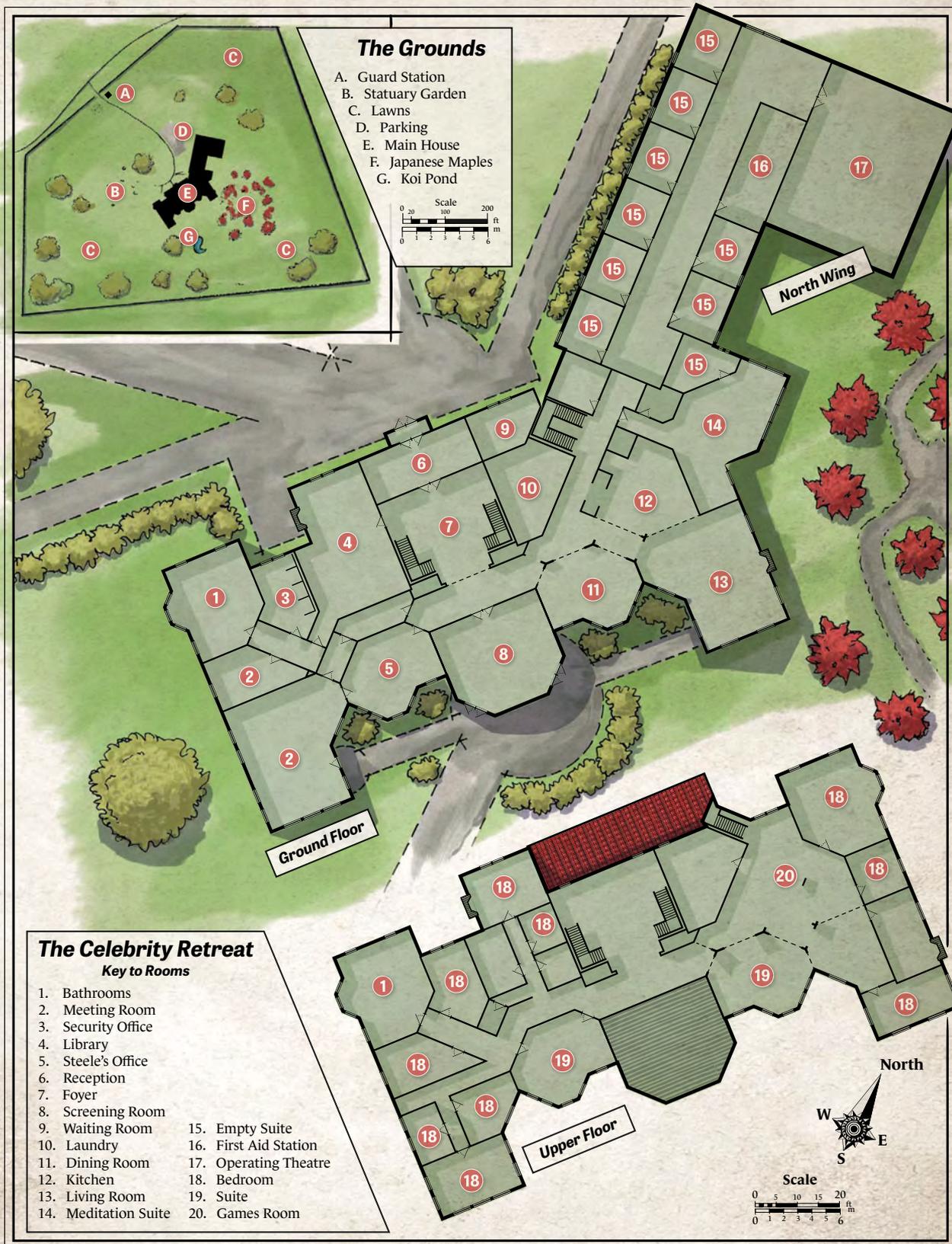
The reception desk is large and modern, made from glass and steel. Mandy Solek, the young woman who is on duty when the investigators arrive, is perky, cheerful, and professional. She greets visitors by asking, "How may I make your day wonderful?" and flashing even, polished teeth.

Unless the investigators have arrived for the test screening, Solek needs to get authorization from Steele before they



Private office

THE SPACE BETWEEN



are allowed any further; she calls him on the internal phone system (Steele no longer sleeps, so is available at any hour), and he insists on personally escorting the investigators.

SECURITY

The Celebrity Retreat employs 30 full-time security guards, at least six of whom are on duty at any time. All the guards are trained—some are former law enforcement officers—and all are members of the Church. They carry pistols and stun guns, and while their main instruction is to detain intruders and troublemakers, they are authorized to use lethal force. Use the statistics of the **Church Security Guard** (page 200).

Every square foot of the Retreat is monitored by security cameras, but the cameras in the Emptying suites, the operating theatre, and Steele's personal office do not transmit to the main security office; their feeds can only be accessed using Steele's computer.

CRAIG STEELE'S PRIVATE OFFICE

Steele's office is the same one that Chandler used in his final years. It is furnished with antiques, including a

mahogany desk, a Persian rug, and a large bronze statue of the Buddha. The walls are lined with floor-to-ceiling bookshelves, filled with Church publications, books on religion and philosophy, and the hundreds of bound notebooks in which Chandler wrote longhand.

There are two Mythos tomes among the more benign books: a tattered, incomplete copy of the *Arriatural of Passing* (see page 195) and a series of files containing the core of Chandler's analysis of this book and his own conclusions about the nature of Emptiness and the Void (see **The Exegesis of Ralph L. Chandler**, page 195).

There is an oak cabinet in one corner of the room, protected with a heavy steel lock. Inside is a mannequin holding the tanned skin of Ralph L. Chandler. Chandler requested that his skin be preserved, as he believed that Emptying could happen even after death. Steele is working to resurrect Chandler as one of the Truly Empty.

The computer on Steele's desk is password-protected, but can be broken into with a Hard **Computer Use** roll, allowing access to the security camera feeds from the entire building, security dossiers on Church members (including the investigators), and development and script notes for *The Space Between*. Scanning through these notes requires a **Language (English)** roll to quickly get the gist.



THE SPACE BETWEEN

If successful, or if the investigator copies the files and reads them elsewhere at leisure, give the player **Handout: Space 4—The Truth behind The Space Between**.

Keeper note: if any of the investigators have acted suspiciously, Steele makes contact with them directly. His interest is ostensibly in the production, but his real purpose is to find out how much of a threat they pose. Steele suggests to any such suspect that the stress of the stalled production and the police investigation must be “Filling them with woes.” Steele offers the investigator a personal Emptying session—see **A Private Session with Steele**, below.

THE EMPTYING SUITES

An Emptying session, whether or not it takes place in the Celebrity Retreat, is largely a series of questions designed to get the subject to open up about what is on their mind. They are performed one-on-one, and the Emptier needs to be trained in Church-approved methods.

The sessions are conducted in private suites, and are considered strictly confidential. The suites in the Celebrity Retreat are all wired for sound, and every session is recorded without the subject’s knowledge. The recordings of these sessions are stored in case the subject should ever require coercion.

The rooms are clean and quiet, with white walls and soft white furniture. Ambient New Age music is piped in, but

THE EXEGESIS OF RALPH L. CHANDLER

This Mythos tome takes the form of five large battered cardboard box files, containing a mixture of handwritten and typed pages, incomprehensible diagrams, and clippings from other sources. Steele has attempted to create an index and summary, but the notes are insanely chaotic.

- **Sanity loss:** 1D8
- **Cthulhu Mythos:** +2% Initial Reading; +5% Full Study
- **Mythos Rating:** 30
- **Study:** 40 weeks

Spells: Gateway to the Void (Call/Dismiss Yog-Sothoth), Commune with the Bringer of Wisdom (Contact Nyarlathotep).

this is turned off when the session starts. The door of each room is fitted with a lock; these are rarely engaged, but if Steele takes an investigator into a suite, he will lock them in together.

A PRIVATE SESSION WITH STEELE

If an investigator has been acting suspiciously (asking lots of questions, poking around the Retreat, talking to Harrow, and so on) then Steele wants to find out whether they pose a threat to the test screening and ultimate release of *The Space Between*.

Steele summons the investigator to his office to ask if they are feeling a bit “Full,” as their “woes are obviously making it difficult for them to operate efficiently.” This must mean that the investigator is overdue for an Emptying session, and Steele would be only too happy to carry it out. He is sympathetic and warm, implying that an Emptying session conducted by him would be a great honor and would improve the investigator’s standing within the Church.

ARRICULARS OF PASSING

English, by Diatab, 1656 (this edition printed 1798)

A puzzlingly complex book whose title makes little sense. An assortment of random entries without cohesion or meaning, leaving readers confused with what they consider to be gobbledygook. Through repeated readings, meaning begins to form from the text. The text is believed to contain information on several entities, including Cythulos, Yog-Sothoth, Azathoth, and the Hungry Void. One of the more easily read sections describes the use of sigils for protection and summoning. It is possible the text contains further insights into other aspects of the Mythos, as the text possesses a multitude of layers, of which only a few have been discovered.

- **Sanity Loss:** 2D8
- **Cthulhu Mythos:** +4/+8 percentiles
- **Mythos Rating:** 36
- **Study:** 32 weeks

Spells: Chant of Thoth, Contact Deity: Cythulos, Contact Deity: Hungry Void, Voorish Sign, Wrack, others at the Keeper’s discretion; note that a maximum of one spell can be learned from this tome per reading.

If the investigator turns down the offer, Steele waits until they are out of earshot and calls for security to detain them. Unless the investigator escapes, they are taken to the operating theater for the **Fast Track Process** (below). Any attempted escape could be played out using the chase mechanics (see **Escaping from the Celebrity Retreat**, page below).

If the investigator agrees to the private session, Steele leads them to an unoccupied suite and locks the door. He invites the investigator to get comfortable, and then start asking them a series of questions in a neutral and soothing tone of voice. The initial questions are gentle, starting with what "woes" are occupying the investigator's mind, whether the problems on the film set are filling them with extra woes, what they think about the disappearance of Harrow, and so on. If Steele is aware of any particular actions on the part of the investigator, he then focuses on these, asking what woes led them to, for example, break into a restricted area.

Steele is skilled at reading the responses of his subjects, so it will be difficult to lie to him. Any attempt to do so requires a Hard **Fast Talk** roll. If the investigator manages to get through the session without being caught in a lie, Steele simply lets them go with a friendly reminder not to let themselves become so "Full" again. Steele also tells them to let him know personally if there is anything that he should be aware of from now on.

If Steele becomes convinced that an investigator is lying, he excuses himself to call for security to detain the investigator and take them to the operating theatre. The suite's door is quite secure and requires a **Locksmith** roll to unlock or a Hard **STR** roll to break down; the latter will attract attention.

THE OPERATING THEATER

There is a small medical clinic at the far end of the North Wing, with a doctor on call at all times. A month ago, Steele had one of the rooms in the clinic equipped as an operating theatre, and has been using it to experiment with forcible Emptying. The operating theatre is equipped with scalpels, flensing knives, bone saws, and clamps. Some of the knives have strange sigils carved on the blades (a successful **Cthulhu Mythos** roll determines they may have something to do with the Opener of the Way).

The center of the room is occupied by a stainless steel table equipped with leather restraining straps, and sluices down each side. The metal of the table is carved with similar sigils to those found on the knives. While there are no gas cylinders or anesthetic visible anywhere in the room, there is a table with a number of strange liquids and powders in glass jars, and a brass bowl discolored with bloodstains. Several large medical waste containers stand against one wall.

THE FAST TRACK PROCESS

The technique Steele has devised involves painting sigils on the skin of a subject using a mixture of blood, ash, and the ground remains of a meteorite. The subject is then blinded and deafened surgically to limit extraneous sensory input, before being flayed in a ritual manner. It is vital that the subject is alive and conscious throughout the process.

If Steele believes an investigator to be a threat to the future of *The Space Between*, he explains that the Church has been working on new techniques to help people become Empty without years of study and practice, and asks if the investigator would like to try one of these new techniques.

If the investigator agrees, Steele leads them to the operating theatre. The doors to the theatre are open, and a man wearing surgical scrubs is inside, putting on a paper mask. He stands by the steel operating table.

A successful **Spot Hidden** roll reveals two security guards following at a discreet distance. Steele has instructed them to restrain the investigator if necessary.

Unless the investigator escapes the security guards, or if they agree to the Emptying process even after seeing the operating theatre, they will be stripped naked and then strapped to the operating table. Both the surgeon and Steele seem to pray before the procedure, using words in an unfamiliar language. The surgeon then selects one the very sharp knives and begins the long process of skinning the investigator alive. There is no anesthetic.

Once the procedure is complete, give the player **Handout: Space 2—You Have Been Emptied**.

ESCAPING FROM THE CELEBRITY RETREAT

It is probable that an investigator will want to flee the Celebrity Retreat at some point, especially if they have been selected for the fast track process. How this should be handled largely depends on whether they are still in a position to sneak out or if the alarm has been raised.

Of course, if an investigator has given no reason for Steele or anyone else at the Retreat to be suspicious, they will be allowed to leave without incident.

Sneaking Out

If no alarm has been raised, it is possible to try to get out of the Retreat quietly. A successful **Stealth** roll allows an investigator to get to an external window, or the door to reception, without being seen. They will still be recorded on camera, but no one will notice this until it is too late.

Opening an external window, or worse, breaking one, sets off an alarm and brings security guards to the location within 1D6+1 rounds. This includes the French windows from the dining room and the fire doors in the corridors. An **Electrical Repair** roll

allows an investigator to disable the sensors on a door or window to avoid this happening. If an investigator is challenged by a security guard for setting an alarm off, it takes a Hard **Fast Talk** roll to convince the guard that there is an innocent explanation.

Once outside, a **Luck** roll is required to determine if a guard is patrolling the gardens. If a guard is present, the investigator either has to wait until they have moved on or make a **Stealth** roll to sneak past them.

Climbing the external walls and avoiding the razor wire and broken glass on the top requires a Hard **Climb** roll. Those failing suffer 1D3 damage and need to make a successful **Luck** roll to avoid crying out and alerting the security guards.

Leaving through the main gate involves either not being seen by the guard on the gate—by hiding in the back of someone’s car as they leave, for example—or by convincing the guard that there is no reason for suspicion, which requires a **Fast Talk** or other social skill roll.

Getting out to the reception area is simple, as the door from the corridor in the main building is not locked from the inside. Mandy Solek notices anyone heading out, and she has been alerted by Steele if a visitor is to be detained. It requires a Hard **Fast Talk** or **Intimidation** roll, or otherwise disabling Solek, to leave the room without her calling for backup from security.

Fleeing

If the alarm has been raised, a single security guard makes it to the investigator’s position within 1D4+1 rounds, and an additional team of two guards arrive 1D10 rounds after that. A chase may ensue—possible obstacles include:

- Furniture (sofas, tables, desks), which can be jumped over with a **Jump** roll.
- Closed and locked external doors and windows, requiring a **STR** roll to break through.
- Antique stone statues in the mansion and the grounds, which can be pushed over in front of pursuers.

THE SCREENING ROOM

The screening room lies on the ground floor of the main building. It seats 60 people in six, stepped rows of plush, red-velvet covered chairs, and has a screen 20-feet wide. The walls are soundproofed and covered with the same red velvet as the seats. Recessed house lights provide a soft ambient glow.

The room is generally used for early showings of films involving Church members, and for visitors at the Retreat to watch Church training or recruitment films.

The projection booth sits at the back of the room and is accessed by a separate door in the corridor. This door is kept locked when not in use. The booth is cramped, and is dominated by two large film projectors. Metal shelves containing film canisters line the back wall.

THE TEST SCREENING

The screening of the rough cut of *The Space Between* has been scheduled for 8 p.m. on the April 9th, and goes ahead unless prevented by the investigators. The guest list includes key members of the production, some senior members of the Church, and a few friendly journalists. Over 60 people have been invited, and the screening room will be full to capacity once they all arrive.

Drinks and hors d’oeuvres are served in the ballroom before the screening. Steele and Musgrove do not attend the screening itself, but join the attendees for drinks. Woodward has no intention of attending and finds any means he can to avoid going to the Celebrity Retreat.

At 9 p.m., Mandy Solek announces over the public address system that all guests should make their way to the screening room. Ushers in red uniforms are on hand to make sure that no one gets lost. There is no fixed seating. Allow the investigators to sit where they choose. Once everyone is in place, Steele, who is waiting in the corridor, locks the doors.

The house lights dim and the screen flickers into life. A white card with black text reading, “The Space Between—Rough Cut” flashes up, and the film starts. The rough cut is a disjointed affair, as Woodward has abandoned the pretext of editing the film. There are a few scenes of Clarissa Hollows moving into her apartment and some, oddly, with her seeming to talk to someone despite being alone in the frame. The editing is shoddy—the sound out-of-sync and there is no score.

This portion of the film lasts only five minutes. The audience is noticeably restless by this stage, with complaints and stifled laughter. Should any of the investigators attempt to leave, they find the doors are locked; the doors have a STR of 200, so it will take multiple people working together to break them open.

The screen begins to flicker again, as the first of the spliced frames of Harrow’s murder appear. More and more of them flash red as the narrative of the film breaks down, and then everything goes black. The scene changes to the basalt cliffs, bringing a drastic improvement in picture and sound quality. The image looks almost real, and the shifting stars lend it a strange 3D effect. Harrow can be seen on the cliffs, covered in blood. Yvette Sommers stands beside her. Slowly, Sommers raises one hand and touches Harrow on the forehead. There is an echoing scream and Harrow collapses in on herself, leaving nothing but a pool of empty skin and clothing on the floor.

At this point, one of the audience, who was attempting to go out to the rest room, discovers that the doors are locked and starts pounding on them and shouting for attention (if the investigators haven’t done so already). He screams as the varnished wood of the door turns into black volcanic rock.

The reality of the screening room begins to change. The air grows cooler and damp, filled with the scent of ocean spray. The walls transform into black stone, becoming the natural amphitheater on the cliffs. The stars spread out from the screen and dance across the shadows of the room. The floor becomes slick and stony. In less than 30 seconds, the room is gone, leaving rows of red velvet seats incongruously fastened to the basalt rock of the cliffs. Those caught up in these events should make a **Sanity** roll (1D3/1D10 loss).

The audience panics. Everyone is out of their seats, desperately looking for a way to escape, or sitting on the ground, crying or screaming. A few panicked individuals run over the edge of the cliffs and fall with a despairing scream to be dashed on the rocks below.

In the midst of all this, Yvette Sommers, fully revealed, walks calmly through the crowd, touching people and Emptying them. Stars from the whirling sky above drift down in whorls and eddies, entering the collapsed skins. These skins inflate again like balloons, getting to their feet and looking around with dark eyes filled with stars.

The reality of the basalt cliffs in the screening room is much stronger than it was in Woodward's editing suite; however, there are few ways an investigator can survive this situation without being Emptied. They can hide from Yvette Sommers (a Hard **Stealth** roll), or jump off the cliffs (a Hard **POW** roll) to escape back to reality—those jumping and failing this latter roll die as their body hits the jagged rocks hundreds of feet below. If a player comes up with a creative way of escaping (perhaps through spontaneous use of the **Cthulhu Mythos** skill), be open to the possibility, but bear in mind that they are trying to escape a godlike entity.

If an investigator does not flee or hide, it is inevitable that Yvette Sommers catches up with them. Even if they try to run, they are soon be outnumbered by the Truly Empty, who try to hold the investigator down until Yvette Sommers initiates them into their ranks. Don't play this round after round of the investigator trying to run away, as that will just become frustrating—just cut forward to them being held by the Truly Empty and watching Yvette Sommers moving inexorably toward them.

An investigator who has successfully hidden finds that the screening room returns to normal after what seems like an eternity, but it is only actually 20 minutes. Someone who has jumped to freedom wakes, confused and disorientated, on the floor of the screening room.

The screening room is filled with the rest of the audience members, all in their seats, sitting calmly. As the investigators get up, the other people in the room look round at them, their dark eyes filled with stars...

WRAPPING IT UP

There is no specific end scene, as there are many ways that the players can affect the outcome. You should try to find an appropriately creepy or powerful climactic moment and end it there, perhaps asking the players to narrate brief codas for any surviving characters, incorporating aspects of their successes or failures in containing the threat from the film. There are a few common outcomes that have come from playtests, presented below.

Destroying the Film

The film represents a serious vulnerability in the Church's plan. There is other footage that could be edited together to replicate it, but this relies on Woodward. After what he has experienced and done, Woodward wants nothing more to do with the Church (once he has completed the rough cut).

Killing, disabling, or discouraging Woodward before he has finished the rough cut also throws a spanner in the works, but may open the investigators up to criminal charges or reprisals from the Church.

If the investigators are revealed to be behind the destruction of the film, Steele and Musgrove use the full resources of the Church to hunt them down. The preferred plan would be to bring the investigators back to the Celebrity Retreat for the fast-track process, but the Church settles for destroying them financially or having them killed.

Helping the Police

Given the sway that the Church has in Los Angeles, helping the police is unlikely to end happily. Those with police contacts can make a Hard **Psychology** roll to work out if the police officers they know can be trusted; failure means that someone from the Church will be tipped-off about the investigators' locations.

The police could arrange for protective custody if the investigators have evidence of crimes, but the Church is powerful enough to stall any investigation and delay arrests and prosecutions for many months. If the film still exists, these delays last until the events outlined in the section **Distribution of the Movie** (page 199).

Exposing the Church

The Church does not control the media, but they have enough members and informants that word gets back to Erica Christensen, leading to injunctions against any organization that tries to run a libelous story. These informants also make it difficult to avoid the security teams and private contractors that Steele sends after anyone who disrupts his plans.

Steele wants to bring those responsible to the Celebrity Retreat for fast-track conversion. As per dealing with the police, a Hard **Psychology** roll may identify if a previously trusted source is likely to give the investigators up to the Church. If the film still exists, the events in **Distribution of the Movie** come to pass.

Attending the Test Screening

If the investigators attend the test screening, use the description provided to play through it. Unless the players have another plan in mind, ending the game with any survivors in the screening room, surrounded by the Truly Empty, provides a strong final scene.

Fleeing

One or more investigators may want to disappear once they discover some or all of the truth. Provided they have not actively interfered in the completion of the film or the test screening, Steele does not pay attention to their departure, and so they are not hunted down.

Play out a short coda for these characters as they try to build new lives, haunted by what they have experienced. Can they ever be sure that anyone wearing sunglasses isn't an ageless horror hiding in human skin?

Of course, if the distribution of the film goes ahead unimpeded, this new life may not last for long.

DISTRIBUTION OF THE MOVIE

If the test screening proves successful, Steele begins to arrange more private screenings for Church members, film distributors, critics, politicians, law enforcement officials, people in the media, and so on. The goal, over the next five months, is to make enough key people Truly Empty to ensure international distribution and glowing reviews for *The Space Between* to be seen by as many people as possible. Although it becomes apparent that something strange and horrifying is happening to those who see the film, enough people are converted by then, including those in positions of power, that they assume a large degree of control over global affairs. Ultimately, *The Space Between* is shown on every television channel.

While it will never be possible to Empty all of humanity, those investigators who survived find themselves living in a menacing and thoroughly alien world—this could provide the basis for a sequel or on-going campaign.

Conclusion

Suggested Sanity awards for investigators completing this scenario are:

- Stopping the distribution of *The Space Between*: +1D8 Sanity points.
- Exposing the Church of Sunyata's conspiracies: +1D3 Sanity points.
- Helping Verity Harrow find peace: +1D3 Sanity Points.
- Fleeing LA, knowing that the movie will be distributed: 1D10 Sanity loss.



CHARACTERS

LAPD UNIFORMED OFFICER, *to protect and serve*

STR 70 CON 50 SIZ 65 DEX 70 INT 50
APP 50 POW 50 EDU 60 SAN 50 HP 11
Damage Bonus: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 9 MP: 10

Combat

Brawl 60% (30/12), damage 1D3 + 1D4
9mm pistol 60% (30/12), damage 1D10
Taser 50% (25/10), damage special
(target must make Extreme
CON roll or be incapacitated for
1D6 rounds)
Dodge 45% (22/9)

Skills

Intimidate 60%, Listen 40%, Psychology 40%, Stealth 30%,
Spot Hidden 40%.

CHURCH SECURITY GUARD, *loyal and unquestioning*

STR 50 CON 55 SIZ 65 DEX 50 INT 60
APP 50 POW 50 EDU 50 SAN 30 HP 12
Damage Bonus: 0 Build: 0 Move: 7 MP: 10

Combat

Brawl 60% (30/12), damage 1D3
Pistol 40% (20/8), damage 1D10
Taser 40% (20/8), damage special (target
must make Extreme CON roll or
be incapacitated for 1D6 rounds)
Dodge 45% (22/9)

Skills

Climb 40%, Drive Auto 40%, Jump 40%, Listen 40%, Spot
Hidden 40%.

TOM BOLENDER, *age 54, uncomplicated security guard*

STR 60 CON 50 SIZ 70 DEX 55 INT 50
APP 45 POW 40 EDU 55 SAN 40 HP 12
Damage Bonus: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 5 MP: 8

Combat

Brawl 60% (30/12), damage 1D3 + 1D4
.32 Pistol 50% (25/10), damage 1D8
Dodge 35% (17/7)

Skills

Credit Rating 30%, Intimidate 60%, Listen 40%, Psychology
40%, Stealth 30%, Spot Hidden 40%.

TEKROOP SINGH, age 43, assistant director *on the verge of a nervous breakdown*

STR 45 CON 45 SIZ 55 DEX 45 INT 70
APP 60 POW 50 EDU 80 SAN 50 HP 10
Damage Bonus: 0 Build: 0 Move: 6 MP: 10

Combat

Brawl 30% (15/06), damage 1D3
Dodge 25% (12/05)

Skills

Art/Craft (Filmmaking) 70%, Charm 40%, Credit Rating
50%, Spot Hidden 50%, Psychology 55%.

DETECTIVE SAMUEL NEUMEIER, *age 48, enemy of the Church of Sunyata*

STR 60 CON 55 SIZ 65 DEX 65 INT 80
APP 50 POW 50 EDU 60 SAN 40 HP 12
Damage Bonus: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 7 MP: 10

Combat

Brawl 50% (25/10), damage 1D3 + 1D4
Pistol 60% (30/12), damage 1D10
Dodge 35% (17/7)

Skills

Climb 40%, Credit Rating 35%, Drive Auto 50%, Intimidate 60%,
Listen 50%, Psychology 60%, Stealth 40%, Spot Hidden 60%.

JARED WOODWARD, age 42, broken auteur

STR 40 CON 45 SIZ 60 DEX 40 INT 70
APP 65 POW 60 EDU 80 SAN 18 HP 10
Damage Bonus: None Build: 0 Move: 6 MP: 12

Combat

Brawl 25% (12/5), damage 1D3
Dodge 20% (10/4)

Skills

Art/Craft (Filmmaking) 70%, Charm 60%, Computer Use
30%, Credit Rating 60%, Drive Auto 30%, Fast Talk 60%,
Spot Hidden 40%.

MANDY SOLEK,
age 28, impossibly perky receptionist

STR 55 CON 55 SIZ 50 DEX 55 INT 60
APP 70 POW 60 EDU 60 SAN 51 HP 10
Damage Bonus: 0 Build: 0 Move: 9 MP: 12

Combat

Brawl 30% (15/06), damage 1D3
Handgun 40% (20/08), damage 1D10
Dodge 40% (20/08)

Skills

Charm 70%, Credit Rating 30%, Listen 50%, Spot Hidden 40%.

RICH VALLARIO,
age 33, faithful but shaken

STR 65 CON 45 SIZ 80 DEX 40 INT 50
APP 55 POW 40 EDU 65 SAN 32 HP 12
Damage Bonus: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 7 MP: 8

Combat

Brawl 30% (15/6), damage 1D3 + 1D4
Dodge 20% (10/4)

Skills

Charm 40%, Credit Rating 30%, Fast Talk 60%, Psychology 55%, Spot Hidden 30%.

THE EMPTIED,
newly hollowed vessels of the void

For statistics, refer to Verity Harrow (following).

If grabbing hold of one of the Emptied, the person finds that their fingers sink into the Emptied's skin disconcertingly, as if grabbing hold of a partially inflated balloon. The Emptied's fingers bend in odd directions with the slightest pressure, and their limbs are similarly pliable. Deforming one of the Empty this way provokes a Sanity roll (1/1D6 loss).

When one of the Emptied suffers a Major Wound, is impaled, or is wounded with a sharp object, their skin splits and the Hungry Void leaks out—see **The Hungry Void** (pages 180 and 202).

Seeing one of the Emptied for what they are, through their eyes, mouth, or by piercing their skin provokes a Sanity roll (1/1D8 loss).

If an investigator or non-player character is Emptied, make the changes to their statistics detailed in **Handout: Space 2—You Have Been Emptied.**

VERITY HARROW,
age 25, one of the Emptied

STR 25 CON 30 SIZ 50 DEX 50 INT 60
APP 80 POW 90 EDU 65 SAN 15 HP 8*
Damage Bonus: -1 Build: 0 Move: 8 MP: 18

Special note: When one of the Emptied suffers a Major Wound, is impaled, or is wounded with a sharp object, their skin will split and the Hungry Void will leak out. See the section titled **The Hungry Void (following).*

Combat

Attacks per round: 1

Brawl 25% (12/5), damage 1D3-1
Dodge 25% (12/5)

Skills

Art/Craft (Acting) 60%, Charm 70%, Credit Rating 40%, Spot Hidden 30%

Sanity Loss: seeing one of the Emptied for what they are, through their eyes, mouth or by piercing their skin, provokes a Sanity roll (1/1D8 loss).

THE TRULY EMPTY,
eternity wrapped in human skin

For statistics, refer to Craig Steele and Brian Musgrove (following).

If grabbing hold of one of the Emptied, the person finds that their fingers sink into the Emptied's skin disconcertingly, as if grabbing hold of a partially inflated balloon. The Truly Empty's fingers bend in odd directions with the slightest pressure, and their limbs are similarly pliable. Deforming one of the Truly Empty this way provokes a Sanity roll (1/1D6 loss).

Seeing one of the Truly Empty for what they are, through their eyes, mouth, or by piercing their skin, provokes a Sanity roll (1/1D8).

When one of the Truly Empty suffers a Major Wound, is impaled, or is wounded with a sharp object, their skin splits and the Hungry Void leaks out—see **The Hungry Void** (pages 180 and 202).

If an investigator or non-player character becomes Truly Empty, make the changes to their statistics detailed in **Handout: Space 3—You are Truly Empty.**

CRAIG STEELE,
age 58, one of the Truly Empty

STR 30 CON 30 SIZ 60 DEX 70 INT 70
APP 75 POW 150 EDU 80 SAN 00 HP 9*

Damage Bonus: 0 **Build:** 0 **Move:** 6 **MP:** 30

Special note: when one of the Truly Empty suffers a Major Wound, is impaled, or is wounded with a sharp object, their skin will split and the Hungry Void will leak out. See the section titled **The Hungry Void (following).*

Combat

Attacks per round: 1

Brawl 30% (15/6), damage 1D3
Dodge 40% (20/8)

Skills

Art/Craft (Acting) 60%, Charm 70%, Credit Rating 95%, Listen 55%, Psychology 60%, Spot Hidden 55%.

Sanity Loss: seeing one of the Truly Empty for what they are, through their eyes, mouth or by piercing their skin, provokes a Sanity roll (1/1D8 loss).

BRIAN MUSGROVE,
age 63, church leader and one of the Truly Empty

STR 25 CON 30 SIZ 60 DEX 50 INT 60
APP 65 POW 150 EDU 85 SAN 00 HP 8*

Damage Bonus: 0 **Build:** 0 **Move:** 4 **MP:** 30

Special note: When one of the Truly Empty suffers a Major Wound, is impaled, or is wounded with a sharp object, their skin will split and the Hungry Void will leak out. See the section titled **The Hungry Void.*

Combat

Attacks per round: 1

Brawl 25% (12/5), damage 1D3-1
Dodge 25% (12/5)

Skills

Charm 40%, Credit Rating 70%, Intimidate 60%, Law 50%, Listen 30%, Spot Hidden 30%.

Sanity Loss: seeing one of the Truly Empty for what they are, through their eyes, mouth or by piercing their skin, provokes a Sanity roll (1/1D8 loss).

THE HUNGRY VOID,
the cold reaches of infinity

If the skin of one of the Emptied or Truly Empty is ruptured, the Hungry Void within leaks out; starting at melee range and then expanding, at a movement rate of 8 for 1D6 rounds, passing through walls, doors and any other solid objects. At the end of this time, it contracts back within the shell it occupied. If the Empty person is still above zero hit points at this stage, they can contain the rupture; otherwise, the void continues to contract to nothingness, leaving only empty skin.

The Hungry Void takes the form of living tendrils of darkness. Small specks of light, like distant stars, can be seen within, giving a vertiginous feeling of looking into infinite space. Its presence sucks the energy out of its surroundings, making lights dim and flicker, and causing the temperature to drop below freezing. Frost forms on metal surfaces and people can see their breath in the air.

STR 120 CON — SIZ varies DEX 50 INT —
APP — POW — EDU — SAN — HP n/a
Damage Bonus: n/a **Build:** n/a **Move:** 8 **MP:** n/a

Combat

Attacks per round: 2

Tendrils of the Void: long tendrils of nothingness, made from the essence of the void, spread out from the ruptured skin and attempt to consume all around it. If a tendril grabs hold of a target (Dodge to avoid), they can make an opposed STR roll to break free; if unsuccessful, the target is pulled within the Hungry Void and is lost, tumbling through darkness for eternity, never dying and never escaping.

Tendrils of the Void (mnvr) 60% (30/12), death.

Armor: none, although the Hungry Void cannot be damaged. It is a manifestation of infinite space. Any weapons thrown or thrust into it will be sucked within its infinite reaches and lost forever. Any attempt to engage the Hungry Void in melee will result in the investigator being attacked.

Sanity Loss: 1D3/1D10 to see the Hungry Void.

THE SPACE BETWEEN

YVETTE SOMMERS, *avatar of the Hungry Void*

Sommers appears to be a human woman, tall and slender, with long, dark hair. She wears an ankle-length dress, which is night black and flecked with what seem at first to be gems or sequins. These flecks glow or catch the light and move slowly.

Up close, the illusion of Sommers' humanity falls apart. As with the Empty, her eyes and mouth are filled with the Hungry Void, giving a glimpse into the vast expanse of nothingness that makes up her being. She contains an infinity, and seeing this creates an overwhelming sense of vertigo.

The basalt cliffs are home to Yvette Sommers, the name given by Woodward to the avatar of the Hungry Void that made itself known to Chandler and was finally contacted by Steele. Woodward created this form from his imagination, and the entity now wears it when contacted through the film.

Sommers exists only to bring Emptiness to those she meets—she does this by touching a person, pulling all that they are into the Hungry Void and filling their skin with her Emptiness. Anyone undergoing this becomes Truly Empty.

STR 120 CON — SIZ 60 DEX 50 INT 150
APP — POW 150 EDU — SAN — HP n/a
Damage Bonus: n/a Build: 2 Move: 8 MP: 30

Combat

Attacks per round: 1

Emptying Touch: Yvette Sommers needs to touch the target. The target must make an opposed POW roll against her POW of 150 or be instantly emptied. If this happens to an investigator, consult the section titled **The Truly Empty**.

Emptying Touch: (mnvr) 60% (30/12)

Armor: none, although Sommers cannot be physically harmed, as she is embodiment of infinite space, wrapped in pure imagination. There is simply nothing there to be damaged. She can still be grappled, pushed or knocked over to give a victim a chance to flee her.

Sanity Loss: 1/1D8 Sanity points to see Yvette Sommers



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PLAYER HANDOUTS AND MAPS

Maps, both Keeper and player versions, and player handouts for the scenarios in this book can be downloaded for free from Chaosium.com



AUTHOR BIOGRAPHIES



PAUL FRICKER

Paul Fricker is a freelance writer and games designer. In partnership with Mike Mason, Paul is best known for writing and revising the latest edition of Chaosium's award-winning RPG, *Call of Cthulhu*. Over the years he has participated in the creation and development of numerous scenarios and campaigns, beginning with *Gatsby* and the *Great Race*, back in 2005, and most recently *Full Fathom Five* (2020). At present, Paul is writing the rules for the forthcoming *Rivers of London* RPG for Chaosium. Paul is also one of the hosts of the horror and gaming podcast, *The Good Friends of Jackson Elias*. He can be found on Twitter (@paulfricker), where he endeavors to focus on the important topics in life; gaming, music and food!



MATTHEW SANDERSON

Matthew (or more often, Matt) has long been an avid fan of horror in fiction and in films. He was discovered running a game of *Call of Cthulhu* at a local gaming convention, which led to the publication of his first scenario. Matt has contributed to a number of *Call of Cthulhu* titles—*Dead Light & Other Dark Turns*, *Pulp Cthulhu*, and *The Two-Headed Serpent* among others). He lives in rural Northamptonshire, England, with his ever-loving wife, Tiffany (who is also very understanding and forgiving, given the endless hours he spends writing!), along with a growing menagerie of parrots and chickens. In those rare moments when he has “free time,” Matt can be found enjoying cocktails or searching obscure corners of the internet for yet more books to add to his already extensive gaming library.



SCOTT DORWARD

Scott has been playing and running roleplaying games since stumbling into a game of AD&D in the early 1980s. When *Call of Cthulhu* arrived in the UK, Scott played it obsessively for the rest of the decade. He also read every Mythos tale he could get his hands on. These took their toll, and he hasn't been quite right since.

After running a ridiculous number of games at UK conventions, Scott was asked to write for several RPGs produced by friends. These included *Dead of Night*, *Hot War*, *Cthulhu Dark* and *Jaws of the Six Serpents*. Since then, he has written for Chaosium, Cubicle 7, and Pelgrane Press, specializing in Lovecraftian horror. Scott also worked as the line developer for Cubicle 7's *World War Cthulhu* until 2017.

Scott is co-host on the popular *Good Friends of Jackson Elias* podcast, and, more recently, he has become a regular player in a number of live play podcasts and steaming games, notably *Ain't Slayed Nobody* and *Pretending to be People*.

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