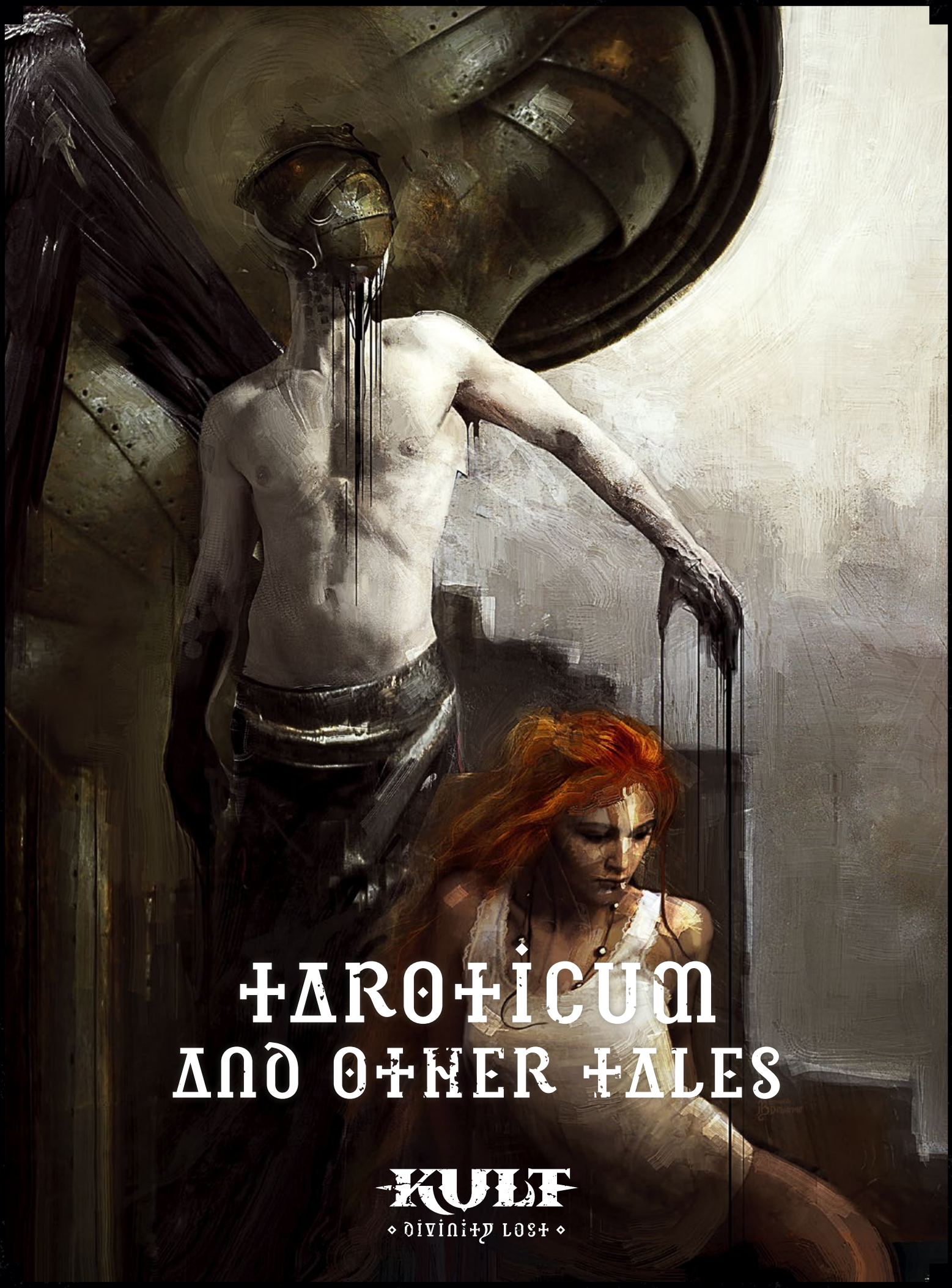

EROTICUM
AND OTHER TALES

KULT
DIVINITY LOST

Exoticum
and other tales

KULT

Divinity Lost

TAROTICUM

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Introduction

It was midnight on the 22nd of December, 1892, the first winter of Governor Seymour's service at Sandburn. They were gathered in the prison's deepest room, beneath the death row and the isolation cells. No screams could be heard through the stone. The iron door leading to the stairway was closed and locked.

Seymour had taken off his coat, rolled up his sleeves and cut a gash in his left arm. He now let the blood drip onto the floor and over the symbols he had drawn with chalk and soot on the flagstones. His companions were silent, with their backs to the wall, expectant.

Seymour stepped carefully into the protective circle, surrounded by the holy names, and picked up the black book where he had recorded the ritual.

"*Take your places. We now begin,*" he said, opening the book.

The assistants reluctantly stepped into the middle of the room and positioned themselves around the bloodstained triangle in front of the protective circle.

"*Ol binu od zodakame, Ilasa gabe Taoroth...*"

Seymour's chanting filled the little room. The candles on the circle's edge went out. He dropped the book on the floor, and in a raised voice began reciting long strings from his memory into the darkness.

"*...zodiredo Adni das Iarinuji elasa...*"

Finally, he fell silent. There was a thud and and a sudden high-pitched scream. The circle of candles lit up again, and in their light, the ritualists saw a creature crouched within the triangle on the floor. At first it looked like an animal, but when she straightened up, they realized she was an old woman dressed in rags. They hesitated for a moment.

"Catch her!"

The Governor's voice broke their paralysis. The men threw their chains, specially prepared, over the woman. She screamed and fought, but to no avail. She was forced to the floor. The chains seemed alive, merging with the stone floor and eating into her flesh. They did not stop until they formed a black net, pinning the woman to the ground by her own weight. Something fell out of her ragged clothes: a deck of cards. Seymour quickly stepped out of the protective circle and snatched the deck. Carefully, he wrapped the deck in a silk handkerchief from one of the pockets of his crumpled coat.

"Make certain that she stays here," he said before he opened the door and left the room.

PRELUDE

The story begins in the year of 1892 at Sandburn, a worn-out prison on the edge of London. The prison has received a new Governor, Anthony Seymour, who is interested in the occult. He has been searching for a powerful artifact, known as the Tarotica, for many years. It is a deck of cards that, according to legend, has the power of controlling both the Illusion and Elysium.

Seymour is not human, but a lictor trying to break out of the hierarchy and create his own power base with the aid of magic. During his studies, he realized that the artifact is bound to places that embody imprisonment. He needs a prison filled with terror and fear to create a temple where he can invoke and bind the Tarotica's guardian. To this end, he acquires the post of Governor at Sandburn by using his contacts in the public administration.

Referring to a new, stricter prison reform, Seymour begins a change of routine at Sandburn. Prisoners are forbidden to communicate with each other. Nightly inspections become the norm. Seymour organizes a system of informers and capricious punishments. Possession of a pair of dice could mean a slow, agonizing execution by torture, while a failed attempt to escape can be rewarded with doubled food rations. After a few months, an environment has been created where nobody is safe, and everyone is afraid of informers and reprisals. This is exactly what he is aiming for.

He confides in a few loyal guards, explaining that he is going to perform an occult experiment. If it succeeds, he and his assistants will gain both power and fortune. The guards reluctantly agree to help.

In the prison's basement, Seymour builds his temple. The guards help him to sacrifice a prisoner so the temple can be hallowed. One night, when the moon is waning and the winter cold is at its worst, he paints a protective circle and a triangle for invocation in the temple. Seymour invokes the artifact's guardian, the Goddess of the Forgotten, and the assistants stand ready with magical shackles to bind the creature in the temple.

The Goddess's outer appearance is that of an old woman, dressed in dirty rags. Seymour takes the artifact, a deck of 67 cards, and imprisons her by magical means in the temple. In his office, Seymour studies the Tarotica. It consists of 22 Major Arcana representing the Archons, the Death Angels, the Demiurge, and Astaroth. The 45 Lesser Arcana are divided into five suits: Skulls, Roses, Hourglasses, Eyes, and Crescents. Seymour lays the cards in a pattern representing Sandburn. He lets his own blood flow over the first card, Demiurgos, making himself the deck's master. In turn, the guards and prisoners are bound to the deck, thus becoming Seymour's slaves. The prison is drawn closer to Inferno.

Neither prisoners nor guards can get out of Sandburn. The gates stay closed to all except Seymour. The Tarotica's guardian remains imprisoned in the basement. Terror and control in the prison grow worse.

Finally, the guards and the prisoners decide that something must be done. Consulting with the imprisoned goddess, they learn that Seymour has made himself invulnerable through the binding. To hurt him, they must first steal the Demiurgos card and hide or destroy it. Only after that, he may be imprisoned or killed.

They steal the Demiurgos card and kill Seymour. The card fades and becomes blank. The prisoners riot, and the prison guards are killed. Nephariites from Inferno appear and remove the four guards who helped Seymour acquire the Tarotica. Sandburn then glides back into our own reality.

This part of the story is retold in the adventure's prologue. The players undertake the role of the four guards. At first, they aid Seymour with imprisoning the Goddess, and then overthrow him and liberate the prison. In truth, these four are the players' real characters, and 100 years later they have been reborn into new bodies and play out the rest of the adventure. The prison guards are described at the end of the Prologue.

A Hundred Years Later

After the prison revolt, Anthony Seymour is taken to Inferno, where he is tortured for eternities. He becomes a Black Lictor, serving Astaroth instead of the lost Demiurge. The prison guards are also brought to Inferno, but released after a period of punishment and reborn into new bodies. Some of the prisoners survive the events and later die natural deaths. The Tarotica remains in a hidden room behind Seymour's office. The Goddess remains imprisoned in a cell beneath the prison.

In the early twenties, Sandburn closes as a prison and is rebuilt into a mental hospital. London's city limits continue to grow and soon engulf the former prison. It is currently located in the middle of a rundown section of council flats southwest of Clapham.

The Tarotica, which has never remained for so long in our reality, influences the world around it, shaping humanity to mirror itself. The Sandburn hospital gradually twists into a semblance of the Tarotica until the staff form into two distinct factions: a strict and hierarchical group (the Archons) and a sadistic and rebellious faction (the Death Angels). Likewise, the patients are influenced by the five suits.

The Tarotica's power also seeps out beyond the hospital, influencing all of London. The five suits create centers of power in different city locations where their influences are particularly strong. People in positions of authority are subtly shaped by the patterns of the Major Arcana.

During all this, the Goddess of the Forgotten remains barely awake in the old abandoned section beneath the hospital. Her consciousness is gradually surfacing, stretching outward to contact the Tarotica. Although she cannot invoke the cards or free herself, she can influence them.

She decides to change the Tarotica by creating a new card, Anthropos, which represents Awakened Man. Aided by this card, she will be able to escape from her prison. However, in her current imprisoned state, she cannot create the card by herself. A human must make the card for her, and it must be a special human: a newborn soul not bound by the Illusion.

With aid from the cards, the Goddess searches for someone in the vicinity to help her. She eventually discovers a mind she can contact through dreams. It belongs to Mary Langsbury, a woman suffering from schizophrenia and a patient at Sandburn. She has a magical intuition that allows her to understand the cards. In addition, she has no difficulty seeing through the Illusion due to her illness.

The cards send visions directly into Mary's consciousness, influencing her to search the closed-down sections for the secret room where the Tarotica is hidden. Upon discovering the room, she lays out the cards according to the Goddess's instructions. Using the Roses' suit, she invokes Chris Walden, a prince of Passion, and becomes pregnant by him. She now carries a Child of Magic that can be bound to a newly created soul.

But she needs help. The Child's soul must be created and then the baby born before it can create the new card. Using the cards, Mary invokes the only souls the Tarotica recognizes in London: the reborn guards who bound the Goddess in the first place. These are the PCs. This is where their story begins.

Synopsis

The adventure consists of a prologue and six chapters.

In the Prologue, the players use pre-generated characters, the four prison guards in a 19th century prison. They play out the previous events, as described above.

In Chapter 1, the players use their own PCs, unaware that they are the reborn prison guards released from Inferno. They are having mysterious dreams calling them to Sandburn, now rebuilt as a mental hospital, where Mary waits for them. She asks them to get her out and to help her create the soul of her magical child before Seymour shows up. She says that the madmen on the Isle of Dogs can help them. The PCs probably will not understand half of what she says, but they can help her get out of the hospital. She gives them the Tarotica for safekeeping.

Soon after, Seymour arrives at the hospital and possesses Doctor Lockley's body, taking the director's place. After interrogating the Goddess of the Forgotten in the basement, he starts looking for Mary and the Tarotica. He finds both. He steals the cards and cuts the fetus from Mary's belly, taking it with him. When he returns to Sandburn, he brings the fetus to Inferno in order to assert his control over it. He tries implanting it in a creature of Inferno so it can be born, but the creature dies. Seymour doesn't know that only the Child's parents can give birth to it.

The PCs also meet Timothy, a boy from the hospital, who helped Seymour hide the Child in Inferno. He tells them that they were in a land of the dead peopled by the homeless. He thought he could spot his grandfather among the dead.

The PCs now have two leads to follow. In Chapter Two, they can locate the madmen in the London Docklands, who know how to create a new soul. In Chapter Three, they can try entering Inferno in order to reclaim the Child. It doesn't matter in which order they approach these Chapters.

In Chapter 2, the PCs search for answers among the Docklands' madmen. On the Isle of Dogs, they are told to contact someone called Waya, who can show them where they can create a Child of Magic. The problem is that she has been taken by the police and brought to a institution for mental patients. The PCs must free her and the madmen in her company before they can talk to her.

Waya explains that they must go to a place called Achlys to create their newborn soul. She can't tell them where it is, but knows of the one person in London who can, the Forgotten Man. He is forgotten by everyone, but she can help the PCs remember him in order to find him.

Waya plucks out the PCs' memories of their past lives, and tattoos images from these memories onto their bodies. Aided by the tattoos and a map created from their memories they will be able to find the Forgotten Man. They know that the road leading to him begins somewhere in Kennington, south of the River Thames.

However, to create the soul they must have the fetus that Seymour stole. Following Timothy's lead, they must now enter the land of the dead to reclaim it.

In Chapter 3, the PCs enter the land of the dead and reclaim the fetus. By asking the homeless living under Waterloo Bridge and on London's streets, they reach the cemetery of the vagabonds, a burial place where the forgotten go to die. A dying man, Lesley, may be able to guide them to the other side, but only after some effort.

In exchange for helping them enter the land of the dead, Lesley demands that the PCs reveal those responsible for his death. There has been a wave of mysterious deaths among the homeless of London. Once they promise to investigate the event, he guides them to the land of the dead. They find the fetus there, still alive and unharmed by everything happening to it. They bring it back to the world of the living.

Eventually, the PCs must fulfill their promise to Lesley to investigate the deaths among the homeless. They discover that a government contractor, employed to remove homeless people from the streets, is actually killing them for extra pay.

In Chapter 4, the PCs help the Child of Magic create its new soul. In order to do this, they must travel to Achlys, the origin of everything. Waya, the magician of the madmen, has told them how to find the Forgotten Man, who knows how to create souls and find the roads that lead to Achlys. She also explained that the tattoos she provided them can help them return from Achlys.

The PCs go to Kennington, south of London, and search for a way into parts of the city populated by the forgotten, the recluses working to weaken time and space. They search for the Forgotten Man and are told that he moved to a village farther away. They follow his trail to an empty moor, which is quickly covered in darkness. In truth, the moor is a manifestation of the Labyrinth of the Underworld.

The PCs reach a village with guardians who tell them that they serve the Forgotten Man. Eventually, the PCs meet him and he explains how the Child may create its soul. A servant shows the way to the gates of Achlys, where a blind man stands guard. This is the Blind One, who protects the entrance to Achlys. The PCs must have the Child of Magic with them, and they must explain that they have not come to Achlys to be destroyed, but to create something new. He will then allow them to pass without a fight.

Through a labyrinth atop the hill next to the Blind One's farm, the PCs reach the void that is Achlys. Everything dissolves around them, and in the end, only the fetus and their memories, in the form of the tattoos, remain intact.

The Child of Magic creates its soul out of the nothingness by calling it to itself. The PCs can get back to Elysium by following the memories residing within their tattoos. They then return to London with the Child and its new soul.

In Chapter 5, Seymour is not one to give up so easily. After the Child acquires its soul, he no longer has full control over it, but he can still ensnare it. Using his control over the homeless through the Tarotica, he enlists the aid of a Dream prince, living among London's drug users, to catch the Child's soul in a dream. The dream soul is hidden away at Sandburn in the Dreamworld, where Seymour starts to influence the Child to gain power over it. He then conceals Sandburn in a special part of the Dreamworld so it cannot be found.

The PCs get in touch with the Dream prince who helped steal the Child's soul. He has been thrown out of his own Dreamworld and wants revenge. With his aid, the PCs enter the dream, a dark, twisted version of London, to free the Child's soul. By asking around, they can get to Sandburn, where the soul is imprisoned. They reach Sandburn and free the soul.

In Chapter 6, the PCs must make sure that the Child of Magic is born in order to stop Seymour. As Mary is dead, there is only one other person that can give birth to the Child: Chris Walden, the conjurer of Passion who helped Mary conceive the Child. He is bound to the fetus through the ritual that created it. Seymour has realized that Walden is a threat, and his men are looking for the conjurer, who has disappeared.

The PCs must find Chris Walden and persuade him into changing his gender through a magic ritual, and thereafter give birth to the Child of Magic. Seymour becomes increasingly desperate, chasing them all over London. Hidden at the home of Rupert Faraday, another conjurer of Passion, they reconstruct the ritual that helps Walden with his sex change and giving birth to the Child.

The Child of Magic is born and paints the 68th card of the Tarotica. Seymour loses all control over the cards and is ripped to shreds by the patients of Sandburn. The Goddess is freed and the Child disappears beyond the Illusion with the cards.

The Child of Magic

The Tarotica originally consists of 67 cards. They symbolize the Illusion with its Archons, Death Angels, and the five worlds of Man. The deck has an innate potential of holding 68 cards. The last and unnumbered card was intended to represent Man, but the Goddess of the Forgotten consciously refrained from making the card, as she is unable to create this card herself. Its powers would then far exceed her own. Only a human, a Child of Magic, possesses that ability.

After being imprisoned in the Illusion for a hundred years, the Goddess decides to complete the deck of cards to set herself free. She arranges for Mary to become pregnant with a soulless fetus that can be bound to a newly created soul.

The Goddess hopes to create a human being that has never been imprisoned by the Illusion. Unfortunately, no more humans have been created since the Fall – they have only been reborn into new lives. She wants to create a human soul, newborn and unbound, that does not need to walk the long road to Awakening. Such a soul is required to create the 68th card.

Human souls are created out of Achlys, the nothingness that existed before chaos and order. To complete the last card, the PCs must travel to the edge of this nothingness and, once there, create the first new soul since humanity's imprisonment.

In order for the Child to be born after Mary's death, the PCs must then locate the only other human magically connected to it, Chris Walden. By transforming into a woman, Walden will be able to bear the Child.

The Theme of the Scenario

A central theme in Taroticum is imprisonment and retaining one's freedom at the expense of others. Anthony Seymour was a lictor of the Archon Geburah initially, and after his imprisonment in Inferno became a servant of the Death Angel Golab.

While the power of the deck of cards eclipses that of the higher powers in this scenario, the influence of Geburah, the Judge, to enforce social norms and punish those who refuse to obey is unmistakable in the actions of Lancer against the homeless as well as the persecution of the madmen at the hands of the police.

Golab, the Torturer's, influence is especially palpable in the extreme suffering at Sandburn and the sadism of its guards. It also manifests in Seymour's torture of the Child of Magic, tearing it from its mother, trapping it and denying the fetus its birth.

The Tarotica

The Tarotica was created by the Goddess of the Forgotten, who made it into an illustrated reflection of humanity's imprisonment. She produced it from her own pain, by drawing the cards upon her own flesh and then cutting them out. The cards can be used to manipulate the Illusion, but only the Goddess may freely use them. All others risk becoming entrapped by the deck of cards, which possesses its own mind and will.

The Tarotica cannot be destroyed, as it can influence and change its surroundings. If they wish, the cards can change owners, disappearing from whoever previously possessed them. They can connect themselves to a certain person, effectively following him or her. Even if the owner tries to throw the deck away, they find the cards lying beside the bed when they wake up the next morning.

For the majority of the adventure, the Tarotica remains in the hands of Anthony Seymour. However, as the PCs will possess them on a few occasions during the adventure, they are described in detail below.

The Major Arcana

0. Anthropos: (the card is not present in the original deck) A fetus inside an egg in front of Metropolis.

I. Demiurgos: An eye inside a triangle, surrounded by a halo. After the Prologue, the card is blank.

II. Astaroth: A horned creature girded by a snake, a pentagram is in the right hand, a flame in the left and a fettered man lies by his feet. A black sun shines in the background.

III. Kether: A ruler with crown, lash and orb, sitting on a throne decorated with rams. Two hooded Lictors kneel by the throne.

IV. Chokmah: A horned, crowned and bearded father figure surrounded by small, naked women and children. The entire card is fading.

V. Binah: The Madonna with the Child sitting on a stool on a checkered floor.

VI. Chesed: A white man, dressed in a robe, is giving water to a fettered, black man with a bandage over his eyes. The entire card is fading.

VII. Geburah: A judge in a full length cloak is sitting on a throne with a double-edged sword in his right hand and a scale in his left. A curtain behind him is upheld by a triangle with an eye.

VIII. Tiphareth: A spider with the sign of eternity on its back is sitting in a web.

IX. Netzach: A knight with a lion on his shield and a sword on his chest is holding a lance towards a vanquished foe. There are bombers flying in the background.

X. Hod: An executioner with a double-edged sword is standing between a kneeling man, whose hands are tied behind his back, and a dog with its tail between the legs. Hanged people are swinging from gallows in the background. A black sphinx is flying through the sky. The entire card is fading.

XI. Yesod: An usurer is counting money in front of a lattice filled with roses. A starving beggar is sitting in front of the table.

ANTHROPOS

DEMIURGOS

ASTAROTH

KETHER

CHOKMAH

BINAH

CHESED

GEBURAH

TIPHARETH

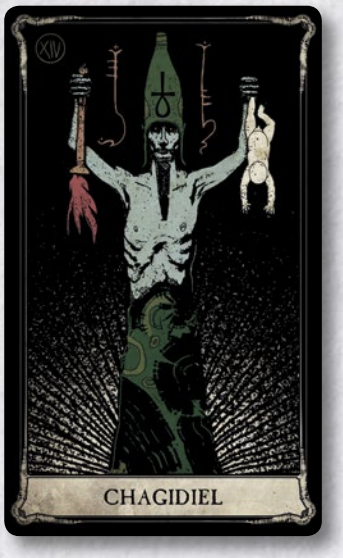
NETZACH

HOD

YESOD

MALKUTH

THAUMIEL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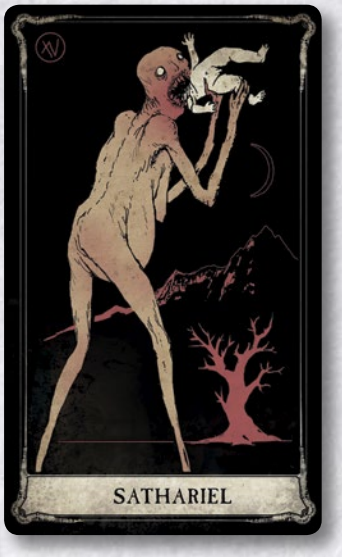

SATHARIEL

GAMICHICOTH

GOLAB

TOGARINI

HAREB-SERAP

SAMAEL

GAMALIEL

NAHEMOTH

XII. Malkuth: A woman in a loincloth wearing an ankh around her neck is standing on a half circle. In her uplifted right hand is a staff. Her lowered left hand is sending a flash of lightning towards the ground, splitting the half circle she is standing on. Above her her is a sign of eternity. To the right is the tree of life in the form of a hollyhock. To the left is the tree of knowledge with the snake.

XIII. Thaumiel: A monstrous ruler with lash, crown of iron and a skull face on a throne decorated with ram skulls. At his feet are two veiled razides. Cogwheels and slaves carrying burdens along a road can be seen behind him.

XIV. Chagidiel: A starving, monstrous figure of a man with a pharaonic beard and an inverted ankh on his forehead. He is holding a child by the ankle in his right hand and a downturned torch in his left.

XV. Satbariel: A parched, monstrous woman is swallowing a child. There is a dead tree on her right side, and ragged peaks and a black moon in the background.

XVI. Gamichicoth: Death is dancing with a cup in his right hand and a bunch of grapes in his left. Starving people are reaching out for him.

XVII. Golab: A ruined body is bleeding on top of an altar. Behind is a creature with bloodied knives instead of hands and with an executioner's hood covering its head.

XVIII. Togarini: A fully veiled form with an inverted torch in each hand. There are also two inverted pentagrams. In the background can be seen the living dead getting out of a cemetery.

XIX. Hareb-Serap: An immense battlefield with dead bodies in the foreground. On the horizon can be seen a skeletal face in the mushroom cloud of a nuclear blast.

XX. Samael: A man is squatting on his haunches, eyes bound, a dagger in each hand, on top of a pile of bloodstained corpses. He is bloodied up to his elbows. Behind him, two black sphinxes are flying.

XXI. Gamaliel: A pair of lovers are hanging in torment in chains between a black pillar and a white pillar.

XXII. Nahemoth: A creature looking like a fish is sitting on its haunches in a deserted landscape.

The Minor Arcana

The Minor Arcana consists of five suits of nine cards each: skulls, roses, hourglasses, eyes, and crescents. Each suit symbolises a part of the Illusion. The skulls are Death, the roses are Passion, the hourglasses are Time and Space, the eyes are Madness, and the crescents are the Dream. The suits don't have any face cards.

London

London is a city of contrasts in 1992. Respectable businessmen rub shoulders with punk rockers, buildings of steel rise from medieval quarters, luxury cars glide past the homeless, and beggars panhandle for a few pence in the city's prosperous heart. London is both immensely rich and devastatingly poor. Many are troubled by the lack of housing and the crippling poverty, but opinions are split about what should be done. For the past ten years, laissez-faire has been the rule of the land.

However, all of this is only the Illusion on top of the real London. The true city is ancient, and was built when all cities were labyrinths. The windings of the labyrinth still remain in the forgotten parts of London.

The Children of the Night have existed in London since its first foundations were built. Some of the creatures of the the Underworld have found their way to the surface and now live amongst the sleepers.

The Tarotica and London

For the past one hundred years, London has also been influenced by the presence of a powerful artifact: the Tarotica. While it has been hidden away in the old Sandburn prison, parts of the city have gradually fallen under the deck's power, mirroring the images on its cards.

This influence is not immediately apparent unless one understands what is truly happening. If the players make this connection on their own, the GM can weave references to the Tarotica into their descriptions:

"After noticing signs and symbols of the Rose in the windows of sex shops and above certain doorways, you realize that Soho is heavily influenced by the Suit of Passion."

The Major and the Minor Arcana have affected different factions of London's rulers and servants. The well-defined class structure of English society complements the cards perfectly. The Major Arcana has influenced the upper classes, while the five suits of the Minor Arcana have influenced the people on the bottom. Thus far only the oldest parts of London have fallen under the Tarotica's influence. However, if it remains in Sandburn, eventually the entire city will fall under its power.

The Minor Arcana

The Minor Arcana have influenced the older neighborhoods. Through the years many of these areas have been rebuilt and gentrified, but quite a few still remain poverty-ridden slums.

The Suit of Eyes

The Suit of the Eyes represent Elysium, the enslavement of our minds and souls. It is the blinding madness as well as the rebellious, penetrating insight that lets us glimpse reality.

Madness has its strongest influence throughout the London Docklands and the Isle of Dogs. All of London's mental hospitals are under the power of this suit. The madmen gather on the Isle of Dogs, where they instinctively sense the influence of the cards. It can be argued that the entire Docklands project is a result of this suit's influence on the city. The Isle of Dogs exists on the border to Metropolis and the worlds beyond the Illusion.

The Suit of Skulls

This suit represents Death as a breakthrough to the other side, as well as the mortal destruction that binds us to our flesh. It is strongly connected to both Metropolis and the Archons as well as Inferno and the Death Angels. Death is everywhere. Of the cards, the Suit of Skulls has had the least influence over London. South of Battersea is a small, abandoned cemetery where the outcasts gather when they're ready to die. The border between Life and Death is thin there and occasionally breaks, thereby allowing the dead to move among the living.

A priest, refusing to abandon the dying, continues to care for them even after they have passed on. He has is now undead, but is barely aware of it.

The Suit of Hourglasses

The hourglasses represent Time and Space, the prison binding us in the Illusion, but they also carry the hope of breaking these shackles and waking up. The hourglasses also reproduce the labyrinth that all cities are built from. It has a strong connection to Achlys and the Underworld. All of London is influenced by this suit, partly because the labyrinth beneath the city still remains quite powerful. South of the River Thames, the suit has a center of influence in Kennington, with gates leading to the Labyrinth and to Achlys. Those passing through are usually lost forever.

All of London is influenced by alterations in Time and Space, which move streets and alter memories. Cab drivers must continually update their knowledge of the city. In 1971, Oxford Street disappeared for three hours, and during the eighties several alleys and council houses moved or vanished completely.

The Suit of Crescents

The crescent moon is a symbol of the Dream, the search for the unattainable. The Dream inspires and strengthens, but it also becomes a crutch to endure the unbearable.

The Suit of the Crescents has influenced the East End, including the old poor quarters of Whitechapel and Limehouse, as well as the newer slums of Brixton and the South. It manifests itself through the increased use of drugs as an escape from reality.

All the addicts of London live in a shared Dreamworld under the influence of the suit. The Dreamworld is powerful enough to invade our reality in such a way that the junkies dream right alongside those who are awake.

This dream realm shares similarities with the Interzone from William Burroughs's novel *The Naked Lunch*, and a few people have wondered whether his story may have influenced the Dreamworld.

The Suit of Roses

The fifth suit is that of the roses, a symbol of Passion, either blinding desire or that which liberates us. It directly relates to our sexuality. It is strongly connected to the primal forces of Gaia. Passion has influenced all of London, most strongly in parts of the West End. The city's inhabitants have a split view on sex, and a sort of horrified fascination with their own sexuality. Its major area of influence is Soho, where most of the sex shops and the porno clubs are located. Many of London's Passion conjurers live in or near this area in order to draw from its power.

The Major Arcana

The Major Arcana have primarily influenced the upper classes. The suit consists of 22 individual cards, divided among the Archons and Death Angels, as well as the Demiurgos and Astaroth. This division has allowed the Major Arcana to twist the city in more distinct ways. Each Arcana influences one or two people until they have been transformed into living embodiments of its card.

Large factions of the city's administration and many industrial leaders are currently under the Major Arcana's influence. In addition, several representatives of the House of Commons and the House of Lords are similarly affected by the cards.

This means that all the affluent areas in London are being influenced, including Chelsea, Knightsbridge, Mayfair, and Notting Hill. Also, the Major Arcana are creating a situation where the 16 people most strongly connected with the cards will eventually control the entire city. London's highest echelons are well on their way to achieving complete domination.

London Today

The Tarotica's influence over London is growing stronger all the time. The city is being rebuilt and renovated as a direct result of the cards. New houses are being constructed and old ones torn down so the city can adjust to the cards' layout. Roads are moved and parks are laid out. Certain areas are beginning to resemble the card or the suit which most strongly influences it. At first, this effect appears in the aesthetic decorations, and then in the architecture and the city zoning. From the air, it is possible to see how London is beginning to take a new shape under the influence of the Tarotica.

The Labyrinth

London is an ancient city. According to some, it was built over the ruins of one of humanity's original cities. It is known that the city developed out of a labyrinth, the age-old symbol of time, space, and hidden knowledge. London is still in part that labyrinth.

It is easy to become lost in the maze of streets, alleys, and small parks. A road that led to one place yesterday may be wrong today. Once you have lost your way, it is easy to completely lose sight of all landmarks. You are drawn deeper and deeper into the ancient labyrinth.

When you can no longer find your way out, you find yourself among the forgotten people, those nobody remembers or wants to know about. They have removed themselves from all contact with the outside world and live on streets lined with boarded-up houses. The forgotten never talk to anyone unless they are addressed directly. They refuse to look anyone in the eyes, and will never ask any questions.

SANDBURN

Sandburn Prison takes part as a setting in both the Prologue and the present. As such, two descriptions of the institution are provided: one for its appearance in 1892 and one for a hundred years later, after it becomes a mental institution.

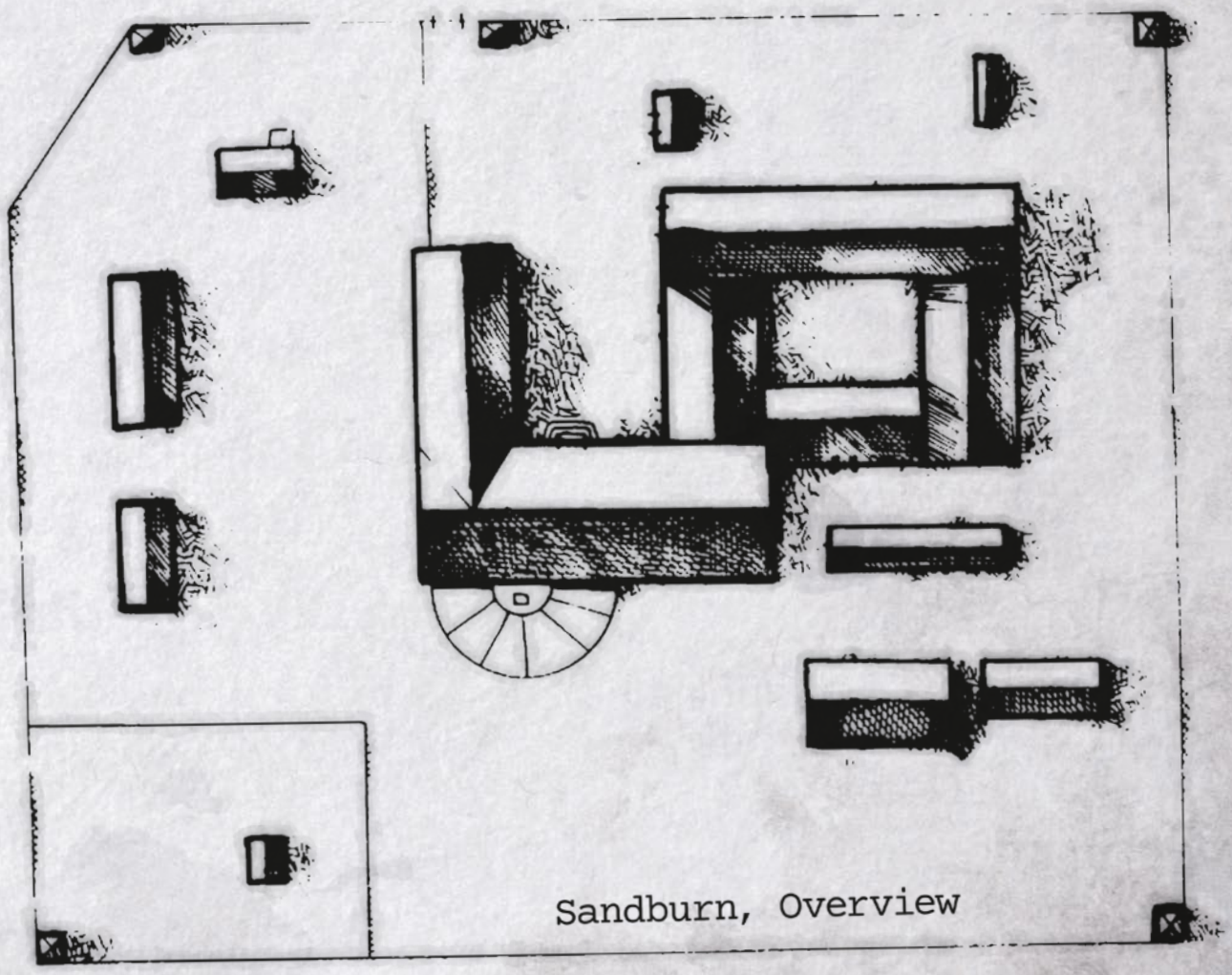
Sandburn Prison is situated in Clapham on a trash-filled common, where the houses of the city meet the farms of the country. The oldest section was constructed in the 1820s and consists of a single two-story building, called the Old Gaol.

In 1892, the Old Gaol is connected to three newer wings constructed around a small paved yard that houses the gallows. The West, the East and the North wings are built according to recent penal theories. The cells are placed in two rows with an open shaft through the center of the buildings, providing the guards an unlimited view of all the cells.

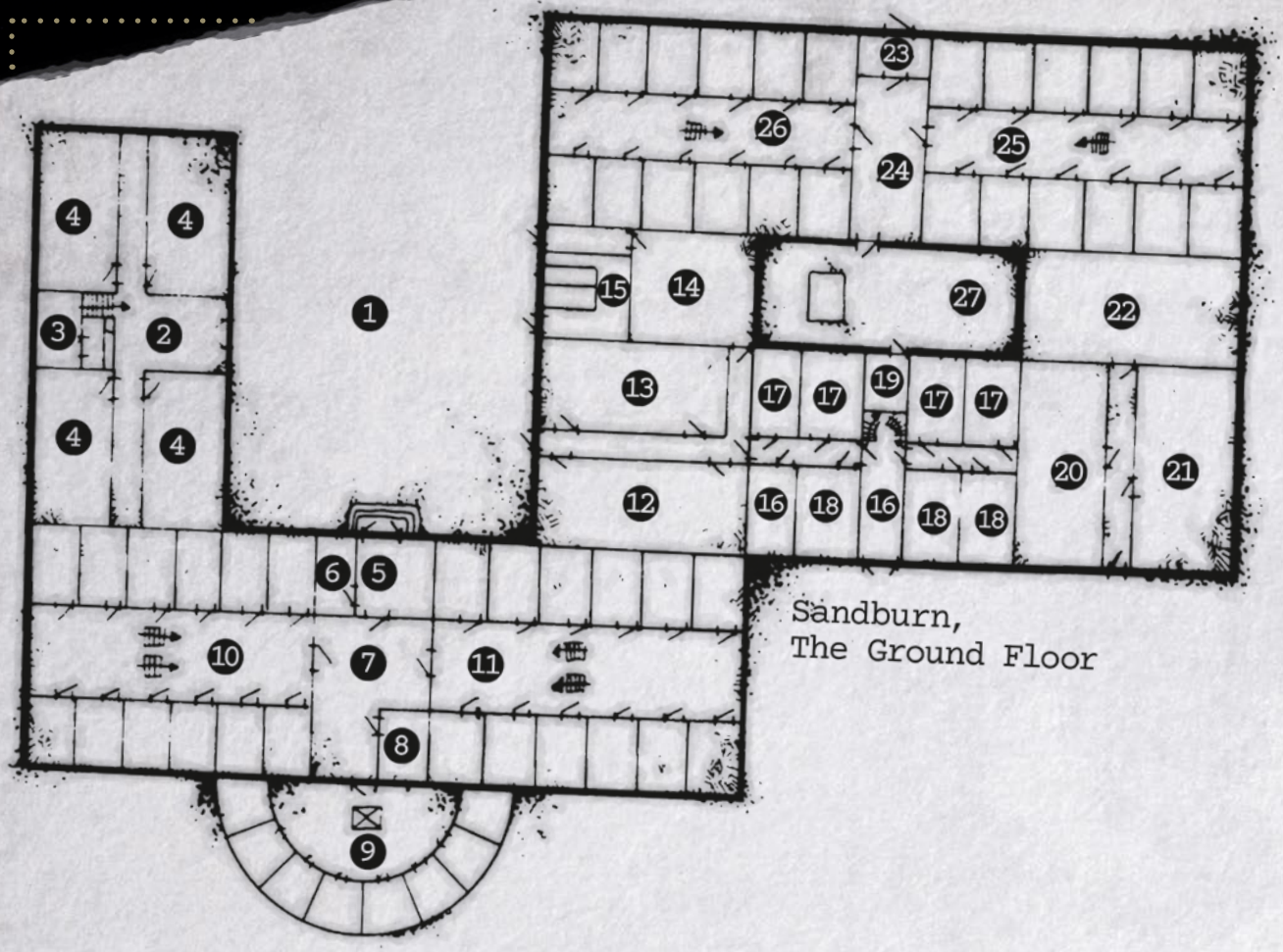
The New Prison is only ten years old. It has also been built according to the latest architectural principles. Its layout is open and features a balcony running along the cell doors of the second story. The middle part of the New Prison contains some offices. Behind the building is a modern yard divided into "cake slices."

There is a hospital connected to the New Prison. It is over a hundred years old with narrow windows and massive stone walls. Because of the large number of inmates at the prison, only a small part of this building is used as the hospital.

The prison is surrounded by a stone wall, 24 feet high. A series of small, wooden towers are spread out along its length. Several other buildings are also located inside the wall: the central guard house, the Governor's home, the stables, the dog compound, and a small cemetery and chapel. The guard dogs are allowed to run loose at night.



Sandburn, Overview



The Map of Sandburn

There are two descriptions for each location on the map, marked 1892 and 1992, respectively. Descriptions following 1892 refer to locations in Sandburn Prison, and descriptions following 1992 refer to locations in Sandburn Asylum. In some instances the descriptions are identical. Allow the players take a good look at the map before playing the Prologue, as their characters have been working at the prison for several years.

The Ground Floor

[1] **Yard. 1892:** A paved yard that functions as a drill-ground for prison guards after the arrival of Governor Seymour. The prisoners are walked across the yard to get to the washrooms and the dining halls. **1992:** The yard is covered by gravel and weeds. A huge elm is growing in the middle.

[2] **Hospital Entrance. 1892:** An open hallway with a reception desk next to the stairway to the first floor. The white paint on the walls has started to flake. The sharp smell of alcohol and prolonged sickness permeates the place. **1992:** There is a guard behind the desk by the stairs. He directs all visitors to the New Prison building.

[3] **Nurses' Room. 1892:** Eight nurses work at the hospital. They sit here and chat when they're not attending to the patients. **1992:** As in 1892.

[4] **Sickrooms. 1892:** There are six beds in each of the four sickrooms. Only the worst cases and prisoners close to death are brought here. **1992:** There are four patients to each sick-room. This is an infirmary for physical injuries or diseases.

[5] **The New Prison Entrance/Reception. 1892:** A hallway that can be cordoned off in case of escape attempts or uprisings. The stairs leading both up and down can be closed with iron gates. **1992:** This is a reception area, overlooked by a receptionist and a guard located in room 6. There is a window in the wall to room 5. The receptionist requires that all visitors provide some form of identification. The door to room 7 is opened electronically from the guard room.

[6] **Guard Room. 1892:** A small office with a rickety table where a guard registers all visitors. **1992:** The guard and the receptionist sit in here. A telephone switchboard and screens for the closed circuit surveillance system are also found here.

[7] **The New Prison Central Hall. 1892:** This is a worn hall with large, iron-barred doors leading to the wings. Benches run along the walls, where prisoners who were not in solitary used to sit and talk before Seymour arrived. **1992:** A bare hall with walls that are freshly repainted white. The old barred gates to the wings have been replaced with glass walls.

[8] **Guard Room/Smoking Room. 1892:** A room where the guards sit down between their rounds through the wings. There is a table and a few chairs in the room. **1992:** The attendants use this room for smoking. The furniture consists of a couple of tables and a black and white television set.

[9] **Exercise Yard. 1892:** A small wooden tower overlooks the "cake slices" where the prisoners get their exercise. Because of the crowded conditions at the prison, the yard is not often in use. There is no practical way of letting the prisoners out in an orderly fashion. **1992:** The yard is overgrown by weeds. It is used occasionally in order to let difficult patients get some fresh air. The guard tower is in shambles.

[10] **The New West Wing. 1892:** The stairs and the balcony are made of steel bars, giving a full view of the entire hall at all times. The cell doors are made of bars that allow full visual access. Each cell contains six cots, three on each side. They are folded up each morning, turning the cell into nothing more than a bare stone floor. Recently each cell has been holding up to eight prisoners. The cells are less than ninety square feet in size. The air is heavy and smells of sweat and urine. The noise level is high and the entire place gives an oppressive feeling. **1992:** The barred doors have been replaced with solid steel doors with a sliding shutter. There is only one patient assigned to each cell. The furniture consists of a bed and a small table. A few of the ground floor cells are padded. Otherwise, things look as they did a hundred years ago. One of the cells at the rear has been installed with modern toilets.

[11] **The New East Wing. 1892:** Like the New West Wing, as above. **1992:** As above.

[12] **Dining Hall. 1892:** A bare hall with long wooden tables and benches. The food is delivered by inmates working in the kitchen. Plates and cutlery are made of tin. **1992:** The same long tables and benches as a hundred years earlier, but the walls have been repainted in a sickly yellow.

[13] **Dining Hall/Workshop. 1892:** Like the Dining Hall, as above. **1992:** A workshop with looms and tables for carpentry, painting, and sewing.

[14] **Kitchen. 1892:** An old-style kitchen with a brick oven. Everything is cooked in huge cauldrons above a central fireplace. A cook and two kitchen hands work together with a few trusted prisoners. A stairway leads to the food stores in the basement. **1992:** The kitchen has been slightly modernized, looking like it was refurbished during the 1950s with the addition of large electric pots and stoves. Two cooks work here.

[15] **The Washroom. 1892:** Long washbasins are fastened to the walls. The room is heavily damaged by water. After Seymour's arrival, it is a common occurrence that inmates are murdered here, turning the floor and the walls a permanent rusty color. **1992:** A relatively modern washroom with showers and wash basins.

[16] **The Hall of the Old Gaol. 1892:** An old house with unpainted stone walls. Two circular, narrow stairs lead up and down at the end of the hall. Narrow doors lead into the cells. **1992:** As in 1892.

[17] **Death Row. 1892:** The number of death sentences has increased, which means that there are up to six prisoners in each cell, but they still have more room than the other prisoners. They are never let out of their cells. **1992:** The doors are wide open. The cots in the cells are rotten.

[18] **The Women's Cells. 1892:** Because of the prison's overcrowded situation, the special women's section was emptied and its 18 female prisoners moved into these four cells. Before Seymour's arrival, they had a greater freedom of movement as compared with the male prisoners. However, since the new order began, they have never been let out. **1992:** The doors are wide open. Everything in the cells is rotten.

[19] **The Morgue. 1892:** After Seymour's arrival, the dead are brought directly to the cemetery and buried. Beforehand, they were placed in the morgue until usually being buried somewhere else. **1992:** A forgotten skeleton is on the floor, long since stripped clean by rats.

[20] **Workshop. 1892:** The female prisoners worked here before the prison became hopelessly overcrowded. During the last few years it has been used for keeping prisoners who do not need strict supervision. Up to fifty people can live in the room. **1992:** Benches and looms are broken and moldering.

[21] **Workshop. 1892:** A carpentry workshop that is still in use, but solely by the staff. They use the workshop for repairing or making tools. **1992:** The work tables are moldering and broken.

[22] **Workshop. 1892:** A workshop similar to room 20 being used to house more prisoners. **1992:** The work tables are broken and moldering.

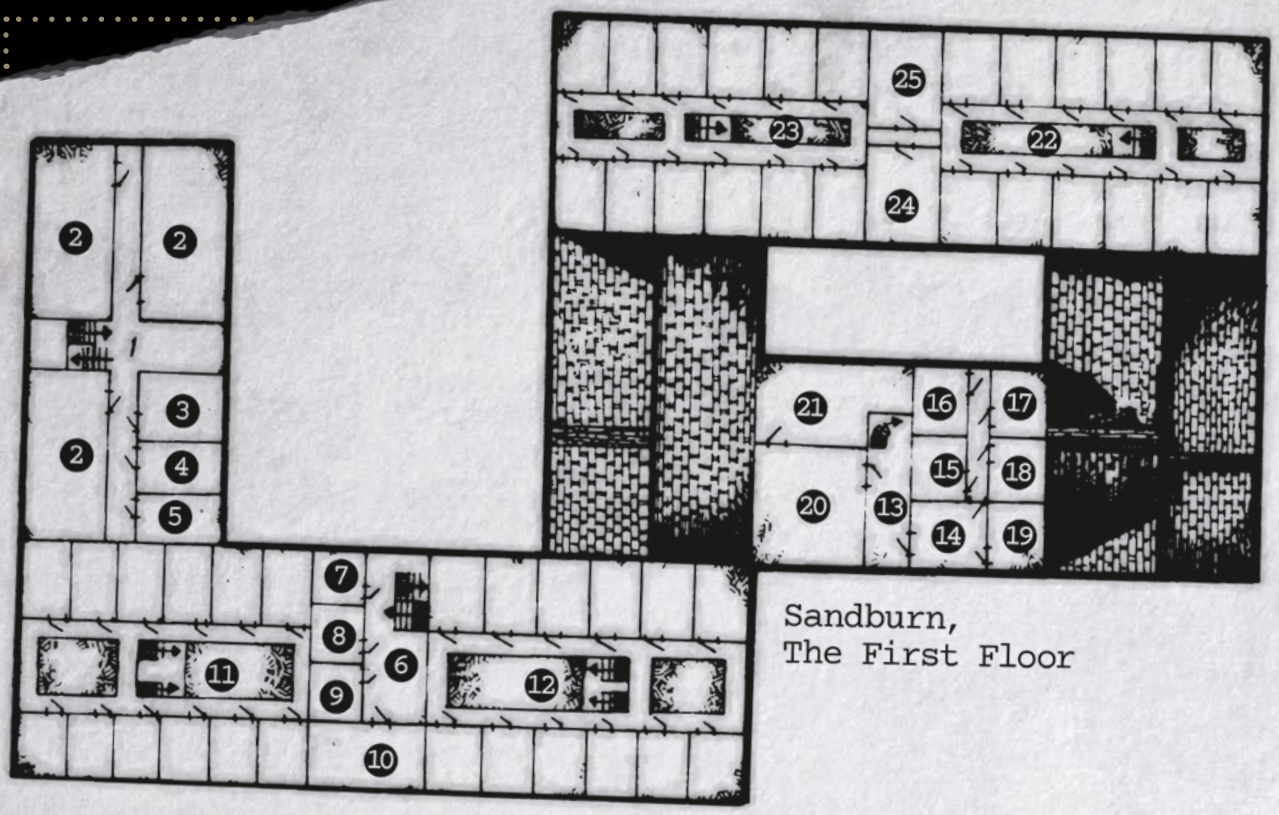
[23] **The Entrance to the Old Wings. 1892:** A small hall intended as a prevention against escape attempts. A barred gate separates it from the next room. **1992:** The floor is covered with dust.

[24] **The Hallway of the Old Wings. 1892:** An older, worn part of the prison that has been renovated to better comply with modern methods. The walls are unpainted stone, the room is crowded and the humidity is high. In the middle of the room, the guards sit around a table playing cards when they are not walking their rounds. **1992:** The floor is covered with dust and the table is broken.

[25] **The Old East Wing. 1892:** A narrow, worn building in two stories. The same overcrowding as in the wings of the New Prison. **1992:** The cell doors stand wide open, and everything is rotten and covered in dust.

[26] **The Old West Wing. 1892:** As above. **1992:** As above.

[27] **The Inner Yard. 1892:** A small, cobbled yard with a gallows. The yard is not used for anything other than executions. **1992:** The gallows has fallen apart and weeds are growing all over the yard. Small trees grow between the cobblestones, pushing them out of place.



THE FIRST FLOOR

[1] **The Upper Hospital Hall. 1892:** A bare hall with a window facing the yard. **1992:** As 1892.

[2] **Sickrooms. 1892:** There are six beds in each of the three rooms. Only the worst cases and prisoners close to dying are put in here. **1992:** Sick inmates are treated here. There are four beds in each room.

[3] **Doctor's Consultation Room. 1892:** This serves as Doctor Peacock's consultation room, where he makes his biweekly call on Tuesdays and Thursdays. After Seymour's arrival, he is stuck at the prison. He starts to drink heavily and can be found continually intoxicated in his office. **1992:** Doctor Naismith takes care of all physical ailments afflicting the inmates. The room houses modern medical equipment.

[4] **Office. 1892:** Doctor Peacock's office. After Seymour's arrival, the room is a mess of confused notes; there are papers lying everywhere. **1992:** Doctor Naismith's office. A neat and well-ordered place.

[5] **Storage Room. 1892:** Drugs, bandages, and spirits are stored here. **1992:** Same use as in 1892.

[6] **The Upper New Hall. 1892:** A bare and shabby hall. **1992:** Newly painted white with non-figurative, framed paintings. There are potted plants on the window sill.

[7] **Storage Room. 1892:** A storage room for nightsticks, chains, handcuffs, and prison garb. **1992:** Used to store bed linens.

[8] **Visitor's Room. 1882:** Before Seymour's arrival, the room was used for hosting important visitors. Clive Wilson, the prison chaplain, moved in here after Seymour took over. The room is dirty and disordered. **1992:** Visiting room for relatives of the inmates. The room is furnished with a table, comfortable chairs, and a potted plant.

[9] **Visitor's Room/Office. 1892:** An empty visitor's room containing a few chairs and a table. **1992:** The office of Leonard Barding, the head attendant and Mr. Lockley's personal assistant. The office has a modern look, featuring wooden furniture and small plants.

[10] **Office. 1892:** The office of Matthew Clarke, the superintendent. Clarke has completely let go of all order since Seymour arrived. The office is pure chaos. **1992:** The office belonging to the Director, Doctor Lockley. The office is light and inviting, furnished with modern, wooden furniture in neutrals and pastels.

[11] **The New West Wing. 1892:** The stairs and the balcony are made of steel bars, giving a full view of the entire hall at all times. The cell doors are barred, allowing full visual access. Each cell contains six cots, three on each side. They are folded up each morning, turning the cell into nothing more than a bare stone floor. Recently each cell has been holding up to eight prisoners. The cells are less than 90 square feet in size. The air is heavy and smells of sweat and urine. The noise level is high and the entire place gives an oppressive feeling. **1992:** The cell doors have been replaced with steel doors with a sliding shutter. There is only one

patient assigned to each cell. The furniture consists of a bed and a small table. Otherwise, things look like as they did a hundred years ago. One of the cells at the rear has been installed with modern toilets.

[12] **The New East Wing. 1892:** As above. **1992:** As above.

[13] **The Upper Hall of the Old Gaol. 1892:** A bare, damp stone hall with portraits of former Governors on the walls. **1992:** Mary's footprints can be seen in the thick dust on the floor.

[14] **Guard Room. 1892:** Assembly room of the guard captains. They have their offices in the next corridor. There is a table and a few chairs in the room. **1992:** The furniture is broken and there is a heavy layer of dust everywhere.

[15] **Office. 1892:** The office of Will Tailor. An austere room containing a desk and a cupboard. **1992:** The furniture has rotted.

[16] **Office. 1892:** The office of Michael Brown. Looks like room 15. **1992:** Looks like room 15.

[17] **Office. 1892:** The office of Harlan O'Connor. Looks like room 15. **1992:** Looks like room 15.

[18] **Office. 1892:** The office of Richard Dorsleigh. Looks like room 15. **1992:** Looks like room 15.

[19] **Supply of Arms. 1892:** The room contains about 20 truncheons, 40 Lee-Metford rifles with 20 boxes of 100 rifle shells each, and 10 Webley Mark II revolvers with two boxes of pistol shells. A steel door leads into the room. Seymour is the only person with a key to this room. **1992:** Everything is still in the room, but rusted and dusty.

[20] **The Governor's Office. 1892:** Seymour's office is elegant with heavy oak furniture. A desk and several cupboards dominate the room. Seymour keeps his keys in the top desk drawer. **1992:** The office furniture is strangely well-preserved, apparently immune to the decay suffered by the rest of the building. Mary's footprints can be seen in the dust.

[21] **The Inner Room. 1892:** Seymour furnished this library himself with glassed-in bookshelves. There are tomes of occult literature here, as well as some works on social sciences. The Tarotica is spread out on a table in the middle of the room. **1992:** Mary has removed the Tarotica from the table. There is not a speck of dust in here, and the furniture and the books are totally undamaged.

[22] **The Old East Wing. 1892:** A narrow, worn two-story building that suffers the same overcrowding as in the wings of the New Prison. **1992:** The cell doors are wide open, everything is covered in dust.

[23] **The Old West Wing. 1892:** As above. **1992:** As above.

[24] **Guard Room. 1892:** The guards of the old wings are sitting here playing cards when they are not on their rounds. It is a room with bare stone walls. The only furniture is a rickety table and a few chairs. **1992:** The table is broken. The skeletal remains of some guards who were killed by the prisoners are lying on the floor.

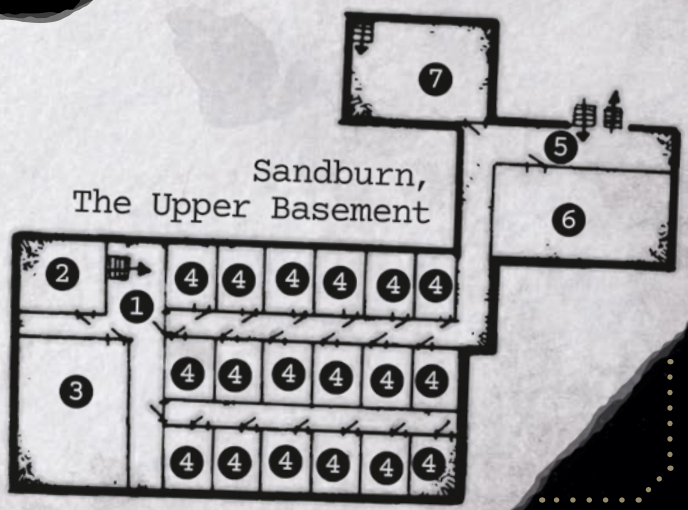
[25] **Storeroom. 1892:** An old storeroom containing a little of everything; furniture, broken tools, etc. **1992:** Everything is rotten and covered with dust.

The Upper Basement

[1] **The New Basement. 1892:** The stairs lead down to a damp and drafty basement. The walls are made of stone blocks. A few empty casks are lined against the wall. **1992:** The walls have been whitewashed, and a coal stove is heats the room.

[2] **Guard Room/Smoking Room. 1892:** The guards overseeing the isolation cells spend their time here. The room is heated by a small coal heater. A rickety table is the only furniture. **1992:** This is where the attendants running the lower ward rest between duties. There is a TV set, a table, and a couch here. There are always at least two attendants in the room.

[3] **Laundry Room. 1892:** All the laundry is taken care of here, and is handled by trusted prisoners supervised by a pair of guards. The laundry is done on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The water is carried in from the yard and heated on an old coal stove. **1992:** The room has been equipped with modern laundry machines run by two attendants.



[4] **Isolation cells/The Lower Ward. 1892:** Because of the crowded conditions, the isolation cells are no longer used for solitary confinement. Up to eight prisoners are crowded in the pitch dark on a damp stone floor covered by some straw. It is quite common to find dead prisoners here. Everyone is suffering from fevers and various illnesses. Matthew Clarke ends up here after attacking Seymour. **1992:** These small rooms actually serve as isolation cells in the hospital. Although they are heated and lighted, they offer very little comfort beyond that. About half of the cells are currently in use.

[5] **The Old Basement. 1892:** An old basement with earthen walls. When Seymour takes control over the cards these parts of the prison glide closer to Inferno. The walls are covered with ice, and are continually changing. The basement doesn't quite have the same shape every day. **1992:** The passage between the new and the old basement has been bricked up. The closeness to Inferno can still be felt. The walls are covered with ice, and do not remain in a fixed location.

[6] **The Old Isolation Cells. 1892:** Seymour rebuilds the cells into torture chambers. If he is allowed to keep it up long enough he summons razides to the prison, so they may torture the prisoners. The walls are ice-coated earth, and the floor is covered with frozen blood. **1992:** The old instruments are still here, and the moldering remains of a few humans are present in the room. It is still close to Inferno, and the walls feel as if they may suddenly split open.

[7] **Kitchen Stores. 1892:** Storage space for the kitchen's food items, such as barrels of salted fish, sacks of flour, and potatoes. A stairway leads to the kitchen on the ground floor. **1992:** Same as in 1892, but with the addition of modern stores: freezers, dry goods on shelves, etc.

THE LOWER BASEMENT

[1] **Seymour's Temple. 1892:** Ever since the Goddess of the Forgotten was imprisoned here, darkness has filled the room. No light can penetrate it. The Goddess is chained to the floor. Seymour is the only one with a key to the door. The key is in his desk drawer. **1992:** Same as in 1882.

London

PROLOGUE

THE PROLOGUE TAKES PLACE IN Sandburn Prison, in the year of 1892. This is the moment when the prison's Governor Anthony Seymour, a lictor, invokes the Goddess of the Forgotten and manages to get his hands on a powerful artifact: the Tarotica. During the Prologue, the players use pre-generated characters, the prison guards who aid Seymour when he invokes the Goddess. In the end, they rebel against him and cast him into Inferno.

If there are more than four players, the gamemaster (GM) can create additional guards, and if there are fewer, they can remove an equal number. The reason for the Prologue is to provide the players an understanding of the background, as well as create a connection to the present day characters and force them to act.

The souls of the guards have been reborn into the players' regular characters. They must undo what they did at the prison a hundred years earlier, liberate the Goddess, and make certain the cards of the Tarotica disappear from our reality. Therefore, the prison guards should resemble the present day characters as much as possible, both in appearance and personality. It doesn't matter if any of the modern characters are of different genders or races than their past lives. Matching the personalities is most important. The GM need not explain to the players why the Prologue must be played using these separate characters, only that this short introduction is designed to provide them with background information for the adventure. Furthermore, the GM should explain that the Prologue is a tightly controlled scenario, and that players should be careful in playing the characters as they are described. If possible, there should be no indication provided that these characters are in any way linked to their present-day characters.

The PCs have been prison guards at Sandburn for several years. They have a strong belief in authority, they are loyal civil servants obeying orders without asking any questions. It is important that the players understand this. At the beginning, they will definitely not question the Governor's orders.

Memories of an Earlier Life

The players can use the knowledge they gain during the Prologue in later Chapters. This intuition shows up as memories from their past lives when they recognize things from the Prologue. Explain to them that this knowledge appears in the form of hazy visions and faint memories.

When they recognize the prison from the Prologue in Chapter One, the GM tells them that "*...it looks familiar; you've seen this place somewhere before, but you can't place where.*" This should be done with all the locations and any other information they would recognize.

The Player Characters at Sandburn

The PCs have worked as prison guards at Sandburn for a few years. Currently, the prison is crowded beyond capacity, and is continually teetering on the edge of rebellion, putting all the guards on edge. The GM should say a few things about their daily routines before starting play. Their duties include rounds on the walls and inside the different wings. Several of the guards are trusted prisoners allowed to move freely inside the walls. All the guards are taking bribes, busily making a tidy profit by supplying the prisoners with booze, food, and tobacco. In between their rounds, the guards spend time talking and playing cards in the guard rooms.

London's rapid population explosion has placed an undue strain on the prison. It is chock-full of prisoners, housing up to eight people in cells that are built for two. By the fall of 1892, there are 1100 inmates jailed in Sandburn. Cockroaches, fleas, and rats thrive in this press of bodies. Diphtheria and cholera epidemics are common. In the previous summer, the prison had a few cases of leprosy, but these were quickly carted off to a leper colony in Cornwall.

The prisoners are actually supposed to work in a nearby quarry, but since the summer of 1891 no one has been let out of their cells. The prison guards are continually patrolling the prison in order to quell any rebellion before it gets out of hand. Discipline is rapidly breaking down, creating a desperate situation.

Seymour Arrives

In the summer of 1892, everything changes when the new Governor, ***Anthony Seymour***, arrives. He moves his office to a more central location in the main building, and begins to clamp down on all routines. Prisoners are no longer allowed to talk to each other, nor are they allowed to receive packages from the outside. Beatings, isolation, and starvation become the standard punishments meted out for even the smallest infractions. Nightly inspections become the norm.

The Governor promotes the PCs to guard captains, each becoming responsible for one of the wings. Seymour instructs them in ways of controlling discipline effectively. Gradually, the new routines are tightened even more. Torture and faked executions are common. A complicated system of secret informers is instituted.

When the adventure begins, it is now December and Seymour has spent five months at Sandburn. At first, the PCs thought that the improved discipline was definite progress, perhaps even saving them from a hopeless situation. Now, they have a growing uncertainty, as a few prisoners have actually died as a result of Seymour's methods of corporal punishment. Despite this, they are still loyal to the Governor.

The Temple is Sanctified

At the beginning of December, the Governor approaches Richard Dorsleigh and asks him to clean out the bottommost isolation cell in the lower basement, where a prisoner has been sitting in the pitch dark since Seymour arrived.

"*I need the cell. Make sure it is cleaned out properly, sweep the floor, and scrub the walls. Leave the prisoner in place meanwhile. I believe there are some clamps in there, so feel free to chain him to the back wall. After that, I want you to come to my office. There is something I wish to discuss,*" he says.

The cell lies beneath death row, at the end of a long staircase and a corridor. In fact, this is a store room being used as an isolation cell. There is no light in there, and rather than a cot some straw has been thrown directly on the floor. The prisoner, a man in his 50s, has spent almost half a year in the cell. He's been driven insane by the isolation, mumbling unintelligible phrases. He does not resist being chained.

When Richard returns to the Governor's office, Seymour invites him to sit down, and offers him a cigar. He explains that he needs the isolation cell for some private experiments. If they turn out well, they may prove profitable for both him and Richard. However, he must be allowed to work in absolute privacy. He instructs Richard to make certain that no one on the staff will interrupt him.

"*Tell the superintendent that he will keep his people away from the lower basement. And tell him to send me ten half-pound candles. Tomorrow, I want a man sent to me at four in the morning to do something. Is this clear?*"

Before Richard leaves the room, Seymour tells him that he will also need help from him and the other PCs.

"*But we can talk about that later,*" he adds.

That night Seymour sanctifies the temple in the basement by sacrificing the insane prisoner and then spends the remaining hours in meditation. Later that morning, the guard who was sent for is instructed to bury the corpse in the common behind the prison, where all those killed by plague and maltreatment are interred. Rumors begin circulating among the guards and the prisoners.

The Goddess is Invoked

On the 22nd of December, three weeks later, ***Governor Seymour*** summons the PCs to his office. He explains that there is something important he needs to do, for which he requires their assistance. He is reluctant to reveal what they're supposed to help him with, but he does tell them that it will be carried out in the old isolation cell in the middle of the night. He asks them to get to the cell just before midnight, and sternly instructs them not to talk to anyone about it.

"*You will, of course, be paid for your work. No question about that. And there will be nothing illicit involved either, so you need not worry about that aspect,*" he says.

If they mention this to anybody – for example, ***Clive Wilson*** – they will receive only evasive replies. They are advised to follow Seymour's orders, as long as they are not asked to do anything illegal. Nobody wants to upset the Governor.

Seymour spends a couple of hours before midnight completing a protective circle and a triangle for the invocation on the floor of the temple. He is almost finished when the PCs arrive. He provides each of them with a black, oily chain to hold, and instructs them to wait by the wall while he finishes painting the signs with his own blood. The PCs are then ordered to stand around the triangle.

"*If anything shows up, I want you to throw your chains over it. That is the only thing you are required to do,*" the Governor says.

He lights the candles in a ring around the protective circle, and carefully steps into it. He picks up a black book and begins reading unintelligible words aloud The lights around the circle blow out, as a cold wind rushes through the room. Seymour continues to read, and after a few minutes the candles reignite by themselves, burning brightly.

The PCs hear a sudden thud, as a shape appears from nowhere and falls to the floor inside the triangle. At first, it appears to be a crouching animal, but when they look closer they realize it is an old woman dressed in rags.

"*Catch her!*" Seymour says.

The PCs notice how the chains seem to come alive in their hands. After the chains are thrown over the woman, they wind themselves around her body like metal snakes, binding her to the floor. She is held firmly down, and even if the PCs wished to free her, they soon realize the impossibility of such an attempt. The chains have merged with her body, welding her to the cold stone floor

Before she is fully entrapped, the woman manages to pull something free from her clothing. It is a deck of cards, which she drops on the floor. Seymour rushes forward and picks it up.

"That one is for me. You will not regret this, my friends. I can assure you of that. I will see to everything here. You can go to bed. Come to my office in the morning, after breakfast.

After confirming that ***the Goddess of the Forgotten*** is firmly secured, he leaves the cell, lock the door, and then retires to his office.

Inferno

Once back in his office, ***Seymour*** enters the inner room behind the main office and begins studying the deck of cards: the Tarotica. He removes the first card, the Demiurgos, and ritually binds it to himself, in order to use the deck. He then lays the cards out on a table in a pattern representing Sandburn and its inhabitants. , His task completed, he leaves the room and locks the door.

Before dawn everyone realizes that something unnatural has happened. The ground shakes and the temperature drops. The regular sunrise fails to come, the morning sky remains dark. Instead, a black sun rises above the walls. The prison has moved away from our reality and drifted closer to Inferno. From this point forward, only Seymour is able to leave the prison and enter London. Anyone else opening the gates will only gaze into a dark and misty landscape where every path leads back to Sandburn. There is no longer any way out.

That following morning Seymour calls the PCs to his office once again. They sense that he has changed, even though they cannot tell exactly how. He possesses an authority he did not have earlier. They cannot move against him or hurt him, finding it is physically impossible to attack him. The only way they can defy him is in refusing to obey his orders. However, if this happens, he simply promotes some of the lower ranked guards to captains and demotes the PCs, then he orders the insubordinate PCs to be flogged in the yard.

Seymour has put everyone in the prison under the control of the cards. They cannot hurt him as long as they remain at Sandburn, and he has made certain that nobody can escape. Now, he intends to strengthen his control over the prison and use it as a base from which to extend his power.

He orders all furniture to be ripped out and burned in the yard. All the lights are to be turned out, and they are to stop using the stoves. Only the office and the guard rooms are to remain lighted and heated. The prisoners' food rations are halved, and the guards' wages are doubled (unless they refuse to follow orders).

Except in the office and the guard rooms, the temperature inside the prison quickly drops to freezing levels. But in spite of the brutal cold and cruel starvation, no one really dies. Even the most sick and injured of the prisoners linger on perpetually, surviving despite the odds. Those who do succumb to the horrible conditions only rise again the following morning.

Death does not exist in Inferno

The first day after invoking the Goddess, ***Clive Wilson*** comes to see the PCs, expressing his worries. He wonders what has happened and wants to leave the prison. That afternoon, he is called to Seymour's office, who talks to him about the situation. After this encounter, the prison chaplain obeys every order blindly, questioning nothing.

For the first couple of days, the other guards and remaining staff constantly approach the PCs to find out what has happened. After a few days, they begin sliding into apathy, not caring about anything anymore.

On the third day, ***Superintendent Clarke*** enters Seymour's office with a pistol in hand with the purpose of killing him, but he is unable to fire his weapon. ***Seymour*** delivers Clarke to the PCs, ordering them to flog him until not a single piece of skin remains on his back, and then to lock him up in an isolation cell.

The prisoners try to talk to the PCs, and one of them, Harry Barnes, tries to convince the PCs to release them.

"You can't touch him, but we can get at him. Let us out and we'll take care of him," Barnes says.

However, if the PCs release the prisoners without first talking to the Goddess and stealing the Demiurgos card, the prison uprising results in a massacre. The rebellious prisoners are clubbed down and chained in the torture chamber, where they are punished for months. Seymour remains unscathed throughout the entire conflict.

Gradually, Seymour tightens all the harsh routines even further. The guards are ordered to flog anyone too sick to appear at inspections in the mornings, to execute insubordinate prisoners (who return to life the next day), and to punish the guards and the staff for the smallest breach of prison regulations.

The situation becomes steadily worse until Sandburn is drawn completely into Inferno. After a few weeks, razides appear and begin furnishing torture chambers in the lower isolation cells, and then induct themselves among the guards in their dorms. If the PCs wish to remain as prison guards in Inferno for all eternity they may do so, but the adventure will be a rather boring one to play.

The Advice of the Goddess

The PCs eventually realize that the only one who can tell them what to do is the Goddess imprisoned in Seymour's temple. The key to the cell is on the keychain located in the top drawer in Seymour's office. He has previously ordered the PCs (or the new captain of the guards) to place a guard outside the cell and not let anyone in.

The Governor remains inside his office more or less around the clock, except when he makes his rounds of inspection between 7–11 AM, and at 5–10 PM. This is when the PCs can get hold of the key. The guard is easily lured away or knocked out. The PCs may be doing this guard duty themselves, if they have remained in the Governor's confidence.

Inside the cell, the darkness is like a living thing and no light can disperse it. ***The Goddess of the Forgotten*** is still chained to the floor. No matter what tools they use, the PCs cannot get her free. She mutters and swears continually. If the PCs try to talk to her, she is at first rather distrustful, as she recognizes those who captured her. They may win her confidence by explaining that they are moving against Seymour, or if they tell her what has happened to the prison. If the PCs convince her that they are trustworthy, the Goddess tries to get the PCs to tell her everything they know about Seymour and the prison. When told of the current conditions, she realizes that Seymour has created a duplicate image of the prison using the Tarotica, and that he has taken control of everyone within its walls.

"*You must break his control. Otherwise, you will never get out,*" she says.

When the PCs say that they cannot attack him, she realizes that he must have bound himself to the Demiurgos, the most powerful of all the cards in the deck.

"*It controls all the others. As long as you are bound to the lower cards, you cannot harm him. You must break his connection with the card,*" she explains.

She cannot do anything as long as she is bound, but she can help the PCs eliminate the Demiurgos card, if they succeed in stealing it for her.

"*But, you can only do so if his power is undermined. The Demiurgos draws its strength from his power. If the prisoners and the guards turn against him, the card will be weakened. Only then you can break the bond between him and the card,*" she says.

"*Seymour will notice if the card disappears,*" she warns them. They will not have much time once they have touched the cards.

"You can confuse him by binding the card to someone who cannot use it. Someone totally without power. He will then lose his control and you are free to touch him. Find someone without power and ask him to let his blood flow over the card and care for it, as he would a child. Then, you may be able to get at this Seymour, but only if you have weakened his power first.

"*But do not take the entire deck. You will gain nothing from that. And he will notice that immediately.*"

The Goddess can tell the PCs more about the Tarotica and what has happened at Sandburn, but she remains distrustful and rather abrupt.

The Fall of Seymour

The best chance of stealing the cards and vanquishing Seymour is for the PCs to defy the Governor from the very beginning, and refuse to follow his orders after being thrown into Inferno. Then, they can get at the Tarotica directly.

If they have not already done so, they can entice the prisoners into rebelling, simply by unlocking the cell doors early in the morning or late at night. ***The prisoners*** will then rush out and attack ***the guards***. If the PCs have helped in getting the rebellion going, they will fare much better than the other guards, who are torn to shreds. They may also stir up their fellow guards and staff against Seymour. While no one can openly oppose him, they can refuse to work and openly disobey orders.

If they do anything that overtly undermines respect for the Governor, they may touch the Tarotica. As long as his authority remains intact, they cannot get at him or the cards.

The Tarotica is laid out in a complicated pattern on a table in the room beyond the Governor's office. The key to the inner room is on the bunch of keys in the top drawer of Seymour's desk.

The Demiurgos card is in the middle of the layout. The card has darkened and the contours have become more defined since Seymour acquired the deck. The other cards are bound to this middle card by some invisible force. As long as Seymour's authority remains unopposed, it is physically impossible to take or even move any of the cards. The cards might as well be welded to the table.

Only when the Governor's authority has been questioned can the PCs take the Demiurgos card from the table. The rest of the cards remain spread around the table in disarray after the middle card is removed.

Seymour immediately realizes that something has happened after the cards are disturbed. His intricately constructed control over the prison shatters, and a full-scale riot breaks out. All the doors in the prison are violently thrown open. The prisoners stream out of their cells and attack and chase

the guards.

The building descends into total chaos. In spite of this, however, no one is able to physically harm Seymour. He heads straight to his office in order to reclaim the deck and find the lost card.

The PCs will have very little time in which to act. They must locate someone who can be bound to the Demiurgos card in order to get at Seymour. If they have allied themselves with Barnes and the prisoners, they can move freely and unharmed throughout the chaotic prison. Otherwise, they risk being ripped apart whenever they encounter any of the prisoners.

There are a number of people in the prison able to neutralize the card: Superintendent Clarke who has lost everything and is lying close to death in an isolation cell, the most humble member of the kitchen/civilian staff, or just about any of the prisoners trapped on death row. Anyone who is apparently devoid of power will be able to break Seymour's control, if but a few drops of their blood fall on the Demiurgos card and they then take it in hand.

Seymour notices when he loses control. He screams like an animal and invokes all the forces of Inferno to his aid. Even so, the prisoners fall on him and literally tear him apart.

THE END

Even if the PCs survive ***the prisoners***' wrath, they cannot escape their own feelings of guilt from taking part in the events. They are, in fact, in Hell. At the same moment Seymour dies, the walls surrounding them melt away, revealing four Nepharites which have come to drag them off to eternal punishment. This ends the Prologue.

THE PLAYER CHARACTERS

The ***player characters*** for the prologue are in the appendix. All of them are guard captains who live in the prison barracks. They have no families, other than their parents and blood relatives. They are each responsible for one of the three wings, assisted by ten subordinate guards. They are only responsible to the Governor.

CHAPTER 1

A CRY FOR HELP

It was still dark when Mary woke up. A key rattled in her cell door.

"Breakfast in ten minutes, time to get up." The attendant continued on to the next door.

She jumped up and pulled on her clothes. The voice from her dream had told her to hurry. She opened the door a crack, and then sneaked out into the corridor.

The abandoned sections of the hospital were on the other side of the dining hall, beyond the kitchen. That was the direction the dream had called her from. The door behind the kitchen was open, but not by much. The dust lay thick on the floor as she searched along the corridors to the narrow, wooden door at the end of a long staircase. She tested the handle. It was unlocked.

She stepped into the old office and went to the desk. The bunch of keys lay in the top drawer, just like they had in her dream. The smallest of the keys fit the door across the room. She carefully opened the door and looked inside. The morning light filtered in through a narrow, barred window. The cards were scattered on a rickety table in the middle of the room. She went up to it and gathered all the cards together. They burned her palms. When she laid them out on the table, they seemed to merge with its wooden surface.

First, she formed the cards with the roses into a ring, and then laid the other cards out in a pattern surrounding them. When the last card was laid on the table, a figure formed in front of her. It was a creature wrapped in delicate veils. An angel. He stretched out a hand and pulled her towards him.

Mary Langsbury, 26 years old, is committed to the Sandburn psychiatric hospital in southern London. The hospital is housed in the former prison of Sandburn. In a forgotten room in the deepest basement, the Goddess of the Forgotten has been imprisoned for a hundred years. In another forgotten part of the building, the Tarotica's cards are spread out on a table. They remain just as they did when Anthony Seymour was dragged down into Inferno.

The Tarotica's power has ensured that sections of the old prison have remained abandoned and untouched throughout all these many years. People do not consciously notice these forgotten areas. They never go there and never ask why they are empty.

In Inferno, Seymour has been punished over the last hundred years; transformed into a Black Lictor, as a result of his torture. However, he remains bound to the Tarotica and to Sandburn. He continues to control the cards, so long as the Goddess of the Forgotten remains imprisoned. After a hundred years have passed, he is able to return.

The Goddess, who has the ability to see into the future, knows that Seymour may return from Inferno at any moment to retake his position at Sandburn and regain full control of the cards. Time is running out, and she has been lying helplessly in her prison cell far too long.

She finally establishes a link with the Tarotica. She decides to relinquish her own power over the cards in order to stop Seymour. She plans to create a new card that will take the deck beyond his control. However, the new card cannot be created in the same fashion as the others, out of her own pain and flesh. It must be created by a Child of Magic, a human being with a newborn soul.

The gaze of the Goddess falls on Mary Langsbury. The young woman is a dreamer with magical intuition. Because of this, she may be able to create the Child of Magic. Through dreams the Goddess contacts Mary and leads her to the forgotten room behind the old office where the cards are still lying. Mary lays out the cards in the pattern she remembers from her dreams, summoning a creature of Passion in the form of an angel. With his aid, she becomes pregnant with a Child of Magic.

A new soul is not created by itself, however. The Goddess instructs Mary to get in touch with the free madmen outside the hospital, so that she may provide the Child a soul. But Mary does not want to leave the hospital. Her paranoid schizophrenia makes her believe that she cannot survive in the outside world. Instead, she escapes and hides in the oldest sections of the building.

To get the assistance she needs, Mary contacts the only souls the Tarotica recognizes in the vicinity: the four prison guards who helped imprison the Goddess a hundred years earlier. They have returned, reborn into new bodies.

Not long after this, Anthony Seymour escapes Inferno in order to reclaim the cards.

The Dreams are Calling

When Chapter One begins, the PCs are in London. Preferably they live in London, along with established friends and acquaintances. If they do not live there, then they need to be in London for some reason – visiting family, a business trip, etc. The adventure works best if the story interrupts their everyday lives. It is not important that they know each other before the adventure begins. The fact that they all receive the same visions and are called to visit the mental hospital by an unknown girl should be enough to get them together.

During Thursday night of December 17th, 1992, the PCs have the same vivid dream of a young woman sitting in the corner in a dusty room with bookshelves along the walls and a table in the middle. She lays out cards in different patterns in front of her, explaining to the PCs that she and her child are in grave danger. They must help her.

"*It is your fault. You must right all the wrongs now,*" she says over and over again.

They see that her white jacket is marked with the words 'Sandburn Asylum.' The dream forces them to leave the room and walk through an old, dusty office before reaching a long, stone stairway. They descend the stairs, passing through a doorway and a weed-choked park to a high wall. There are imposing gates in the wall, but the gates are wide open, and when the player characters step through, they wake up.

While they go about their normal lives in the city, the PCs are frequently approached by beggars and the homeless. These outcasts mutter something about helping the poor little girl in the hospital, how they must get there before it's too late, and that they must put everything right. (These messages come from the Goddess, who can communicate through the people of her own domain.)

Each following night, they experience the same dream again, and each day the beggars return. The whole thing continues and becomes steadily worse until the PCs finally react. If they ignore the calls for more than three days, the PCs start receiving visions even when they're awake and have problems falling asleep. The dreams become increasingly real and violent until they wake up with physical gashes and bruises where Mary has grabbed them. Sooner or later they'll be forced to locate the hospital.

Sandburn in 1992

Sandburn Asylum is housed in the old prison, still surrounded by the high walls. The walls have been topped with detection wires and the gates, always closed, are under constant surveillance. There is a guard house on the inside, but during the day all visitors are allowed in without questions. During nighttime, the guards demand identification of all visitors, as well as an explanation for the visit.

The area inside the walls has been transformed into a park, but the upkeep has been sorely neglected. Once appealing, it has devolved into a marshy forest with gnarly trees and thorn bushes.

Only the hospital and the New Prison are used as a mental hospital. The Old Gaol, the Old North Wing, and the workshops are closed and forgotten. Mary is hiding in the Governor's office in the Old Gaol. The park surrounding these abandoned sections has become a jungle. The old Governor's Home has been turned over to the staff. The cemetery is overgrown and the chapel lies in ruins. The central guard house is used as a security center. The old exercise yard is still used to provide troublesome patients with some fresh air.

Patients are housed in the Old Hospital and in the cells of the New Prison. The cells have not been modified that much. They have had the old doors replaced with shutter-equipped steel doors instead of the old barred doors, and a few cells have been padded.

The administration is housed on the first floor in the middle section of the New Prison. The reception is on the ground floor. The building's exterior is crumbling from neglect. The main entrance leads directly to a shabby reception, where a guard and a receptionist are waiting.

Bureaucracy

Upon their arrival, the receptionist asks the PCs who they are and what they want. She says that visits are only allowed on weekdays between 10 AM and noon, and between 6 and 7 PM. They must state who they want to visit, and all visits must be limited to the visitor's room. If they are not related to the patient, they must have permission from the relatives. All relatives are recorded on lists, and if the PCs have any objections, they will need to speak with the Director, Dr. Lockley.

Sandburn's administration has molded itself after the Tarotica and is run by a bureaucracy the PCs may have some real difficulties dealing with. They are informed that they are not on the list of approved visitors, that unplanned visits are not allowed, that they must have the permission of the closest relatives, and that the names of the patients are not divulged.

Director Lockley is a very busy man. If the PCs are important people in society, he just may be able to see them. If they are foreigners, private investigators, journalists, or someone without direct authority, they are directed to Mrs. Galloway, his secretary, who absolutely refuses to help them.

Professors, managing directors, police officers, and other socially-elevated people will be allowed to meet the Director after a few days. The PCs are led into his antiquated office on the first floor of the New Prison building. The Director wears a black suit. He is short, with a paunch, and thinning, salt-and-pepper hair.

He offers the PCs cigars and listens politely while they explain their business. When he realizes that they want to see Mary Langsbury, Lockley becomes outwardly worried. She disappeared from her ward a few days ago. The staff have been looking all over for her. The PCs' sudden arrival irritates him.

He informs them that, unfortunately, they cannot be allowed to see anybody unless they're registered as relatives. The only thing that can make him change his mind is if the PCs are able to pressure him by going to some higher authority, such as London's Criminal Investigation Department or the Justice Department. He will then admit that the patient has just escaped, but he expects that she will return soon enough.

If the PCs ask about the closed sections of the prison, the Director tries desperately to change the subject. It becomes obvious that he does not want to talk about them.

Another way of finding out what has happened is by bribing the receptionist, one of the guards, or the attendants. For £50 (pounds) or more, anyone at the hospital will happily inform the PCs that Mary Langsbury recently disappeared, and that the staff have been searching for her, albeit unsuccessfully. They may also be told that she was pregnant at the time of her disappearance. Under no conditions will the PCs be able to convince the hospital staff to enter the abandoned sections in search of Mary. They argue that she cannot be in there, that they have other things to do, or that the PCs are only there in order cause trouble. They use the most absurd excuses in order to avoid entering the abandoned sections.

Mary's Hiding Place

The PCs can easily find the old offices on the Old Gaol's first floor and ***Mary's*** hiding place by following the route they walked during their dreams. The easiest time to get there is during the day, while they can enter the gate without arousing any suspicions. The park is so overgrown that they can get to the gates of the Old Gaol without being seen. Furthermore, there are no modern alarms anywhere in the Old Gaol. Only the rusted remains of the original, 19th-century lock hold the gates together. A well-placed kick is enough to break it open.

Thick layers of dust coat everything in the closed sections. Nothing has been touched for a hundred years. All the wood is rotten, and the doors hang askew in the doorways. Mary has disturbed the dust and left clear footprints on the stairs up to the Governor's office.

Mary is sitting on the floor in the inner study, continually laying out the cards out in different configurations. She is pale and feverish from the cold nights and the lack of food over several days. When the PCs arrive she brightens considerably.

"It said you would come. It knows you. Now, it wants to stay with you," she says. She gathers the cards together and shoves them in the hands of one of the PCs.

"*Can you help me get out of here? It so cold and I haven't eaten for several days. If I go back, they will probably take my child away and kill it. They can't do that. You won't let them do that, will you?*"

The PCs can, if they show a little patience, learn that she is pregnant after meeting an angel, and that she summoned the angel through the cards. She knows that the Child is important. The cards have told her so. She also knows that the Child does not have a soul.

"*It is going to receive a new soul. Not any old and used soul. That is why I asked you to come, so that you can help me. I have difficulties taking care of myself out there. There are so many voices. I cannot keep track of things,*" she says.

She explains that the voices have told her to search for the wise men on the Isle of Dogs. They know where souls come from.

"*I told it I cannot find anything out there. I think it became angry, and now I can't read its cards. It told me to ask you to come here, but it hasn't said anything since. It needs you. We must leave before the Devil arrives. He's on his way,*" she says.

Mary has no clear understanding of the Goddess of the Forgotten, who has been talking to her through the Tarotica. She believes that the cards themselves are talking to her. She desperately tries to convince the PCs to take her out of the hospital, where her child will not be harmed.

The Governor's Office

The PCs can take their time looking around inside the closed sections of the hospital. It largely appears as it did a hundred years ago, but far more deteriorated. They may find a few interesting items in the Governor's office, which has managed to stay much drier than the rest of the building.

On the desk is a yellowed and somewhat stained photograph showing the entire prison staff at Sandburn in 1892. The picture is dated manually in one corner. They get an uneasy feeling of déja-vu when they see Seymour and the others in the picture. If the PCs examine it more closely, they will discover that some of the staff look uncannily like the PCs themselves.

In a desk drawer, they find a bundle of letters tied together with string. These are letters from Seymour's friend Rupert Faraday, a conjurer who followed the Governor's search for the Tarotica from the sidelines, but backed out when things started to close in on Inferno. In the letters, Faraday warns that the Tarotica may manipulate and transform Seymour if he is forced to create a purgatory around himself in order to summon it.

There is another picture on the desk, this one showing Seymour and Faraday, taken somewhere in Scotland on a moor. It is signed by both men. There is something familiar about Faraday that the PCs cannot quite place. (He still lives in London, now a Nosferatu. They may have seen his picture in the local newspapers. Faraday's looks have not changed, even after 100 years.)

The Goddess of the Forgotten

The Goddess remains imprisoned in the basement beneath the Old Gaol. No one has entered her cell for a hundred years. If the PCs use the memories (or visions, as they perceive them) from their previous lives, they may seek her out.

The basement beneath the Old Gaol remains very close to Inferno. It is colder here than in the rest of the building. The stone walls are held together by grotesquely-shaped iron rivets. Water runs down the walls and the last steps on the stairway are icy. It is difficult to illuminate the oppressive darkness.

Before Seymour returns from Inferno (up to 24 hours after the PCs' initial meeting with Mary), the door to the prison remains locked. The key is in the drawer in the old office. After Seymour's return, he carries the key himself.

The PCs need to deal with the door's lock to gain entry to the cell. Once inside, they discover a near-absolute darkness that no amount of light can dispel for more than a couple of feet. The Goddess is fettered in the middle of the room.

She accuses them of imprisoning her and says that they must help her get free. They cannot free her by physical means, however. Seymour will soon return, she explains.

"*Sooner or later he will gather you to him. They always seek out their old victims. Time is short. I was asleep too long. Now something must be done,*" says the Goddess.

She has decided to neutralize the Tarotica in order to free herself. She says that only a newborn human soul, a Child of Magic, can create the 68th card, which symbolizes Man.

"*A Child of Magic can create the final card and take control of the Tarotica. Then I can be free.*"

Unfortunately, she does not know how the new soul can be created, but the wise fools hold the key to its creation. They can explain how such a thing can be done. She tried to persuade Mary to seek them out, but the woman refuses to leave the hospital alone. She knows that they are on the Isle of Dogs, as the cards have told her so.

"*You have a debt to repay. Make sure that the Child is born and your debt to me shall be redeemed. Only then will your souls have no more ties to the cards.*"

If the PCs seek her out after Seymour's return, the Goddess becomes even more anxious for them to do something. She explains that Seymour will try to either kill the Child or try to control it by creating a soul for it in Inferno or in some other way.

If they manage to contact her, the Goddess can advise the PCs throughout the adventure. Seymour will have no guards stationed in the lower part of the basement. He does not want to reveal to anyone that he is keeping a prisoner there.

If the PCs refuse to use the "memories" from the Prologue, the GM may have the Goddess use street beggars to instruct them to search in the basement of the hospital.

The Return of Seymour

Anthony Seymour returns to our reality 24 hours after the PCs' initial meeting with Mary Langsbury, where they receive the Tarotica from her. He has spent an eternity of suffering in Inferno. By his perception, his punishment has been eternal, even though chronologically his time spent away from the world of man has been limited to a hundred years. The agonizing eternity in Inferno has transformed him into a different sort of tormentor, a Black Lictor. However, he still craves power over the Tarotica and all the people it can bind.

Seymour enters our reality where he disappeared, in the old parts of Sandburn. After entering his office, he discovers that the cards are gone, and then proceeds down to the Goddess of the Forgotten in the basement. Using his newfound knowledge of pain and terror, he viciously retrieves everything he wants to know from her. He is told that the PCs have the cards, that Mary is carrying the embryo of a Child of magic, and that the Goddess is planning to free herself by using the Child to create the 68th card.

Seymour realizes that he can use the situation to his own advantage. At first, he wishes to destroy the Child in order to remove its threat towards the Tarotica. After contemplating, he recognizes the Child of Magic's potential for making the cards even more powerful. Anyone who controls the Child will also control the Tarotica, and thereby control all of the Illusion. Seymour decides to seek out Mary.

But first, he must regain control over Sandburn. When Director Lockley arrives at his office the next morning, Seymour is there waiting for him. He possesses the Director's body and casts the man's soul into Inferno. For the next few days, he maintains Lockley's normal form, but it gradually changes and twists, until finally shaping itself to Seymour's infernal visage. The staff notice that 'Lockley' is changing, but they do not say anything where he can hear.

He orders that the old Governor's quarters be cleared out, so that he can move in. Slowly, he recreates the old Sandburn around himself.

Mary's Death

Initially, Seymour plans to kill the Child of Magic that Mary is currently carrying. He does not want to risk allowing the Tarotica to slip beyond his control. But after considering the situation further, he realizes that he wants control of the Child, instead. He decides to steal the fetus for himself and create a Child of Magic in Inferno.

After he has returned to Sandburn, he will eventually find Mary, regardless of where she might be. If the PCs refused to take her with them, Mary remains at the hospital, in which case, Seymour locates her the very same night.

When Seymour finds Mary, he cuts the fetus from her womb and places it inside a glass container, where it cannot be damaged. He leaves Mary to bleed to death on the floor. She dies from the injuries, regardless of what the PCs do. She cannot be saved; the only thing the PCs can do is stave off death for a while. Meanwhile, Seymour takes the fetus to the realm of the dead and leaves it there in safe hands.

An Evil Promise

If the PCs are in Mary's company when Seymour arrives to steal the magical fetus, he uses the occasion to remove the Tarotica from the PCs' possession as well. If they are somewhere else, he waits one more night before seeking them out. They may attempt to stop him, but eventually he succeeds in stealing the cards. If they have hidden them, he forces them to tell him where they are.

When he sees the PCs, ***Seymour*** immediately recognizes them as his old subordinates. His first impulse is to kill and punish them for their betrayal, but he realizes that they will only be reborn again. They have served their time in Inferno. He is satisfied with finding out all they know about the Tarotica, the Child of Magic, and the Goddess of the Forgotten.

"You have done well. Maybe I will forgive you your earlier betrayal, but now I'm in charge again. When the Child is born, there will be great changes. You will all be surprised. Maybe I will allow you to have your old posts as guard captains back. But, if so, you must take care. Let me know if you hear anything I might find useful," he says.

Seymour's Plans

Anthony Seymour has returned to take his place at Sandburn, and hopefully to expand his power base as much as possible. After he realizes that he can control the Child of Magic and bend it to his own purposes, he begins to work out a grand plan.

He takes the Child back to Sandburn, but he does not want to leave it there. He brings it down to the realm of the dead, where no one can get at it, but he cannot do this alone. As Seymour is only capable of bringing souls (of which the Child lacks) into Inferno , he forces a young patient, Timothy, to carry the Child for him.

At first, he attempts to implant the Child in a creature of Inferno in order for it to be born in Hell, but the creature dies. Seymour does not know that the only people able to give birth to the Child are its two parents, who were bound to it through the process of conception. When he does not immediately unlock a solution, he leaves the fetus in its glass container.

As soon as he has hidden the Child, Seymour begins investigating how a new immortal soul is created and then twisted. The first attempt at forcing the information from the madmen fails to produce anything more than terrified gibberish. Instead, he decides to allow Inferno's corruptive nature to slowly influence the Child in the hope that a dark soul will emerge, one that he can control.

He also wants to find out if the Child can be born in some way. After some investigation, he discovers that the child's father also has the potential of nurturing the fetus. He decides to entice Chris Walden, the Passion conjurer who is the father, into his service, and then bring him to Inferno in order to implant the Child within him. However, Walden quickly realizes that he is in danger and goes into hiding.

Terror at Sandburn

Seymour begins a reign of terror at Sandburn. He reopens the abandoned sections and admits more patients. Hundred-year-old methods of treatment are mixed with electrotherapy and torture. The staff is bound to the Director, in much the same way the guards were bound to him a century earlier. Seymour improves his contacts with his superiors, and makes sure he is free to do what he wants.

Ten new guards (***Seymour's Guards***) arrive two days after Seymour's initial takeover. During nighttime, there are two guards in the guard center, and two guards patrolling the grounds outside. During daytime, there is one guard stationed at the main gate, and one in the guard center. They inspect all identification of anyone entering. If the PCs do not have any identification (which is quite common in Great Britain in 1992), they will be denied entrance into the facility. It is possible to use their driver's licenses. The guard also inquires about the visitors' reasons for coming to Sandburn. New electronic alarms are installed in the reopened sections a week after Seymour's arrival.

If the PCs wait outside the gates, they can talk to the employees as they come and go. The attendants are confused and frightened. They suspect that something has happened to Lockley, but they do not know what. They object to the archaic treatment methods that have been reintroduced, but few of them are brave enough to protest openly. They know that one attendant who did complain was found dead a day afterwards, apparently having suffered a heart attack. Everyone is frightened. A few have quit, but as it's difficult to find another job, most of the staff are reluctant to do so. Secretly reporting it to the authorities has not produced any results.

The PCs are approached by a young woman working in the hospital, after she spots them while they are waiting outside the walls. She asks them if they knew Mary Langsbury.

"*I have a boy in ward seven, Timothy. He kept asking about Mary's friends. He believes that you will come and rescue him. He has become so frightened lately. He begged me to tell you that the Child is in the realm of the dead. I hope that means something to you. Are you relatives of his? Have you come to visit him?*" She doesn't know anything else, and doesn't want to be seen talking with the PCs for too long.

If they're noticed waiting outside the walls, the guards will eventually come out and chase them off.

Timothy

Timothy Garland is twelve years old. He was admitted six months ago after a nervous breakdown. His parents are alcoholics and live in Islington. He has lived on the street for the past two years, but is not actually suffering from any mental illnesses.

Seymour employed Timothy to bring the magical fetus down to the realm of the dead, in order to hide it. The boy was sane enough to be reliable. In addition, the lictor calculated that the visit to Inferno would be traumatic enough to shatter the boy's sanity. He was right. Timothy has not been able to talk coherently since the horrific experience.

Seymour bragged to Timothy how he cut the fetus out of Mary Langsbury's body after she fled. He warned the boy that something similar would happen to him if he dared to do the same. Since then Timothy has been both hoping and fearing that the PCs will show up to save him.

He instinctively knows when the PCs enter the hospital, and goes to contact them. He whispers that he knows things he can tell them, but only if they help him get out.

"*But then you gotta hide me, so he can't cut me up,*" he says.

If the PCs decide not to investigate the hospital any further, Timothy eventually escapes on his own and comes to find them.

Timothy is in shock and stuttering badly. He can only tell them a small bit at a time, and has to make an effort with each sentence.

"*He had it in a glass jar. The Child. And it lived. I had to hold it. First, it was disgusting. But then, when we got to the other side, it felt good to have it with me. It was worse coming back alone.*"

Gradually, they get the full story of how Seymour called the boy to his office and gave him the fetus. The room glided like an elevator down to Hell. It grew colder and colder until ice covered the walls around them. Then, the walls turned into cage bars and behind them there were people being tortured and and reaching through the bars. Seymour's human shape began to change and fade, hinting at something monstrous beneath.

When the elevator finally stopped, it was dark and ice cold. Only the fetus in the glass jar felt warm. Seymour put a chain around Timothy's neck and pulled him along for what seemed like an eternity, through snow and mud, across bones and rotting flesh. Screams and pleading came from every direction, while bloodied hands grabbed him and tore his clothes.

Finally, they reached a crypt where mummified centenarians garbed in rags crouched against the walls. Timothy recognized one of the ragged people. It was his grandfather, who had died a few months ago. He tried to run up to him, but Seymour yanked on the chain to stop him. He lifted the lid of a sarcophagus and told the boy to put the fetus in there. When the lid was replaced, Seymour led the boy back through the darkness to the office. Upon their return, Seymour looked like Director Lockley once more, but Timothy's clothes were torn to shreds, his bare feet were frostbitten, and his entire body was covered in scratches and caked blood. Seymour slapped him and ordered him to go get washed up.

"*I think I know where it was,*" Timothy explains. "*All those dead people. They looked like the ones living under Waterloo Bridge. I think one of them was my grandfather. He died last year. He lived under that bridge. I don't know how he died. I tried to talk to him, but the Doctor wouldn't let me get close enough to do it.*"

Seymour Strikes Back

If the PCs openly return to the hospital, they are taken straight to the Director's office. ***Seymour*** reveals his true form, and warns them not to interfere with him again.

"I told you not to get in my way. Now, you can choose between two paths. Either you come and serve me voluntarily, or I will have you all committed and make you my patients. You don't want that, now do you?"

If the PCs do not visit the hospital openly, but still snoop around in a way that word reaches Seymour, he eventually finds them and delivers the same ultimatum. If they refuse to work for him, he issues a certificate of compulsory institutional care three days later. The police will then take the PCs to Sandburn for closed psychiatric care, as they are judged to be dangerous to themselves and to the general public.

If events reach this point, the GM should play out their escape from the hospital. They can accomplish this without encountering any great difficulty. Because they have not freely given themselves over to Seymour, he cannot gain total control over them. Of course, they may use this opportunity to try to kill him. If they kill Lockley's body, Seymour returns within 24 hours, possessing someone else in power. Seymour is never without the Tarotica. They must kill him in order to get at it. If the PCs steal the cards, Seymour loses control over Sandburn. He drops all his current projects and concentrates on retrieving the cards at all costs.

Seymour's servants will continue chasing the PCs throughout the adventure. The hunt intensifies once the PCs have taken possession of the Child in Chapter Three. Seymour uses the guards that he hired for Sandburn Asylum, in addition to a number of other truly unscrupulous NPCs. The GM should use Seymour's servants to constantly remind the PCs that they are in grave danger. Later into the plotline, this pressure becomes even more intense, until they are practically under siege.

The Servants of the Goddess

Throughout the adventure, the Goddess of the Forgotten keeps in touch with the PCs through her minions: beggars, bag ladies and other outcasts. They approach the PCs, mumbling the messages from the Goddess. She notices how Seymour is taking control of those parts of London which the cards have already influenced. The GM may use her servants to provide the PCs with information when they are sidetracked.

The GM can also put some of the PCs' relatives and acquaintances among the madmen, the beggars, and the homeless of the various Chapters. This is an easy way of turning the story into something a little more personal.

Rupert Faraday

Five days following Seymour's return, as Sandburn begins deforming and drifting closer to Inferno again, Rupert Faraday reacts. Seymour's old friend, Faraday has lived as a Nosferatu in London for the past one hundred years. He is one of "the idle rich," and occasionally shows up in the gossip columns of the local tabloids. In addition, he has developed into a competent conjurer in the lore of Passion.

Through word of mouth, he realizes that Seymour has returned. He hears from a friend in the Ministry of Justice that the staff of Sandburn has begun sending in several incomprehensible reports, obviously accusing the Director of mismanagement. Thus far, he has handled the matter internally, without taking any action. As this is probably only a relations problem, the matter is something the union will have to deal with.

Faraday visits Sandburn for a chat with Seymour. He is frightened when he realizes that his friend has been transformed into a creature of Inferno. He leaves without directly confronting Seymour. Instead, he writes a long article for *The Times* , seemingly about the bad conditions prevalent in mental institutions in general, but with most of the criticism directed toward Sandburn. He concludes the article by demanding a public investigation of conditions at the hospital.

Furious, Seymour calls his friend and threatens to kill him if he does not retract his statements. Faraday replies that it really would appear suspicious if he were to die right now. Seymour hangs up, enraged.

The PCs see the article in *The Times*. If they searched Seymour's office and found the letters from Faraday, they probably become even more interested. They can find Faraday's address by calling the inquiry. He lives in a fashionable house on Mount Street in Mayfair. If they call or visit Faraday during daytime, the butler instructs them to return around nine in the evening.

The PCs are shown into a drawing room furnished exclusively with ornate antiques, where a muscular, pale 35-year-old man is waiting. He wears a black suit, a smoking-jacket, and black gloves.

They recognize him from the picture on Seymour's desk. ***Faraday*** introduces himself and shakes their hands. He appears worried and asks what they want and what they know about Seymour.

After he finds out exactly how deeply involved they are, he tells the PCs that he is an old friend of Seymour. They were both members of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, an occult society, from the very beginning in 1877. It was here that they first heard about the Tarotica. All they knew at the time was that it was an object reflecting the structures of authority and thereby had the power to control them.

"*We searched for it together at first,*" he says. "*But then Anthony discovered that he had to create a hell on Earth in order to get hold of it. I pulled out at that moment. I've since created my own immortality,*" Rupert says.

He is troubled by the events taking shape at Sandburn. If the PCs tell him about the Child of Magic and the 68th card, he becomes increasingly agitated.

"*A newborn soul. No one has ever heard of any such thing. I have been dabbling with the mysteries of creation for a long time, and even I have no idea how to do such a thing. God knows what he will be able to do with this creature under his control.*"

Faraday only knows that such a ritual must be performed near a place called Achlys, which exists beyond both time and space.

"*I do not know how to get there. The madmen you mentioned may know. They are trying teachers, but they know much about that which is beyond. Remember to paint a third eye on your foreheads when you go to meet them. Only then will they let you in.*"

After the soul has been created, it must be bound to the Child. Faraday says that he believes the Child must be present when the soul is created, as it is shaped from the Child itself.

"*If it's formed out of Achlys, you must carry the Child with you. It likely must be born under special circumstances, as well. I may have some literature touching upon the issue. I'll see if I can discuss it with someone who knows more about this. Can you try getting more information from this Goddess of yours?*"

Faraday cannot help them if they say that Seymour has hidden the Child in Inferno. "*I am no conjurer of Death, but there are many roads leading to the realm of the dead, I know that much. Each place has its own gates into death. The boy went there. Ask him.*"

Faraday promises to look into the events at Sandburn, and will contact them if anything develops. The PCs should realize that he is in a position to help them, considering the fact that few people could get an article published in *The Times* with a few hours' notice.

Faraday can aid the PCs through his contacts with the authorities. Also, he is in a position to invalidate Seymour's certificate of compulsory institutional care, have the PCs released from jail, and get hold of classified information. But these actions are nothing he suggests voluntarily, or would even think of. He will be quite willing to help, but only if the PCs ask directly.

CHAPTER 2

THE WAY OF THE FOOLS

"DO NOT STEP ON THE BLACK TILES, ONLY THE WHITE!"

Waya danced away across the chequered floor. Along the hallway's walls, a hundred eyes were riveted on them as the group carefully followed her over the white tiles toward the stairs. When they had descended a few steps, the lights went out and they were forced to feel their way forward. Voices whispered out of the darkness:

"Left hand. Follow the wall with your left hand. Left foot first. You have lost your glasses and will never find them again. Look with your left eye. Left eye."

With the right eye shut, the darkness gave way to a washed-out, hazy light. They came to the end of the long corridor. The walls and the floor were made of rough concrete. Waya waited at the foot of the staircase.

"We cannot walk further. This is where the path ends. Go to the wall and wait until it talks. It provides memories."

Before they could ask what she meant, she danced back up the stairs and disappeared. The corridor bent this way and that several times before ending up as a smooth, greyish-white wall. No doors led anywhere. They sat down and waited.

The PCs have lost both the Tarotica and the magic fetus. Mary Langsbury is probably dead. Seymour threatens to turn them into his slaves. If they want to know more about what is happening, they have two current leads: the madmen of Isle of Dogs and the homeless living under Waterloo Bridge. Where they go first will not interfere with the adventure's progression. This Chapter details the realm of the fools on the Isle of Dogs in the Docklands.

THE ISLE OF DOGS

The Isle of Dogs is a peninsula created by a large bend in the River Thames. It formerly contained the London shipyards with their huge docks. In later years, the entire peninsula became known as the Docklands: a huge gentrification project with offices and stores. The recession has made it difficult to lease office and retail spaces, so large parts of the new complexes remain empty.

The Docklands' southern sections border on older developments with rather worn row houses. Several warehouses and industrial buildings have remained empty since their initial construction. The homeless and mentally ill have moved in here. The fools hold court in an empty machine hall at South Section Dock.

If the PCs arrive at the Docklands during daytime, they will not notice anything unusual. The only people they see are the office workers employed by the few companies that have moved here. There are no signs of the fools and the homeless, other than the occasional trash collector and a few drunks.

During nighttime, however, the fools take over the area, but without being seen. The place still appears deserted, but furtive shadows steal along the quays and are dimly seen behind the dark glass windows.

THE GUARDIANS

The madmen (***The Fools***) closely guard their domain. Those who know what to look for can spot the guardians crouching against the building walls and in the alleyways to the deserted parts of Docklands. If the PCs arrive at night, they soon realize that someone is following them.

As they get closer to the machine hall where the madmen gather, they are surrounded by shapes dressed in rags and mumbling incomprehensibly, pulling at their clothes and hindering them from proceeding further. If the PCs try to force their way forward, the madmen follow them. More and more join the throng until they are enough to overpower the PCs and throw them into the Thames's brackish waters.

In order to get past these guards, the PCs must either behave like madmen themselves or convince them that they have important business. If they dress in rags and mumble incomprehensibly, they may walk straight into the Court of the Fools without any interference. If they paint an eye on their foreheads, as Faraday suggested, they get some shirty looks, but are left unbothered.

Convincing the guardians that the PCs have an important mission is more difficult. If they have the Tarotica or are accompanied by Mary Langsbury, the madmen will let them pass. They can sense that there is something important in the making. Timothy can also take the PCs past the guards.

Otherwise, they must explain that they want to know something about a Child of Magic. If they manage to explain this to the confused, suspicious guards, they are allowed to pass.

THE COURT OF THE FOOLS

At night, the fools hold court in an empty machine hall that was built by Western Development Plc., but never occupied. During daytime they move to the underground sections of the Docklands.

The private security companies hired to police the area have grown tired of removing all the boxes and blankets filling the building. They leave the madmen in peace, so long as the warehouse is otherwise unoccupied. The building consists of three large halls with concrete floors and rows of columns. The furnishings are a maze of boxes, blankets, newspapers, and bits of tin and plywood. It is perpetually dark inside. An occasional candle or oil lamp offers some weak light. Putrid skulls and pieces of cloth and skin are suspended from the columns. At night, there are upwards of five hundred people in the halls. In daytime, they're eerily abandoned.

When the madmen realize that the PCs are outsiders, they are initially surrounded by suspicious and curious madmen touching them and speaking incoherently. After a while, a small boy covered with half-healed wounds and bruises and dressed in a dirty coat, approaches them. He takes one of them by the hand and tells them to come. He persists until they follow him.

The boy leads them in complicated circles, back and forth through the halls. Occasionally, he touches a rotting skull, lights or douses a candle, and mumbles something unintelligible. At last, they stop in front of an emaciated, hollow-eyed man sitting on a pile of old newspapers. He is naked and covered in festering sores and intricate tattoos. The unkempt nails on his hands and feet have grown into black claws. Acrid candles burn all around him. The boy releases them and quickly runs off. The PCs notice that the madmen have gathered in a circle around them, only a few meters away.

From atop his pile of newspapers, the naked man glances up and screams straight at the PCs. They can see that his eyes are completely white. He is blind.

Out of the circle of people, the boy in the coat reappears. Someone shouts something incomprehensible at him, and he hurriedly sits on his haunches a few steps away from the PCs.

The naked man speaks, while the boy translates the gibberish. "*He asks, What do you want? Do you wish to die and offer me your blood?*"

If the PCs explain that they want to know how to create a Child of Magic and a new soul, they get this answer: "*Why should we tell you? You are food for the gods.*"

The PCs must make a reference to the Goddess of the Forgotten, and explain that Seymour is a threat to all the mentally ill. Otherwise, the only answer they receive will be that their blood shall feed the gods of the underworld. If they make references to the Goddess and Seymour, the man becomes thoughtful and falls silent for about thirty minutes. The people still surround them and the boy remains frozen on the floor. At last, the man answers through the boy:

"Waya is the one who knows. Waya is not here. Men in black clothes have taken Waya, and the blue circles have been disturbed. Give me Waya. Then she will lead you. Now go away. Or else die."

The boy jumps up on his feet and tugs at their clothes to get them away from the man. The circle of people surrounding them slowly dissolves into the shadows. The boy explains that the police have taken people away in their cars.

"They have taken Waya, the one who can talk to the gods. The prince is upset. Doesn't know why Waya is gone. But nothing can hold Waya. She walks through walls, and through the air to the moon. Strange. The prince is angry. He wants Waya and the others back. You bring them back."

He explains that if the PCs wish to learn about magic, they need to talk to Waya. He doesn't know any more than this.

The Imprisoned Madmen

The police have becoming increasingly irritated by the madmen and homeless congregating in the deserted buildings on the Isle of Dogs. Now and again, they send raids into the area to pick up some of these vagrants. After Seymour declares that he has room for an additional hundred patients at Sandburn, this activity intensifies. During the week following his return, the police pick up around fifty people on and around the Isle of Dogs.

An investigation must be performed before they can be turned over to mental care, but there is not space enough in jail. Instead, the patients transferred to an abandoned school in Richmond, which previously housed refugees awaiting deportation.

Any PCs with police contacts can easily find out what has happened. All the police departments in London know that a "cleanup" is being performed in the Docklands, and that the fools are trucked to a holding site in Richmond.

If they don't have any contacts within the police, the PCs must find other means. An easy method is simply hanging around until late after dark. Two police convoys appear and a half dozen policemen start to search the area for madmen. They do not dare enter the Court of the Fools for fear of being torn to pieces. The police authorities don't believe the reports telling of hundreds of maniacs in the Docklands, which means that there are no antiterrorist squads present, despite requests from the local police. The PCs can follow the squad cars to the school in Richmond, where the prisoners are being held. If the PCs are unlucky, they may find themselves getting caught by the police and taken to Richmond.

The PCs can also pretend to be related to missing mental patients, trying to find out through the police what has happened to their relatives. Using some persuasion and 100 pounds as bribes, they get the address in Richmond. However, this illicit method is risky, as many London policemen are not particularly keen on bribery attempts.

Eddings Primary School

Eddings is a small primary school in Richmond, which was closed in the mid-seventies. Since then, it has been used intermittently for a number of things. During the 1980s, it was used to hold refugees awaiting deportation. Alarms were installed at that time, in conjunction with window locks and other improvements.

Over the past six months, Eddings has been used as a collection point when the local jails are filled up. Drunks, the homeless, and mental cases are brought here, and then ferried to institutions or released. Some detentions have been drawn out for several months. At the moment, there are thirty mental cases being held at the school, as well as ten homeless people. They are locked up on the first floor, making them easier to control. Four guards are upholding order, but security is not particularly heavy. Waya is one of the madmen. She's a conjurer of Madness from the Court of the Fools in the Docklands. She is confused over why she allowed herself to be captured by the police. Perhaps, she is trying to get inside Sandburn in order to do something. Or maybe there's another reason for her being in Richmond. She feels that she has followed the blue scent, and that led her here.

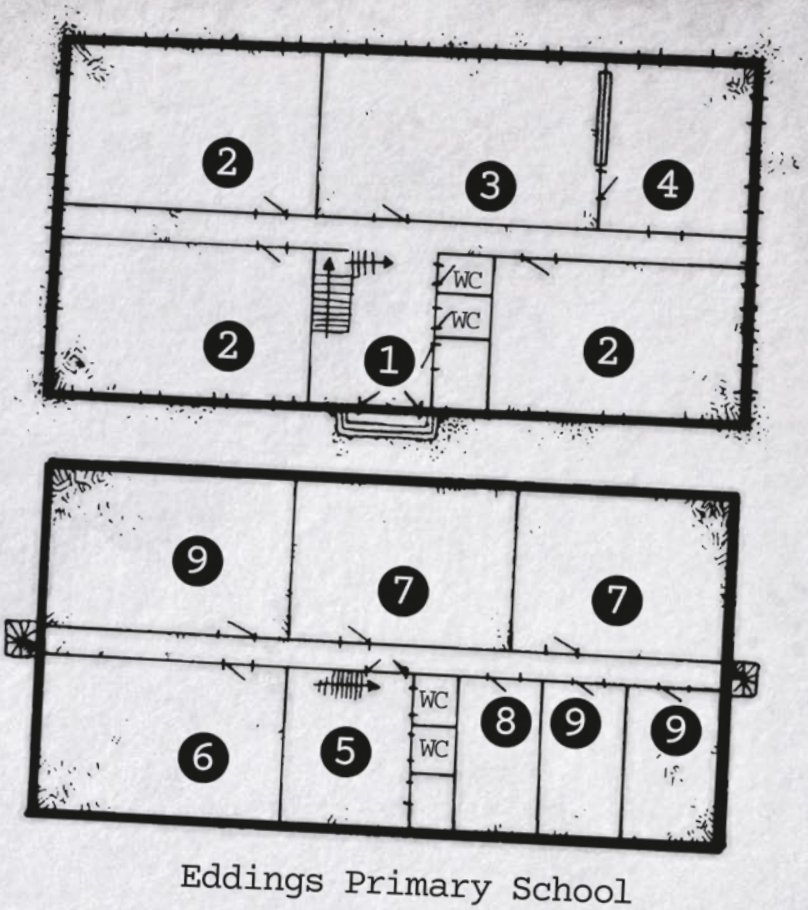
If the PCs' contacts within the police are good enough, they may arrange to be allowed inside the school and talk to the inmates. If they lack these sort of contacts, they must sneak inside. This is not particularly difficult. The windows and the doors do have alarms, but a PC with the appropriate skills can deactivate or evade them. False alarms are common, so it takes the guards a while to investigate anything, even if the alarm is sounded.

The windows are locked from the inside. They can be broken open using a crowbar or something similar. The doors can be opened using brute force, but this causes some noise. The fire escapes lead to the first floor corridor. All the doors on the first floor are locked, but lack alarms.

[1] **Hallway:** The old entrance with toilets, store room, and staircase going up. The room is filthy and water-damaged. Fluorescent lights flicker and blink in the ceiling.

[2] **Class Rooms:** An empty classroom. The desks and the black board are still there.

[3] **Dining Hall:** The inmates and the guards eat here three times a day. The food is brought in ready-made. The guards have had problems lately in getting the fools to the dining halls. Instead, the fools are served the food in the classrooms. There are tables and low chairs from when the building was used as a school. A bar is facing the kitchen.



Eddings Primary School

[4] **Kitchen:** An old kitchen that hasn't been used since the seventies. There are still some pots and pans left.

[5] **Hallway:** As bare and water-damaged as the one above.

[6] **Classroom:** The desks have been removed and replaced by ten beds with plastic covers. There's a heavy smell of urine, feces, and decay. There are signs painted with crayons and blood on the walls. The linoleum flooring has been ripped out in one place. There are remains of food and broken china on the floor. There are eight fools here, currently. A few are walking worriedly back and forth. One is sobbing loudly, while several are sitting in apathy. There is a woman in the corner staring maniacally at the cracks in the wall. The woman is Waya.

[7] **Class Rooms:** Like room 6, but Waya is not present.

[8] **Teachers' Room/Guard Room:** The four guards sit in the room watching TV, reading, or playing chess. Once every hour, they make their rounds to check that nothing has happened. They have stopped opening the doors to the class rooms, expecting things to be as usual.

[9] **Offices:** Dusty offices that have not been used since the mid-eighties. There are desks and filing cabinets in here. All the papers are gone.

Waya

Waya is a conjurer of Madness. She walked the Path of the Fools in order to learn how to break the Illusion. She followed the madmen that were taken by the police, without knowing exactly why. Now, she is studying the cracks in the paint on the wall in order to get some indication as to what she will do next.

Some of the other madmen at Eddings are alert enough to point out Waya to the PCs. When she first sees them, she is frightened and suspicious, but then she soon brightens.

"*You are the blue men. We have waited for you. The wall isn't answering. You are the blue path,*" she says.

The PCs will have difficulty getting anything coherent out of her. It seems that she left the fools and followed the police in order to meet the PCs. Now she is expects them to do something. If they start to talk about the Child of Magic and creating a new soul, she becomes quiet and pensive.

"*Achlys,*" she says at last. They will not get anything else from her as long as they remain at Eddings.

Flight of the Fools

In order to get any of the madmen (*The Fools*) out of the school, the PCs must have Waya's cooperation. Of course, it would be impossible to get the thirty violent, screaming, or catatonic people out of the building without anyone noticing. After they explain that they are willing to take the madmen away from the school, Waya is able to quiet the fools downs enough. She does not want to leave the rest behind. If the PCs want to help only her, she refuses to leave.

If they have cut the alarms on a window, it is possible to direct the fools out and down the fire escape with Waya's help. They are near the River Thames; only a fifteen minute walk from the Richmond tube-station.

If the guards discover the escape attempt they immediately call the police, who will arrive within five minutes. The guards try to reason with the madmen and the PCs, in order to delay them. However, when the madmen press forward and begin surrounding them, the guards run back to safety of the guard room and stay there.

The PCs can get out of the building, even if the alarm is sounded. However, with the police on their way, it will be quite difficult traveling across all of London in the company of thirty unruly madmen. If the police appear, Waya tells them to disperse and get to the Isle of Dogs however they can. She then goes with the PCs.

Waya's Path

After the PCs return to the Isle of Dogs, the fools are less suspicion towards them. ***Waya*** leads them along the same twisting path as the small boy had previously. When they arrive at the king of fools, she sits down on the floor and draws a line in the dust with her finger. The king continues staring straight ahead, screaming sporadically. Waya pours a pinch of powder over an oil lamp now and then, filling the air with a sweet, heavy scent. The PCs become sleepy and having trouble concentrating.

After a while, the boy in the coat sneaks up. He sits behind the PCs, searching their pockets for candy. He whispers to them, explaining that Waya and the king are talking about the PCs. Maybe they are going to be taught great things, like making time go backwards.

"*Wait. Wait, and don't show impatience,*" he repeats over and over.

They cannot tell if they've fallen asleep or been awake the entire time, but roughly two hours later Waya turns towards them. She gestures to the boy to come forward, and draws a sign on his naked chest. The boy runs up to the PCs.

"*You look for Achlys, a place where the path begins. Waya does not know where it is. But she knows of one who does. He is forgotten and very difficult to find. You must remember him to find him. She can help you remember him. Then you must follow our path. The Fools' Path,*" the boy says.

Waya tries to explain what they must do. "*Achlys. The path begins there. The Child... the flesh must be where the path begins. It receives life and is born. Do you understand?*" she asks.

She keeps struggling until the PCs understand that they must bring the Child of Magic to Achlys, the beginning of the path. Once they've understood this, she nods in approval and falls silent.

"*Follow me. I will show you how to remember,*" she says and gestures for them to get up.

She removes a blue crayon from her pocket and starts walking backwards while drawing a line on the floor. People move out of her way, and she moves surprisingly fast.

"*Follow. Watch the line,*" she says urgently.

They PCs realize that they must keep their eyes on the blue line, otherwise they will lose both Waya and each other. If their eyes stray from the line even for just a moment, it feels like the entire world is twisting around them, and they move in ever larger circles and become dizzy from looking at the floor. When Waya starts drawing the blue line, their watches stop, time losing its meaning.

Suddenly, the blue line disappears. When the PCs look up, they find themselves in a large hall with a domed ceiling. The floor is chequered and the walls are covered with living eyes that stare at them, unblinking.

"*Do not step on the black tiles, only the white,*" Waya shouts, dancing off across the checkered floor towards a staircase.

They realize that the black tiles are actually abysses between white pillars. When they reach the staircase everything goes dark. They hear voices whispering in the darkness:

"*Left hand. Follow the wall with your left hand. Left foot first. You have lost your glasses and will never find them again. Look with your left eye. Left eye.*"

After the PCs shut their right eyes, the darkness gives way to a washed-out, greyish light. In time, they reach the end of a long corridor, where a staircase leads down. The walls and the floor are made of rough concrete. Waya is waiting for them at the bottom of the stairs. When she speaks, she sounds totally coherent, not as groping and cryptic as before:

"*I cannot go any further. The path ends here. Follow the corridor to the wall, and wait there until it speaks. Do not grow weary. Do not turn around. It will talk and reveal the Way. I shall wait back on the other side. I will give you signs to help you remember, engrave them in your bodies so that you do not forget them.*"

Before the PCs have a chance to ask her what she's talking about, she runs back up the stairs. The corridor bends and twists a couple of times, until ending at a smooth, greyish wall. There are no doors anywhere. The air feels harsh and cold, heavy with the bitter smell of ozone.

If they give up and return back the way they came, they emerge in a room with a checkered floor, its walls covered with a dotted pattern. They're in an empty house in the Docklands. Their watches start running again. They have failed. If they make a concerted effort, they can convince Waya to allow them to try again.

If they remain in front of the wall, nothing happens at first. An eternity seems to pass. They become hungry and thirsty. The hunger passes, leaving an aching emptiness. Eventually, they barely know if they are awake or asleep. It's cold and their limbs are constantly going numb. The light bothers their eyes.

But gradually the corridor changes around the PCs. They begin to notice frozen half-human creatures, faces and mutilated limbs, beneath the concrete walls, floor, and ceiling. Some are moving, others appear to be dead. A faint murmur from a thousand throats can be heard. Fingers and tongues are moving, as if trying to push out of the stone.

The PCs find themselves on a narrow walkway, chiseled out from between the petrified, living and dead bodies. Stone eyes gaze out at them, fingers groping, and the PCs feel their own cold feet seemingly sinking into the stone, threatening to root them there.

Inhuman voices begin flooding the PCs with questions. Who are you? Why are you here? Are you staying? How far gone are you along the path? Who do you follow? What are you seeking? Which path are you walking?

If PCs try answering the questions, they'll continue to do so forever. As long as they answer the questions, they will not be permitted to continue. They simply feel their bodies sinking further and further down, merging with the petrified creatures. If they persist too long, they will eventually be consumed completely.

Nothing happens until the PCs ask the stone creatures about the Way. Immediately, the walls shudder around them and turn back into concrete again. A doorway has appeared in the wall ahead of them, and the corridor continues on the other side.

They descend a staircase and soon emerge in a small basement. Thin rays of light trickles through a narrow window. A small fire burns on the floor, filling the room with acrid smoke. The air is heavy with the smell of ink and solvents. Waya is sitting by the fire, heating makeshift needles. Surrounding her is an assortment of

watercolors, pencils, jars of dried paint, and tubes of oil-paint. Occasionally, she fills a rag with solvents from a plastic bottle, deeply inhaling the fumes.

"*I will read your memories. Then you must interpret them yourselves. On your left hands, I will draw the road to the one forgotten by all,*" she says, approaching them with her bottle of solvent and the stinking rag.

By now, the PCs are famished, chilled, and thoroughly exhausted. When Waya waves the solvent-filled rag in front of them, they quickly lose consciousness from the fumes. While they're unconscious, Waya reads their memories, and then etches them onto their skin as scars and tattoos. Meanwhile, they dream of their lives, all the way from the Fall to their last reincarnation. But their minds cannot retain all these memories. They fade before the PCs wake up, leaving only symbols and designs tattooed on their flesh; signs they can interpret to discover knowledge about the past.

Memories

The PCs wake up at dawn, with no clothes except their coats or jackets. They're lying in a doorway in the Docklands. There are no madmen in sight – the Court of the Fools having dispersed at dawn. The PCs' bodies ache all over. They are starving, dehydrated, and chilled, as well as having lost a lot of blood. Their wallets are missing as well. In effect, Each PC suffers from a Serious wound and their **Stability** is lowered by 2.

Every inch of their bodies, from their heads to the soles of their feet, is covered with non-figurative patterns and grotesquely drawn figures. Some are normal skin tattoos, while others are scar tattoos cut deeply into the flesh and then filled with soot to prevent proper healing.

One of them is holding a piece of paper. It's a rather crude map, drawn with blood on lined paper. There's a dashed line leading out from a cross with the words "Kennington Station" written next to it. Waya drew this map out of the PCs' memories, outlining the way to Achlys.

Before the PCs can do anything at all, they must find a warm and protected place. After they've located a suitable shelter, they can begin studying the signs etched across their bodies. Each PC has different and unique designs, and only occasionally share similar patterns. When the PCs look closer, they realize that the tattoos consist of several smaller tattoos, which, in turn, are comprised of more minute tattoos. They appear to continue on forever into ever-smaller pictures and signs.

After they study a picture, it revives incomprehensible memories, and meaningless images and words flood their consciousness. They see cities and people, hear names, and sense smells they have long forgotten. But they cannot seem to gain any coherence out of these vague impressions. The moment they stop concentrating, the memories fade away into forgetfulness.

Only one tattoo is replicated on each of them; a blue spiral on their left hands. When they look at it, it appears to be made up of numerous small signs from known and unknown alphabets. If they try to study the spiral in depth, a numbing agony forces them to look away. They think they can make out an irregular shape and get the sensation of being sucked into the spiral just before they avert their gaze. The deeper they gaze into the pattern, the more difficult and painful doing so becomes. The memories refuse to come forward.

Only by studying the very tip of the spiral are they able to summon up any sort of memories. The PCs see a man's face, fading away so quickly they are not able to discern it. However, they receive impressions of parts of London, specifically houses they recognize from Kennington. They know that these houses have something to do with the face. The man of the fading face belongs there, but they cannot remember how. They remember that he is somehow important, but not why or how, or from where they know him.

The spiral records the first part of their creation, from Achlys's inception to the birth of their soul. That's why it's so difficult to study and understand. The houses they remember while studying the spiral's tip mark the route they must take to find Achlys. It is identical to the dashed line on the messy map they have.

Back to the Fools

If the PCs return to the Court of the Fools any night following the events with Waya, they realize that much has changed, including themselves. They instinctively know how to behave to fit in. They freely move between the different locations throughout the halls by following the invisible, twisting paths, as well as by performing the intricate rituals in the right places. This information is instinctual, as if they had always possessed it. When they try talking to ***Waya***, they discover she is much more intelligible, if not completely sane. In peace and quiet, she explains that a soul is born out of the nothingness which existed before chaos, Achlys, and that they must bring a Child of Magic there to summon the soul from the nothingness into existence.

If they ask her about the Child stolen by Seymour, she informs them that she doesn't know what he's done with it, but she guesses it's in Inferno, as he's a Black Lictor. "*He belongs there. He wants to create a soul out of pain.*"

Unfortunately, she cannot tell them which route they need to take to get to the realm of the dead in order to retrieve the Child. "*Many doors lead to many rooms, many more than a single life can walk through.*"

The road to Inferno she is most familiar with is that of the outcasts and the homeless. "*Harrow knows. Under Waterloo Bridge.*"

If they show her the map they got, she nods and says, "*I took your memories and made a picture. You remember the Forgotten Man. He knows the source of the souls.*"

Now that they can move freely among the fools, the PCs realize that they are not as alien as they first thought. Most of the fools are new faces, but they recognize a few as old school friends, coworkers, and neighbors.

CHAPTER 3

THE OTHER BEACH

"Only two quid. It's cheaper than any liquor store. And better," said the man in the trench coat.

Richard suspiciously studied the bottle before he counted out two pounds in coin. The bootlegger looked remarkably well-dressed, clean shaven, and rather stiff. Richard did not usually buy any home-made stuff, but the thirst burned in his throat and it really was cheap.

He brought the bottle back to his box under the bridge, where Jeremy was waiting. They split it and had their usual banter about the last mouthfuls. It took a couple of minutes before they realized that something was wrong.

"*You're trying to poison me!*" Jeremy screamed when he felt the poison burn in his bloodstream.

Richard was already too far gone to answer. He vomited blood and phlegm until it stuck in his throat, cutting off the air.

He thought he was dead when he opened his eyes and saw a thin figure outlined against the light. But death could not be this bad. His body was shaking, and he felt like he was choking.

"*Grandfather?*"

It was Timothy. Richard tried to answer, but his throat was full of phlegm. The boy shook him and muttered things he could not hear. Then he was torn away to the other side.

With Timothy's aid, Seymour has brought the Child of Magic to the realm of the dead in order to bind it there and create a soul out of the pain of Inferno. He tried having the Child born through a creature of Inferno, but the attempt failed. Now, he has hidden the Child in order to provide it with a soul of his choosing. All the while, he continues searching for Chris Walden, who he suspects is the only one capable of giving birth to the Child. The PCs need the Child in order to create the new soul. They don't know any obvious roads to the realm of the dead, but Timothy, Waya, and Rupert have all indicated that the homeless under Waterloo Bridge may know a path to the other side. During their search, the PCs soon notice that a wave of mysterious deaths is now plaguing London's homeless population.

Waterloo Bridge

Waterloo Bridge is a gathering point for London's homeless. A virtual city of newspapers and boxes has risen under the bridge on its southern side. Here can be found hardened tramps who've been around since the forties, and homeless kids escaping unemployment or abusive families.

For the past couple of months, the atmosphere has become gloomier than usual. Unexplainable deaths, sudden poisonings, and strange fevers have plagued more of the homeless than ever before. Everyone fears that the winter will be a cold and long one. Wild speculations abound. Everything from the medical corporations to God himself have been accused of being the perpetrator. It's said that mysterious men in dark coats have been sneaking around the hideouts of the homeless. They're pushing rotten liquor and dangerous drugs on people.

In truth, the killings are being carried out because of a government campaign against the homeless, a campaign that has derailed completely. A few years ago, the city government organized a study group, known as the Housing Project, to find solutions to London's homeless situation. The project contacted Lancer Ltd to get the vagrants off the streets. The company was paid for every homeless person they removed from the streets.

Initially, the company worked in a responsible manner, but things quickly got out of hand. Employees started to take the homeless out of London, paying them to stay away, and then claiming the cash reward. When this proved ineffectual, they began poisoning people and spreading non-fatal diseases, in order to get the homeless victims committed to hospitals. This meant that they were off the streets, and thus the company got its compensation. From this point on, it wasn't long before the employees started selling poisoned liquor and giving away typhoid-infected blankets, actually killing people.

As the construction industry's recent financial crisis exacerbated the housing shortage, the Government and the Housing Project's board have not closely examined the company's work for months. The money is still being paid out, and the upper management are completely unaware that the homeless disappearing from the city's roll are actually being murdered.

Lancer Ltd. and its employees have unwittingly fallen under the Tarotica's influence; specifically the Major Arcana of Gamichicoth, who spreads fear and hatred of anything different. After Anthony Seymour returns to Sandburn, he begins investigating what the cards have been up to, so he can more easily take control himself. He contacts Howard Carpenter, Lancer Ltd.'s owner, with an offer of cooperation. Soon after, Carpenter is completely under Seymour's control.

Searching for the Realm of the Dead

When the PCs seek out the homeless, they are met with hostile suspicion. If they appear well-dressed and affluent, nobody wants to talk to them. They whisper behind their backs, and pull away when the PCs get near.

If they have tattoos from the Court of the Fools, the homeless become even more suspicious. The fools are treated with fear and hatred by most of the homeless. However, if Timothy accompanies the PCs, it will be easier for them to interact with people. Many homeless recognize him as Richard Cardigan's grandson.

The PCs discover numerous homeless people sick with fevers, suffering under several layers of newspapers and blankets. The sick meet the PCs with additional vehemence, as if they are in some way responsible for what is happening. Timothy explains to them that his grandfather died of poisoning.

"*Others seem to have died the same way,*" he says.

With ***Timothy's*** aid, or by patiently earning a homeless person's confidence, the PCs may inquire with the people under the bridge about the way to the realm of the dead. The first few people they ask will laugh at them or look frightened, not understanding what they are asking about. A common reply is, "*I'll find out soon enough. I'm going there.*"

But if the PCs keep asking around, a rumor spreads about their search. After an hour or two, an emaciated and feverish man (***Lesley Farmer***) appears. He looks like he is about to expire any second. A cigarette butt hangs from the corner of his mouth, and he is wearing a dirty suit.

"*My name's Lesley. People are saying that you're looking for the realm of the dead. I'm on my way there.*"

If they ask what he means, he removes the butt from his mouth, and stares at them for a while, as if judging their trustworthiness. He then explains that there is a place for people like him, "*people without anywhere to go,*" where they go to die.

"*You can come along. It's better than going alone,*" he says while coughing hollowly.

If the PCs ask why he is dying, he says that he has gotten some sort of sickness.

"*Same shit as everyone else. Something going around,*" he says and nods towards the other sick people lying against the concrete wall.

They climb onto the bridge and take a bus south. Lesley informs them that the place is some distance away. During the trip, he tells them about his life as a coal-miner, sailor, construction worker, and dockworker. Now and then, he's overcome by violent coughing fits, often spitting up blood. He also knew Timothy's grandfather, and says that he died of bad liquor. "*Poison. There are some bastards running around selling poison. It's not from the home-brewing. This stuff is pure poison. You die in a couple of hours.*"

They switch buses twice, winding their way through London's southern suburbs, until they finally get off at a road that runs between a narrow canal and a stretch of grey row houses. A small, half-ruined wooden footbridge crosses the canal, and they can see a derelict cemetery on the other side. The PCs suspect that they're somewhere south of Battersea.

"*This is it,*" Lesley says, leaning against the bridge rail, fighting to catch his breath.

The Cemetery of the Tramps

The PCs have arrived at the cemetery of the tramps and the homeless. It is an old burial site where the homeless have come to die for the past hundred years. The cemetery spreads out across a common with only a sparse few buildings surrounding it. The ruins of an 18th-century church silently stand in the middle of the overgrown burial site.

The once-proud British memorials with marble angels and spires that looked like cake decorations are now crumbling and covered by greenery. A rusty iron fence surrounds the area, which is separated from the city along two sides by the canal.

But the PCs don't find much of the original cemetery remaining. When they cross the canal, they are immediately greeted by a terrible stench. The dead and dying are littered across the cemetery. Countless bones cover the ground, ranging from bleached skeletons to those with putrid flesh still attached. The graves are decorated with skulls.

After they enter through the gate, Lesley gently lays himself down on a flat, stone grave. He nods towards the church ruins.

"*There's some sort of priest in there, people say. I've never been here before. Talk to him.*"

When they get closer to the church, the PCs see a man in a black priest's robe, reading verses over a recently deceased man. His hair is thin and black, his eyes dark and piercing. As they get closer, they see that his skin is wrinkled and leathery, almost as if he was embalmed. His nails and teeth are a greenish black.

"*You have not come here to die. I must ask you to leave at once. This is a place of sorrow. There is nothing here for the living,*" he says to the PCs when he reaches them.

If they refuse to leave, he explains that he is ***Father Harrow***, and that he attends the dying and the dead at the cemetery. They must carefully explain why they've come to the cemetery if he is going to understand them. He does not know what a Child of Magic is, but he knows the paths between our reality and the realm of the dead.

"*I am trapped in the shadows with the dying,*" he says.

He explains that he lacks the power to guide anyone to the realm of the dead. He exists in between realms, and can neither return to the world of the living nor travel to meet the dead.

"*If you want to reach the other side, you must accompany someone who is going there. You came here with a dying man, did you not? Let us go and talk to him.*"

Father Harrow confirms that Lesley is dying, and leads him off to a bench where he can be more comfortable. He explains that a dying man can lead the living to the other side, but notes that doing so is a dangerous undertaking. There is a risk that all of them – Lesley included – will become stuck in the borderland between the dead and the living, where the undead reside.

"*You must decide if it is worth the risk,*" he says to Lesley.

Lesley thinks about it, and says that he is willing to risk this if the PCs promise to catch the people responsible for his death.

"*They're the same bastards who killed Richard Cardigan, and all of the others. There's someone going around killing homeless people. You promise to find them, and then I will do this,*" he says.

If the PCs promise to find the guilty, then Father Harrow explains to them what to do the moment Lesley dies. While he lingers for a moment in the borderland between life and death, Father Harrow will lead them into it. Once inside, they can follow Lesley across the boundary into death. Harrow cannot give any guarantees or information about finding the road back. He has never been to the other side.

"*And, once there, you must know where you are going.*"

Timothy is able to guide them, if he is with the PCs at this time. Otherwise, he must first have described the road to them.

Into Death

They wait by Lesley's side for many hours until he finally dies. Father Harrow closes the dead man's eyes, and then he takes the PCs by the hand, one after the other, leading them along the broken, paved walkway. There is an unsettling sensation of passing through a membrane, or breaking the surface of a pool of water. On the other side, the world drains of color and warmth until it is gray and icy cold.

Lesley is waiting impatiently for them. He appears fuzzy, as if he is beginning to transform into something else. When he sees that they are following, he glides through yet another thin membrane and disappears. When they follow him, the PCs are enveloped by darkness and feel some terrible force grab them, hurtling them towards a black dot in the distance. As they draw closer, they see that it is an opening, through which they are ejected into an ice-cold gloom.

They fall onto a cold floor. It is dark. Out of the darkness they hear mumbling voices that draw closer. As their eyes grow accustomed to the gloom, they can see Lesley sitting on the floor beside them. He is still coughing blood,

looking as wretched in death as in life. They are sitting on the floor in a room with bare walls and many doorways. Moaning voices come from every direction, and they faintly see naked bodies chained to the walls. Maimed people, dressed in rags, gather round them. Some are carrying candles in their hands, but they do not seem to illuminate the area.

One of the ragged men is Richard Cardigan. If Timothy is with the PCs, he recognizes his grandfather and runs up to him. If he is not present, then Lesley recognizes him. Richard is a stocky man with a beard and bushy eyebrows. His face is lined and a trifle swollen, and his body is disfigured by lashes that make a crisscross pattern across his skin. He walks up to them and offers a candle to Lesley, who rises and accepts it. The PCs notice that Lesley has changed. He looks more tired, slower, and much quieter than in life.

"*You do not belong here,*" Richard Cardigan says in a hoarse voice.

He does not change his expression if they explain their business, he simply nods and appears as if he no longer cares what their answer is.

If they ask him where the Child is, Richard nods towards a doorway, and says that there are crypts further down.

"*The demon put the Child in a sarcophagus in there. At first, he tried to stick the Child in a creature of Inferno, but the creature died. Now, he's punishing the dead to create a soul out of their pain. It will be born to become a mighty servant to him. But you'll never get at it. He has set guards around it. If it disappears, he'll surely punish all of us who are still stuck here.*"

The PCs can ask as much as they like, but he has decided that the Child is staying. He's willing to show them the crypt where Seymour hid the Child, though. He leads them through the halls where the dead are being tortured in their cells, down winding stairs to the crypts where Seymour has hidden the Child. Timothy is also able to show the way.

Down by the crypts, the dead are smaller, more twisted, and horribly maimed. Razides and other tormentors can be seen as shadowy silhouettes along the corridors. Hands stretch out through the bars, tearing at the PCs. Screams of agony can be heard from everywhere. The crypts are a labyrinth of stairs, ice-covered ramps, and ladders. The place is bitterly cold, every surface is covered in frozen blood.

The crypt with the Child is farther down. For the final stretch, the PCs must descend a narrow ladder, which rattles and groans in a disturbing way. They reach a narrow, ten-meter high passage with alcoves for the dead running along the walls. Inside the alcoves, the living dead are writhing and twisting from their pain. Finally, at the end of the passage is the entrance to the crypt. It is guarded by four ***proto-razides***; stunted creatures walking on all fours. Upon seeing them, the PCs realize that the creatures are more than capable of ripping all them to shreds. If they venture too close, the proto-razides will attack them.

"*If they kill you, you're stuck here with us,*" Richard says with a crooked smile.

The PCs can enlist the aid of Richard and the other dead to chase them off, and then snatch the Child. However, they must first convince the dead that Seymour's eventual punishment is worth their suffering.

The PCs have a great advantage if Timothy has accompanied them. It is far easier for him to convince his grandfather to let the Child go, adding that the PCs have promised to stop those responsible for the deaths of their fellow homeless.

If Timothy is not with them, the PCs simply must try harder. They must make the dead understand that Seymour can be stopped by the Child, and that he is a monumental threat to themselves and many others. That, and the promise to stop the people murdering the homeless, will convince the dead to help them reach the Child.

Aided by the dead, they can chase the proto-razides away. There are an uncountable number of dead, and they can easily tease the razides to attack. Once surrounded by the sheer mass of the dead, the creatures are rapidly torn apart. If there are PCs who want to fight, the GM may allow them kill the proto-razides themselves.

The sarcophagus where Seymour has hidden the Child stands in the middle of the floor inside the crypt. It is covered by cryptic pictures that the PCs may recognize from the Tarotica. The ten Death Angels are depicted with Astaroth in the middle. The entire sarcophagus is caked in frozen blood. Everyone must work together when raising the lid.

Inside the sarcophagus is a compact, ice-cold darkness, not unlike the one surrounding the Goddess of the Forgotten in her prison. If the PCs stick their hands into the darkness, they can feel something warm and hard: the blood-covered glass container, where Seymour put the fetus. When they pick it up, they see that the Child is still alive inside. The umbilical cord has been severed, and its tiny face looks worried. A black spot has formed on its forehead, and its barely developed hands are clenched tightly.

Back to the Light

There is no obvious way back to the world of the living. There are no exits for the dead, but there are two ways out for the PCs, which they should remember. One leads back to the cemetery of the tramps, while the other leads to Sandburn – the way Timothy came the first time. Both locations border on Inferno.

Timothy can lead the way back to Sandburn, following the route he took with Seymour. It passes a doorway and crosses a deserted, ice-cold plain, where razides and other tormentors are hunting. Fortunately, these horrific creatures cannot touch the PCs or Timothy, who do not belong among the dead. They eventually reach the place where Timothy and Seymour entered Inferno. A narrow stone staircase spirals up through the mountain here, and opens into the old chapel outside Sandburn.

If they ask Richard Cardigan or any of the other of the dead, they are guided back to the cemetery of the tramps. This road leads through the bare grey rooms to a doorway blocked by rusty iron bars. The cemetery is on the other side. It is possible to press through an opening in the bars. After the PCs emerge, they remain trapped in the borderland between life and death, but Father Harrow can lead them back to the world of the living.

Mysterious Deaths

At some point during the adventure, the PCs might want to fulfill their promise to Lesley and the other dead. They do not have to do it immediately after they emerge from the realm of the dead. It is quite likely that they see the creation of the soul and stopping Seymour as being much more urgent. In that case, the GM may skip the remainder of this chapter until the rest of the adventure is over. The PCs can, of course, investigate the deaths while continuing the main plotline.

However, if they totally abandon their promise, they will be haunted. First, they will be approached by homeless and drunks, demanding to know why they backed out of their promise. Later, they will be haunted by specters from the realm of the dead, who become increasingly violent until the PCs fulfill their promise.

Father Harrow

The obvious place to start investigating the deaths is at the cemetery of the tramps. Many of the sufferers going there talk to Father Harrow. He has no clear idea of what is going on outside the cemetery, but he has noticed that more homeless have been coming to die over the past few months.

"*Many poisonings. It could be bad liquor.*"

A lot of people also die from diseases that Harrow hasn't seen for many years, such as typhoid fever and tuberculosis. It is difficult for him to think of a reason why. He knows that there are people showing up at the cemetery who never would have before.

"*There never were any people from the authorities before, but now men are coming in, asking about names and looking for papers, about once a month.*"

The men started to show up almost a year ago. They asked him who he was, and how long he had tended the cemetery, and if a lot of people knew about it or used to visit.

"*I told them what I know, that none of the living ever come this way.*"

The men drove off in a black car. About a month later, they came back, looking for identification papers and asking Harrow about the names of those they could not identify. This has continued ever since.

The two men are ***Lancer Ltd. employees***, and they acquire the names of dead people to report to the authorities. Their reports state that these people have moved out of London or gotten a temporary place to stay. In this way, they are able to collect the bounty from the Housing Project.

Father Harrow does not know their names or where they're coming from, but he says that he's going to ask the next time they show up.

"*That should be in about three or four days. They come here once a month.*"

The PCs can wait it out, talking to the men after they return to the cemetery three days later in the late afternoon. They can also ask Father Harrow to get their names. He later apologizes for not being able to do that or find out what company they are working for, as they refuse to tell him.

"*I told them they were not welcome any longer, and kicked them out. But I got their license number. H345 AXT.*"

Through the registry, they find that the car belongs to Lancer Ltd.

If the PCs wait at the cemetery, they see two men in grey trench coats parking a black Morris by the wayside and then walking across the bridge. They start looking for the recently dead, and asking Father Harrow about the names of those who died during the past month. They note down all the names in a small black book.

If the PCs appear and start asking questions, the men immediately become nervous. At first, they say that the cemetery is private property and that the PCs have no right to be there. They say that they come from the "*authorities*" in order to "*check certain things.*" If the PCs become too persistent, the men retire to their car and leave.

Father Harrow can also tell the PCs that a doctor has been around, checking on the dying and dead. He works on the field for some organization against homelessness, and has become worried about the increased number of deaths recently.

"*He gave me his card. Wait, I have it here.*" He picks out a wrinkled and dirty card.

Doctor Waugh

Shelton Street is one of many small roads east of Charing Cross in central London. ***Dr. Waugh's*** consultation is on the first floor at number 38. Under his name is a handwritten sign saying: "The Society for the Coordination of Medical Treatment of the Homeless".

When the PCs visit, a short, somewhat plump man in glasses and dark brown hair opens the door. He's wearing a black dressing-gown, and introduces himself as Doctor Waugh.

He invites the PCs to step through his waiting room and into his private apartment. The furniture consists mainly of dark wood and heavy curtains. They are seated on a worn couch and offered some tea and biscuits while the doctor asks about their errand.

He tells them that he has been seeking out the homeless for several years. His wages are being paid through a certain foundation, and he works with different charities. A lot of people have been concerned about the rising number of deaths during the past months.

"*It started with poisonings, and then we got these strange infections. They are running their courses with lightning speed.*"

He has performed autopsies of several of the homeless and has found three cases of poisoning, all caused by overdoses of proladine, an unusual medication that cannot be used recreationally. "*There is no explanation for how they got hold of it it, and then took it in this amount.*"

He has seen two cases of death caused by an infection that he has been unable to diagnose. He sent tests for analysis to a laboratory, but hasn't received any results yet.

Waugh heard rumors about poisoned liquor, but he doesn't understand why anyone would poison people with proladine. He can give the name of a known bootlegger, Will Tomkins, who hangs out in a basement near Waterloo Station.

Poisoned Blankets

The PCs can also talk to the homeless about what is happening. When they make it known that they were friends of Lesley Farmer, it becomes much easier to talk with people living under the bridge. They say that the infections began when the weather turned colder. People get fevers, and then they die. Some of those who went to hospitals made it, others didn't.

If the PCs talk to a number of the sick, they notice that all of them are wrapped in the same type of grey-green blankets. These are old military issue. If they ask where they come from, they're told that the Salvation Army started to give them out when the cold arrived. The volunteers distributing the blankets are usually outside Somerset House on the other side of the bridge.

If the PCs bring one of the blankets to Doctor Waugh for an analysis, he reports back in two days, revealing that the blankets are infected. Someone has drenched them with a solution containing bacteria. This is likely the cause of the fevers.

The Salvation Army soldiers on the other side of the bridge are genuinely shocked when the PCs say that the blankets may have been infected. The soldiers explain that the blankets come from a military supply, delivered by a company working for the civil authorities called Lancer Ltd.

The people under the bridge can also tell the PCs about the bootlegger Will Tomkins at Waterloo Station. He is a large-scale dealer, selling laboratory spirits and homemade booze.

The Bootlegger

Will Tomkins sells liquor, weapons, and stolen goods out of the basement under a parking garage next to Waterloo Station. A flea-market fronts his real business. A handwritten sign points the way to the flea-market, where Tomkins's bored-looking sister sells second-hand clothes and stolen car stereos at a couple of rickety tables.

A door behind the flea-market leads into a small room with another rickety table and a large number of boxes and crates. A few of Tomkins's men sit here. Behind this room is some storage space, mostly filled with junk. Some stolen goods and liquor are on the premises, but most of the valuables and illegal items are kept elsewhere.

Tomkins himself looks in on the business a few times every day. He lives south of London and has a few more businesses to attend to: a couple of restaurants and a gambling hall.

The PCs' behavior when they arrive at the flea-market determines how they are treated. Tomkins's sister tries to sell them some cheap shoes, and then makes them leave if they look like confused tourists or undercover cops. If they get troublesome or threatening, two of Tomkins's men come out from the inner room. They ask the PCs to leave.

"*We were just closing,*" they say and try to shoo them off.

The PCs can make them interested by referring to either Lesley Farmer or Doctor Waugh. They can also explain that they know that poisoned liquor is being sold. At first, they don't admit to anything, but say that Tomkins would want to see them anyway. If the PCs say that they want to buy or sell something, they have to deal with Conrad, Tomkins's brother-in-law. Only if they want to buy something very expensive, such as military weapons or drugs, will Tomkins agree to meet them.

After they convince Conrad that they should be allowed to meet the boss, they are told to sit down and wait.

"*He'll be here soon,*" Conrad says.

After a little more than an hour, Tomkins shows up. If he is going to listen to them, the PCs must convince him that they really have something of interest. He tells them to follow him into the inner room.

At first, he is upset about the accusation of selling bad liquor. He says that he doesn't deal with liquor at all or, anything illegal, in fact. If the PCs convince him that they may be of help, they're told that he bought a large shipment of laboratory spirits cheaply through some men he knows are working with the homeless.

"*They work for a bloke named Carpenter. I recognized them, 'cause they've done some sort of count of the homeless for the government. A lot of people were upset about getting listed in those files,*" he says.

He knows that Carpenter owns a company called Lancer, and while he does some illegal jobs, most of his work is for the civil authorities.

Lancer Reacts

When Howard Carpenter, the manager of Lancer Ltd., realizes that someone is investigating the company, he becomes worried. He knows that the homeless cemetery can be used as proof if somebody starts to dig into their activities.

To stay ahead of things, he reports the cemetery to the civil authorities, claiming it is a "*stain on London and a great sanitary danger.*" The cemetery is big news over the next few days, and the public ask how something so terrible could have continued without intervention.

Within a week, the authorities have sent out workers to clean up the cemetery and restore it to its original condition. Father Harrow stays away. All the corpses and various loose body parts are collected and placed in a mass grave in the north end of the cemetery. After the workers have left, everything returns to normal. The dying resume coming to the cemetery, and Father Harrow returns.

If Carpenter realizes that the PCs' aim to expose him, he sends his men after them or enlists hitmen to silence them permanently.

If he becomes really worried, he cleans out any incriminating stuff from his office at Cannon Street and moves it to the basement.

Lancer Ltd.

The PCs have several leads pointing to Howard Carpenter's company. It is impossible to acquire information about the nature of Lancer's work through official channels. All such documents are confidential.

Through Rupert Faraday or someone else with contacts within the city authorities, the PCs can discover that the Housing Project has given money to Lancer Ltd. The last meeting of the board of that foundation was more than a year ago. The chairman is one Kevin O'Connor.

The PCs can also locate Lancer's main office in a fashionable house on Cannon Street in the business district. The office is on the second floor, and consists of six rooms along a corridor and a common room at the end. Carpenter and his assistant, Mr. Maddock, two secretaries, and a receptionist work here.

If Carpenter realizes that the PCs are after him, he will be perpetually unavailable when they arrive. The receptionist tells them that Mr. Carpenter is out at the moment and she does not know when he is expected to return.

If *Carpenter* doesn't have any reason to be suspicious towards the PCs, it is possible to arrange a meeting under some false pretense. He receives the PCs in his office on Cannon Street.

As soon as the PCs discuss anything with regard to Lancer's project for the homeless, he becomes nervous and tries changing the subject. He says that he cannot talk about it for reasons of confidentiality, or that it is a project which is just about terminated. It's quickly apparent that he is not going to say anything further about it.

The PCs might also notice that the men who visited the cemetery and did business with Tomkins and the Salvation Army show up at Lancer once a day to talk with Carpenter. If the PCs corner any of the employees, it is possible to learn something about the company. If they realize that they might be arrested and end up in jail, the employees start talking freely. They admit that they have distributed blankets, counted bodies and sold liquor, but maintain that they never realized that they were doing anything illegal.

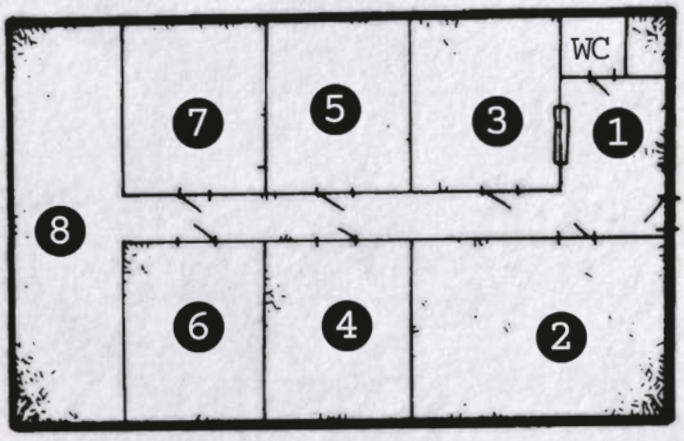
Lancer's Office

The only way to acquire any substantial evidence against the company is by breaking into its offices. The PCs can find lists of the dead at the cemetery, a large supply of drugs used to poison the liquor, and bottles of bacteria cultures – a biological weapon bought by Carpenter from an army colonel.

The office is located on the second floor of a six-story building. The front door is locked and equipped with alarms. There is a phone at the front door for calling all the offices and apartments in the building. The top floor is occupied by a middle-aged couple and an older lady, Mrs. Portland. She opens for anyone who has forgotten the code and is on their way to the office. No matter how late, someone is always working at the computer company on the first floor, and may be willing to open the door.

The second floor is occupied by two offices: Lancer Ltd., and Darmont Investments. The latter company suffered bankruptcy recently, and its offices are empty.

The door to Lancer Ltd. is equipped with an alarm. A PC with the correct knowledge can attempt to neutralize it. The door is locked, but can be opened using the proper equipment. If the PCs totally lack any experience as burglars, they may hire those services through Will Tomkins. There are also thieves among the homeless, who can help the PCs, if they ask around.



Lancer Ltd. Office

Map of Lancer Ltd.

[1] **Reception And Cloakroom:** A counter and a glass window separate the receptionist's area from that of the front office itself. There are a few coat hangers here and some empty boxes. The walls are adorned with a few cheap art prints.

[2] **Carpenter's Office:** The door is locked, but can be opened with a lock-pick and the proper skills. The room has softly-colored walls and is furnished with light wooden furniture. A large potted plant stands in a corner. A Macintosh LC sits on the desk. Along the walls are bookshelves filled with binders and books about economics and administration. In the binder marked "Contracts," the reader finds Lancer's contract with the Housing Project. The contract states that Lancer receives 30,000 pounds per year of service, with an additional 1,000 pounds for each homeless person taken off the streets. The contract is signed by Carpenter and O'Connor, and dated 13th April 1991. Three binders marked "*Personal Files*" contain computer lists of names and dates: these are the people the company knows have died, but were never officially reported as dead. In Carpenter's computer, there are email exchanges between Carpenter and Colonel Ender, who apparently deals with the sale of expired drugs and illegal materials. In August of 1992, Carpenter received 800 "capsules" from Colonel Ender, although the exact type of capsules is not revealed in the correspondence. These were the bacteria solutions Lancer used to purposefully infect the blankets and clothes being distributed to the homeless. In the fax machine, next to the computer, is a letter from Anthony Seymour (posing as Doctor Lockley), where he offers to invest in the company, because of its earlier experience with social welfare issues. The letter is carefully written so as not to cast any suspicion on Seymour should Lancer's illegal activities be publicly exposed.

[3] **Receptionist:** The door is open. Mrs. Parker runs the switchboard and performs some routine jobs at the company. She doesn't know anything about Carpenter's doings, and doesn't, out of principle, investigate other people's business. There is a switchboard, a computer, and some lists in binders located here.

[4] **Maddock's Office:** The door is open. During the past months, Bertram Maddock has taken over much of Carpenter's former responsibilities from other companies. In his office, the PCs can find contracts and documents dealing with such diverse subjects as labor exchange for hospital workers, pest control, and printing jobs for the public administration. There is nothing illegal to be found in this room. Maddock knows what Carpenter is doing, but keeps himself removed from these dealings to avoid trouble.

[5] **Innings's Office:** The door is locked. Jennifer Innings handles the accounting at Lancer. She knows what Carpenter is doing, but like Maddock, she tries to stay out of it to avoid getting in trouble if anything should happen. Someone with good knowledge of accounting or bookkeeping can find information about money received from the Housing Project, and about questionable transactions of money to Carpenter's private accounts.

[6] **Lockey's Office:** The door is open. Marianne Lockey takes care of various secretarial tasks. She types letters and does some of the routine money transactions. She works part-time and doesn't know what is happening at the company.

[7] **Empty Office:** The door is locked. There are crates inside containing the bacteria solution Carpenter bought from Colonel Ender, as well as expired jars containing large quantities of proladine. Carpenter bought the lot cheap from the company with the excuse that it was to be sold abroad.

[8] **Break Room:** A coffee machine, a refrigerator, and two tables.

Revealed

Supported by the evidence found at Lancer's offices, the PCs can contact the police, or talk with Kevin O'Connor – the Housing Project's chairman. Regardless of who the PCs approach with this information, both organizations are hesitant to fully investigate the grim matter, as nobody is interested in being punished due to their involvement with Carpenter's illicit business practices.

If the authorities are pressured (especially by the press), then Carpenter is eventually brought to justice, the whole matter hushed up as effectively as possible, and the Housing Project terminated.

Chapter 4 Unto the Beginning of the World

"There is no one who can create a soul. There has never been. Each soul must create itself," said the Guardian.

He raised the jar containing the fetus and laid his ear towards the glass. The Child took no notice. Inside the murky fluid, its tiny hands moved carefully, as if testing their strength. He put the jar back on the table.

"I can let you pass the gate, for you do not seek oblivion. But it is a dangerous undertaking," he said.

He led them out of the house and up a hill on the other side of the valley. When they got closer, they saw the labyrinth etched into the side of the hill, a white spiral created by the limestone where the heather had been removed.

"Here is the gate. Let the Child catch its soul and then return. Maybe the memories will help you return. Otherwise, you are all lost," he said.

When they took their first step towards the center of the labyrinth, they realized what he meant. The void in the middle of the circle beckoned violently. With every step, the pull grew stronger, their will to return to reality breaking into fragments and swept away. Only the Child seemed undisturbed in its glass jar.

The PCs know that a new soul can only be created in something called Achlys, and that the Forgotten Man holds the key. Through the tattoos and the map they received from Waya, they can find their way to the Forgotten Man. He lives far beyond our reality, where time and space are broken apart and destroyed. The Man is a reflection of the Tarotica's first card, the Demiurgos. Through his connection to the lost godhead, he knows how a new soul is created. He can lead them to the guardian, a being that stands guard over the labyrinth of the Underworld. He keeps away those who otherwise would rush to destruction and become devoured by Achlys. The PCs must persuade the guardian to let them pass through the gate of the labyrinth. Once on the other side, they must help the Child of Magic create a soul, and then return with it before they are destroyed by the darkness that existed before chaos.

The Forgotten Kennington

The PCs realize that they have one tattoo in common following their meeting with Waya; the blue spiral on their left hand. When they look closer at it, they see only a great darkness which seems to pull them into itself. The only part of the tattoo they can look at without much discomfort is the very tip. Parts of London seem to be pictured there. They discover memories of an area near Kennington Road, as well as the hazy impression of a face.

They also have a smeary map drawn by Waya from their memories. It begins with an 'X' marked next to the Kennington tube station.

They can go to Kennington and try to follow the route from their memories. It is surprisingly easy at first, as they remember a few houses along the road, up a smaller street. Gradually, it becomes more difficult. They must cross an abandoned lot and enter a narrow alley between coal-blackened brick walls. The alley opens on a small street they recognize from their memories, but they cannot locate it on the map.

The street rests on the edge of our reality. It does not always exist in the London we know. Several houses have boarded-up doors and windows. No people can be seen on the street, but the PCs notice distrustful faces peering out behind drawn curtains, then disappearing back into the gloom.

In one direction, the street continues onward seemingly forever, flanked by typical English row houses of blackened brick on both sides. In the other direction, the houses become older and increasingly decayed, until the street finally disappears into a ruined industrial area with tall chimneys and soot-covered brick walls. Despite the strange environment, the PCs are able to catch glimpses of London between the houses. Skyscrapers, Big Ben, and various church towers rise above the roofs. Narrow alleys between the houses lead back to normal London.

They have come to a part of London that used to be connected to one of the lost Archons, now long faded from the memory. The recluses live here, people who have withdrawn from all human society, children on the run, and the neglected and senile elderly.

Since the cards arrived in London, these forgotten parts of the city have become tied to the faded Archons of the Tarotica. After Seymour returned, he started taking control of the area. Now, the forgotten have begun to disappear in a physical sense. They are literally fading away.

The PCs see obvious traces of decay everywhere. Bodies of dead rats line the gutters, while a bloated dog rots on the street. Gardens are deteriorated and choked with weeds. Behind drawn curtains, the corpses of the forgotten are moldering in solitude. The stench of coal smoke mixed with decay is thick in the air. They see no pedestrians, no cars, and no bicycles.

The Recluses

When the forgotten realize that the PCs have come from the outside and that they carry the Child, they react. They are closely tied to the Goddess of the Forgotten, and in their dreams she has given them hope through this unborn child, which shall stop the gradual destruction of their world by removing the Tarotica. They know that the cards are responsible for their gradual fading from existence.

However, the recluses are incapable of contacting the PCs themselves. They lack the power to interact with anyone coming from the outside world. The PCs must make a conscious effort to seek them out in order to obtain their help.

The PCs cannot interact with the forgotten by simply knocking on some doors. They must actually set food into the rotting old houses and seek help. Only then will they be able to talk to the forgotten people. Everyone they meet appears strangely hazy and insubstantial. As soon as they look away, the PCs begin forgetting all their faces.

When the PCs manage to talk to any of the recluses, they will soon get responses. They notice that everyone appears to be teetering on the edge of extreme panic.

"*We are disappearing. It's the cards. The cards did this. We are the fading cards, and the cards are destroying us. You must help us. You have the unborn child. Make sure that it takes the cards away.*"

Through their mental connection with the Goddess of the Forgotten, they know more about the cards than most people. They can explain to the PCs that the Goddess belongs to Metropolis, the "city beyond." The Tarotica is her tool to influence the world of man.

"*We used to be on our own. We lived on the border between London and the great city beyond. We were safe. Now we're being destroyed,*" they say.

"*This is happening because the man holding the cards is using them for his own purposes. He doesn't need the recluses, so we are fading away. We'll be replaced by his slaves!*"

The Child of Magic can create a new card and take control over the Tarotica. They demand that the PCs destroy or remove the cards in order to prevent their own destruction. If the PCs agree to this, the forgotten will reveal how the Forgotten Man can be found. They say that they vaguely remember him, even if they cannot think of his name.

"*You will never find him on your own. Only we, who are also fading away, can find him,*" they say.

If the PCs promise to try to help them, they point the way up a long, winding street that leads to a large stone church on top of the hill.

"*That's St. Patrick's. The Forgotten Man is inside. He's a priest, if we recall correctly. No one has seen him for many years.*"

The Empty Cathedral

The street ends at a paved area at the top of the hill. The church has two tall towers. The churchyard is covered with weeds. If they examine the graves, the PCs discover that nobody has been buried here since the beginning of the last century. Only the narrow walkway leading up to the church gates is well-kept.

The Forgotten Man used to be the pastor of St. Patrick's Cathedral before he finally left London. The recluses of Kennington haven't looked for him in many years, so they don't realize that he abandoned the church. It is an old, crumbling building. Its gates have been left ajar. When the PCs look inside, they see that someone has lit a few candles by the altar, and that the center aisle has been swept, but just barely. Everything is deteriorating. The benches are rotting, the stained-glass windows are broken, and birds are nesting in the exposed rafters.

There is no one inside the church. The PCs find nothing of interest inside the church itself, other than the fact that someone has tried to to maintain some semblance of order. Inside the sacristy, rats have eaten most of the vestments, but in a box on a table by the window they discover a leather-bound black book, which is only slightly water-damaged.

It is a diary written by the Forgotten Man before he finally left the church. It isn't dated with years, but it runs from January 1st to October 31st. Most of the notes tell about christenings, weddings, burials, and the general upkeep of the church. The entries become fewer and fewer towards the end of the book. Nothing seemed to happen at all during the last couple of weeks. The last page bears the following inscription:

"I have considered Giorgio's suggestion. There is nothing more for me to do here. I will follow his advice and leave immediately at dawn. I can't talk to him again. I have written a letter for mother to deliver."

The Mother of the Priest

When the PCs have looked through the entire church, they hear the church doors groaning open, followed by the shuffle of approaching footsteps. They find a small, crooked woman limping along the aisle, sweeping the floor with a broom. When she notices the PCs, she pauses, supporting herself on the broom, nods towards them politely, and then continues with her sweeping.

The woman is the mother of the Forgotten Man. Like all the other forgotten, she does not initiate any conversations. The PCs must address her directly in order to get her to reply. She has tried to keep the church in some semblance of order ever since he disappeared. She is carrying a letter that her son wanted her to give his friend Giorgio before he left. She was going to give it to him, but didn't have any business in town for several weeks. After too much time had passed, she felt too embarrassed to deliver it. She has fought her conscience for not doing so. At times, to ease her guilt, she cleans the church as well as she can.

If they ask about the Forgotten Man, she merely shrugs and says that she doesn't know. If they ask about the priest, she says that he has left. She says that she is the priest's mother, and that he received a posting somewhere else. She doesn't know where.

"*People around here aren't churchgoers,*" she says.

After she realizes that the PCs want to talk to her, she eventually hazards a question. Do they have any business down the hill, to the houses? She pulls out the wrinkled, dirty letter from her pocket.

"*I have something that needs to be delivered. Can you take it with you?*" she asks.

The letter is addressed to Giorgio Fulci. She explains that he is a good friend of her son.

"*He lives at the bottom of the hill.*"

Giorgio Fulci

Finding the right address isn't at all easy. The names on the street signs have long since worn off or faded away. With some effort, the PCs can decipher the remnants of the name 'Fulci' on a handwritten sign outside one of the houses at the bottom of the hill. Nobody opens when they knock, but they notice that someone is moving around inside behind the drawn curtains. The door is actually unlocked.

Giorgio lives alone in the house and never ventures outside. They find him on the first floor watching TV. He looks up when the PCs arrive, and thanks them for delivering the letter. It contains a 'thank you' from the Forgotten Man, because Giorgio gave him the address of his home village, where they were looking for a priest.

Giorgio can tell the PCs that he used to go up the hill to the church to talk to the priest, way back when. But people eventually stopped going to church, so the priest grew tired and decided to leave. Giorgio gave him the address to his former village, so he's certain the Forgotten Man went there. He can remember his friend, but he cannot seem to recall his name. He doesn't remember the name of his home village either, but he is able to direct them. He has a few fading photographs showing low stone buildings on a deserted moor. They all look like they are almost a hundred years old.

"*That place has grown rather quiet over the past years. I thought about returning once, but it was too much of a bother.*"

He shows them to the door and points along a driveway leading from the backyard. It twists and snakes between the dark, ruined factories.

"*Take that road. Follow it and don't leave it, not for a second. When you get there, ask for the Forgotten Man.*"

The Village of the Guardians

The driveway leads through into a desolate landscape with crumbling factories, low brick walls, and broken asphalt. The sky is grey and heavy, and becomes increasingly dark until the landscape is veiled in eternal dusk.

Soon, the darkness is deep enough to keep the PCs' progress slow and cautious. A thick fog glides in and suffocates the light from any torches or lanterns. They get a feeling as if the sky had lowered itself on top of them, and the broken walls surrounding them have transformed into a confusing labyrinth.

They hear the nearby sounds of thundering waves or huge machines. The noise grows stronger until they can no longer hear their own voices. Drops of water splatter on them, and they realize that the road is following the edge of a mighty river that is cascading down somewhere ahead. They have come to the Underworld and the gate to Achlys, which has taken the form of an abandoned industrial landscape.

The road narrows down to just a path between low brick walls. Eventually even these disappear. Swarms of bats fly low over their heads, the only living creatures the PCs can see. They hear a distant clamor of church bells. Just as the darkness and fog are so thick that the PCs can no longer see beyond their outstretched hands, they finally reach a house of stone.

The house is situated on the edge of a small village of eight farms and a crumbling church. The village is almost medieval, except for the occasional bicycle leaning against a wall or a paraffin lamp glowing in a grimy window. There is nothing else more modern than the 14th century. The PCs cannot see any people outside, but if they knock on the doors to any of the houses, they are eventually welcomed inside.

The villagers (***The Guardians***) dress in medieval homespun clothes in dark colors. The houses are very old, stone buildings with slate roofs. There is barely any furniture, just benches along the walls and straw on the floors.

The villagers invite the PCs to share dinner. The people remain quiet unless the PCs ask where they are or how to find the Forgotten Man.

If the PCs don't ask for the Forgotten Man or Achlys, their hosts' behavior resembles that of ordinary villagers. They say that the village doesn't have a name, but "*it was called Trilsey before it lost its name.*" They say that they subsist on sheep farming, and don't visit London very often, although they know that the city is nearby.

If the PCs ask about the Forgotten Man or Achlys, their hosts fall silent. Women and children retire to the kitchen. The men make the sign of the cross, and look around carefully before they, in a whisper, explain that they are the guardians of the Forgotten Man. They serve him and keep his secrets.

"*Only the worthy may step before the Forgotten Man,*" they say.

They explain that the PCs must cleanse themselves before they may hope to see the Forgotten Man. They are escorted out of the building and through the village to the crumbling stone church. It begins to rain, and wolves start to howl in the distance. Inside the cramped church, hundreds of thin wax candles burn.

"*Kneel and pray,*" they say, and leave the PCs inside the church.

At midnight, some three hours later, the two men return and inform the PCs that the Forgotten Man is ready to meet them. They assure the PCs that it is a great honor, and that they must be very special indeed to be allowed such an audience with the Forgotten Man.

The men lead them along a narrow path that climbs a steep hill toward a large, two-story building constructed of masonry far nicer than the village houses. A gate leads into a yard, where they are met by a short man dressed in black who asks them to follow him. The villagers slowly return down the hill.

"*My lord has decided to see you,*" the man says, and shows them inside the house.

The Forgotten Man

The Forgotten Man is a reflection of the Tarotica's first card, the Demiurgos. Whether or not he is actually an aspect of the lost creator is best left undecided. He does have memories and skills in common with the Demiurge, among them the knowledge about how new souls are created.

Like the forgotten servants of the Archons, the Forgotten Man is fading. Only the forgotten can find him. The fact that the PCs can perceive him at all is due to the memories of the Demiurge they have tattooed on the left hand.

The black-dressed servant shows them into a sumptuously furnished dwelling with a seemingly uncountable number of decaying rooms. Half of the exquisite furniture is covered with dust sheets. There are paintings wrapped in brown paper leaning against the walls. The wallpaper is stained and peeling from water damage. There are a number of religious symbols around: crucifixes and votive candles, small pictures with the name of God in Hebrew and Arabic, and etchings depicting Biblical events. Black-dressed servants drift through the rooms like shadows.

The servant leads the PCs through a long succession of rooms, until they finally arrive at a fairly well-preserved drawing room with carved wooden furniture and dark tapestries covering the walls. A white-haired man in a full-length black coat stands with his back towards the PCs, staring out through a window. He turns around as they enter the room. Immediately, they know that they have seen his face somewhere before, but they cannot place it. The servant leaves.

The Forgotten Man suffers from gout and his posture is crooked, but he makes an effort to remain straightened up with the aid of a walking stick. He is maybe in his 70s, with closely cropped hair and round glasses. Beneath the black coat can be seen a priestly collar.

"*What do you want?*" he asks and looks at them with a stern expression. The Forgotten Man knows much about the Tarotica and is one of the few with the knowledge about the creation of new souls. He knows that the Goddess of the Forgotten created the cards from her personal suffering, cutting each one out of her own body.

Seymour belongs in Inferno, but has returned to reclaim the cards. The Forgotten Man is tied to one of the fading cards, which is why he is gradually fading away.

He confirms that they must seek out Achlys, the nothingness that existed before chaos, to create the new soul. When there is total emptiness, a space of endless potential, a new soul will create itself out of that nothingness.

"*The nothingness is the potential. Chaos is the creation,*" he explains.

He cannot explain to the PCs how to create a soul. They already possess souls and do not need another one.

"*But I can explain to the Child,*" he says and takes the container with the fetus.

The Child gazes out for a moment, and soon stirs within the murky fluid. The man asks them to wait for a moment, and then leaves, taking the fetus with him. He returns after a few minutes, putting the jar on the table.

"*Right. Now it knows what must be done. You just bring it into the void.*"

The man can help them find Achlys. He warns them that they must pass the guardian at the gate, but he doesn't consider that as much of a problem. They are not going there to have themselves destroyed, which means that they should be allowed through.

"*Use your memories to find your way back, afterwards.*"

He pulls a cord and a bell rings somewhere far away. After a moment, the servant shows up. The Forgotten Man instructs the servant to lead them to the gate of Achlys.

It is still dark and foggy when they leave the house. They leave the village and walk out into the broken landscape once more. There is no way they can orient themselves. They have no indication of time. Somewhere in the fog, their watches stop. When they hear a scream in the distance, as if from a dying animal, the servant stops.

"*Just keep on straight ahead, and you will find him,*" he says and turns around, hastily disappearing back into the fog.

The Blind One

The stench of blood and decay drifts through the fog, choking their senses. The darkness is dense, almost palpable. The ground slopes slightly downwards, and is covered with stones and gravel. Occasionally, the PCs stumble over bodies and limbs which have been ripped away. There are more and more of these the farther they go until the ground is strewn thickly with bones and skulls. If they stop to investigate, they find that most of them are old and crumble if they are touched, although some still have remnants of flesh and skin.

Finally, they reach a shallow valley and the ground levels out. They hear a rhythmic tearing sound, and the darkness is dispelled. They look down on a small farm in the middle of the valley, almost invisible in the gloom. An old man (***The Blind One***) idly cuts the farm's high grass with a scythe. He is wearing old-fashioned work clothes, and looks up when the PCs arrive.

"*I will let no one continue. You must return or die.*"

They notice he is likely blind from the way he moves his head. On closer inspection, they realize that his eyes have been gouged from his skull. Surrounding the farm are simple wooden crosses, marking the graves of those who refused to turn around.

If the PCs explain that they do not seek destruction, but have a child in need of a soul, the man becomes puzzled. He touches the glass jar with the Child, and thinks for a moment. Then he invites them to the farm house hidden between the hills.

The house is somewhat old-fashioned, its furniture reminiscent of the English countryside of the 1930s. The man explains that he guards the entrance to the labyrinth, and he then asks the PCs about their errand.

"*I can let you pass through the gate, as you do not seek destruction. But why would you search for Achlys?*"

When the PCs inform him that they are trying to create a new soul, he shakes his head.

"*There is no one who can create a soul, there has never been. Each soul must create itself. Those in need of a soul call out for one. Then it creates itself out of Achlys, and is formed in the void. The Child can call for its soul.*"

"*Achlys is annihilation, and no one returns from it,*" he warns them. He appears to study the tattoos on the PCs, and then says that it may be possible for them to find their way out aided by their memories.

"*Memories disappear when you enter. All the time that has passed between the creation of your souls and the present will disappear. It will never have been. But you carry your memories with you on your flesh. Aided by them, you may recreate your lives and return. Perhaps.*"

He warns them not to venture too close to his sister, the one humans call She Who Waits Below. She can and will devour them if they get too close.

He leads the PCs out of the house and up a hill on the other side of the valley. As they get closer to their destination, they see a massive labyrinth etched into the side of the hill, a white spiral created by the exposed limestone.

"*This is the gate. Let the Child call out for its soul. Maybe your memories will help you return, later. Otherwise you shall be forever lost.*"

When they take the first step towards the labyrinth's center, they realize what he meant. The void in the spiral's center draws them in. The pull grows stronger with every step, and their will to return to reality shatters into fragments and is swept away. Only the Child remains undisturbed in its glass jar.

The Inner Labyrinth

When they walk through the labyrinth, the world dissolves around them. It becomes grainy, indistinct, and black and white, like a photograph in a newspaper. They watch as their own bodies dissolve until only the tattoos remain. The glass jar with the fetus becomes difficult to see, but the Child within remains clear.

The spiral seems immensely larger than it appeared from the outside, but soon they lose all perception of time and distance. Gradually, with each step they take, they forget who they are, where they come from, and what their purpose is. They dissolve into the grey nothingness until only the fetus and their tattoos remain visible. All their memories are erased, unless they continually concentrate on the tattoos in order to remember who they are and where they come from.

A woman's voice calls out to them from the maelstrom in the middle of the spiral, beckoning for them to come and be dissolved. Finally, there are only the memories that they were born out of Achlys and that the nothingness is calling them back. Only by concentrating on their tattoos – the only anchors remaining within the endless chaos – can they resist the temptation to move inwards and be destroyed.

The PCs no longer possess any perception of motion or of their surroundings, until they finally see something which differentiates from the grey nothingness. Far away, in the maelstrom calling out for them, they can perceive a feminine form. She is surrounded by the grey haze, and occasionally she disappears, but they still see her clearly. She is holding the glass jar with the fetus in her hands. It is She Who Waits Below.

The feminine form appears to change its shape continually, fluidly, and not always remaining human. She Who Waits Below reaches out and gives the glass jar back to them. Immediately, they realize something has changed within the Child. It looks at them and utters something which they cannot completely comprehend. The PCs are still nothing but the tattooed memories. Only by concentrating on the blue spiral on their left hand, and by following it out from the center, can they find their way out of the void. Gradually, the world reforms around them, until they are back inside the labyrinth once more.

However, they are no longer on the dark moor. They have been brought back to London, and find themselves standing inside a faintly suggested labyrinth of scattered stones in Hyde Park. Some distance farther on, they see a blind gardener raking leaves.

CHAPTER 5
DIRTY DREAMS

"*I was a bloody idiot to help him catch that kid. But he was powerful and I believed him. And then I realized he wanted to take over the whole bloody scene, and I wasn't part of the picture. That's when I tried to kill the kid, and then, well, you know...*"

Wes angrily tapped his cigarette against the ashtray. His gaze wandered all over the room, and his thin hands kept clenching and unclenching.

"*But of course. We can try to pick it up. We have to get inside and wake it. And then I can kick that bloody bastard out!*"

He went into the kitchen and returned with five small plastic bags containing a black powder. He laid the bags on the kitchen table and brought out five disposable syringes from a greasy-looking bag.

"*This all cost me a bundle. I'm not doing this to help you, don't ever believe that. It's just that I'm really pissed off,*" he said, and started mixing the powder.

He prepped each needle, filling them with the dark liquid. With his practiced hand, each syringe found their vein, as skillful as a surgeon.

At first, nothing seemed to happen. But then, a choking fog muddled their thoughts, letting them sink back into a foggy haze. Slowly, the world cleared around them. They were still in Wes's apartment, but things had changed. Outside, the sky was a deeper blue. Wes's jaundiced body looked even more predatory than before. Among the cigarette ashes and the grime on the table were hundreds of small, black insects. They cascaded over the table's edge and started to scurry like a living wave out over the floor.

The PCs have helped the Child of Magic create a soul. Seymour can no longer place it fully under his power, but he can still prevent it from gaining control over the Tarotica. He uses the power he has over the Dreamworld of the junkies: a dark and nightmarish place that has been influenced by the Suit of Crescents for a hundred years. This is where Seymour plans to capture the Child's dream soul and keep it imprisoned in eternal nightmares. The PCs must enter the Dreamworld in order to free the Child once more. The only person who can bring them there is the dream prince, Wesley 'Wes' Sterling, who helped Seymour catch the Child's soul. Wes realizes that he has been had, and now seeks revenge. An addict, he is not an ally to be trusted.

Stolen Dreams

After the Child acquires its new soul, Seymour can no longer harm it through physical means. It instinctively defends itself against all attackers. Despite the fact that it does not have a true consciousness, the Child can still influence the world around it with the powers of an Awakened human. Seymour and his men cannot touch it.

Instead, the Black Lictor decides to trap it. Aided by Wes – a dream prince among London's addicts, whom he controls by the help of the Tarotica – Seymour entices the Child's dream soul and then traps it at Sandburn within the dream. To be extra cautious, he warps the Dreamworld to assure that Sandburn becomes impossible to locate. Then he begins sending nightmares to the Child, in order to bend it to his own will. He betrays Wes, throwing him out of the Dreamworld with a warning to not interfere.

The PCs soon realize that something is amiss when the fetus stops looking at them, its expression going blank. It tightens into a convulsive ball and no longer moves. They are unable to make it react to them. There is little point in them consulting with a doctor, as the fetus should be dead according to all the laws of normal medicine.

A Failed Murder Attempt

After Wes (***Wesley Sterling***), the dream prince of London's drug-users, realizes that Seymour has taken over his Dreamworld and plans to permanently expel him, he becomes desperate. Currently, the Dreamworld is the only thing keeping him alive. He cannot survive outside it for long. He cannot directly get at Seymour, so instead he decides to attack the Child. He is unaware that harming it in this world is virtually impossible.

At a moment when the fetus is unsupervised, Wes attacks with the help of two companions. Their aim is to kill the Child, and they do not anticipate any difficulties. As such, they haven't brought any weapons, intending to use whatever seems handy at the time.

When they enter the room containing the fetus, Wes immediately senses that something is very wrong. Magically intuitive, Wes perceives a strange aura around the Child. He tells one of his companions to find something heavy, in order to smash the fetus's glass jar.

The man picks something up and approaches the jar, but the fetus senses the threat. It reacts instinctively and uses telekinesis to turn a bookcase over the man, drive a pair of scissors into his eyes, or use whatever else is handy, depending on where it is located.

The man is seriously hurt. Panicked, Wes and the second man quickly leave the place. When the PCs return, they discover the wounded junkie on the floor. He claims to be a burglar. If they pressure him, he admits that he works for Wes, but doesn't "*know nothin' about nothin'.*" Reluctantly, he tells them that Wes hangs out in Limehouse, but that is all he divulges. He seems to be in a state of shock, and is obviously afraid of the Child.

Threats

Wes now decides to threaten the PCs instead. He sends two large, dirty men (***Junkies***) with long, lanky hair, armed with stilettos, for a 'chat.' The men tell the PCs to get their kid back from the Dreamworld, or else they will suffer the consequences. They also say that it will not survive much longer, if they don't get it out soon. If the PCs try to interrogate them, they know nothing. Wes has simply told them what to say. Under threat, they will reveal that they were sent by Wes, who is currently in Limehouse.

The Junkies

The PCs can contact the ***junkies*** in the city to find out what is happening. They are not that cooperative or easy to question, though. Generally, they demand something in exchange for information. However, if the PCs manage to gain their trust through some means, they are told that a lot of people seem to be permanently trapped in the Dreamworld, unable to get out again. They speak of an imposing man the PCs recognize as Seymour, who has taken control of the Dreamworld and started changing it. If the PCs ask about the junkies' dreams, many refer to Wes as being an important person. He's a small-time dealer known among the junkies of east London, living in a flat at Dog's End in Limehouse.

A Flat in Limehouse

Wes lives in a rundown house at Dog's End. It's a gallery-access house, and Wes lives on the second floor at the back, fronting a narrow canal. There is no name on the door, but the junkies in the vicinity know that Wes lives at number 32.

A thin woman in a black blouse and too-tight jeans opens the door. The flat is filled with people. It is a filthy place with worn furniture, water-damaged wallpaper, empty wine bottles, and ashtrays packed to bursting laying everywhere. It is cold and damp and stinks of old tobacco, mildew, and urine.

Wes stumbles out to meet them. He is emaciated and jaundiced, with yellowish eyes and claw-like hands. He wears jeans and an open leather jacket. When he realizes who the PCs are, he becomes increasingly agitated.

"*Oh, you mean that thing. No big deal. Don't be worried. We can talk about it. Step inside my office.*"

He tells the PCs to sit down in the kitchen and then kicks everyone else out of the apartment. When they can talk undisturbed, he brings out a few bottles of beer and offers them to whomever. At the same time, he tries to squeeze as much information out of the PCs as he can, such as what the Child of Magic really is, and why Seymour wants to trap its soul in the Dreamworld.

He tries to get this information without saying anything himself. But when this one-sided inquiry becomes impossible to maintain, he reluctantly starts giving up some information of his own. He explains that he used to be the master of a Dreamworld that is shared by most of the junkies in London.

"*It's existed for a long time. I took it over from another guy.*"

Wes doesn't know it, but the Dreamworld was created by the Tarotica, its Suit of Crescents having shaped the junkies' dreams for many years.

After Seymour showed up, he started ingratiating himself and gave away drugs and money to anyone who obeyed and promised to support him. Wes says he tried to kick him out at first, but Seymour proved to be too powerful.

"*So when he wanted to catch that kid, I did it. We hid it at that hospital, Sandburn, but he didn't trust me after that and hid the hospital somewhere. I don't know where it is anymore. He kicked me out and told me I'd get hurt if I ever returned. If you know how to throw him out, I'm with you.*"

Wes explains that Seymour has hidden Sandburn. It is no longer where it should be in the dream. He may have moved it to a private Dreamworld. In that case, only Seymour would know where the entrance is.

"*But it's impossible to keep anything like that hidden for long in the dream. There are people who will know.*"

He cannot talk to anyone himself, but he tells the PCs about the people they should contact in order to get the information.

It is true that everyone has sworn fidelity to Seymour, but their loyalties aren't worth much in Wes's Dreamworld.

If the PCs agree to try freeing the Child, Wes leaves the kitchen and returns with five small plastic baggies containing a black powder. He puts the bags on the table, along with five syringes, fresh from the local needle exchange. He begins mixing the powder. If the PCs ask what it is, he simply smiles.

If the PCs are reluctant to inject an unknown drug, they can get their own. However, Wes must take them into the Dreamworld through his own apartment. It is the only safe entry point to the Dreamworld, ever since Seymour kicked him out.

At first, nothing seems to happen after the hit. But soon, the drug lowers a choking fog over the PCs and their thoughts refuse to follow their wills. Slowly, the world clears around them. They are still in Wes' apartment, but something has changed. Outside the sky is a deeper shade of blue. Wes's jaundiced body appears more like a predator. Hundreds of small, black insects crawl through the ashes and the grime on the table. They tumble off the table's edge and start crawling across the floor.

Wes's Dream World

The PCs are now in the Dreamworld of the junkies. It isn't a Dreamworld in the usual sense, as they are still physically in London. Their bodies are not lying dormant somewhere, but everything happening to them also happens to them in reality. They can interact with people outside of the Dreamworld. The only difference between the PCs and those outside the dream is that the PCs can see more of reality.

They have a limited ability to see through the Illusion, mixed with a tendency to hallucinate. This means that they see things happening in London which they normally wouldn't. Nightmares take on physical shapes. The walls flow with blood and are transformed to gaping maws. Wes's dirty flat gradually fills with crawling insects, forcing them to retreat to the street. Everything outside has changed. The GM should use their own imagination, incorporating the PCs' disadvantages to conjure up a sense of dread and fear. They are now in the middle of a communal nightmare. They should never feel at peace or safe.

Before they leave the apartment, Wes assumes a different shape. He transforms himself into some sort of shaggy predator with yellowish, bloodshot eyes.

"*We're going to talk to Richie. He knows who's working for Seymour,*" he says and leads them out through the door.

London is more claustrophobic, dirty, and convoluted than before, but it generally remains recognizable. The PCs see more junkies on the streets than usual, and some people are strangely disfigured and animal-like. The sky is dark, perpetually close to dusk, regardless of the actual time of day.

They take the tube to Leicester Square downtown. The tube train is organic and rotting, as if they are within the innards of a giant dead caterpillar. At Leicester Square, they see even more clearly that most people don't appear as they should. Many have the features of insects or are horribly malformed. In the middle of the square, a man sits by the fence around the grassy plot, sells little jars with dead fetuses. The PCs recognize these as reflections of the Child of Magic.

"*He works for Seymour. Watch out for him.*"

They turn into Chinatown and stop outside a restaurant with dried ducks and sausages hanging in the window. Wes says that the man inside is called Richie. He is a police informant, who has sold out to Seymour.

"*But I don't think he's sold out completely. If you have something to offer him, I bet he can take you to Seymour's servants.*"

Richie

The restaurant is hot and filled with smoke. The only people inside are a tall Chinese man, who stands behind the bar wiping glasses, and two fat, short men, sitting at a table, whispering. They both have a glass in front of them. All three look up when the PCs enter. The Chinese man is Richie.

If the PCs mention Seymour's name or Sandburn, the two fat men get up and hurry outside. If they are more discreet, Richie turns to the men, informing them that he is just about to close. After they have left, he locks the door and goes to pour glasses of Chinese herb liquor for the PCs.

Richie is prepared to talk to the PCs, but only if they have something they can offer him in return. He wants to know more about Seymour, the Tarotica, the Goddess of the Forgotten, the Child of Magic, and Sandburn. In exchange for that information, he tells them that Seymour has bought out almost all the small-time dealers in London. He's demanding protection money and is trying to corner the drug business.

"*It's impossible to get at him. He has powerful friends,*" Richie shrugs. "*Even my employers, my legal employers, are protecting him,*" he adds.

When the PCs mention that Sandburn has disappeared, he nods.

"*He got help in doing that. He couldn't hide something as large as that on his own. More people must have been involved. And I think I know who.*"

He says that the two men in the restaurant were spies for Seymour. They often meet at Cards, an exclusive club on Greek Street. Richie says that he can buy memberships for the PCs, but it is expensive. It will cost them 2,000 pounds per person. This is all the help he can give them. He'll provide the membership cards to them that very same evening, if they can get the money. He accepts all major credit cards. Once they agree to pay, he gets the cards for them.

"*Ask for Charlotte. She serves at Cards.*"

Seymour's Agents

The two fat men at the restaurant are ***Seymour's Agents***. They become interested in the PCs, especially if Seymour or Sandburn are openly mentioned. When the PCs leave the restaurant, the pair follow at a distance. The agents try to catch Wes, if and when he and the PCs separate – for example, if the PCs leave him behind while they go to Cards. They threaten to turn him over to Seymour unless he tells them everything he knows about the PCs. Wes is frightened and starts to talk. Once they have everything, the agents kill him and leave his body in an alley. Then they start following the PCs in hopes of catching them and turning them over to Seymour. If the PCs outnumber them and appear to be tough, they head over to La Parma, a small bar at Old Compton Street, where they enlist some thugs to help them out.

Cards

Wes says that he thinks heading over to Cards is a good idea. If they can't afford to (or simply don't want to) become members, the PCs can wait outside the club until someone comes by that they can pick up for interrogation.

The entrance to Cards is a nondescript, grey door on the first floor of a house on Greek Street. Inside is a huge man in a black tuxedo. He does not look completely human. When he smiles, they realize that his teeth are sharpened. His nails are also black and sharpened.

"*Mr. Seymour's enemies dare show up here, I see. Don't worry. No one's going to reveal you. Unless you do something stupid, that is,*" he says and takes their coats.

They enter a large club, which is far larger on the inside than possible considering the building's small exterior. There is a seemingly endless number of rooms, bars, dance floors with soft music, and private booths. A mix of extremely well-dressed upper class people and down-and-out junkies mingle about in the rooms.

They see ***Seymour*** standing at a bar, surrounded by a flock of admirers. He frowns when he spots the PCs entering, but makes no signs of recognizing them. Four large bodyguards, who appear more dead than alive, remain constantly in his vicinity.

Everyone at the club is more or less owned by Seymour, but the PCs are not in any danger unless they start messing around. It is possible to talk discreetly with various people. They talk a lot about Seymour having picked up junkies and carted them off somewhere, although no one knows where. Many have simply disappeared. The PCs can pick up a lot of information regarding the junkies' Dreamworld, and hear speculations about Seymour's plans.

All of Seymour's closest associates are marked with a small snake tattoo on their left temple. They have helped him move the hospital, so know where it is.

If the PCs ask about Charlotte, several people point out a tall blonde woman serving drinks. If they try to talk to her, she asks them to follow her and leads the way to the kitchen. Unidentifiable things swirl together with dead insects and human limbs in large pots. A huge cook is cutting up a human body.

Charlotte explains that only a few of Seymour's closest men know where Sandburn has been hidden away. Everyone with a snake tattooed on the left temple belongs to his inner circle. Some of them can probably be bribed, but they are all afraid of Seymour.

"*Arrange a meeting with somebody later on, somewhere else. Most of the people here believe you have a lot of influence, because you are Seymour's enemies, and yet you showed up here. They think you could have a lot to offer them.*"

When they enter the club once more, the PCs notice that several people have a tattoo of a snake on the left temple. Almost everyone clustering around Seymour have these. As long as Seymour is around, nobody seems willing to talk with the PCs.

If they look around a bit, they find a young man with the same tattoo sitting by himself in a smaller room, nursing his drink. He looks up worriedly when the PCs approach him.

"*We can't talk in here,*" he whispers. "*Meet me at the Victoria Station entrance in an hour, when the tube closes down.*"

HUNTED

When the PCs have asked around at the club for a while, somebody finally takes notice of them and notifies Seymour. If the agents from the Chinese restaurant are looking for them, they have arrived and reported to Seymour by now. The PCs notice that the bodyguards are looking in their direction, and that people around them are moving away. Suddenly, the room transforms around them and they find themselves inside a torture chamber. Seymour and his guards remain the only patrons not nailed to the walls, hanging from the ceiling, or lying dismembered on the floor. The walls drip with blood.

"*This way,*" they hear Charlotte say.

When ***Seymour's agents*** lunge for them, they can follow Charlotte, who leads them out through the kitchen and out the back of the building. She closes the door behind them. They are just in time to avoid the pursuers.

Unless they have managed to prevent the agents from killing him, they discover Wes' maimed body in the alley behind the house. For the remainder of their stay in the Dreamworld, the PCs are chased relentlessly. Everyone knows that Seymour pays well for information about them. They must be extremely careful if they have any hope of slipping away. The GM can let them be caught if they behave in a foolish or reckless manner, but primarily the pursuit is to create narrative tension.

VICTORIA STATION

After the tube closes for the night, Seymour gathers about 30 ***junkies*** at Victoria Station. He drags them off to Sandburn, where their pain assists in the creation of his purgatory. The old prison is hidden in a closed section of the Dreamworld. The only way to get there is by taking the tube train towards Brixton after the night's last train departs, and then continuing a good distance beyond the end of the line.

If the PCs arrive at the station after closing, they can see well-dressed men, alone or two-by-two, enter the closed tube station. The man they talked to at Cards is waiting for them, hidden behind a newsstand next to one of the entrances. He whistles to get their attention.

The man doesn't want to tell them his real name or who he is. He says that the PCs can call him ***Raoul***. He is short and dark and has a sharp profile and pale hands. He says that he really doesn't work for Seymour. As proof of this, he wets his finger and shows that his tattoo is just painted on. He asks the PCs about their purpose, and who they are. The only thing he knows is that they are enemies of Seymour.

"*I have tried to stop this trafficking, but my superiors refuse to listen.*"

He explains that Seymour is picking up people in the Dreamworld with promises of money and drugs. They are carted off somewhere, he doesn't know where, and then they disappear.

"*They are always taken away after midnight. Tonight, I decided to follow.*"

THE TRACK TO SANDBURN

They have no problems getting down to the platform. The iron gates have been closed, but a small door has been left ajar. The light on the platform illuminates a large number of people boarding a waiting train. ***Seymour's agents*** in black are shoving the ***junkies*** into a train compartment.

The PCs and ***Raoul*** can sneak down the escalators and get inside one of the last cars before the train rolls out of the station. Two agents guard each car but the PCs can hide behind the seats without much difficulty. Only the emergency lights are on.

The train rolls south towards Brixton. The trip only takes fifteen minutes. Meanwhile, they see how the tube car transforms around them into an icy torture chamber. They recognize the environment from their previous trip to Inferno. Seymour's guards are also mutating and changing, as they gradually transform into razides. On the other hand, Raoul becomes paler and paler. He notes everything in a small black book.

The train rumbles past Brixton, which is normally the end of the line, and continues some distance further until it stops at a dark platform. The station signs read 'Sandburn.'

Seymour's guards shove the junkies ahead, up the escalators towards the turnstiles and then disappear. The train remains at the station and the PCs and Raoul are able to get off.

SANDBURN IN THE DREAM

The escalators from the tube lead directly to the cellars at Sandburn, opening out of the east wall in the old upper basement. When the PCs approach the basement, they hear screams and loud voices. The guards shackle their prisoners before they are led further to the isolation cells, where they are finally locked up. After a few minutes, everything is relatively quiet again – at least for the moment.

Sandburn is closer to Inferno here than in the waking world. The PCs soon hear tormented screams coming from the torture chambers nearby. The stairs to the prison of the Goddess appears as an icy cave opening. There are hoarfrost-covered cockroaches and centipedes everywhere, some of them up to twelve inches long. If they enter the lower basement to talk to ***the Goddess of the Forgotten***, she tells them that the dream soul of the Child is in Seymour's old office.

Raoul admits that he is looking for somebody, a colleague, who disappeared during a previous mission. He walks off towards the isolation cells in order to find him. The PCs can either help him or search for the Child.

Raoul's colleague disappeared while he investigated Seymour's drug dealings. He is lying half-dead in a cell in the isolation section. The colleague tells the PCs that Seymour has captured a child that he is keeping at his office. Raoul says that he will try to return through the tunnel with his colleague. He doesn't want to risk following the PCs up to the prison.

"Get in touch with me later on. I may have some more information. Brennan here has probably found out quite a bit, too," he says, and quickly writes a note, which he gives to the PCs. 'Raoul Strapford, Vice Squad, Scotland Yard.'

If they are careful, the PCs can ascend the stairs to Seymour's office without being seen. Seymour isn't here at the moment. The place has apparently been cleaned up since they were here the last time, and the office is obviously being used. On the desk sits the familiar glass jar with ***the Child of Magic*** inside. However, it no longer appears to be the partially-formed fetus, but a new-born, sleeping infant: a baby girl. The jar is filled with cockroaches, which crawl all over her. Sensing the PCs, she begins beating against the glass with her fists.

The PCs can wake the Child by lifting it out or by breaking the glass jar. It will then fade away and disappear. Contrary to the PCs' impressions, the Child is not physically present at Sandburn. At the same moment the Child wakes up, the PCs also wake up from the drug. They watch as the world returns to its more solid form around them.

It is night and they are in Seymour's office. The wisest course of action would be to get out before anyone discovers them. If they spend a few minutes searching through Seymour's office, they will find a few interesting leads.

In the bottom desk drawer, they can discover three letters from a certain Chris Walden. They reek of an odd perfume, and are bound together with red silk ribbons. These are letters from Chris, the conjurer of Passion who is the Child's father. Seymour now knows that only Chris can give birth to the Child. He has tried to seduce Chris into Inferno without success. Chris carefully declines to visit Sandburn, but suggests instead that he and Seymour meet at Michiko, a restaurant in Soho.

Back to Reality

When the PCs leave Sandburn, they are back in reality again. However, the people they encountered in the Dreamworld exist in real life also. They can look up Raoul at Scotland Yard, or Richie at the Chinese restaurant. Both look more normal in the world of the awake.

Richie is reluctant to talk to the PCs. He's afraid of Seymour and has been threatened. He asks them to leave immediately. He cannot help them further.

Raoul works at Scotland Yard Vice Squad. It takes him a few moments to recognize the PCs when he meets them. He looks a bit embarrassed when seeing them, as if he's ashamed of having been to the junkies' Dreamworld.

Raoul tells the PCs that Seymour has tight connections with the higher ups. All the investigations concerning him have been dropped. Raoul is subject to an investigation, accused of bribes and corruption. He looks a bit downcast, and is apologetic for being unable to provide them with more help.

If they ask him about Chris Walden, he can uncover an impressive amount of information about the conjurer. If they give him a couple of hours, he can track down the information from the police files at the Yard. The information states that his real name is Christopher Walden. There are several arrests and convictions for obscenity, as well as pending lawsuits. He seems to work in pornography. Raoul cannot find an address, but he gives them a slightly-aged photograph of a 30-year-old man.

CHAPTER 6
THE CHILD OF MAGIC

"YES, I'M THE FATHER OF THE CHILD, BUT I STILL DON'T KNOW WHAT *to do about it,*" Chris said, and continued with his drumming against the glass to provoke some sort of reaction from the fetus.

She smiled at him, as if watching him from her half-closed eyelids.

"The Child was bound to the mother when the ritual was woven, and this decided how the fetus would develop. It is impossible to put it in an incubator or anywhere and just hope that it will start growing."

He put the jar down and poured himself another glass of wine. Far away, they could hear gunshots, and the blond man rushed into the room once again.

"They've got the police with them. Michiko has been arrested. They've threatened to kill him, if you don't give yourself up," he said, catching his breath. Chris drank deep from the wine glass.

"Something must be done. Otherwise, I will die and you will become Seymour's servants forever," he said and put the glass down.

The PCs have saved the Child of Magic from the Dreamworld. But they still don't know what to do with it. Seymour wants to stop it from being born and taking over the Tarotica at all costs. In order to stop this, he tries to kill the only person that can make the fetus develop fully and give birth to it: the Child's father. The PCs must find the father, a conjurer of Passion, who has hidden himself in a world where Seymour's servants cannot move. At first, he states that there is nothing he can do to help. After the Child's mother died, it could no longer be born. The PCs must convince the conjurer to change his sex in order to deliver the Child, and must also help to discover the magic ritual to make such a thing possible.

Seymour's Hunt

Chris Walden is the mightiest conjurer of Passion in all of London, with substantial interest in the British sex and pornography industry. He has kept himself young through the aid of magic, and doesn't look older than 30, despite the fact that he was born in the early 1920s.

He has developed into a creature of Passion, and is no longer entirely human. After Mary Langsbury called for a partner to create a Child of Magic with the aid of the Tarotica, Chris heard her call. He is partly under the Tarotica's influence and those ties forced him to obey. He went to Sandburn and conceived the Child with Mary. By the time he tried contacting her a few weeks later, she was already dead and Seymour had taken over Sandburn. Terrified, Walden went into hiding. Seymour has since managed to find out that Walden is the Child's father. At first, he planned to pull the conjurer down into Inferno in order to let the Child develop inside his body. But that plan had to be abandoned after the PCs rescued the fetus out of Inferno. When Seymour discovered what had happened, it was too late to do anything. The Child already possessed a soul. He made a last attempt and captured the Child's dream soul.

After the PCs have managed to free the Child's dream soul, Seymour becomes desperate. He fears that they will find some way of giving birth to the Child, allowing it to take control of the Tarotica. In order to stop this, he tries to murder the last living human with a ritual connection to the child, and thus able to give birth to it: Chris Walden. After the PCs free the dream soul, Seymour begins an unending witch hunt for Walden. He will not try to kill the fetus, as he's afraid that this will destroy the cards. Instead, he goes for the father. His agents are searching through Soho and questioning everyone in the sex industry. However, Chris Walden has retired to his own magic kingdom, where the Black Lictor cannot reach him. Seymour has no power over Passion, and as long as Chris stays away, he will survive. Even so, he has begun to worry.

Searching for Chris

The PCs don't know what to do with the Child. The Goddess of the Forgotten has told them that they must make sure it is born in order for it to create the 68th card. She has no idea how this is to be done, though. She says that only the mother can give birth to it. A unique connection was set up during the ritual of creation. Rupert Faraday gives the same information, that only the mother can give it birth.

But the PCs soon notice that Seymour is chasing after Chris Walden. Raoul, Seymour's men, and people in the Dreamworld of the junkies all know of the astronomical price put on Walden's head. The PCs may also have found the letters from Walden to Seymour. The dead of Inferno suggested that Seymour was looking for a person who could give birth to the Child.

They have two definite leads to Walden. He mentions Michiko in his letters, which is a restaurant in Soho. Raoul and his contacts in Scotland Yard have information about a company owned by Walden called Lovecraft Inc. It has featured in several known cases involving sexual offences. Rupert Faraday also knows Chris, but they haven't seen each other for several month. He knows that Chris is the owner of Lovecraft.

Michiko

Michiko is a small restaurant with a bar and club on the first floor. It's on a back street in Soho. Despite the name, it doesn't serve Japanese food, but traditional English dishes. The restaurant has been named after the owner, an English-Japanese man named Michiko. It's a well-known hangout for transgender people, but it does attract a rather mixed crowd.

There is a diverse clientele in the restaurant when the PCs arrive, including four of ***Seymour's agents***. They look up when the PCs arrive. The PCs seem to recognize these gentlemen from somewhere, but they cannot place them. (They met the agents in the Dreamworld.)

The bar upstairs contains about 30 people. It is crowded and hot, and the sound levels are deafening. Michiko, a man dressed in black leather and geisha makeup is mingling and talking to people. Two of Seymour's agents, dressed in matching dark suits, are sitting at a table. Margie, a stocky English woman in her 40s, is tending the bar. She is talking to a young man with notebook and pen in hand. This is Gordon Sherman, a journalist also searching for Chris Walden.

The PCs can easily start talking with anyone and find out that there is a hunt for Chris. When the PCs ask for him, they are hushed up and the guests nod towards Seymour's agents.

"They are everywhere. And they have started to collaborate with the police. People have gotten in trouble. The police have threatened Michiko."

The only person present who knows where Chris is hiding is Michiko himself. He refuses to say anything if the PCs just ask for Chris. The only chance of getting anything from him is by talking privately to him and showing him the fetus. He then brings them to a room behind the bar.

When he sees the fetus, Michiko realizes that there is something special about the PCs. He makes a phone call and confirms that he can give them Chris' address. When he gets the go-ahead he tells them that Walden is at a private club at Soho Square.

"*First floor, code 3276. And make sure that no one is following you.*"

If the PCs ask about Chris or talk to Michiko privately, Gordon Sherman becomes interested. He is writing a feature on the excitement surrounding Walden's recent disappearance, and is trying to get hold of him for an interview. He confronts the PCs and begins to question them. Unless the players are quite explicit about getting rid of him, he shadows the PCs, hoping that they will lead him to Walden.

LOVECRAFT INC.

If the PCs never found the letters from Walden to Seymour, they have no lead to Michiko. In that case, they will have to ask around in Soho. Rupert and Raoul also know where they can find him. Everyone points to Lovecraft Inc. on Brewer Street, a company distributing pornographic items. Chris is listed as the official owner of the company.

Lovecraft Inc. is located on the first floor of an old, run-down house. The entrance leads to a staircase from the ground floor directly to the first. A discreet sign indicates that Lovecraft Inc. is located on the premises.

If the PCs ring the bell, a heavily made-up woman in her 30s opens the door. She inquires about their business. If they ask about Chris, she says that he isn't there and that she doesn't know where he is. She looks frightened and they can see that the makeup is failing to hide a large bruise on her temple and broken lips. Seymour's men have already paid a visit at the company and tried to force the employees to reveal Chris's whereabouts. Like at Michiko, the PCs must prove that they are not Seymour's henchmen to get people to talk. They can refer to Rupert Faraday, show the fetus, or reveal what they know of Seymour's plans in order to be admitted.

They are led into a modern office with small cubicles separated by glass walls. Four employees work at the office. The company distributes Japanese videos, printed materials, and sex aids. Merchandise is spread out on the floor and on tables. Binders and papers are strewn on the floor. Two men and a woman are trying to put the place in order. Someone has obviously done a violent search not too long ago.

The woman who opened the door introduces herself as Camille Rose. The other employees are called Sandy, Greg, and Patricia, respectively. If the PCs manage to win Camille's confidence, she explains that four men dressed in black forced their way in earlier that morning while she was alone. They ripped out everything and beat her to find out where Chris was hiding. They threatened to burn the house or kill someone, if he doesn't show up soon.

"*They have threatened other people too. Michiko is afraid of them.*"

If they ask, she explains that Michiko is a friend of Chris, and that he owns a restaurant.

Camille can give the address to the club at Soho Square. Like Michiko, she makes a phone call to check first.

Walden's Hideout

Chris Walden has retired to a private club where he is relatively safe from Seymour finding him. His magic protects him from being seen. But Seymour's agents have started collaborating with the police, and they are spreading so much terror among Walden's friends and acquaintances that he no longer feels safe even there. When Seymour starts to kidnap people and threaten to kill them if Walden doesn't show up, his own friends start demanding that he gives himself up in order to save them all.

In addition, the PCs cannot get to the club without leading ***Seymour's agents*** there. A hundred eyes are watching them wherever they go Their pursuers will remain with them as long as they stay in Soho. They cannot persuade Walden to leave his hideout, as he realizes that he is done for the moment he leaves. The club where he's hiding is in an old, private apartment from the turn of the century. It takes up an entire floor, but nothing on the outside suggests that it is there. Three apartment doors lacking nameplates lead into the club. If the PCs ring any of the doors a young blond man with nipple rings opens the door. He is extremely distrustful and will not let them inside unless they can prove who they are.

When he is fully convinced that they should be allowed to meet Chris, he leads them through a series of dimly lit rooms. The furnishings are a mixture of British Imperial and a modern S&M-club: heavy curtains and furniture combined with chains, steel, and black-painted walls. The visitors are also a mix of extreme sado-masochists and what appear to be ordinary businessmen. No one pays any attention to the PCs.

The young man unlocks a door and shows them into a room without windows. ***Chris*** is waiting for them there. He's a thin man who appears to be no older than 30. He is dressed in a silk kimono and has waist-length, blond hair. He looks very nervous, but invites the PCs inside and asks them to close the door behind them.

Chris asks to see the Child of Magic in order to convince himself that the PCs are who they claim to be. He tells them that Seymour tried to lure him into some form of trap earlier before the PCs picked up the fetus in Inferno. After that, he didn't hear anything for a while, but now Seymour seems to have decided that Chris must die. He is frightened and realizes that his protection isn't going to hold out for much longer.

Chris understands that Seymour's interest has something to do with the Child of Magic. He tells the PCs that he is her father. If they ask how that is possible, he explains that he is a conjurer of Passion. But he doesn't know what the PCs must do to make sure that the Child is born or how to stop Seymour.

The Child was bound to the mother when she was created. The ritual bound them to each other and determined how the fetus would develop. It is impossible to put her in an incubator or anywhere else in the hope that she will begin to grow, he explains.

Initially, Chris does not reveal that he also was bound to the Child during the ritual, and thus he can give it birth by changing his sex. This does not occur to him at first. However, if the PCs suggest it, he says that it could be possible.

"I can change sex for a short moment, an hour or so at most. But that isn't long enough."

He says that he has heard about spells for permanent sex changes, but he doesn't know them. He would need to do some magical research; something they hardly have time for, as Seymour is nipping at their heels.

"But something must be done. Otherwise, I will die and you will become Seymour's servants forever."

On the Run

As they are talking, they hear gunshots outside, and the blond man with the nipple rings returns in a hurry.

"They've got the police with them and they're just outside. They shot at Janice, but I think she got away. Michiko has been arrested. They've threatened to kill him if they can't have you," he says catching his breath.

Seymour's agents have gathered outside the house with the local ***police***. They are waiting on a warrant to do a full house search.

"We can't stay here," ***Chris*** says, panicked.

He dresses and leads them through the club to a hidden elevator, which takes them down the basement. Using a long, dark tunnel, they travel three blocks to an underground parking garage. From there, they can get out onto Oxford Street, unseen.

Chris explains that they must get to a magically protected location to make sure that Seymour cannot reach them. It also needs to be a place where Chris's magic can function. The cemetery of the homeless is too destructive a place for Passion magic, so Chris refuses to even go near the place. Possible safe places are the Court of the Fools or Rupert Faraday's apartment. He is more skeptical about going to the Court of Fools, as it is farther away and he doesn't know anyone there. They can make it on foot to Rupert's place, if they're careful. Unless the PCs have any suggestions, Chris suggests that they should go to Rupert's as they've known eachother for a long time.

"And I probably need another conjurer of Passion, if we're creating a new spell. It's difficult to cast on oneself."

At Rupert's Place

The best and most likely solution would be for the PCs and *Chris* to seek out Rupert Faraday. The Court of the Fools is much farther away and Chris doesn't have any contacts there. The PCs' apartments and similar hideouts lack the magical aura Chris requires to protect himself.

Rupert Faraday is not entirely surprised to see them. He knows that Chris is being hunted and has tried to find out what is happening through his contacts. As soon as they arrive, he starts to work through his contacts to protect themselves against Seymour's men. He makes sure that two police officers are posted outside the gate, and he further stops all attempts at acquiring warrants. Then he strengthens his magical protection to prevent Seymour from sending creatures of Inferno into the apartment.

When they are relatively safe, the group can start discussing what they'll do next. They cannot directly attack Seymour, as he is far too powerful. The Child cannot help them until it has been born. They cannot free the Goddess of the Forgotten as long as Seymour holds the Tarotica. The only course of action left to them is for Chris to change his sex in order to give birth to the Child, and then it can take control of the cards.

This is something the players should figure out on their own. Only if it is absolutely impossible for them to reach this conclusion will Rupert and Chris help them out. Rupert is a conjurer of Passion himself, and reaching this conclusion would be appropriate for him. Chris remains reluctant to pursue this solution, as the transformation will be permanent for him. However, because of the desperate situation, he is ready to try anything.

"*Fine. If we have time to discover the ritual before they catch us.*"

Studies of Magic

Chris knows a spell that can change one's sex for about an hour, but that isn't long enough to allow the Child to be born. Permanently changing genders requires something much more radical. They must do extensive magical research in order to create the appropriate ritual. Rupert and Chris are the magicians of Passion, but they require the PCs' help for them to research the spell as quickly as possible.

The PCs are in a position to learn a little about the Lore of Passion, meanwhile. Those with a **Soul** rating of +1 or higher receive the advantage Dabbler in the Occult. In addition, they acquire a written ritual for transforming someone's gender. It is similar to Permanent Sex Change (see below), but the ritual only takes 15 minutes and the duration is for one hour.

While the conjurers lock themselves inside Rupert's temple in order to summon various creatures of Passion for questioning, they also send the PCs to seek out various other sources. They must be extremely careful leaving the house and moving around the city, otherwise, Seymour's men can pick them up and try to use them to lure Chris out and get their hands on the Child. They can borrow Rupert's car, a black Bentley located in a garage at the end of Mount Street.

Rupert and Chris provide them a list of sources they believe could be useful. Some of them are easily found: a short film by an avant garde filmmaker in the archives at the Museum of Moving Images, and a manuscript at British Museum. But many of the sources are books, letters, and notes they believe are located in the private collection of a certain Leonore Carver in Whitechapel. They warn the PCs that she will not be very cooperative.

"*She doesn't talk to me any longer, so there's no point in me going there. Don't even mention my name,*" Rupert says.

Leonore Carver

Leonore Carver lives in an old, decrepit house at the end of an alley off Commercial Road in Whitechapel. Originally a brewery, the house has only been partly renovated. In addition, it hasn't been repaired since the 60s. A brick staircase leads to an unmarked door on the first floor. People in the vicinity know that Carver lives in the building. The PCs hear from the tone of voice that she isn't very popular in the neighborhood. Carver is a reserved Death conjurer, who possesses one of London's most unusual collections of occult and erotic literature and art. She has quarreled with just about every magical practitioner in London, and is known as a "difficult" person to deal with. Only a small, select circle, mainly consisting of her disciples, have access to her collection.

If the PCs arrive at her door, an unnaturally pale ten-year-old girl opens the door. She says that mother isn't in, and then promptly closes the door in the PCs' faces.

If they contact her on the phone or by letter, they may garner Carver's interest. She knows that they have the magic fetus, a priceless "object" that she really would like to get her hands on. She invites them over to her place at 11 o'clock at night to discuss what they can offer her in return for the information they seek. She doesn't specify any more than this.

Carver opens the door herself when they arrive and shows them in. The house is a labyrinth of rooms with floors and walls made of brick. Two large, black dogs follow them and keep close to Carver. PCs with the Advantage ***Enhanced Awareness*** or Disadvantage ***Schizophrenia*** feel that

something is wrong with the dogs. (Those who can ***See Through the Illusion*** realize that they are razides acting as Carver's bodyguards.)

There are bookcases everywhere, as well as art objects, and strange collectibles. The house is unnaturally cold, hovering around 10 degrees centigrade. There were similar cold sensations in Sandburn's basement due to the close proximity to Inferno.

"*The objects do not fare well in too much heat,*" she explains.

When she sees the PCs, she becomes increasingly interested in their tattoos. She asks permission to look closer, and asks if they haven't thought about getting rid of them. She changes the topic if this seems to be a sensitive subject, but she continues to be distracted by the tattoos.

She shows them into a room with comfortable chairs in front of an open fire. At first, she asks them to specify exactly what they are looking for, and admits that the sources are part of her collection. Then she inquires about the reasons they need them.

At first, she says that she will only help them if they provide her with the magic fetus, but soon realizes that this is an impossible demand. Then, she discusses the possibility of getting patches of tattooed skin from one or two of the PCs. After additional bargaining, she agrees to let them copy the sources in exchange for a copy of the finished spell and the right to study in detail their tattoos when they have matters in hand, and are not as hurried as they are now. Without offering something in return they will not be provided access to her collections at all.

Carver writes the agreement on a piece of paper and asks the PCs to sign. This is a magically-binding agreement, she explains. Anyone reneging on their part of the agreement will be pulled down into Inferno. (The GM should decide if this is the truth, or if Carver is actually lying.)

It takes Carver half an hour to locate all the sources from the list the PCs received from Rupert and Chris. Meanwhile, she asks them to wait in front of the fire, and also offers them a bottle of wine. The pale girl shows up and nervously watches them, but runs away if they try to talk to her.

Carver brings out the sources so they can copy the parts they need. They are an odd combination of unintelligible diagrams, texts in languages they do not understand, and what appear to be crude pornographic stories.

They return late at night to Mayfair. Carver demands that they return within a month to let her study, and possibly copy, their tattoos. She reminds them of the penalty for forfeiting on their agreement.

If the PCs get tired of haggling with Carver and instead try to break into her home, they find themselves in serious trouble. The two watchdogs, in the reality beyond the Illusion, are actually razides and continually patrol the house. Burglars are in for a nasty surprise. In addition, they have no chance at all at locating what they are looking for on their own. The collection is simply too extensive and scattered throughout the expansive building. (The GM doesn't need to kill the PCs, but can make sure they are thoroughly harmed by the experience.) Furthermore, if the PCs are caught as thieves, Carver will no longer be open to negotiation. She may consider allowing them access to the collections in exchange for the spell and their skins. With the threat of her razides, it is probably not that difficult to intimidate them into signing a binding agreement. If things should go this badly, the PCs will likely be attacked by Carver and skinned alive after the adventure's conclusion. The GM may let them escape this predicament by letting the Child of Magic protect them.

Under Siege

It takes the PCs and the two conjurers six days to construct the ritual for the Chris's sex change. Meanwhile, ***Seymour*** makes more and more desperate attempts at killing ***Chris*** and gaining control of the Child. ***Rupert*** uses all of his influence to protect them, but this is only effective up to a certain point. After a few days, Seymour starts sending creatures of Inferno after them, threatening to break through Rupert's magical protection.

Seymour should not succeed, but the GM is encouraged to make the PCs extremely tense during this time. If the PCs ask, Rupert can supply them with weapons. In this case, the GM may let a creature break through the barrier, or let Seymour's men attack them while they are outside the house.

The Ritual

After six days, ***Chris*** and ***Rupert*** have completed all the preparations required for the ritual, which they believe will work. Once started, it takes a full 24 hours to perform. Chris must have a woman to model his visualization from. If there are no women among the PCs, Rupert asks a friend of his to help them. Lillian Woolworth arrives at the apartment the same night.

The ritual is performed in Rupert's temple, a square room with bricked-up windows, red walls, and symbols inlaid with copper, silver and gold thread in the parquetry. Any PCs with Magical Intuition may meditate in the temple during the night prior to performing the ritual. This preparation will lend Chris additional power while casting the spell. Rupert is also helping, so he meditates as well. If nothing unexpected happens, they will succeed. They start the ritual at midnight, and they can see how Chris' body gradually transforms, until 24 hours later his body has become completely female. By that time, everyone involved in the ritual itself will be totally exhausted. Chris stumbles out to the couch in the living room and promptly falls asleep. The woman who modelled for his visualization is also exhausted. They cannot be roused before dawn.

The Child of Magic

Only one problem remains. The fetus is still inside the glass jar. There is no obvious method of physically implanting her inside *Chris*. The conjurer refuses all nonprofessional assistance after she wakes up.

The fetus is smaller than a fist, making it possible for a doctor to implant it in the womb. The physician closest at hand for both the PCs and Rupert to contact would be Dr. Ernest Waugh, the slum doctor who investigated the deaths among the homeless. He will come to the apartment, if Rupert or the PCs call him.

At first, ***Waugh*** immediately rejects the entire concept as medically impossible. The Child would have no chance of survival, as it lacks the placenta required to nourish it. Furthermore, Chris would risk blood poisoning.

However, when he actually sees the fetus living within the glass jar he becomes thoughtful. After some persuasion, he reluctantly agrees to make the attempt.

As soon as he begins, Chris's body physically alters itself, allowing the fetus to be placed inside her womb. A fleshy membrane closes over the opening immediately afterwards. Despite this miraculous event, Waugh waits skeptically for the Child to die. It doesn't. Instead, it begins reclaiming all the lost time it spent in the glass jar. It develops rapidly, and Chris wakes up with a swollen belly the next morning, as well as a ravenous appetite.

It takes three days for the Child to mature enough to be born, which happens during the night of the fourth day. The childbirth is equally miraculous, taking very little time and with no discomfort for the mother. It's a small girl, who appears quite normal. Chris calls the baby Mary, in honor of her dead mother. But the rapid development continues. During the following day, the Child grows up.

She remains asleep during most of the day while she develops. By midnight, the development begins to slow down, and ***the Child*** wakes up. She appears to be roughly about three years old and can walk and talk.

The Child has magical abilities from birth. Both conjurers say that the girl is probably able to twist time and space in order to grow up faster. Indeed, she might also use her powers to protect the apartment from this point forward.

After she wakes up around midnight, she starts looking around the apartment for a piece of stiff paper and something to draw with. She sits down and begins drawing the 68th card of the Tarotica: a sleeping fetus inside an egg, floating above Metropolis. Below the picture she writes "Anthropos" in crude, childish letters.

Neither the PCs nor the conjurers manage to achieve any real contact with the Child. She is totally occupied with her own business. She smiles at them, but refuses to say anything more than a few words.

When the 68th card is finished, she brings it to Chris and says that they are going to the prison to give it to Anthony. She is quite insistent about it until the PCs and Chris agree to follow her to Sandburn, where Seymour has realized that something is terribly wrong.

Back to Sandburn

Seymour notices when Mary creates the 68th card, as he loses all control over the Tarotica. He is just barely able to retain enough control over his employees to prevent Sandburn from falling into chaos. Throughout London, his power crumbles and disappears. He tries to flee back to Inferno, but the Tarotica prevents him. He has bound himself to the cards, and now he cannot leave Sandburn. He remains locked inside his old office until the PCs arrive with ***Chris*** and ***the Child***.

They notice that something has happened to the hospital. The inmates are screaming and banging on the doors. The attendants and the guards seem confused and are milling about. Mary, the Child of Magic, goes directly to Seymour's office and opens the door.

Seymour is frightened out of his wits. He has shrunk to half his former size and hands over the cards when the Child stretches out her hand

towards him. She hesitates for a moment and closely studies Seymour, but then she crawls up on a chair and lays out the cards on the desk. The PCs feel the ground shake with each card she deals, and the screams from the hospital grow louder and more intense. The inmates break out and begin tearing the attendants and the guards to pieces.

The Goddess of the Forgotten is freed of her chains in the basement. She ascends from beneath the building and finds her way to the office, followed by the bloodstained, screaming, and insane patients. The Goddess walks past both the Child and the PCs to Seymour and pulls him with her to the crowd outside the door, where he is slowly and excruciatingly ripped to shreds.

She reaches out for the cards, but Mary grabs her arm and stops her. Enraged, she turns toward the PCs instead, preparing to throw them to the blood-stained mass of people outside. But Mary intervenes again, preventing the angry Goddess from harming her new friends. The Goddess mutters something inaudible and leaves through the door. The crowd disappears down the stairs.

The Child collects the Tarotica. She thanks the PCs, gives Chris a kiss on the cheek, and walks out through the door, which takes her to Metropolis. They never see her again.

London's Burning

Violent riots erupt across London, as everyone who was bound to the Tarotica rises up once its grip is loosened. The homeless, the madmen, and the forgotten go on a violent rampage. The forces of law and order have little time to react, many of them becoming confused when the cards' influence disappears.

When the PCs look out through the window, they see how the lights go out in several places throughout the city. There is a blackout and smoke from burning houses rises towards the sky in thick plumes. They hear the sound of sirens from several directions. The Goddess leads the patients from the hospital, but soon abandons her wards, returning to Metropolis to create a new artifact. The PCs are able to leave the hospital through a City which becomes more and more chaotic. It takes several days before some semblance order is restored in London.

The Blessing of Dionysus

Magic School: Lore of Passion

Effect: The conjurer is able to change the gender of himself or somebody else. The change is radical enough to affect the future rebirths of the person's soul, which will now be reborn with its new gender. The one who is changing their gender must have a person of the opposite sex present, in order to have a visualization model for the change. Both stay naked inside a protective circle in the temple. The sex change cannot be performed unless the subject cooperates.

Equipment: A person of the opposite sex, candles to be lit during the ceremony, a bowl of water

Magic Tools: The cup and the ring

Protective Circle: Not required, but a circle to represent the womb and rebirth may be drawn

Invocation: The conjurer describes the sex change in song during extensive parts of the ritual

Gestures: Through sexual intercourse and by continuously touching the "assistant" within the circle the changes are transmitted to the body

Visualization: One's own body and consciousness changing sex.

Duration: Permanent

Time To Perform: 24 hours

Appendix

Player Characters

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Harlan O'Connor (p. 73)
Rick Dorsleigh (p. 73)
William Tailor (p. 73)

Non-Player Characters

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Timothy (p. 90)
Tomkins and His Men (p. 90)
Chris Walden (p. 91)
Ernest Waugh (p. 92)
Waya (p. 92)
Chaplain Clive Wilson (p. 93)

Player Characters

After comparing their appearance and personalities to their current characters, copy the descriptions below and provide them to the players. The GM is free to adapt the pre-generated characters of 1892 to better merge with those of the present. It should not be too difficult to imagine the modern characters as the reborn souls of the guards. The GM can add characteristics of the players' regular characters to those of the prison guards.

If the GM wishes to make them more like their modern counterparts, they can give them the same abilities, advantages, and appearance. If any or all of the current characters are women, this will not matter. Simply match those with the most similarities in personalities and backgrounds.

All of the guard captains live in the prison barracks. They have no families, other than their parents and blood relatives. They are each responsible for one of the three wings, assisted by ten subordinate guards. They are only responsible to the Governor.

The guard captains are all of *The Sleeper* Archetype.

Michael Brown

Michael Brown came to Sandburst four years ago from a prison in his home province of Cornwall. He became a prison guard when the small family farm could support him no longer. At Sandburn he was badly wounded during a prison uprising in the summer of '91. He welcomes the new, harsher discipline.

Brown is of medium height, with a beginning paunch. His skin is quite dark and his hair is bushy. He wears a mustache and usually a few days of stubble. He is dressed in the blue uniform of the guards.

Personality: The job as a guard suits him perfectly. He hated farming and loathes manual labour with a passion. He is a very social person, who wants to be surrounded by people he can trust. He likes working with the other guard captains.

Age: 35.

Height: 165 cm.

Weight: 80 kg.

Attributes

- **Fortitude** +2
- **Willpower** +1
- **Reflexes** +0
- **Reason** +1
- **Perception** +1
- **Intuition** +3
- **Coolness** −2
- **Violence** −1
- **Charisma** +2
- **Soul** +0

Harlan O'Connor

Harlan was born in London by Irish parents, and he grew up in Kennington, south of the Thames. He worked at odd jobs during his teenage years, but was recruited to the army when he was 19. After twelve years in India, he returned to England and got a job at Sandburn, where he has worked for five years.

Personality: A light-hearted man who takes life as it comes. He has learnt that it is not much use to plan ahead and try to influence anything. He obeys orders and is not one to make a fuss about it, but he does try to get off as lightly as possible. He is satisfied with the improved discipline in the prison, meaning that he need not worry about being strung up in a rebellion. Otherwise he doesn't much care about the state of things.

Age: 35.

Height: 170 cm.

Weight: 75 kg.

Attributes

- **Fortitude** +1
- **Willpower** +0
- **Reflexes** +2
- **Reason** −2
- **Perception** −1
- **Intuition** +0
- **Coolness** +3
- **Violence** +2
- **Charisma** +1
- **Soul** +1

Rick Dorsleigh

Rick is the oldest of the characters, a veteran of 20 years at Sandburn. He was born in Harrow outside of London and worked in the harbour at the Isle of Dogs before he came to the prison. He has built his entire life around the prison, and rarely goes outside the walls.

Rick is short but powerfully built. The head is balding, and the face is usually covered in a short stubble. He wears the blue guard uniform, and chews tobacco.

Personality: A practical man, doing his job and not caring for anything else. He has seen a number of Governors come and go, and does what they tell him to do. He is slightly paternalistic towards the younger guards, trying to foster them in their profession.

Age: 43.

Height: 160 cm.

Weight: 75 kg.

Attributes

- **Fortitude** +1
- **Willpower** +2
- **Reflexes** +0
- **Reason** +1
- **Perception** +3
- **Intuition** −2
- **Coolness** +0
- **Violence** +2
- **Charisma** −1
- **Soul** +1

William Tailor

Will Tailor has worked for ten years at Sandburn. He was born in Whitechapel, and was raised with four older brothers by a prostitute mother. He went to sea when he was 13, but had to quit because of a knee injury twelve years ago.

Tailor is tall and sinewy, clean-shaven, with thinning, dark brown hair. He has a slight limp on the left leg, and always wears the prison uniform. The uniform is blue with yellow buttons and facing.

Personality: Early on, he learned to obey orders and not to question anything. Trouble bothers him, he wants straight answers and clearly defined tasks. He convinces himself that the new order in the prison is better than the old, chaotic state of things. He hates disorder after having shared a hundred square feet with four older brothers.

Age: 31.

Height: 180 cm.

Weight: 75 kg.

Attributes

- **Fortitude** +2
- **Willpower** +0
- **Reflexes** +1
- **Reason** −2
- **Perception** +3
- **Intuition** −1
- **Coolness** +1
- **Violence** +2
- **Charisma** +0
- **Soul** +1

Non-Player Characters

The Blind One

The blind man the PCs meet on the border to the Inner Labyrinth is an aspect of the Blind Bull, the guardian against Achlys. He kills or scares off all those seeking the inner labyrinth. The PCs meet him in a not particularly scary guise, as they aren't harboring any desire to be destroyed.

If anyone honestly seeks destruction he will assume the form of a horned being drenched in blood, and the landscape surrounding the PCs is closed in to form a dark labyrinth.

The Blind One is a tall man dressed in old-fashioned work clothes, jacket, trousers and boots. His eyes have been gouged out, and the sockets are empty.

Height: 190 cm, **Weight:** 85 kg.

Personality: His only purpose is to stop those seeking their destruction in Achlys.

Playing Tips: Play him as an old farmer, a bit slow and quiet. Try to give the impression of hidden aggressiveness beneath the calm surface.

Home: The Inner Labyrinth leading from Kronor into Achlys.

Creature Type: unique supernatural being.

Abilities

- *Sharp senses:* His senses are heightened far beyond any human capacity, able to pick up the most minute sight, sound, and scent, including an intuitive sense that detects if someone nears the Gate.
- *Creature of Achlys:* He is extremely powerful in his native environment. All **Harm** inflicted upon him is reduced by –2, and any attacks against him or attempts to affect him with other abilities are at –2 to the roll.
- *Blade of Decay:* Attacks from the Blind One's ancient, runes-encrusted scythe ignore armor. Any wounds inflicted by its blade will become infected, and require repeated rolls to ***Endure Injury*** or begin to fester and become necrotic. Any non-alive organic matter touched by the scythe starts to decay at an unnaturally accelerated rate.
- *Monstrous form:* Humans who see the Blind One's true form must ***Keep it Together*** to not panic.
- *Mindless determinism:* Nothing can deter the Blind One from his task – no amount of threats, pleas, charm, or wit will ever make him change his mind about fulfilling his destiny of standing guard at the Gate to Achlys.
- *Resurrector:* If the Blind One should ever die, he reawakens unharmed several days later – even if his physical body has been completely destroyed.

Combat [7], **Influence** [1], **Magic** [5].

Combat [Divine]

- Knock someone or something over.
- Disarm an opponent.
- Keep someone at a distance.
- Deflect a blow, and make a counter-attack immediately afterwards [–2 to ***Avoid Harm***].
- Make armor-piercing attacks.
- Shrug off even grievous injuries.
- Slay someone with a single strike.

Influence [Novice]

- Be revered among the guardians in the forgotten village.

Magic [Exceptional]

- Sense anyone approaching the Gate he guards.
- Reveal in-depth knowledge about the Inner Labyrinth, Achlys, Chaos, and the Nothingness.
- Conjure a dense fog to devour all sight and sound beyond Distance: room.
- Read thoughts and emotions of anyone nearby.
- Distort the environment into a twisted labyrinth of narrow corridors, winding staircases, trap doors and dead ends.

Attacks

Armed only with his massive scythe, the Blind One needs nothing more than it – and his magical powers of commanding his native environment – to prevent any mortal human from pursuing their destruction in the nothingness of Achlys.

Scythe: Whirl and slash [3*] [keeps all would-be attackers at Distance: room with by swinging his blade in deadly circles – anyone attempting to get closer than that must ***Act Under Pressure*** or suffer **3 Harm**]; Handle sweep [2] [Distance: room, may affect several opponents, all victims must ***Avoid Harm*** or be *knocked over*]; Impale [3] [Distance: arm/room, victim must ***Act Under Pressure*** to break free without taking another **2 Harm**]; Cut in half [Instant Death] [Distance: arm/room, if failing or unable to ***Avoid Harm***, the victim dies from this attack. On a partial success, a **Critical Wound** is received instead].

Wounds & Harm Moves

Armor: 2 (supernatural protection due to his destined role of guarding the Inner Labyrinth).

Wounds: ○○○○○○○○○○○○○○ ☠

- Ignores the injuries.
- Makes a counter-attack immediately [–2 to ***Avoid Harm***].
- Recoils from the hit, and makes a *Handle sweep* attack in retaliation.
- Shrugs off the wound, and begins to distort the environment into a twisted, claustrophobic labyrinth.

- Momentarily stops, sighing with nihilistic anguish from the pain.
- Reveals his true form [***Keep it Together*** or panic and flee], and focuses on destroying the opponent who gave him this wound above all others.
- Takes a deep, crippling injury to one of its legs [loses the ability to move around faster than at a limping hobble].
- Roars with all the rage of oblivion and annihilation audible in his unnatural voice [***Keep it Together*** or cower and weep].
- One of his arms is grievously torn and tattered [can still use the scythe, but loses the ability to make immediate counter-attacks, as well as the *Whirl and slash* and *Handle sweep* attacks].
- Falls down and stops moving, a last groan of futile defiance escaping with his dying breath.

Howard Carpenter

The manager of Lancer Ltd is a slick businessman in charge of several contracts. Lancer is only a small part of his business dealings, and the only one which is purely illegal. He had no intentions of doing something as risky as killing the homeless from the beginning. The activities gradually glided over to that end.

In order to kill his conscience, he started to justify his actions by claiming in his mind that the homeless would die pretty soon anyway, and probably would suffer more. During the past months it has become a fixed idea that he will clean up the streets of London. He has found a perverted pleasure in reading the reports of people "taken off the lists of the homeless". It does make him a little frightened, but he can't shake off the feeling.

If he is confronted with his actions he will blame anything but himself as long as possible. He can't easily be forced to take responsibility for the deaths.

Carpenter is of medium height, clean shaven and well groomed. The hair is dark and cut short, the eyes are blue. He wears conservative suits and tries to keep as low a profile as possible.

Personality: Carpenter is living in constant fear of being exposed and forced to take responsibility for his actions, and having to re-evaluate his position. He keeps everything at arm's length in an attitude of mild, impersonal irony.

Playing Tips: Smile and joke continually in a nervous way. Change the subject if things get too uncomfortable and then throw the PCs out, or keep quiet if they confront him with something he doesn't want to admit.

Home: Elysium (London).

Abilities

- *Connection to Higher Power:* He has begun to slip under the influence of Gamichicoth, due to his 'work' with the homeless.
- *Snake-tongue:* Regardless of what the truth is, Carpenter can always reply yes or no freely to the question "Are you lying?".

Combat [1], **Influence** [4], **Magic** [–].

Combat [Novice]

- Give up and beg for mercy.

Influence [Powerful]

- Hide evidence (by removing the files and binders from his office to the basement).
- Manipulate and corrupt someone (such as Mr. Maddock and Ms. Innings).
- Recruit criminal elements (e.g. some thugs to rough someone up).
- Influence city authorities (may use this to get the graveyard of the homeless cleaned up).

Attacks

Carpenter will not meaningfully attack anyone during the course of this adventure.

Wounds & Harm Moves

Wounds: ○○ ☠

- Subdued.
- Badly Injured.
- Unconscious/Dying.

Leonore Carver

Leonore Carver is a reserved death conjurer living with her daughter and two razides in a rebuilt brewery in Whitechapel. She has a bad reputation among the conjurers of London, and spends as much time in Inferno as in London. She is influenced by the Tarotica and by the Death Angel, Togarini. Those seeking her out do so to gain access to her extensive collection of occult literature and art.

Leonore is short and slim, with short, dark hair and green eyes. She wears loose-fitting, black clothes and heavy make-up.

Height: 160 cm, **Weight:** 55 kg.

Home: Whitechapel, London.

Personality: Leonore is a fanatic, caring only about her occult studies. The only other human being she cares about is her daughter Sandy, who has started to protest against the life her mother is leading, and she will revolt violently as soon as she reaches puberty.

Playing Tips: Be coolly businesslike, but at the same time perversely interested in anything collectible.

Abilities

- *Connection to Higher Power:* Leonore Carver is under the influence of Togarini, whose urge of compulsion is expressed through her compulsive need to collect things.
- *Cold hearted:* Cannot be Influenced or charmed, except by offering rare collectibles (in which case, she will be automatically interested in making some form of bargain).
- *Snake-tongue:* Regardless of what the truth is, Carver can freely reply either 'yes' or 'no' to the question "Are you lying?".
- *Extremely well-read:* Outstandingly capable in information retrieval, and very well-versed in natural sciences, humanistic scholarship, and occultism alike.
- *Linguist:* Carver is fluently competent in German, French, Italian, Spanish, Latin, and Classical Greek, and somewhat competent in Sanskrit and Hebrew.

Combat [2], **Influence** [5], **Magic** [5].

Combat [Novice]

- Command her 'guard dogs' to protect her.
- Get out of harm's way unexpectedly fast [–2 to ***Engage in Combat***].

Influence [Exceptional]

- Command her 'guard dogs' to act on her behalf.
- Reveal her knowledge of, and desire to own, the Child of Magic.
- Offer rare, obscure, or supernatural knowledge or objects, in exchange for payment.
- Accumulate forbidden knowledge and arcane collectibles.
- Demand obedience through the credible threat of terrifying consequences.

Magic [Exceptional]

- Protective aura [gives her 1 armor at all times].
- Reveal deep insights into Inferno and the School of Death.
- Summon creatures from Inferno, and make them obey her every wish.
- Degenerate or disintegrate parts of someone's body [causing **1 Serious Wound**].
- Master of the School of Death.

Attacks

Weak in direct physical confrontation, Carver prefers to let her 'dogs' do the fighting for her. If hard pressed, she will support them by attacking opponents with her magical power – assaulting their senses with visions from Inferno, withering their body parts, or even sending deranged minions of hell after them.

Unarmed: Retreat behind her dogs [0] [***Act Under Pressure*** to get hold of her and stop her escape attempt]; Inefficient punches and kicks [1] [PCs are at +2 to ***Avoid Harm*** against these]; Lightning-fast dodge [0] [PCs are at –2 to ***Engage in Combat*** with an attack she can see coming].

Magic: Behold the magnificent terrors of Hell! [*] [Distance: room, forces anyone present to ***See Through the Illusion*** or get confused and terrified by visions from Inferno]; Summon purgatides [*] [if someone should escape from or even defeat her razide guards, she will send a bunch of purgatides after them to track and bring down the intruders. (She can also summon other, more powerful creatures of Inferno, but the rituals for those take longer and are more demanding on her)]; Wither the Mortal Frame [Serious Wound] [Distance: room, affected limb starts to decay and transform into something horribly subhuman or outright infernal, victim loses effective use of that limb and must ***Keep it Together*** to avoid becoming panicked or scared].

Wounds & Harm Moves

Armor: 1 (magical protection she permanently maintains around herself).

Wounds: ○○ ☠

- Hurt/Retreating.
- Badly Injured.
- Unconscious/Dying.

The Child of Magic

The child of magic is the first new human being created since the Fall. She isn't bound by the Illusion like the rest of us, because she has never been imprisoned, but only born, into it. One could say that she was born awake, and have powers in common with those people.

The PCs only meet her as a newborn, *whose outer appearance is that of a three-year-old girl*, when she studiously creates the 68th card of the Tarotica. The cards have, to a certain degree, formed her entire mind.

Height: 80 cm, **Weight:** 25 kg.

Personality: An inscrutable child with unusual gifts. She hasn't yet had time to shape her personality when the PCs meet her. She concentrates on finishing the Tarotica, something she instinctively knows she must do.

Playing Tips: Smile sweetly and in a friendly way, but try to be slightly detached, and don't care about what the adults are doing.

Creature Type: Child of Magic.

Home: All of Reality.

Abilities

- *Awakened Human:* She sees the True Reality at all times and has an innate understanding of the world beyond the Illusion.
- *Regeneration:* The Child regains 1 wound each minute of story time.
- *Immune to harm:* She is unaffected by mundane weapons, fire, cold, electricity, and virtually any other form of harm. Only magically-charged attacks can affect her at all.
- *Unreadable:* She is inscrutable and her Awakened mind cannot be read in any way.
- *Time Warper:* She can twist, stretch, and compress time at extreme rates, or even stop it completely if she wants to.
- *Space Bender:* She can bend, distort, and remake space around her as she wishes, teleport considerable distances, or fold space in on itself to capture someone or seal off a location.
- *Telepath:* The Child can mentally connect with other humans and share her thoughts and emotions with them.
- *Telekinetic:* She can move things by force of will alone, throwing heavy objects or stopping any motion in mid-air if she wishes to.
- *Infant:* Her only weakness is her young age. Wide-eyed, curious, and innocent, she is yet inexperienced at using her powers and still has a hard time understanding the motivations and reasoning of Unawakened adult humans. But she is learning at an almost impossibly fast rate...

Attacks

She is not an aggressive child, and sees little reason to use her Awakened powers for violence. However when attacked, or when someone who has cared for her (e.g. the PCs) is in danger, she will make use of her abilities for self-defence.

Telekinesis: Force wave [3] [Distance: room/field, tear down everything in the Child's surroundings]; Hold [*1–2] [Distance: field, she grasps and holds one or several people and prevents them from moving. ***Keep it Together*** to break free, but it will be painful if you do so]; Push over [1–2] [Distance: room, she knocks people off their feet or topples furniture on top of them].

Time-warping: Slow [–] [Distance: field, she selectively slows down Time for whatever people or events she chooses]; Time skip [–] [By briefly stepping outside of Time, she can skip up to 2 increments of Distance in an instance]; Time stop [–] [Distance: field, she remains the only one able to move while freezing Time for everyone else around her. She can selectively exempt individual persons from this effect if she wishes to.].

Space-bending: Vanish [–] [wrapping herself in a curtain or squatting down in a corner, she twists Space around herself to make herself disappear from human perception entirely. PCs must ***See Through the Illusion*** in order to locate her]; Increase gravity [*] [Distance: room, everything in the area becomes extremely heavy, and everyone is at *–3 to all of their rolls* and any **Harm** based on ballistics or momentum (e.g. bullets, impact weapons, falling damage) is intensified by **+2 Harm**].

Wounds & Harm Moves

Armor: 3 (instinctively surrounds herself with a powerful force field whenever threatened by physical harm).

While it may happen that the Child gets wounded during the adventure, the wounds will never have any tangible consequences – soon healing up, or be removed by her via use of time-warping or healing magic. Most attacks, however, will not even connect, or may hit but seem to have any effect on her.

Superintendent Matthew Clarke

Clarke is a peaceful man who has spent 30 years in keeping track of food and clothing at Sandburn. *He is in his 60's, short, balding, but hosting a large beard. He often laughs. His staff consists of two cooks, four errand boys and three assistants.*

Height: 170 cm, **Weight:** 70 kg.

Personality: Clarke is a man able to adjust to just about anything, but only to a certain limit. When Sandburn glides over towards Inferno, that limit is passed, and Clarke reacts.

Playing Tips: Be cool as a cat until you lose your patience, then you will be so furious that you are barely able to talk.

Unique Moves

- Provide in-depth knowledge about the prison's logistics, bureaucracy, and administration.
- Tell a joke to brighten up the mood.
- Gossip about daily news from the world outside the prison, as well as rumors and hearsay from within Sandburn.
- Arrange for his errand boys and assistants to get something to someone, or enable someone to get somewhere, within the prison.

Attacks

While he would not normally physically attack anyone, Clarke snaps when Seymour drags the whole prison into hell, and will attempt to shoot the Governor with a revolver he has taken from the weapons locker. He cannot go through with it due to Seymour's unholy powers of control, but if the GM decides to have PCs present at the scene, Clarke may attack them freely. (Especially when Seymour orders them to subdue the would-be attacker.)

Unarmed: Wild, frantic punches and kicks [1].

Webley Mark II Revolver: Combat shooting [2] [Bad aim: PCs get +1 to ***Avoid Harm*** against these shots].

Wounds & Harm Moves

Wounds: ○○ ☠

- Subdued
- Badly Injured
- Unconscious/Dying.

The Dead

The tortured homeless in Inferno look like they did in life, but even more ragged, half naked and tortured. Many are maimed and missing limbs, eyes or ears. The skin is covered by festering, open wounds. They wail constantly because of the pain. Since Seymour came to Inferno with the child of magic, conditions have become even worse. The new soul is going to be created out of the pain of those bound to the cards.

To further this end, Seymour is gradually transforming the grey, desolate halls in the realm of the outcasts into a nightmare.

Personality: Filled with pain and fear.

Playing Tips: Moan desperately. Tear at the clothes of the players.

Home: Inferno (the halls of the outcasts).

Creature Type: Lost souls.

Abilities

- Deathless.
- Can take virtually endless amounts of physical harm.

Unique Moves

- Swarm a hapless wanderer, wailing and pleading senselessly.
- Reveal knowledge of their part of the world of the dead.
- Reveal limited knowledge about the recent wave of poisonings and sickness amongst London's homeless population.
- Tease the Proto-razide guardians away from the Child's crypt.

Attacks

Their attacks are normally weak and inefficient, but when given a focused plan, they can be scarily effective against less numerous opponents.

Unarmed: Tear and Pull [0] [PCs must ***Act Under Pressure*** to advance through the press, of mangled and mutilated bodies]; Mass assault [2] [needs 6 or more of them to execute, and for every full additional 6 Lost Souls participating, their victim is *at –1 to* ***Avoid Harm***]

Wounds & Harm Moves

Individual Lost Souls may be physically destroyed, but ever more will stream after them.

- Wail and moan in agony.
- A sutured wound rips open, exposing intestines and bone.
- A mangled limb is torn off or destroyed.
- A head is smashed in, blood and brain matter emerging as the creature continues to twitch and wail.
- One of the ragged, tortured bodies is ripped to bits, the pieces still writhing and attempting to crawl back together.

Rupert Faraday

Rupert was born of wealthy parents in London in 1854. He studied law at Oxford and ended up in the same circle of people interested in the occult as Anthony Seymour. They both got on the trail of the secrets of the Tarotica, but when Seymour took the job as prison governor in order to create the right circumstances in order to summon the artifact, Faraday pulled out. He lacked the power hunger of Seymour. His aim has rather been that of leading a comfortable and moderately influential life.

When Seymour went to Sandburn, Faraday started to hang out with the Nosferatu that now and then showed up in London. It took a couple of years, and then he joined them. He has lived quite aloof for the past century, preferring to mix with young ladies and gentleman of the upper classes. The PCs will later on meet Vanessa Clarke, in the guise of Waya, who is an old friend of his.

During the last few years he has secretly associated with Nosferatu and conjurers among the Caribbean immigrants, learning some of the Lore of Passion. This is something he does not talk openly about. It could ruin his social standing.

Faraday is of medium height, muscular, with dark hair combed to the back. The skin is pale, somewhat waxy. He is always wearing gloves.

Age: 138, **Height:** 180 cm, **Weight:** 80 kg.

Personality: Like all Nosferatu, Faraday has a fixation with blood and sex. He is able to show a rational, scientific mind, but as soon as his vampiric instincts are aroused all logic vanishes. If there are any slim, beautiful and aloof young men or women among the PCs, Faraday will be more interested in these than in the doings of Seymour. His aristocratic background makes him oblivious to what men of a lower social class, or women, have to say about his advances.

Playing Tips: Be cool, but spiritual in a funny way. Keep a total control of your body, and smile constantly in an amused fashion.

Home: Elysium (Mount Street, London).

Creature Type: Nosferatu.

Abilities

- *Blood drinker:* Heals wounds and regains power by drinking blood.
- *Ageless:* Doesn't naturally age and will never die unless by violence.
- *Immune to harm:* Immune to attacks from normal weapons and unarmed attacks Magically charged artefacts or the like will deal **Harm** as normal.
- *Immune to fire and electricity:* Cannot be harmed by these elements.
- *Martial arts master:* Reduce the dice results of all close combat attack moves against him by –2.
- *Heat vision:* Can see in the dark by perceiving living bodies and other heat sources.

Weaknesses

- *Vulnerable to wood:* Weapons made from this material ignore his *Immune to harm* Ability.
- *Sensitive to sunlight:* Exposure to direct sunlight causes him **2 Harm** (for partial exposure) or **4 Harm** (for full-body exposure).
- *Hunting instinct:* The presence of slender, attractive, reserved teens and tweens (of both sexes) compels him to impose himself upon them in order to get at their blood. (By seduction, intoxication, payment, extortion... anything short of brute violence, except when desperate).

Combat [3], **Influence** [5], **Magic** [4].

Combat [Considerable]

- Grab hold and pin someone.
- Disarm someone.
- Sneak up on someone, completely surprising them.

Influence [Exceptional]

- Know just the right person (has contacts in London's upper classes).
- Seduce someone and exploit their usefulness for himself.
- Get in touch with supernatural contacts (other Nosferatu).
- Reveal his knowledge of something secret.
- Slander someone (Seymour, via his article in The Times).

Magic [Powerful]

- Reveal limited insight into the Truth.
- Journeyman in one of the schools of magic (Passion).
- Magically protect an entire location from supernatural intrusion.
- Develop a new ritual or modify an existing one (*Dionysus' Blessing*, permanent sex-change to be used on Chris Walden).

Attacks

Usually not one to start fights, Faraday can well defend himself if need be. Decades of experience in various forms of unarmed combat and the almost-forgotten gentlemanly art of bartitsu stick-fighting have made him a formidable opponent to any who would foolishly mess with him. If prepared for a fight in advance, he can also utilize his command over the Magic of Passion to debilitate and confuse opponents.

Unarmed (old-school boxing and wrestling styles): Punch [1]; Throw [0] [target must ***Avoid Harm*** or is thrown to the ground]; Grapple and pin [0] [victim is pinned and must ***Act Under Pressure*** to get away]; Disarm [0] [target must ***Avoid Harm*** to keep hold of the weapon or object]; Drink blood [1*] [target must be pinned by him first, PCs must ***Endure Injury*** against **Harm 1** but can afterwards ***Act Under Pressure*** to break free; every time they fail to do so, the drinking continues and the **Harm** increases by +1 for the next ***Endure Injury*** roll].

Walking stick (bartitsu fighting style): Precise swings and thrusts [2]; Disarm [1] [target must ***Avoid Harm*** to keep hold of the weapon or object]; Painful Jab [1] [***Endure Injury*** to avoid falling down from the pain]; Riposte [1] [on a failed ***Engage in Combat*** roll, Faraday can make a counter-attack that doesn't allow his opponent to ***Avoid Harm*** against].

Magic: Agitate primal urges [–] [Distance: room, target must ***Keep it Together*** to avoid getting dazed, confused, scared, or momentarily stunned by their own urges rising up and battling for control]; Form of desires [–] [Distance: room, Faraday appears in the form of the target's deepest desires].

Wounds & Harm Moves

Wounds: ○○○○○○ ☠

- The punches do nothing against him – you don't even think he will have bruises after this.
- Your blade sinks into him but he doesn't even flinch.
- The cut you gave him heals back up almost as fast as you inflicted it.
- The bullet disappears into his waxen flesh just leaving a dark ragged hole, no blood spilling forth.
- His clothes burn, but he himself is unaffected. Even his hair is still impeccably arrayed when the flames die down.
- The wooden stake penetrates deeply, causing him to scream with horror and pain.
- Pushed into the sunlight, he catches fire immediately, flailing and screeching helplessly.

Lesley Farmer

Lesley is an unemployed worker who became an alcoholic in his old age. He suffers from lumbago and arthritis, and has become used to killing the pain with booze. He was thrown out of his apartment a couple of years ago, and has been living on the streets ever since. He knows almost all of the homeless in Central London, and is angry and frightened about all the unexplained deaths. When he got sick he tried to find the one responsible, but soon realized that he was dying.

Lesley is a short and emaciated man with ragged, greyish black hair and brown eyes. He is dressed in a dirty, old tweed suit.

Height: 170 cm, **Weight:** 55 kg.

Personality: Lesley lost his confidence when his body started to give up on him, and he couldn't work any longer. He started to drink, and hasn't been able to stop.

Playing Tips: Move in a spasmic way, as if you're in pain, and talk a lot to hide your agony.

Home: Waterloo Bridge, London.

Unique Moves

- Recognize Richard Cardigan's grandson, Timothy.
- Know the way to the cemetery of the tramps.
- Reveal limited knowledge of the world of the dead.
- Agree to take the PCs with him, in exchange for the promise of justice for the poisoned homeless people.
- Ask if anyone got one last drink for him, before he goes.

Attacks

Lesley is too sick and frail to meaningfully attack anyone, and hardly able to defend himself. If confronted with violence, he has to rely on the PCs to defend him.

Wounds & Harm Moves

Wounds: ○ ☠

- Subdued/Badly Injured.
- Unconscious/Dying.

The Fools

The fools of London are not as far gone as the mentally ill in, for example Frankfurt, who band together in special clans completely outside society.

They wander in and out of different institutions, and live alternately in hospitals, their own apartments or on the street. The most deviating of the fools gather at the court of the fools in Docklands, but they are still not an altogether strange group. They dress in rags and look like the ordinary homeless individuals. Some are only mildly disturbed, while others are living totally in their own worlds.

There is everything here from older gentlemen in the remains of tailor-made suits to young women in bathrobes and old women dressed in rags.

Personality: Varies a lot between different individuals. They all have some sort of disturbance in the way they view reality.

Playing Tips: Speak in a disjointed way. Move stiffly and mechanically. Erupt suddenly in incomprehensible gibberish. Act crazy. These are crazy people.

Unique Moves

- Convincingly appear like an ordinary homeless person.
- Hide themselves, someone else, or some thing, pretty effectively.
- Find someone or something, anywhere in London.
- Exhibit fragmented insight into the Truth.
- Gather in small groups in the streets of London, mumbling to each other quietly.
- Gather in large numbers in the Docklands.

Attacks

Normally unarmed, the fools of London sometimes carry small knives (in various states of dereliction), or grab any handy object nearby to use as an improvised weapon when faced with the need for self defence. Some of them have undergone minor bodily changes due to past traumatic events or their own profound insanity beginning to twist their physical form out of shape. Of these, a few sport jagged claws, bony spikes protruding from the skin, or vicious teeth. There are only maybe a handful of them in the Docklands, and Moves marked with *italics* are only for them.

Unarmed: Punches and kicks [1]; Grapple [0]; Swarm and overwhelm [2] [needs 6 or more fools, target must ***Act Under Pressure*** or be *knocked down* and overwhelmed]; Natural Weapons [2] [target may have to ***Keep it Together***, depending on the details of the natural weapon and situation when it's used].

Hidden knife: Surprising stab [1] [target ***Avoids Harm*** at *–1 to the roll*;, Repeated stabbing [2].

Makeshift club: Beat [1]; Swing wildly [2] [opens the attacker's defence – PCs subsequently ***Engage in Combat*** against him at *+1 to the roll*]; Knock out [1] [a target unaware of the attack must ***Endure Injury*** or pass out, NPCs are unconscious or dazed].

Wounds & Harm Moves

Wounds: ○○ ☠

- Subdued.
- Injured.
- Badly Injured/Dying.

The Forgotten Man

The Forgotten Man has been shaped by the Demiurgos card in the Tarotica. He has taken many features of the lost Demiurge, but is still purely human. He does not remember who he was before he became the forgotten.

The Forgotten Man is a short and bent sage, holding himself straight with a stick. He is wearing a thinning, short beard in a heavily lined face surrounded by thin white hair. He is wearing a full length black coat on top of his priestly robe. He never leaves his house.

Height: 160 cm, **Weight:** 60 kg.

Personality: A recluse who no longer knows who he is, or what he used to be. He holds great knowledge and remarkable memories, but only fragments remain of his own consciousness.

Playing Tips: Give an impression of lost strength, try to stay upright in spite of the fact that you are bent, and speak with authority, even though your voice occasionally gives out on you.

Home: The Borderland between Elysium and Achlys (the forgotten village that used to be named Trilsey).

Creature Type: Human (or is he?).

Abilities

- *Keeper of Knowledge:* The Forgotten Man has probably forgotten more than he still remembers – but nevertheless, he can be a wellspring of knowledge and information on topics both entirely mundane and obscurely arcane. [If the PCs need help with any of their Disadvantages or Dark Secrets getting out of control, or need some other critical information at this point in the adventure, consider letting the Forgotten Man give them some vital, if cryptic, advice or pointers].
- *Protected by the Nothingness:* His close proximity to Achlys and his intimate relation to She Who Waits Below cause time and space to bend and warp around him whenever he is threatened. [Attacks against the Forgotten Man will invariably fail, be it by sheer coincidences (a shooter stumbles at just the wrong time, and the bullet misses by mere inches), or by obvious distortions of Time and Space (the walls bend inwards, everything starts to move very slowly, as the man suddenly seems much farther away than should be possible within the confines of this room)].

Unique Moves

- Have his servant and guardians do his bidding.
- Reveal detailed knowledge about the Tarotica, the Goddess of the Forgotten, Seymour, Achlys, the Guardian at the Gate, and numerous other topics of interest.
- Explain how to create a soul, to someone who does not yet have one.

Attacks

He will not attack the PCs (or anyone else) during the course of this adventure.

Wounds & Harm Moves

The Forgotten Man cannot be harmed at all, and thus will never receive any wounds or make any harm moves.

The Goddess of the Forgotten

The Goddess has the same shape in 1892 as in the present, meaning that she will only be described in this section. She has no name, and embodies those who are forgotten and rejected, the people seen by nobody. Normally, the Goddess resides beyond the Illusion in Metropolis, but Seymour summons her to our world. In places where there are a large number of the forgotten and the rejected, like prisons, the walls between her world and ours is thin. She has a contradictive personality, as even though she helps the forgotten survive, she still keeps them in oblivion – all the while gathering new people to her flocks.

The Tarotica has been created out of her pain, and the pain of all the other forgotten people, and is a picture of power in the world of man. It can be used to influence the Illusion, but the Goddess has primarily used it to perceive the future and the past.

The outer form of the Goddess is that of an old, wrinkled and broken hag in tattered clothes.

Personality: As a personification of the outsider, she is short of temper and distrustful of everyone, viewing herself as bypassed and ignored. She hates everyone with self-confidence and power.

Playing Tips: Talk in a whining voice, stare distrustfully at the players, sort of from below the one you are talking to. Play her as an old fortune teller.

Home: Metropolis.

Creature Type: Living Goddess

Abilities

Normally a being of considerable power and influence, the Goddess in her imprisoned state has almost all of her abilities neutralized by Seymour's black chains. Only some of her influence remains.

Combat [–], **Influence** [3], **Magic** [–].

Influence [Considerable]

- Induce pity and compassion in her miserable, weakened state.
- Offer tidbits of her intimate knowledge of the Tarotica, in exchange for promises to help destroy Seymour.
- Speak and perceive through her servants (beggars, homeless, outcasts...).

Attacks

The Godess will not be able to attack anyone during the course of this adventure.

Wounds & Harm Moves

Wounds: the Goddess cannot die, since Seymour's imprisonment preserves her in a perpetual state of suffering and misery. If someone attacks her in spite of her pitiful condition:

- The broken old hag whines and wails with pain from the assault.
- She winces in agony, struggling against her chains.
- She whines loudly as the punches and kicks connect.
- You hear bones break in her frail, ancient body.
- Curled up into a fetal ball on the ground, she stops offering even the meagre resistance she has so far.

The Guardians

The village found by the PCs has existed since the 14th century. The villagers call themselves Guardians and serve the Forgotten Man. There are about 30 of them in the village – which is actually a part of the underground city of Ktonor that the PCs are able to see, a part lying quite close to London. They dress in dark, old-fashioned clothes. If they meet the PCs after their visit to Achlys, they will be filled with awe.

Personality: Fanatical traditionalists. They haven't changed at all over the centuries, and spend all their strength at keeping the secrets of the forgotten man.

Playing Tips: Stare in a slightly empty and fanatical way.

Abilities

- *Fanatical:* It is impossible to detract them from their sacred duties. [They cannot be influenced, charmed, or reasoned with].

Unique Moves

- Appear like farmers and shepherds fallen out of time – belonging to a bygone, much darker and more primitive age than the current one.
- Reveal superficial knowledge of the Forgotten Man and Achlys.
- Show the way to the crumbling church where the Forgotten Man's servant collects the worthy and leads them to the Man.
- Defend their secrets with violence.

Attacks

Armed with various kinds of farming implements, the guardians are prepared to inflict violence upon any intruder in their village who threatens their secrets or offends the Forgotten Man whom they serve.

Unarmed: Punches and Kicks [1]; Grapple [0]; Overwhelm [2] [needs 4 or more guardians, target must ***Avoid Harm*** at *–1 to the roll*, or be *knocked down* and overwhelmed].

Scythe or Pitchfork: Slash or Pierce [2] [Distance: room]; Keep at a distance [2*] [target must ***Act Under Pressure*** to come any closer than Distance: room, on a failure **2 Harm** is dealt]; Impale [2] [Distance: room, victim must ***Act Under Pressure*** to break free without taking another **2 Harm**].

Sickle, Hatchet, or Meat cleaver: Cut and Hack [2] [Distance: arm]; Chop off hand or foot [Critical Wound] [Distance: arm, victim must be *knocked over*, dazed, distracted or otherwise temporarily disadvantaged for the guardian to make this attack].

Wounds & Harm Moves

Wounds: ○○ ☠

- Subdued.
- Injured.
- Badly Injured/Dying.

Father Harrow

Father Marcus Harrow was born in 1902 in London, and became a clergyman 25 years later in the Anglican church. He worked with charities and helping the poor, and got in touch with the cemetery of the homeless in the 30's. He started visiting in order to talk to the dying and sitting with them. When it was time for him to die after 50 years he never passed on to the other side. The closeness between the worlds of the living and the dead at the cemetery has gotten him stuck in the borderland. He is a living dead who can't leave the cemetery, but neither can he die. He helps the dying and buries as many as he can, but more often he lets the birds and the rodents finish off the corpses.

Harrow is dressed in an old fashioned robe. He is thin, with black hair and greenish-black nails and teeth. The skin is wrinkled and looks slightly embalmed.

Height: 180 cm, **Weight:** 60 kg.

Personality: Harrow "lives" only for his wards at the cemetery. He has forgotten much about life outside and doesn't care about anything in the world of the living. Nothing can make him upset or even touch him.

Playing Tips: Talk calmly and a little bit impersonally. Look deep into the eyes of the one you are talking too, preferably putting your hand on his shoulder.

Home: Elysium (the cemetery of the tramps and homeless)

Creature Type: Undead.

Abilities

- *Ageless:* Doesn't naturally age and will never die unless by violence.
- *Invulnerable to physical harm:* almost no bodily injury can bring him down.
- *Journeyman of the School of Death:* has accumulated some real knowledge about Death, and command beginner-level abilities in Death magic. (Fields of expertise: talk to the dead and affect the living).

Unique Moves

- Take care of the dead and dying.
- Counsel someone on the paths to the borderland of death, and beyond.
- Reveal knowledge of the world of the dead, how to get there, and the dangers involved.
- Reveal limited knowledge about the men working for Lancer, Ltd. (and help finding out a bit more).
- Reveal knowledge about Dr. Ernest Waugh, the doctor taking care of the homeless.

Attacks

It is impossible to make Father Harrow angry enough to become violent, and he is impervious to most any form of damage and harm. As such, he does not have (or need) any combat abilities.

Wounds & Harm Moves

More of a spirit or spectre trapped in his own undead flesh, Harrow will ignore and quickly regenerate any wounds dealt to him. Only fire can destroy his physical form for good, and then only if he is burned to ashes.

Junkies

This description may be used for Wes' assistants and all the other junkies the PCs meet. They are all thin and grubby, dressed in jeans and worn jackets. Most of them seem to be in their thirties, but prematurely aged.

Personality: Like many junkies your are acting selfishly and have a tendency to switch between sentimentality and aggression.

Playing Tips: Play it nervously. Let your hands shake, and talk in a forced, uncertain way.

Home: Elysium (London).

Abilities

- *Addicts:* They are dependent on the substances they abuse, and ever greedy for more. Therefore, they can easily be tempted or coerced by offering (or withholding) them the right kinds of drugs. [PCs Influencing them are at *+2 to their rolls* if they have suitable drugs to offer, or take a junkie's supply away and threaten not to return it to them].

Unique Moves

- Find someone or some place.
- Reveal information about the current state of the Dreamworld, in exchange for payment.
- Break into a place.
- Intimidate someone.
- Reveal the whereabouts of Wes Sterling (under credible threat).

Attacks

Unarmed: Punch [1]; Grapple [0]; Knock down [1]; Dirty fighting [1] [hits to the eyes, groin, or throat which can make the victim temporarily dazed].

Switch-blade stiletto: Surprise attack [1] [all the victim can do in return is try to ***Avoid Harm***]; Knife at the throat [2*] [if the victim does not follow the attacker's orders, she must ***Act Under Pressure***, taking **2 Harm** on a failure]; Reckless attack [2] [targeted opponent can immediately deal their own **Harm** back to the attacker].

Wounds & Harm Moves

Wounds: ○○○ ☠

- Bruised.
- Badly Injured/Fleeing.
- Unconscious/Dying.

Lancer's Employees

Carpenter has made sure he has some sort of hold on each of his employees at Lancer. He will go to any lengths to avoid leaks about the activities of the company. There are ten people working with the Housing Project, as it is called at Lancer. The employees are quiet, reliable men in their forties, who will be the first to suffer the consequences if they start to talk about it. They have taken care of business since the start, more than a year ago, and have since become more and more effective.

The employees keep a low profile. They usually appear in pairs, sometimes as groups of four or so. *They always wear non-descript suits and grey or beige coats. Their hair is cut short and they are always clean-shaven.*

Personality: Effective, unemotional people, doing their jobs, and not thinking too much about it.

Playing Tips: Play them as bored professionals. Avoid expansive gestures, and use curt expressions.

Home: Elysium (London).

Unique Moves

- Make up excuses and explanations.
- Deny any knowledge of or involvement in certain events.
- Sneak up on someone, or shadow someone.
- Intimidate someone.
- Draw a concealed weapon.

Attacks

Unarmed: Punch [1]; Grapple [0]; Knock down [1].

Browning Hi-Power: Aim and Fire [2] [–1 Ammo]; Overkill [3] [–2 Ammo]; Multiple targets [2] [–3 Ammo, may hit one additional target]; Ammo: ○○○○.

Wounds & Harm Moves

Wounds: ○○○ ☠

- Bruised.
- Wounded/Retreating.
- Badly Injured.
- Unconscious/Dying.

Mary Langsbury

Mary Langsbury has suffered from schizophrenia since childhood. She was born of poor parents in Brixton, and was institutionalised when she was eight years old, first at a children's home and then at Sandburn, where she has been for the past ten years. She is hearing voices and seeing fragments of worlds beyond the illusion. She has never been able to relate to the world and can not orient herself in reality.

Mary is fairly short, with short, brown hair and green eyes. She is very pale, and moves and talks like a child.

Age: 26, **Height:** 160 cm, **Weight:** 55 kg.

Personality: Mary has never gotten a real grip on reality. She does not understand how things connect. She is gliding between different worlds without being able to control what is happening. The cards have given her a firm hold on things at last, but at the same time she is afraid of it. She will gladly give it away, but she will still try to hang on to it.

Playing Tips: Talk and move like a child. Be uncertain. Glide off into the blue for long periods. Talk incoherently from time to time.

Unique Moves

- See things beyond the Illusion, albeit fragmented and uncontrollable.
- Listen to voices only she can hear, stare into nothingness.
- Hold her belly, singing softly to it.
- Answer questions minutes or hours before or after they are asked of her.
- Express fear of the outside world.

Attacks

Mary will not attack anyone during the adventure. If forced to defend herself, her attempts will be feeble and desperate.

Unarmed: Push and slap [0]; Desperate kick [1]; Flee from violence [0] [***Act Under Pressure*** *(at +2* because she is too confused for a focused escape plan) to get hold of her and stop her evasion]

Wounds & Harm Moves

Wounds: ○○ ☠

- Subdued.
- Badly Injured.
- Unconscious/Dying.

The Police

The English policemen are known to be unarmed and service-minded. All law enforcements units are equipped with handcuffs, torches, and radios. The ordinary policemen on the street, the "bobbies", don't carry guns, but other police do.

Adapt the weaponry and use the characteristics for all policemen the PCs run into in the adventure. *The English police uniform is black. They carry ordinary peaked caps or the well-known helmet of the bobbies.*

You can also use the characteristics for unarmed policemen when you describe the guards at Eddings Primary School.

Unique Moves

- Show up unexpectedly.
- Investigate a crime scene.
- Find evidence in a case.
- Pursue someone, openly or unnoticed.
- Detain someone, temporarily or for good.

Attacks

Interested in keeping the civil peace, they will normally seek to de-escalate violent conflicts. When faced with what they perceive as hardened criminals, however, they will be very persistent in bringing them down and subduing them – taking them into custody if possible.

Unarmed: Punch [1]; Grapple [0]; Pin down and shackle [0] [needs 2 or more policemen unless the victim is unconscious, subdued, or compliant].

Truncheon: Beat [1]; Surround and subdue [2] [needs 4 or more policemen with truncheons, ***Act Under Pressure*** to break out of the circle and avoid being subdued]; Knock down [1] [victim falls prone on a failed ***Endure Injury***].

Glock 17: Careful shots [2] [–1 Ammo]; Quick firing [3] [–2 Ammo]; Crowd Suppression [1] [–2 Ammo, may hit several targets, PCs targeted must ***Keep it Together*** or freeze or flee, distance: room]; Ammo: ○○○○.

Wounds & Harm Moves

Wounds: ○○○ ☠

- Bruised.
- Retreating/Calling for reinforcements.
- Badly Injured.
- Dead/Dying.

The Prisoners

The prison contains everything from smalltime crooks to mass murderers in one huge mix. The only distinction made is between those with death penalties and those without. The prisoners awaiting execution have their own wing. Overpopulation means there are up to ten convicts in cells built for four.

All prisoners wear striped, thin prison clothes. Most of them are barefoot. A few, considered really bad cases, are permanently chained to walls, or manacled. Use the characteristics below for all the prisoners.

Unique Moves

- Listlessly trot along and let things happen.
- Show fear of and deference to the guards.
- Plead for mercy.
- Gather in small groups in the yard, mumbling to each other quietly.
- Start fights amongst each other or with guards.
- Lead an uprising.

Attacks

Normally unarmed, the prisoners at Sandburn can have (or make) small, makeshift knives or crude, improvised clubs. They will do this in larger numbers in times of internal turmoil, or before a revolt breaks loose. In times of outright uprising, many will heft larger clubs and iron bars, and a precious few may wrest a revolver or rifle from an overwhelmed guard. Most of the prisoners are in for petty crimes (theft, fraud, desertion, debts...) and aren't habitually violent people, but some are "bad cases" (thugs, rapists, murderers...) who can be tough, ruthless and vicious.

Moves marked with *italics* are only for these more violent prisoners.

Unarmed: Punch [1]; Grapple [0]; Swarm and overwhelm [2] [needs 6 or more prisoners, target must ***Act Under Pressure*** or be knocked down and overwhelmed]; Disarm [0] [target must ***Avoid Harm*** to keep hold of the weapon or object].

Hidden knife: Surprising stab [1] [target ***Avoids Harm*** *at –1 to the roll*]; Repeated stabbing [2].

Makeshift club: Beat [1]; Swing wildly [2] [opens the attacker's defense – PCs subsequently ***Engage in Combat*** against him at *+1 to the roll*]; Knock out [1] [a target unaware of the attack must ***Endure Injury*** or pass out, NPCs are unconscious or dazed].

Iron bar: same attack moves as Makeshift club, but at **+1 Harm**.

Webley Mark II Revolver: Careful shots [2] [–1 Ammo]; Quick firing [3] [–3 Ammo, distance: room]; Ammo: ○○○.

Lee-Metford Rifle: Aim and Fire [3] [–1 Ammo, distance: field]; Ammo: ○○○.

Wounds & Harm Moves

Wounds: ○○ ☠

- Subdued.
- Injured.
- Badly Injured/Dying.

The Prison Guards

There are 40 guards at Sandburn. Each captain has ten subordinates. Many of the guards are former soldiers or sailors who had to quit for some reason or other. The only advantage with working in the prison is the absence of heavy lifting. The guards are not overly keen on working up a sweat.

A handful of the guards have taken the job because they want it. They are generally bullies or sadists wishing to take it out on the prisoners. There are generally one or two of these in each wing. The characteristics below can generally be applied to all of the guards. Moves marked with *italics* are for the bullies and sadists amongst them only.

Unique Moves

- Herd prisoners through their daily routine.
- Threaten prisoners with disciplinary measures (withholding of rations, ice-cold showers, transfer to an isolation cell, beating, flogging, transfer to death row, exemplary execution...).
- Lose their temper and vent their anger on prisoners.
- Suck up to someone higher in station.
- *Extort personal favors, degrading services, or illicit goods from prisoners.*
- *Arrange for or improvise cruel punishments.*

Attacks

Normally armed with nothing but truncheons, shackles, and a mean streak for violence, the guards of Sandburn make efficient use of these tools in order to keep the prison's population under strict control. In times of crisis (escape attempts, prison revolts), Governor Seymour may choose to equip the guards with the 10 Webley Mark II revolvers and/or the 40 Lee-Metford rifles from the prison's Arms Supply.

Unarmed: Punch [1]; Grapple [0]; Knock down [1]; Pin down and shackle [0] [needs 2 or more guards, victim must be grappled, knocked down, or subdued first]; Kick them when they're down [2] [victim must be knocked down or subdued first].

Truncheon: Beat [1]; Surround and subdue [2] [needs 4 or more guards with truncheons, ***Act Under Pressure*** to break out of the circle and avoid being subdued]; Painful Jab [2] [***Endure Injury*** to avoid falling down from the pain].

Webley Mark II Revolver: Careful shots [2] [–1 Ammo]; Quick firing [3] [–3 Ammo, distance: room]; Ammo: ○○○.

Lee-Metford Rifle: Aim and Fire [3] [–1 Ammo, distance: field]; Ammo: ○○○.

Wounds & Harm Moves

Wounds: ○○○ ☠

- Bruised.
- Retreating/Calling for reinforcements.
- Badly Injured.
- Dead/Dying.

Proto-Razides

The four guardians keep everyone away from the crypt where the child is kept. They are stunted, twisted crosses between humans and razides. They move on all fours and are more organic than mechanical, humanlike but with plastic tubes and metal parts added to their bodies. Behind the bloodshot eyes can be seen panicky fragments of human souls.

Length: 200 cm, **Height:** 120 cm, **Weight:** 180 kg.

Personality: Filled with hunger and fear.

Playing Tips: Bite, rip and drool.

Home: Inferno (the halls of the outcast).

Creature Type: Proto-razides, twisted humans halfway into being transformed into demons.

Abilities

- *Monstrous form:* Humans who see these creatures must ***Keep it Together*** to not panic.
- *Creatures of Inferno:* The creatures are very powerful in their native environment. All **Harm** inflicted upon them is reduced by –1, and any attacks against them or attempts to affect them with other abilities are at *–1 to the roll.*
- *Acid Blood:* Whenever one of the creatures takes 3 or more **Harm** from an attack, anyone nearby must ***Avoid Harm*** [2] from being splashed with their highly corrosive bodily fluids.
- *Natural weaponry:* They have various weapons embedded in their bodies, some artificially implanted, and some perversely grown from their demonic transformation.
- *Vicious when bloodied:* As soon as one of the creatures takes 4 or more wounds in total, it will devolve into a state of unthinking rage, during which all **Harm** it inflicts is at +1.

Combat [4], **Influence** [1], **Magic** [2].

Combat [Powerful]

- Knock someone or something over
- Disarm an opponent
- Move a considerable distance in a single leap
- Attack two opponents at once

Influence [Novice]

- Known and feared among the purgatides and restless souls surrounding their lair

Magic [Weak]

- Sense any intruders into the crypt they are commanded to guard.
- Attuned to Inferno (can move through this environment as if native to it).

Attacks

Little more than slavering beasts, driven insane by the endless torture and infernal surgery they have undergone, they will readily attack anyone who enters their lair.

Claws: Rend and tear [2]; Slash two opponents [2] [Distance: arm, both targets must ***Avoid Harm*** or suffer the consequences]; Disarming sweep [1] [if unable to ***Avoid Harm***, victim loses whatever they are holding].

Teeth: Dashing bite [2] [Distance: room, victim falls prone on a failed ***Endure Injury***]; Rending bite [3] [Distance: arm, reduces any armor worn by the victim by –1].

Demonic Appendages (bio-mechanical scorpion's tail, spiked tentacles, and the like): Impale [2] [Distance: arm, victim must ***Act Under Pressure*** to break free without taking another **2 Harm**].

Wounds & Harm Moves

Armor: 1 (from biomechanical implants and being a Creature of Inferno).

Wounds: ○○○○○○ ☠

- Ignores the injuries.
- The attack reflects off the creature's metal body parts.
- Howling with pain and rage, the creature calls for its brood members to help it [they join in a focused attack against its tormentor – ignoring any other opponents for the moment].
- One of its limbs it maimed or destroyed [it loses the abilities *Slash two opponents* and *Dashing bite*].
- A tube cuts open, splashing a red-black, slippery fluid over the floor [***Act Under Pressure*** to move around that area].
- The creature's acidic blood gushes forth from the deep injury [anyone nearby must ***Avoid Harm*** [2] to avoid being hit by it].
- The proto-razide dies with inhuman screams.

Anthony Seymour, 1892 (Lictor)

This is the shape taken by Anthony Seymour in 1892. When the PCs meet him again in the present, he is a black lictor with features of Inferno. As such he will be described in ***Chapter 2***.

Seymour has held different offices in the public administration before arriving at Sandburn. During his time as a civil servant he has become more and more irritated at the lack of effectiveness and the endless social rituals. He does not have the patience for getting into a position through contacts and the correct views. More and more he is dreaming of a shortcut to power, a shortcut built on control and analysis instead of rituals and flattery. These dreams made him begin his quest for the cards, as they are a magical representation of the structures of power. As long as Seymour controls the cards, no-one at Sandburn may physically hurt him.

Seymour is tall, with short, brown hair and green eyes. He wears a large mustache and dark suits. Beyond the Illusion, he looks like a lictor.

Height: 195 cm, **Weight:** 90 kg (**True form:** 250 cm, 400 kg).

Personality: A cold and analytical creature, frustrated that his gifts of reasoning are worthless in the public administration and the aristocracy of his time. He tottered for a long while between occultism and modern science, but has chosen occultism as being more developing on a personality level. He has few close friends, and has difficulty relating to other people.

Playing Tips: Talk in a cold, condescending voice, and never get upset. Sit with a straight back, but still quite relaxed.

Home: Elysium.

Creature Type: Lictor under the influence of no particular Archon (rogue Lictor).

Abilities

- *Cold hearted:* Cannot be influenced or charmed.
- *Gigantic:* Cannot be grappled or knocked over in close combat. Melee attacks Seymour makes always cause the target to be knocked over if they connect.
- *Tough skin:* All **Harm** from chopping and crushing weapons is decreased by –1.
- *Monstrous form:* Humans who see his true form must ***Keep it Together*** to not panic.
- *Aura of influence:* PCs in the being's vicinity (anywhere at Sandburn) who obey Seymour's commands take *+1 ongoing* to all rolls, or *–1 ongoing* if disobeying. [Only after he has acquired the Tarotica and ritually dedicated them to himself].

Combat [3], **Influence** [5], **Magic** [3] ([5] with the Tarotica).

Combat [Considerable]

- Knock someone or something over.
- Grab hold of and pin someone.
- Brace himself.

Influence [Exceptional]

- Be aware of a detail regarding Sandburn Prison.
- Order prison guards to do his bidding.
- Destroy someone's career (by having them thrown into prison and sent to Sandburn).
- Threaten someone, either directly or veiled.
- Call for reinforcements.

Magic [Considerable/Exceptional]

- Initiate in the magic school of Time and Space.
- Summon a being from Metropolis (uses this to invoke the Goddess of the Forgotten).
- Reveal and use a powerful artifact (the black chains to bind the Goddess).
- Harm someone or something (by using the cards of the Tarotica).
- Pull a whole location into another dimension (will drag Sandburn into Inferno).

Attacks

Normally, Seymour will let his captains and their guards do the dirty work of beating uppity prisoners back into submission. However, if attacked, or if his authority is questioned by anyone beneath him, he will ruthlessly subdue them using his unarmed combat attacks.

When his control over the Tarotica is broken, he has no qualms to use his magical attacks as well – viciously using his power over reality at Sandburn to crush the prison revolt and ruthlessly seeking to reclaim control over the cards.

Unarmed: Punch and Knock over [2] [Distance: arm, victim is knocked to the ground]; Grapple and Pin [1] [Distance: arm, victim is pinned and must ***Act Under Pressure*** to get away].

Magic: Distort the surroundings [–] [those present must ***See Through the Illusion*** to get their bearings back]; Reveal true form [–] [***Keep it Together*** to avoid panicking]; All the forces of Inferno [3] [Distance: room, summons infernal energies and minor demonic creatures that rip into his enemies with abandon; ***Act Under Pressure*** to get out of the carnage zone; ***Keep it Together*** when witnessing the mayhem unleashed].

Wounds & Harm Moves

Wounds: ○○○○○○○○ ☠

- Merely a scratch.
- Seymour loses his temper and viciously lashes out at the nearest opponents [his next attack does **+1 Harm**, PC victims have *–1 to* ***Avoid Harm***].
- His false form falters [PCs ***See Through the Illusion***, if successful need to ***Keep it Together*** as per *Monstrous Form*, above].
- He cries out in an unearthly scream that shatters windows and leaves human ears ringing [*–1 on the next roll* for everyone present].
- Black blood pours out of his open wound as he curses and howls at the attackers.
- He tries to flee and doesn't care if he destroys everything in his way [PCs in his way ***Avoid Harm*** [2]].
- The prisoners tear the albino giant apart with their bare hands.

Anthony Seymour, 1992 (Black Lictor)

Anthony Seymour has been transformed to a cross between a lictor and a nepharite during thousands of years of punishment in Inferno. When the Tarotica has fallen out of memory and is brought back into the world, Seymour returns to the reality of men to seek it out. During his entire stay in Hell, he has planned his recovery of the cards and how to use it to put sections of humanity under his spell. When he returns to Sandburn and discovers that the cards have begun to create a Child of Magic in order to make the 68th card, he decides to take control of the child.

As a Black Lictor, Seymour looks very much like his old self. He has the same tall and muscular body, although the hair is torn away and

the bloodied skull is covered by a hat. The face is scarred, and a large moustache hides the fact that his lips have been cut away. The green eyes have been punched out and the empty sockets are covered with dark glasses. Under his dark trenchcoat the body is covered by open wounds after all the lashes, leaving a faint trail of blood.

After he has taken Director Lockley's place at Sandburn, he will look like him throughout the first week (and when the PCs meet him for the first time). Gradually he regains his normal form by twisting Lockley's body.

Height: 195 cm, **Weight:** 90 kg (**True form:** 250 cm, 400 kg).

Personality: The cold and analytical streak has been muddled by the sadism and hunger for power which he gained in Inferno. Seymour has become unpredictable, fickle, and desperate. He has lost all his respect for the old hierarchies he used to belong to as a lictor. Now he wants revenge. The whole world is going to suffer for what happened to him in Hell.

Playing Tips: Talk in a cold, condescending tone of voice. Appear in complete control, then abruptly become violently upset. Ruthlessly focus your spite and hatred on any obstacle in your path, foaming and gnashing that anything dares to oppose your plans. Take it out on innocent bystanders and your own underlings. Then calm down again as soon as any little thing goes according to plan again.

Home: Elysium.

Creature Type: Black Lictor, paying allegiance only to Inferno and his own drive for power.

Abilities

- *Cold hearted:* Cannot be influenced or charmed.
- *Aura of influence:* PCs in his vicinity (or anywhere at Sandburn) who obey Seymour's commands take *+1 ongoing* to all rolls, or *–1 ongoing* if disobeying. [Only after he has acquired the Tarotica and ritually dedicated them to himself again].
- *Boss:* Henchmen and servants act fearlessly and with fanaticism for as long as they're in his vicinity
- *Gigantic:* Cannot be *grappled* or *knocked over* in close combat. Melee attacks Seymour makes always cause the target to be *knocked over* if they connect.
- *Tough skin:* All **Harm** from chopping and crushing weapons is decreased by –1.
- *Demonic form:* Humans who see his true form must ***Keep it Together*** to not panic, at *–2 to the roll* since his new demonic features make his appearance even worse than before.
- *Bound to Inferno:* Should he be destroyed in Elysium he will be reconstructed in Inferno.
- *Torturer:* Skilled in the infliction of suffering to selectively awaken specific aspects of an individual. Resisting this torture requires ***Keep it Together*** at –1.

Combat [3], **Influence** [5], **Magic** [6].

Combat [Considerable]

- Knock someone or something over.
- Grab hold of and pin someone.
- Brace himself.

Influence [Exceptional]

- Be aware of a detail regarding Sandburn Prison.
- Order his personal guards and facility employees to do his bidding.
- Destroy someone's career (by having them diagnosed with mental illness and sent to Sandburn).
- Intimidate someone into obedience (Timothy, Carpenter, Wes...).
- Take control of a person or organization influenced by the cards (Carpenter/Lancer Ltd., Wes Sterling, others...).

Magic [Legendary]

- Initiate in the magic school of Time and Space.
- Journeyman in the magic school of Death.
- Find someone connected to/in possession of the Tarotica (uses this to find Mary, the PCs, Sterling...).
- Possess someone and cast their soul into Inferno (uses this to take Lockley's place).
- Hide something in another dimension (takes the Child of Magic to Inferno).
- Trap a soul in a dreamworld (uses this to try and break the Child's will).

Attacks

Normally, Seymour will let his bodyguards do the dirty work of defending him against any attackers. Subduing unruly patients is the facility staff's job. However, if he receives painful wounds, or if his authority is openly questioned by anyone beneath him, he will ruthlessly lash out at them using his unarmed combat attacks, his heavy revolver, and his magic.

Unarmed: Punch and knock over [2] [Distance: arm, victim is knocked to the ground]; Grapple and pin [1] [Distance: arm, victim is pinned and must ***Act Under Pressure*** to get away].

Colt Python: Combat shooting [3] [–1 Ammo]; Overkill [4] [–3 Ammo, distance: room]; Ammo: ○○○.

Magic: Distort the surroundings [–] [those present must ***See Through the Illusion*** to get their bearings back]; Reveal true form [–] [***Keep it Together*** to avoid panicking]; All the forces of Inferno [3] [Distance: room, summons infernal energies and minor demonic creatures that rip into his enemies with abandon; ***Act Under Pressure*** to get out of the carnage zone; ***Keep it Together*** when witnessing the mayhem unleashed]; Summon and command creature of Inferno [–] [summons a proto-razide to defend him].

Wounds & Harm Moves

Wounds: ○○○○○○○○○ ☠

- Merely a scratch.
- Seymour loses his temper and viciously lashes out at the nearest opponents [his next attack does **+1 Harm**, PC victims have –1 to ***Avoid Harm***].
- His false form falters [PCs ***See Through the Illusion***, if successful need to ***Keep it Together*** as per *Demonic Form*, above].
- His dark glasses shatter and fall off – revealing ragged, empty eye sockets.
- His lipless mouth distorts in an unearthly scream that shatters windows and leaves human ears ringing [*–1 on the next roll* for all present].
- Black blood pours out of his open wound as he curses and bowls at the attackers.
- Forced off-balance, his huge body comes crashing down on the floor, his massive limbs flailing helplessly [*+1 ongoing* to ***Engage in Combat*** until he manages to get back up].
- The albino giant finally stops struggling and lays still, the stench of decay and foiled ambition rising off the inhuman corpse [he will completely decompose within 24 hours, then return from Inferno].

Seymour's Agents

The values can be used for all of Seymour's men in the dream world. Vary their looks and dress depending on who they are. *Most of them are wearing dark suits and trench coats.*

Personality: Distrustful and corrupt.

Playing Tips: Play cool. Don't talk unnecessarily, and try to frighten the PCs.

Unique Moves

- Loom menacingly around the streets and bars of the Dreamworld.
- Herd captives into abduction and detention at Sandburn in the Dream.
- Shadow and ambush someone.
- Subdue and capture someone.
- Twist into monstrous, semi-human shapes when approaching Sandburn in the Dream.
- React violently to spies and intruders.

Attacks

Hardened thugs to a one, they will not hesitate to do anything Seymour tells them to, be it in order to protect him personally, or to keep order at Sandburn. When caught on their own, they have less direction, but will readily resort to violence if unsure of what else to do.

Unarmed: Punch [1]; Grapple [0]; Throw [1] [***Act Under Pressure*** or get *knocked over*]; Disarm [0] [target must ***Avoid Harm*** to keep hold of the weapon or object]; Mangle [3] [needs 2 or more agents to team up on a victim, beating the poor bastard to a pulp].

Glock 19: Combat shooting [2] [–1 Ammo]; Overkill [3] [–2 Ammo], distance: room, Ammo: ○○○○.

Natural weapons (only while near Sandburn): Claw rake [2]; Vicious pounce [2] [Distance: room, –1 to ***Avoid Harm***, victim falls down and gets pinned, must ***Act Under Pressure*** to get free].

Wounds & Harm Moves

Wounds: ○○○ ☠

- Bruised.
- Badly Injured.
- Retreating/Calling for reinforcements.
- Dead/Dying.

Seymour's Guards

The mental institution doesn't have any guards under Director Lockley. The guard center is manned by two guards hired from a private company. When Seymour returns he immediately hires ten bullies to keep order at Sandburn. These are large men, and they always follow orders. Three or four of these accompany Seymour whenever he moves outside the hospital walls.

Personality: Cold and dull.

Playing Tips: Shut your mouth.

Unique Moves

- Suddenly show up when there is trouble or unrest anywhere in Sandburn.
- Accompany Seymour wherever he goes.
- Show up somewhere, shadowing and observing Seymour's enemies.
- Intercept an attack directed at Seymour.
- Retaliate violently against aggression.

Attacks

Hardened thugs to a one, they will not hesitate to do anything Seymour tells them to, be it in order to protect him personally, or to keep order at Sandburn. When caught on their own, they have less direction, but will readily resort to violence if unsure of what else to do.

Unarmed: Punch [1]; Grapple [0]; Throw [1] [***Act Under Pressure*** or get knocked over]; Disarm [0] [target must ***Avoid Harm*** to keep hold of the weapon or object]; Mangle [3] [needs 2 or more guards to team up on a target, beating the poor bastard to a pulp].

Glock 20: Combat shooting [3] [–1 Ammo]; Overkill [4] [–3 Ammo, distance: room]; Ammo: ○○○.

Wounds & Harm Moves

Wounds: ○○○ ☠

- Bruised.
- Badly Injured.
- Calling for reinforcements.
- Dead/Dying.

Wesley Sterling

Wesley Sterling was born in Limehouse. The apartment visited by the PCs originally belonged to his mother. Wes started to use drugs fifteen years ago, when he was thirteen. Since then he hasn't had a moment without being drugged. Now he is 28 and dying. The only thing that has kept him going is the dream world, where he was its prince.

He didn't create the dream world of the junkies. He took it over after another junkie, now dead. Unlike other dream worlds this one doesn't give immortality to its dreamers. They are physically present in the dream. They do not have any dream bodies they can escape to.

Wes is slowly dying since a few years back. He has tried to find a way to use the dream world to become immortal. It is his hope of survival. When Seymour came and kicked him out he became desperate. That is why he is ready to help the PCs. If the need arises he will give out on them in order to get Seymour's help.

Wes is emaciated and jaundiced. He is obviously very sick. His hair is long and reddish. They eyes are brown. He is always dressed in jeans and a grimy, brown leather jacket, and carries a Desert Eagle in his pocket.

Height: 185 cm, **Weight:** 80 kg.

Personality: Anguish over his imminent death and anger because his only world has been taken away from him fills his life. Wes is totally self-centered and doesn't care about anyone else.

Playing Tips: Pretend you are chain-smoking and look everywhere. Let your hands shake, and talk slightly too fast, slightly too nervously.

Home: Elysium (Limehouse, Dog's End).

Creature Type: Dying Dream Prince.

Abilities

- *De-throned Dream Prince:* Has lost much of his influence in the Dreamworld of the junkies, but can still subtly alter his environment in the Dreamworld, travel between different dreams, and find people in the dreams. He can also hide himself away in the Dreamworld, but only as long as he stays away from the parts of it that are now controlled by Seymour.
- *Doomed to die:* A ruthless egotist, with his morals decayed by years of being a junkie and a Dream Prince, he is afraid of nothing except the imminent threat of death hanging over his fragile existence. He will not flinch back from any action, however depraved, if he sees the tiniest chance to prolong his life.
- *Predatory shape:* when entering the Dreamworld that used to be his, his sickly body transforms to grow bestial and predatory features, looking less like a human and more like some surreal beast of prey.
- *Sharp senses:* In his predatory shape, his senses are heightened, able to pick up the most minute sight, sound, and scent, including an intuitive sense for danger.
- *Natural Weapons:* In his predatory shape, he sports crooked, discolored claws on his hands and feet. They enable him to climb walls and even ceilings with astonishing speed and agility, and make vicious close combat attacks.

Combat [3], **Influence** [4], **Magic** [2].

Combat [Considerable]

- Fight dirty.
- Draw a concealed weapon.
- Make a quick counter-attack.

Influence [Powerful]

- Reveal his knowledge about his Dreamworld and Seymour's doings in it.
- Order his few remaining junkie henchmen around.
- Know or find just the right person (through his network of junkies and his knowledge of the Dreamworld).
- Offer mutual assistance and information, only to later break his promises.

Magic [Weak]

- Walk through dreams and find people and things there.
- Subtly alter the environment in the Dreamworld.

Attacks

Although he looks emaciated and weak, his dangerous life of crime and addiction has made Wes a hardy survivor, and prepared for violence. He always carries a switch-blade knife hidden in one boot, and if expecting trouble has his Desert Eagle tucked into the back of his pants.

Moves in ***italics*** are only available to him in his dream-shape.

Unarmed: Punch [1]; Grapple [0]; Dirty fighting [1] [hits to the eyes, groin, or throat which can make the victim temporarily dazed]; *Natural Weapons* [2] [jagged claws on hands and feet]; *Claws at the throat* [2*] [if the victim does not follow the attacker's orders, she must ***Act Under Pressure***, taking **2 Harm** on a failure].

Switch-blade stiletto: Surprise attack [1] [all the victim can do in return is try to ***Avoid Harm***]; Counter-attack [1] [may strike back right after getting hit, victim is at −1 to ***Avoid Harm***]; Knife at the throat [2*] [see *Claws at the throat*, above, as this is the same move with different 'tools'].

Desert Eagle: Combat shooting [3] [−1 Ammo]; Overkill [4] [−3 Ammo, distance: room]; Ammo: ○○○.

Wounds & Harm Moves

Armor: In his predatory form, his shaggy and tangled fur provides him with 1 armor.

Wounds: ○○ ☠

- Bruised
- Badly Injured/ Fleeing
- Unconscious/ Dying

Raoul Strapford

Raoul is an undercover agent at Scotland Yard working on drug cases, particularly Seymour's recent dealings. He's been at work in the dream world of the junkies on earlier occasions, and is here now in order to investigate Seymour's activities. He's found out that Seymour is responsible for a number of recent disappearances among the junkies. They are brought to Sandburn in the dream, and are never seen again. When the PCs meet Raoul, his colleague has been kidnapped by Seymour. He has also discovered a way into Sandburn, and is now on his way there.

Raoul is a loyal civil servant the PCs may have use for later in the adventure. He's just temporarily in the dream world of the junkies. When they meet him when awake, he gives a much less mysterious impression.

He is short, with sharp features and dark brown, almost black eyes. He is wearing a nondescript grey suit and a dark trenchcoat.

Height: 170 cm, **Weight:** 75 kg.

Personality: A conscientious undercover agent, perhaps a little too conscientious, according to his superiors and colleagues. At times he seems to have an almost fanatic fixation to his work.

Playing Tips: Play him as objective, matter-of-fact. Occasionally drop a drily humorous comment to show that he isn't quite as boring as he seems.

Unique Moves

- Disguise himself and infiltrate Seymour's agents at Cards.
- Reveal fragmentary knowledge of Seymour's dealings with the junkies and the Dreamworld.
- Find, shadow, and spy on someone.
- Reveal information about Chris Walden and Lovecraft, Inc.
- Get more information about Seymour, the Dreamworld, and Sandburn from his partner Brennan Carter (only after the captured detective is freed).

Attacks

Raoul will not attack the PCs during the adventure, rather seeking to help them and receive their help in return. He will, however, defend himself if need be.

Unarmed: Punch and Kick [1]; Grapple [0].

Walther PPK: Combat shooting [2] [−1 Ammo]; Overkill [3] [−3 Ammo, distance: room]; Ammo: ○○○○.

Wounds & Harm Moves

Wounds: ○○ ☠

- Subdued.
- Injured.
- Badly Injured/ Dying.

Timothy

Timothy has led a rough life with both parents being alcoholics. He received numerous beatings, and never managed school especially well. His only fixed point in life was his grandfather, one of the homeless living under Waterloo Bridge or at different shelters. When the grandfather died a year ago Timothy had a breakdown. He was sent to various juvenile homes until he finally ended up at Sandburn.

Age: 12, **Height:** 140 cm, **Weight:** 45 kg.

Timothy is tall for his age, but extremely thin. His blond hair is closely cropped, and he has brown eyes. As long as he stays at Sandburn he's dressed in the white garb of the hospital.

Personality: Timothy has in fact a very strong personality, but the death of his grandfather and the indifference of his parents (they did not even attend the funeral) was too much for him. He ran away for the hundreth time in a row. After his descent into Hell he is frightened, but not much more disturbed than before. If he is allowed a little peace and quiet he will get over it.

Playing Tips: Stutter violently and sound as if there are a lot of things you must say, but do not have the words for. Fiddle nervously with your fingers a lot.

Unique Moves

- Recount what Seymour and him did in the realm of the dead.
- Gain the trust of the Fools in the Docklands.
- Gain the trust of the homeless under Waterloo Bridge.
- Find the way to where the Child of Magic is hidden in the realm of the dead.
- Find the way from Inferno back to Sandburn.
- Cry over his grandfather's fate, but express hope that the PCs will defeat Seymour and make everything right again.

Attacks

Timothy is unarmed, and – being a malnourished child kept in bad conditions for most of his life – his attempts at attacks, if he makes any, are pitiful and inefficient. When defending themselves against any violence from Timothy, PCs are at +2 to both ***Avoid Harm*** and ***Endure Injury***.

Unarmed: Punch and kick [0]; Flee from violence [0] [***Act Under Pressure*** (*at –1* because he is small and quick) to get hold of him and stop his escape attempt].

Wounds & Harm Moves

Wounds: ○○ ☠

- Subdued.
- Badly Injured.
- Unconscious/Dying.

Tomkins and His Men

Will Tomkins is a large, mildly alcoholic man with a red face and short, dark hair. He is rather well-dressed in a dark suit and coat. Tomkins has spent his whole life as a fence and selling booze. He has gone in and out of prison but has never spent any longer stretches of time. Lately he has made quite large sums of money from selling guns and increasing the volume of stolen goods. His sister, brother-in-law and uncle are also involved in his activities.

Tomkin is always surrounded by four men when he moves about town. You can give them the same attacks and Harm Moves as Tomkin. They drive a black Mercedes.

Height: 180 cm, **Weight:** 80 kg.

Personality: Tomkin is sentimental and irritable, but also quite easy to persuade. He is irritated by the competition from all the "foreigners", and has a rather limited view on most subjects.

Playing Tips: Talk in a loud voice. Make a lot of gestures. Get upset if anyone directly opposes you or accuses you of anything, regardless of how truthful it may be.

Home: Elysium (London, Waterloo Station Garage).

Abilities

- *Emotional:* Tomkin cultivates a temperamental, cocky, and boastful manner that makes it tricky to spot his real thoughts and motivations [PCs Reading him are at *–1 to their rolls* unless they have already seen through him once before].
- *Prideful:* Tomkin is quite suggestible when his honor, toughness, or criminal acumen are questioned or challenged [PCs Influencing him are at *+1 to their rolls* when playing on his pride].

Combat [2], **Influence** [3], **Magic** [–].

Combat [Weak]*

- Burst out in sudden, senseless violence.
- Knock someone or something over.
- Launch a careless attack and sustain damage in return.
- Draw a concealed weapon.

** alternate the moves given here between Tomkins and his men, so that each of the thugs makes about one or two of them.*

Influence [Considerable]

- Offer illicit goods and services, in exchange for payment.
- Give orders to his henchmen.
- Reveal his knowledge about Howard Carpenter and Lancer, Ltd.

Attacks

Unarmed: Punch [1]; Grapple [0]; Knock down [1]; Kick them when they're down [2] [victim must be knocked down or subdued first]; Dirty fighting [1] [hits to the eyes, groin, or throat which can make the victim temporarily dazed].

Switchblade stiletto: Surprise attack [1] [all the victim can do in return is try to ***Avoid Harm***]; Knife at the throat [2*] [if the victim does not follow the attacker's orders, she must ***Act Under Pressure***, taking **2 Harm** on a failure]; Reckless attack [2] [targeted opponent can immediately deal their own **Harm** back to the attacker].

Browning Hi-Power: Aim and Fire [2] [–1 Ammo]; Overkill [3] [–2 Ammo]; Multiple targets [2] [–3 Ammo, may hit one additional target]; Ammo: ○○○○.

Wounds & Harm Moves

Wounds: ○○○ ☠

- Bruised.
- Wounded/Retreating.
- Badly Injured.
- Unconscious/Dying.

Chris Walden

Chris is London's most competent Passion conjurer. He was born of poor parents in East End during the 20's, and became a prostitute during the depression, but learned the lore of passion. Finally he even managed to master death. He is a pivotal figure within the British pornographic industry, and has amassed a substantial fortune over the years.

During his trips beyond the Illusion, he has acquired features of what exists beyond the purely human – features that allowed the cards to call on him to create the child of magic. *Chris is a transvestite, and clothes himself provokingly, occasionally like a woman, and at times in a more androgynous way. He looks like he's in his 30's, and has long, blond hair and grey-blue eyes. He never goes without make-up.*

Height: 175 cm, **Weight:** 65 kg.

Home: Soho, London.

Personality: Like all conjurers of Passion, he has difficulty relating to anything not belonging to the purely emotional sphere. Facts and details bore him. When he is sexually interested in somebody, woman or man, he is gripped by a passion which is difficult to control, much like that of the vampires. He can be rather trying if he becomes interested in any of the PCs. The cards have influenced him, and in his worse moments, especially when he is jealous, he is reminiscent of Gamaliel, one of the Angels of Death.

Playing Tips: Use a pronounced "feminine" body language and way of expressing yourself.

Abilities

- *Ageless:* Chris perpetually looks like he is about 30 years old, and will neither age nor die, except perhaps by violence, due to the preserving power of Passion magic he has mastered.
- *Impulsive and lustful:* Controlled by his emotions, he is prone to act irrationally and compulsively pursue whatever whim strikes him at any given time. When he lusts after someone, he is virtually impossible to deter from his intended lover [–2 to influence him to back off, and to attempts at acting under pressure to avoid his attention].
- *Master in the School of Passion:* Chris has attained astonishing knowledge and proficiency in his Passion magic. Given enough time, the correct paraphernalia, and access to a purified temple, he can sense and manipulate human passions in most any conceivable ways. He is also competent at conjuring creatures of Passion and making them obey him.

Unique Moves

- Effectively disguise himself as a woman.
- Use his contacts in the porn industry and amongst London's transvestite and transsexual community to hide himself (for a while).
- Seduce someone into (or with the temptation of) kinky or taboo sexual activities [PCs must ***Keep it Together*** to resist his advances, and are at *–2 to the roll* if he has had time to study their desires and passions before (see next entry)].
- Peer into someone's secret desires and suppressed passions, provided he can be alone with the person for a while, and has had time to perform a short ritual beforehand.
- Summon creatures of Passion to do his bidding.
- Manipulate someone's emotions, instantly or over the course of days and weeks.
- Develop a new ritual or modify an existing one (*Dionysus' Blessing*, a permanent sex-change spell, to be used on himself).

Attacks

'Not a fighter, but a lover' by his own account, Chris is not normally armed, nor eager for violence in any form. However, since he has been hunted by Seymour, he started wearing a small revolver – just in case. He will usually rely on his magic to confuse and fend off attackers, though, using the gun only in an emergency.

Unarmed: Punch [1]; Grapple [0]; Dirty fighting [1] [hits to the eyes, groin, or throat which can make the victim temporarily dazed]; Flee from violence [0] [***Act Under Pressure*** to get hold of him and stop his escape attempt].

S&W .38 Special: Combat shooting [2] [–1 Ammo]; Overkill [3] [–2 Ammo, distance: room]; Ammo: ○○○○.

Magic: Agitate the Primal Urges [–] [Distance: room, victim must ***Keep it Together*** to avoid getting dazed, confused, scared, or momentarily stunned by their own urges rising up and battling for control]; Form of Desires [–] [Distance: room, Walden appears in the form of the victim's deepest desires]; Urge of Submission [*1] [Distance: room, may affect several targets, victims must ***Keep it Together*** or submit to Chris, begging him to ravish them with his sexual attention. They will scratch, bite, and otherwise hurt themselves with whatever is nearby if he refuses.]; Carnival of Phantasms [–] [Distance: room, may affect several targets. Victims are assaulted by hallucinations that provoke strong emotions in them (e.g. desire, fear, anger...) and are rendered disoriented and defenceless. PCs must ***See Through the Illusion*** to regain their bearings.].

Wounds & Harm Moves

Wounds: ○○ ☠

- Bruised.
- Badly Injured/Fleeing.
- Unconscious/Dying.

Ernest Waugh

Waugh has worked as a doctor among the homeless for almost 20 years. He knows many of the outcasts, and at the same time he has a number of contacts upwards in society. He is a distant acquaintance to Rupert Faraday. They belong to the same masonic lodge.

His family consists of a sister in Croydon and a couple of aunts in Manchester. He moves about in the underworld of London and can help the PCs if they need it. He knows where the court of the fools is.

Waugh is short and slightly chubby. He wears somewhat worn, but elegant suits and large coats.

Height: 170 cm, **Weight:** 75 kg.

Personality: Waugh is a professional who lives for his work. He is disillusioned on the border of cynicism, and has a strong streak of morbid humour.

Playing Tips: Talk in an ambiguous way, and add dry bits of humour. Become really engaged as soon as the subject turns to medicine.

Home: Elysium (London).

Abilities

- *Jaded:* He has seen some of the worst tragedies and most horrible crimes in his line of work with the outcast and downtrodden of society, and knows first-hand that none of the authorities even give a damn – as a result, very little can shock him anymore.
- *Well-connected:* Waugh has contacts in various parts of London society, from the upper classes and other doctors, to occultists, the homeless, and the fools.

Unique Moves

- Diagnose a sickness or infection in someone or something.
- Heal someone's injuries or disease, or tell them what would be needed to do it.
- Know just the right person to turn to for information or help.
- Perform complex surgery.

Attacks

Waugh will refrain from violence during the entire course of this adventure.

Wounds & Harm Moves

Wounds: ○○ ☠

- Subdued.
- Badly Injured.
- Unconscious/Dying.

Waya

Waya has walked a strange road. She wasn't mentally ill originally, but sought out the fools in order to learn magic. Her real name is Vanessa Clarke, and she was fully sane until about age 20. She studied magic on her own during her teenage years, and got in touch with several of the known conjurers in London. Among others she accompanied Rupert Faraday for a while.

In her twenties, she got in touch with a mentally disturbed conjurer of madness named Max Prado. This was at the end of the seventies, before the fools had gotten their own meeting place. She moved to his single room flat in Brixton and started to learn the lore of madness. She gradually lost her mind, and when Prado committed suicide in '86, she took part in the founding of the first colony of fools in an empty machine hall in southern London. But she has not completely let go of her ties to the past. She still visits her parents in Wembley occasionally, and at times her appearance is quite together.

Waya is 34 years old, very short but heavily built. Her red-brown hair is tangled, and her only eye (the left) is a greenish brown. The body is covered with microscopic tattoos. She is dressed in rags, and wears heavy jewellery of clay, glass and pierced coins around her neck, the wrists and the ankles.

Height: 160 cm, **Weight:** 75 kg.

Personality: Nobody knows exactly how disturbed Waya really is. To a certain part she plays at being crazy, and uses shamanistic techniques in letting go of her control of reality. But she is not totally sane either. She has difficulties communicating, and she is seeing through the Illusion uncontrollably.

Playing Tips: Use a mix of abstract concepts and hard to interpret metaphors when you talk.

Abilities

- *Broken Insights:* Waya constantly perceives fragments of the Truth beyond the Illusion, but her madness prevents her from fully connecting and comprehending the tidbits she spots.
- *Mind reader:* can read thoughts, emotions, and memories of willingly compliant subjects.
- *Time warper:* can twist time, or stop it completely ("she breaks the fingers off the clock").
- *Space bender:* can stretch and distort space ("she can walk through walls, and through the air to the moon").

Unique Moves

- See things beyond the Illusion, albeit fragmented and uncontrollable.
- Find the secret pathways of the madmen.
- Reveal limited knowledge of Achlys and the creation of a new soul.
- Extract and read memories.
- Create a memory map [enables to PCs to find the Forgotten Man, and their way back from Achlys].

Attacks

Waya will not attack anyone during the adventure. If attacked, she will quickly give up, seeking to talk or submit instead.

Wounds & Harm Moves

Wounds: ○○ ☠

- Subdued.
- Badly Injured.
- Unconscious/Dying.

Chaplain Clive Wilson

Wilson is a young pusher seeing Sandburn as a stepping stone for greater tasks. He tries to carry out his work to the letter in order to avoid any criticism. He is a quiet man, and reads a lot. *He is around 30 years old, with thick, reddish hair and green eyes.*

Height: 175 cm, **Weight:** 80 kg.

Personality: Wilson has high thoughts about himself, and views Sandburn as a pit. When Seymour pulls the prison close to Inferno he completely loses his grip on reality, doing anything he is told to do in the hopes that the nightmare will end.

Playing Tips: Play the role in a distant and slightly confused way.

Unique Moves

- Converse about religious and intellectual topics, expressing strong and harsh opinions.
- Tend to his flock of thieves, murderers, and misfits, with a distinctly condescending air.
- Take someone's confession, in a meticulously professional, if slightly uncaring, manner.
- Hold the weekly mass, preaching the sermon of the Lord.
- Follow orders blindly.

Attacks

Wilson will not attack anyone during the adventure. If forced to defend himself, his attempts will be weak and swiftly doomed to fail.

Unarmed: Feeble shoving and slapping [0]; Flee a scene of violence immediately [***Act Under Pressure*** to get hold of him and stop his escape attempt]

Wounds & Harm Moves

Wounds: ○○ ☠

- Subdued.
- Badly Injured.
- Unconscious/Dying.

THE ATROCITY EXHIBITION

You are cordially invited to the exclusive midnight showing of the Cecil Throne Art Centre. After more than three decades, Guy Vauquelin's entire Triumph De La Mort collection, known as the Atrocity Exhibition, will be presented to the public.

A mad virtuoso, a dark prophet, Vauquelin's infamy surrounds him like a miasma. Rumored to have studied at Death's feet, his insight resonates within his macabrely beautiful paintings, entrancing and horrifying viewers with their apocalyptic visions. Consumed by madness and hedonism, he ended his own life, leaving behind his artistic legacy.

Now whispers of strange noises and ghostly apparitions in the gallery hang on people's lips. Even Vauquelin himself has been sighted, returned from the dead, and wandering the halls. Are these simply the product of an inventive marketing campaign, or is something far more sinister at work?

Whatever the truth, all will be revealed at the Exhibition's formal unveiling.

An unveiling no one will soon forget.

Description

Renowned for his naturalistic technique, ***Guy Vauquelin*** blurred the boundaries between nightmare and reality until his suicide. His notorious paintings are scattered across the globe, secreted away in private collections and galleries for more than thirty years. Praised and reviled for its nihilistic beauty, Vauquelin's Triumph De La Mort (*Triumph of Death*) – also known as the Atrocity Exhibition – has never been assembled in its entirety, outside of his catalogue raisonné. Until now.

Sparing no expense, ***Marielle Dubois*** – a wealthy mondaine – arranges for the complete collection to be presented at the Cecil Thorne Art Center, a local art gallery. The Atrocity Exhibition's midnight viewing draws a wide variety of socialites, art historians, and the morbidly curious; all eager to see the debauched artist's masterwork.

Her husband, ***Anthony***, funds this artistic venture, grudgingly tolerating his wife's latest obsession. But Marielle's fixation with Vauquelin goes far deeper than simple infatuation. Most are unaware of Dubois's intimate past with Vauquelin, their scandalous romance only whispered rumor. She knows her former lover was a Death Magician and possessed a mystical connection to his art. She recognizes the Atrocity Exhibition's true power and what it can provide her.

Recently diagnosed with terminal cancer, Marielle desperately needs a dark miracle to survive the year. Vauquelin's masterwork will provide her that miracle. When in close proximity, Vauquelin's paintings thin the veil between Elysium and Inferno, allowing passage between both. With the assembled Atrocity Exhibition, she believes Vauquelin can return to this world and bless her with immortality.

Dubois is only partially correct in this belief.

As she suspects, the Atrocity Exhibition can reunite her with Vauquelin.

However, the Vauquelin she remembers and loves no longer exists. Now the thrall of Togarini – a Death Angel – the painter has been transformed into a powerful nephalite. He desires only to entomb the world in putrescent flesh, spreading the Living Death. When unleashed, Vauquelin plans to drag the gallery and its patrons back into Inferno to eternally serve Togarini's grand design.

The Atrocity Exhibition's influence in Elysium has already allowed Vauquelin to possess ***Alano Toset*** – Head of Security at the Cecil Thorne Art Center. Together with Marielle, he's ritually prepared the Center for the midnight unveiling, thinning the Illusion. Most of their activities have gone unnoticed, but not all.

Meri Janson, an art curator, and ***William Reeves***, a private detective, have grown suspicious of the peculiarities surrounding the Atrocity Exhibition. An art dealer, ***Brahim Nasra***, believes Marielle has stolen one of its pieces from him and has crossed the world to confront her. But none could dream of the horrors waiting for them.

At the midnight showing, they and the Center's patrons are pulled into Vauquelin's personal purgatory. A surreal tapestry of memory and madness, this terrifying world offers insights and horrors alike. Trapped, the survivors must use their wits and cunning to escape Inferno before the night is through. Otherwise, they will become little more than brushstrokes in Vauquelin's final masterpiece.

The Player Characters

The *Atrocity Exhibition* can incorporate virtually any player character (PC) Archetype. No specific Dark Secrets, Disadvantages and/or Advantages are required for the scenario. However, some Archetypes and Advantages may be more appropriate and helpful than others. Socialites and artists are easier to involve in the events, as are journalists and similar professions. Characters with arcane backgrounds may possess knowledge of ***Vauquelin's*** dark history and can assist in disrupting the rituals. Martially-oriented characters will have an advantage during combat sequences.
GM Note: William Reeves, a non-player character (NPC), can fill out this latter role, if required.

Involving the characters can be accomplished in several ways, but utilizing the NPCs is strongly suggested. The characters should know at least one of the NPCs through past experiences. Feel free to flesh out these connections with the PCs; perhaps, the NPCs have appeared previously in the campaign.

Art collectors and debutantes receive an invitation to the gallery from ***Marielle Dubois***. In this case, they know either of the Dubois, ***Samantha Church***, and/or ***William Reeves***. Characters with international art connections know ***Brahim Nasra*** from previous interactions, business or personal. Connections with the Cecil Thorne Art Center establish a professional relationship with either ***Meri Janson*** or ***Alano Toset***.

Meri Janson can be involved as a romantic or professional contact. As head curator for the Cecil Thorne Art Center, she's witnessed unsettling activity at the Center ever since the Atrocity Exhibition arrived. Frightened by these events, she contacts the PCs to discuss them. If required, she'll provide access to the Center, including invitations to the midnight showing.

Associates of Alano Toset have noticed recent changes in his behavior. Prior to his possession, he approaches the PC, complaining of nightmares about the Atrocity Exhibition and recurring images of Death personified. After his possession, he stops taking calls, answering emails, and avoids friends and family entirely. Characters seeking him out discover their friend much changed, both physically and mentally.

Characters knowledgeable in the Death magic recognize Vauquelin's name and his history as a death magician. With minor research, they discover that the Atrocity Exhibition possesses some kind of power, as well is responsible for disappearances, suicides, and other oddities.

Scenario Theme

Depending on the scenario's presentation, the Atrocity Exhibition can explore several themes. In particular, the *Fear of Death* motivates the narrative's central figure, ***Marielle Dubois***. She willingly sacrifices anything and anyone to avoid her impending demise and achieve immortality. As the gallery is swept into Inferno, the unfortunate attendees encounter the embodiment of Death. How they face their fear defines and guides them, revealing their true natures.

Marielle also represents *Death and the Maiden*, a recurring motif in death art. Much like the story of Persephone and Hades, her relationship with ***Vauquelin*** possesses an erotic subtext, revealing the connection between sensuality and death. Many aspects of Vauquelin's purgatory have sensual undertones.

Themes of *Death* itself are also explored. Vauquelin and his master, Togarini, reflect *Death as an eternal prison*, destroying the hope of reincarnation and renewal. Their minions – the Living Dead – serve as (un)living representations of this theme. Once plunged into Inferno, the *Triumph of Death* should be ever-present throughout the scenario, reflected in the transformed world and its encroaching threats. Death is inevitable, no one escape its grasp. But it offers no release, only entropic dissolution.

A subtler, but no less important, theme is *Art's connection to the Soul*. This theme's significance is reflected in the intimate connection between the Atrocity Exhibition and Inferno, as well as to its creator. In this case, art literally binds the soul to Reality, and thus becomes Vauquelin's weakest link. One cannot exist without the other.

Tips for the Gamemaster

The Cecil Thorne Art Center

Most of the scenario takes place within the art gallery and, eventually, its reflection in Inferno. Characters can freely explore the building, encountering events in the order determined by the GM. As such, the GM should consider the setting to be as important as the plotline itself.

A model of brutalist architecture, the two-story Cecil Thorne Art Center is designed for esthetics and functionality. Its textured interiors, elegant lines, and open spaces create a sophisticated atmosphere, as if the building is a work of art in of itself. Illuminated by the second-story skylight, the first floor consists of the main lobby, main offices, and gift store, as well as a small café and sitting area. Sculptures and larger pieces are exhibited in this central area, and most public functions are held here. Twin staircases rise from the lobby to the second floor, where the four main galleries are located. Two staircases allow access to the basement. Also, a small elevator provides handicapped access to both the upper and lower levels.

Named after the center's main donors, each gallery exhibits a specific collection, varying throughout the year. Currently, the *Dubois Gallery* houses the Atrocity Exhibition and is closed to the public until the night of its official unveiling. In the weeks prior to the Atrocity Exhibition, the other three galleries are open and feature displays that complement the grand opening. The *Hewett Gallery* is showing a photographic collection of skull art, including Mexico's Dia de losMuertos festivals and the Parisian Catacombs. The *Rosenfeld Gallery* features funerary art from the Renaissance and Middle Ages, detailing various cultures. Finally, the *Van Assen Gallery* explores Death in all its guises, including *The Best Doctor* by Alfred Kubin.

The extensive basement contains a movie theatre and children's art gallery, as well as the staff labs and offices, loading dock, and storage areas. Each floor is connected by service corridors and elevators, allowing gallery staff to move freely throughout the facility without disturbing the general public. ***Meri Janson's*** office serves as her art lab and contains the main vault. She can be found here most days and evenings, working.

GM Note: If incorporated into a continuing campaign, the GM can change the scenario's location to utilize famous art galleries, such as New York's Guggenheim, London's National Gallery, Stockholm's Wetterling Gallery, or the Louvre in Paris. Most art galleries have detailed websites, as well as floor plans, allowing the GM to restructure the scenario as they wish. The GM could also use a much smaller venue, such as a street gallery; one or two rooms creating an intense, claustrophobic atmosphere. Being trapped in such a confined space, surrounded by the undead horrors of Inferno, might add an element of unrelenting dread.

The Atrocity Exhibition

The culmination of Vauquelin's life experiences and artistic skill, the Atrocity Exhibition consists of eight oil paintings and one triptych. To the outside observer, each piece is an exquisite combination of anamorphosis and naturalism, representing elements of Mortality. However, beneath this disquieting beauty lurks a far more insidious purpose; each painting representing an element of the Illusion.

The Atrocity Exhibition includes:

- *The Prison:* A self-portrait of young Vauquelin, flanked on either side by his corpse, representing the Body;
- *The Coupling:* A dark bedroom with crumpled sheets, empty wine bottles, and rotting food, where two corpses rest in the afterglow of their lovemaking, representing the Feelings and Passion;
- *The Wanderer:* Framed in moonlight, a robed figure traverses vast desert, seeking an indistinct city, reresenting the Intellect;
- *Three Angels:* A dying man chained atop a pile of skulls reaches up toward three stone angels, representing the Imprisonment in the Illusion;

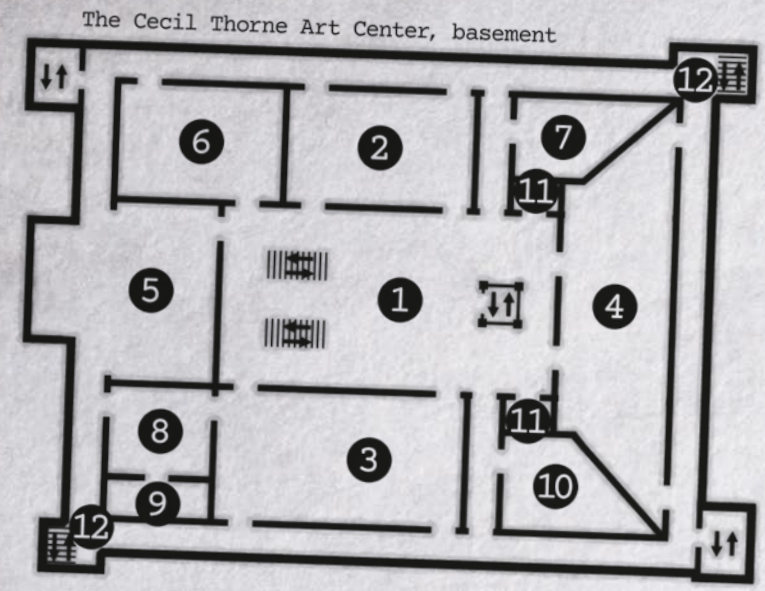
The Prison: A self-portrait of Vauquelin, flanked by corpses, representing the Body.

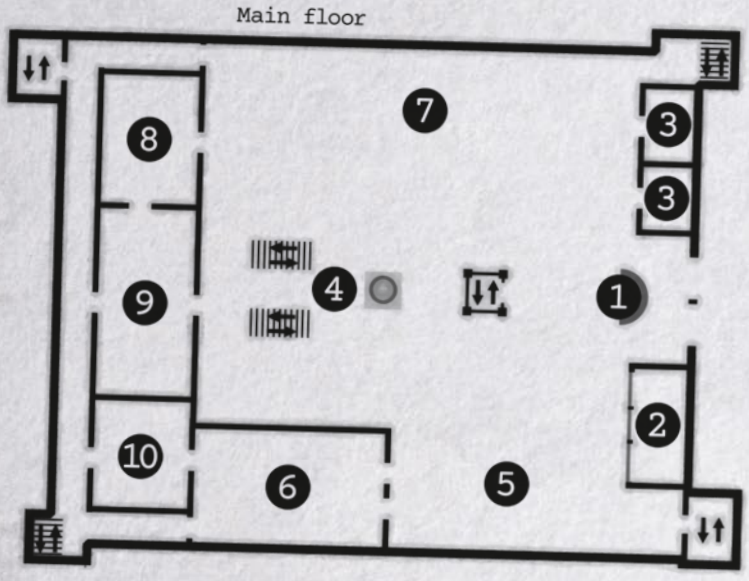
- *Fool's Wisdom:* A disemboweled man offers his entrails to a seraphim in exchange for divine insight, representing the Instincts;
- *Autunno Caldo:* A crucified Vauquelin stands before burning ruins, while anarchists dance in the background, representing the Force of Life;
- *Feast of Ignorance:* Deep within the Parisian catacombs, haloed figures examine the stigmata of Vauquelin's emaciated corpse, representing the Will; and
- *Triumphator:* A haloed Death stands above Adam and Eve slipping into the churning chaos of Purgatory, representing the Consciousness.

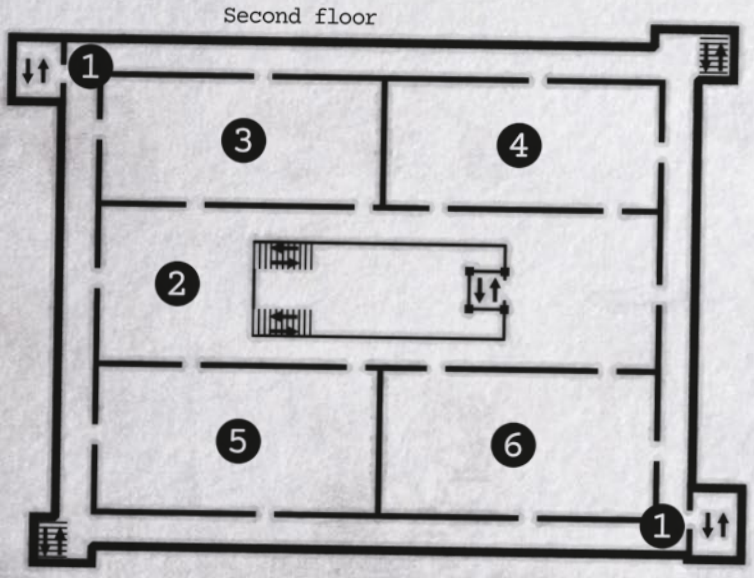
Finally, the exhibit's centerpiece, *The Tears of Djeraba*, is a man-sized triptych, representing the Awakened Self. The left and right panels depict two roads – one light and the other dark – snaking over two citadels. The middle panel depicts the Spring of Death; a bone-white fountain that overflows with black ichor. A tall, dark figure is visible beyond the spring, cloaked in shadows, its face etched with age. Anyone with mental instabilities viewing the open triptych can become hypnotized by the painting, lowering their resistance to possession by entities in Inferno.

Individually, these paintings have very little power, but with the correct training they can be utilized for rituals to gaze into the realms of Death. Prolonged study of their symbology can provide insight into Death magic. On extremely rare occasions, they can cause the Illusion to thin enough to create a temporary gate to the Underworld. However, their true power is only revealed when *The Tears of Djeraba* is fully opened in proximity to the entire Atrocity Exhibition. Within moments, the paintings dispel the border between Elysium and Inferno, drawing the surrounding area into Vauquelin's personal purgatory, as well as anyone unlucky enough to be in its proximity. *GM Note: Normally, this effect is localized – little more than a single room. However, Vauquelin and Marielle spend several weeks ritually preparing the Center to extend the effect to encompass the entire building.*

In addition to its numerous physical perils, characters trapped within Vauquelin's purgatory face mental dangers as well. Over time, PCs begin 'acclimatizing' to the purgatory, altering it with their own unconscious desires for punishment. The GM should be aware of the various Dark Secrets and Disadvantages that might manifest physically to torment each character. Eventually, their bodies may transform appropriately, twisted into grotesque parodies of their former selves. NPCs can cause similar manifestations, providing the GM with additional opportunities for roleplay.







THE CECIL THORNE ART CENTER

Basement

[1] **Lower Gallery:** This area serves as a gallery for local artists, as well as the art produced in the regular classes. On the night of the Atrocity Exhibition, a small bar and catering table will be made available for patrons.

[2] **Classroom:** This open area serves as the classroom for regular children/adult art classes. It will be opened to the public on Opening Night.

[3] **Work rooms:** This open area consists of the tool room, metal and wood shop, as well as a small ceramics studio.

[4] **Theater:** This large theater can seat sixty people comfortably. On the night of the Atrocity Exhibition, it will be featuring a documentary on Vauquelin.

[5] **Loading Dock/Maintenance Area:** The loading dock also doubles for the maintenance area, including the boiler room. A small forklift sits in one corner for major items.

[6] **Library:** This quiet room is stacked with artistic books and documents, as well as business materials not stored in the main offices. Several small tables have been set up for reading.

[7] **Security Offices:** These cramped offices belong to the security staff, featuring a bank of security cameras that can view any room in the building. ***Alano*** keeps an automatic handgun in his locked desk drawer.

[8] **Meri's Office:** *Meri's* office is a painfully organized and Spartan room, which also serves as a second home for her. It has security locks on every sturdy door.

[9] **Vault:** This hardened room has been converted into a vault for the most valuable items in the gallery's collection. Only ***Meri***, the Director, and ***Alano*** have the current access code.

[10] **Projectionist Room:** This room looks out onto the theater and contains the controls for its multimedia equipment.

[11] **Washroom:** Men's and Women's washrooms. Very clean.

[12] **Service Corridor:** Long corridor with access to the two service elevators and stairwells.

Main Floor

[1] **Information Desk:** This information desk is manned throughout the day by two interns. On the night of the Atrocity Exhibition, two guards will be here as well, checking invitations.

[2] **Coat room:** This large room serves as the coat room, as well as minor storage. One person will always be behind the counter.

[3] **Washroom:** Men's and Women's washrooms. Very clean.

[4] **Fountain/Courtyard:** This open-air courtyard features a large fountain, as well as statuary. On Opening Night, a small podium will be set up between the stairwells for speeches.

[5] **Café:** The Brain Frieze is a small café serving sandwiches, coffee, and pastries. It is also known for the best gelato in the city. On Opening Night, it serves an extravagant buffet.

[6] **Art Gallery Shop:** A small shop selling prints and other knickknacks in association with the various artistic exhibitions. It will be closed on Opening Night.

[7] **Gallery:** This wide area serves numerous artistic functions, as well as offering a sitting area for patrons. On Opening Night, it will feature a bar and musicians, as well as small tables.

[8] **Director's Office:** Emmett Veirs' personal office. Surprisingly chaotic. Locked on Opening night.

[9] **Main Offices:** A cube farm office, this area serves as the administrative offices for the gallery. It will also become a temporary prison for the surviving patrons once Vauquelin takes over the gallery.

[10] **Store Room:** General store room for the café, offices, and store.

Second Floor

[1] **Service corridor:** These service corridors allow staff access to the entire facility without ever being seen. Security doors are key-coded.

[2] **Mezzanine:** This mezzanine looks down onto the Main Floor's fountain and courtyard. Most of its roof consists of a gorgeous skylight. Metallic ravens hang from the rafters, reflecting the light. On Opening Night, a bar and small catering table are set up for patrons.

[3] **Hewett Gallery:** Currently showing a photographic collection of skull art, including Mexico's Dia de los-Muertos festivals and the Parisian Catacombs

[4] **Rosenfeld Gallery:** Currently showing funerary art from the Renaissance and Middle Ages

[5] **Dubois Gallery:** Location of the Atrocity Exhibition. Guarded night and day until the Opening.

[6] **Van Assen Gallery:** Currently showing art on the various aspects of Death, including *The Best Doctor* by Alfred Kubin.

THE SCENARIO

Introduction

Depending on how the PCs become involved in the Atrocity Exhibition, the scenario can begin in several different locations. However, the majority of the scenario takes place at the Cecil Thorne Art Center and its dark reflection in Inferno. The Introduction should be tailored to the characters and how involved they are with the NPCs, as well as and the GM's willingness to improvise. If time is short, the scenario can begin immediately at the midnight showing.

Characters connected to ***Meri Janson*** are contacted prior to the midnight showing. She nervously informs them about her experiences at the Center and her growing disquiet regarding the Atrocity Exhibition. A stalwart and unshakeable woman, Meri doesn't scare easily. Since the exhibit arrived, she's heard odd noises in the gallery at night, as well as caught glimpses of shadows and strange lights. While working late, she observed Marielle Dubois and Alano Toset touring the Center, apparently conducting 'ritualistic' activities. She's unsure the true nature of this behavior, but recognized the languages used to be French and Latin. Believing that something illegal is being done, she provides the PCs with invitations to the midnight showing, hoping they'll assist her if something goes wrong.

Characters connected to ***Alano Toset*** notice his sudden personality shift and odd behavior. If they attempt to contact him, he'll be dismissive to the point of rudeness. If approached at work, he'll have them escorted from the building, stating that he's too busy for idle conversation. If they follow him after work, he leads the characters through the worst parts of town, as if looking for something. At the GM's discretion, they may witness him killing a transient and then resurrecting them into one of the ***Living Dead***. Confronting him at this point can be very dangerous, as he is fully possessed by ***Vauquelin***. If approached, the nepharite attempts to escape rather than fight, unwilling to reveal his true nature.

PCs with connections to either ***Brahim Nasra*** or ***Samantha Church*** are employed as witnesses for his confrontation with Ms. Dubois. They are provided invitations and asked to meet them at the gallery showing. Possibly, they can meet sooner to discuss the situation regarding the stolen art work. In short, Brahim reveals Dubois' likely involvement with the theft of *The Tears of Djeraba*. He also knows Dubois had an unsavory past with Vauquelin, perhaps romantic in nature.

It is unlikely ***William*** directly contacts the characters even if they know of him, as he is unwilling to betray his client's confidence. If they have worked with him in the past, he simply informs them that he is on a case. That said, he appears slightly harried, as if something is eating at him.

Socialites close to ***Marielle*** and ***Anthony Dubois*** notice the growing rift between them. Marielle acts fixated to the point of obsession, talking only about the Atrocity Exhibition. Her animated nature belies her pallid appearance. Anthony appears distracted, if somewhat on edge when talked to. He confesses his suspicions about Marielle's possible infidelities to extremely close confidantes; otherwise, he remains silent on the issue. Both provide the characters with invitations.

The Opening Night

On Opening Night, the Cecil Thorne Art Center becomes a vibrant hub of activity. ***Patrons*** arrive between nine and ten o'clock. In attendance are artists and art collectors, critics, dealers, and historians, all eager to view Vauquelin's work first-hand. Other attendees are socialites and debutantes wishing to be seen in public, as well as indulge their morbid curiosity. Many are associates of the Dubois, invited specifically by Marielle. Invitations are checked at the door; anyone without one will be turned away by the well-dressed doormen. Patrons are informed to keep the invitations, as they determine the viewing order.

GM Note: PCs should acquire invitations through one means or another; be it their social standing or from one of the NPCs. If not, they can sneak or smooth-talk their way inside. This should be played out, but considering the number of caterers and staff entering and exiting the Center, gaining access to the facility offers little challenge to inventive characters.

Roughly one hundred patrons are in attendance. Most remain in the Center's main lobby, which serves as the central meeting point for the showing. There is a coat check at the front door, as well as a line of greeters, including the Center's director and other senior staff. Caterers set up in the café, offering an elegant selection of Tunisian and French cuisine. An open bar is located against the hall's far wall, gathering a crowd as the night goes on. Wait staff tour the venue offering drinks and hors d'oeuvres to the patrons. Chairs and tables have been brought in for comfort, providing miniature islands in the sea of bustling people. Two young women, a pianist and a cellist, play somber classical music, almost drowned out by the crowd. Nervous interns provide information on the Cecil Thorne Art Center and its current collection.

A smaller bar and food table have been set up on the second floor. The Hewett, Rosenfeld, and Van Assen galleries remain open to the public throughout the evening, allowing patrons to tour them at their leisure. *GM Note: The current exhibitions are discussed above.*

The Dubois Gallery remains roped off until midnight, its windows darkened by thick curtains. Two security guards prevent all access – even to staff. Upon closer examination, the two men appear pale and sullen, their eyes slightly puffy and dark. They answer questions in monotones, repeating the same dismissive comments. A strong odor of aftershave lingers around them; perceptive observers noticing a hint of decaying meat. They are ***Living Dead*** under ***Vauquelin's*** control, very recently turned. If hard pressed, they lead the unruly into the gallery and dispose of them away from the crowd. Otherwise, they remain at their post.

In the basement, the theatre features a documentary on Vauquelin – the short film set on perpetual loop. The film details the artist's life, but offers little insight into his unsavory or arcane activities. A few patrons mingle here, enjoying the relative quiet. Otherwise, most of the downstairs remains closed off to the public; only staff and caterers occasionally drifting through. ***Meri*** remains in her workshop during the early evening, distracting herself with one of her current projects. If she knows the PCs, she'll make sure to inform them where she is.

The Dubois arrive fashionably late, immediately causing a minor stir. They exchange pleasantries with friends and peers for about thirty minutes. Finally, ***Marielle*** makes a public address, welcoming everyone to the Center and thanking them for their support. She discusses her much-edited history with Vauquelin and why his work is so important to the art community – comparing him to a modern Caravaggio. This speech is unusually impassioned; those who know the debutante take notice, whispering amongst themselves. After the speech, she filters through the crowd until the midnight hour.

GM Note: During the Introduction, the PCs are generally left to their own devices. While the GM may make this section as long or as short as they wish, the characters should be encouraged to interact with the crowd and explore their surroundings. This will provide them with a more intimate connection to the setting and the minor NPCs. Although this places a burden on the GM, these interactions make the upcoming events all the more intense and rewarding for the PCs. Also, the juxtaposition between normalcy and horrific will be far more jarring.

THREAT ESCALATION

Vauquelin wishes to escape his current torments by expanding the Atrocity Exhibition's influence in Elysium and Inferno. Knowing this is beyond him, Vauquelin wishes to appease the Death Angel, Togarini, with an offering – the body and soul of every Cecil Thorne Art Center's patron. Ultimately, he believes Togarini will pardon him from his purgatory in reward for his faithfulness. Furthermore, if empowered, the Atrocity Exhibition could create a permanent portal to Inferno.

Escalations

[1] *Dubois (or Alano) parts the veil between Elysium and Vauquelin's purgatory*: This escalation effectively begins the core section of the scenario. It is highly unlikely the PCs can prevent this from occurring, as ***Dubois*** and ***Vauquelin*** have prepared for months to address most eventualities. The Cecil Thorne Art Center plunges into Inferno, dragging the PCs and NPCs with it.

[2] *Vauquelin unleashes his minions against the gallery and its Patrons*: Taking advantage of the panic and confusion, ***Vauquelin*** turns his minions loose on the gallery patrons, including the characters. Marielle – now ***The Grieving Angel*** – joins this hunt. Those unlucky enough to be captured are brought to the main hall to be transformed into the ***Living Dead***. The hunt continues until Vauquelin feels confident in his position; roughly two hours later.

[3] *Converted captured patrons into Living Dead*: ***Vauquelin*** begins torturing and transforming the captured patrons, adding them to his ranks. During this time, he becomes entirely preoccupied with the 'artistic' pleasures of this horrible process. Remaining survivors are kept under guard in the Center's main office. Most are terrified to

The Coupling: A dark bedroom with crumpled sheets, empty wine bottles, and rotting food, where two corpses rest in the afterglow of their lovemaking, representing the Feelings and Passion.

inaction, even as they're dragged off one by one. Some retain their sanity enough to assist anyone brave enough to escape.

[4] *Consecrate temporary temple*: ***Vauquelin*** sacrifices living ***Patrons*** to consecrate a temporary temple inside the Center's main hall. As he intends to perform only one ritual, this process requires 24 hours of preparation. However, this demands total commitment and concentration. His attentions remain entirely focused on this intricate process. As a result, he is at his most vulnerable during this time, as disrupting the consecration requires the ritual to be performed from the beginning.

[5] *Vauquelin performs Summon Creature of Death ritual*: With the assistance of his ***Living Dead***, ***Vauquelin*** begins the complex ritual to summon the Death Angel ***Togarini***. After seven hours, the *Summon Creature of Death* ritual is completed and the Death Angel is summoned into the gallery. Whether or not this appeases Togarini and creates a permanent connection to Inferno and his Citadel is up to the GM. However, if the Death Angel is summoned, his terrible presence prevents the gallery from returning to Elysium; Vauquelin's dismissal and/or the Atrocity Exhibition's destruction are no longer effective. Permanently trapped in this hellish prison, prospects for the characters and any survivors are decidedly grim.

Goal: Free himself from his purgatory and empower the Atrocity Exhibition

CENTRAL SCENES

The scenario contains three Central Acts, each broken up into several Scenes. These should occur in the order presented.

Act 1: The Party

Details regarding the pre-exhibition party are outlined in the Introduction. However, prior to the unveiling several key scenes take place. These help establish the NPCs and their various interactions. The Acts do not necessarily occur in the order presented, but will take place prior to the next Scene – ***The Unveiling***. The GM is free to add or subtract Acts as they see fit.

SCENE 1: THE PARTY AT THE GALLERY, MEETING THE DUBOIS (INCLUDED IN INTRODUCTION)

After ***Marielle's*** speech (see ***Introduction***), the Dubois make themselves available to the guests for a brief greeting, stand near the podium. A barely-contained tension exists between the husband and wife. Marielle is pale, gaunt, but strangely animated, almost manic in her tone, as if she's anticipating something monumental. ***Anthony*** remains polite, but appears troubled, frequently glancing at Marielle. Eventually, they part company, eager to mingle with their friends and peers.

If the PCs know Anthony, they can pull him aside near the end of the evening. If pressed, he confesses that he's never seen Marielle like this before, even in her 'wild' youth. Ever since the exhibit entered her life, she's acted increasingly secretive and obsessed, as well as disappearing late at night without explanation. He suspects she's involved in an affair. Still, he wants to make her happy, his love and devotion for his wife palpable. He's frustrated that the private investigator he hired hasn't been able to uncover anything.

Scene 2: Confrontation between Marielle Dubois, Brahim Nasra, and Samantha Church

At some point in the evening, ***Brahim*** and ***Samantha*** approach and corner ***Marielle***. Brahim accuses her of stealing *The Tears of Djeraba* while Samantha records the conversation, interjecting questions. This scene escalates quickly, drawing a small crowd of people, including ***Meri***. Despite her best efforts, Meri becomes swept up into the discussion, as she approved the painting's import and ownership documentation. She refuses to take sides, offering to escort Brahim to her office to discuss this further. The characters can become involved depending on who they are associated with.

Should the argument escalate too far, the Center's security staff intervene. They escort Brahim and Samantha into the main office, siding with Dubois. If the characters act disruptively, they'll also be escorted to the main office. ***Alano*** becomes involved at this point. Unwilling to risk further incidents, he locks the group in the office, leaving them here until the Unveiling (***Act 2, Scene 1***).

Otherwise, ***Anthony*** intervenes on his wife's behalf, ushering her away to meet more important people. Snubbed, Brahim gladly relays details of the theft to anyone who'll listen, as well as the background regarding *The Tears of Djeraba*. The scene incites gossip amongst the crowd, people eager to share snippets of Marielle's questionable past.

Scene 3: Meri Expresses Her Concerns

Following the confrontation with Dubois and Nasra, ***Meri*** approaches the Center's Director – Emmett Veirs – with her concerns. If possible, she requests that the characters accompany her as witnesses. She wants to inspect the exhibition before the opening, specifically *The Tears of Djeraba*. As curator, she's concerned by Nasra's claim and doesn't want the Center to be embarrassed by this possible infraction. Emmet refuses, citing that Ms. Dubois's people have everything under control and Meri's concerns are unfounded. He dismisses her out of hand, ignoring the PCs as well.

If they comfort her afterwards, she reveals her concerns about the exhibition, including the strangeness surrounding it. If Nasra is present, he confirms the history surrounding the Atrocity Exhibition, claiming it is cursed.

Scene 4: The Thinning

While touring the Van Assen Gallery, one of the PCs is nearly knocked over by an older gentleman retreating toward the exit, stricken with fear. When finally calmed down, Victor reveals that while in the gallery, one of the paintings began shimmering like a mirror, the pigments melting away to reveal his wife, Georgia, putrefying and in extremis. She'd died from lingering illness several months ago. Mute, she silently pleaded with him, as if begging for help.

Unless the characters intervene, security escort the man from the building, intolerant of all disruptions to the party. With some convincing, he leads them back to the dimly lit corner of the Van Assen gallery. For the moment, the painting – plague art from the Middle Ages – appears completely normal, if decidedly morbid. The characters realize the painting shares an interior wall with the Dubois gallery. Upon examination, the wall radiates with a bitter cold, its plaster almost silken to the touch. After a few moments more, the spotlights flicker and the painting's colors dull noticeably. A faint mewing emanates from the painting like someone screaming through cotton. Eventually, the lights regain their full strength and the effect fades, as does the numbing chill.

GM Note: Unnerving incidents like this begin occurring as the evening draws on. They should not be truly threatening, only unnerving to help increase the tension. The GM may use as many or as few incidents as they desire. Some may include:

- *While in the public bathroom, rotted fingers reach under the opening from the next stall, grasping at the PC, only to retreat just as quickly. If investigated, the other stall will be empty.*
- *Pleading whispers, unintelligible, but obviously pained filter out of the PA system. No one else appears to hear them.*
- *People appear be rotting and bloated when seen out of the corner of the eye, but normal when viewed straight on.*
- *The PC sees someone dead from their past – usually in relation to a Disadvantage or Dark Secret. Before they can confront them, the person disappears in the crowd.*
- *The movie in the basement changes to reveal Vauquelin's purgatory in all its grisly glory, including the flayed and decaying purgatides, pressed against the screen wanting to get out.*
- *Sand and bone dust pool in the hall's shadowy corners. If touched, the sand simply fades, as if made from smoke.*
- *Art takes on a sinister life of its own. Statues shift position, death masks change their expressions, and paintings mutate when not directly looked at.*
- *Exterior windows reveal a desolate landscape of sand and scrub. Cast in moonlight, a mountain village is seen in the distance, ringed by rows of fleshless corpses astride moldering horses. The image fades almost as quickly as it is noticed.*

Scene 5: William Confronts Alano (Optional)

This scene takes place in the basement or out of sight from the main party. Unless the PCs follow ***William*** or ***Alano***, this incident could go unnoticed. William accuses Alano of an affair with Marielle, which Alano denies. He produces his cellphone, revealing the photos of the two of them together. This immediately escalates; Alano grabbing for the cellphone. They fight and Alano is injured, temporarily breaking the nephar ite's hold on him. He warns William that something is coming and the paintings must be destroyed. Before he can say much else, ***Vauquelin*** reasserts control and attacks William full force – his rotted flesh tearing as the demon warps the body from within. Unless the characters intervene, it is likely William will be knocked out or killed. If the former, he'll be hidden away for eventual transformation into a ***Living Dead***, possibly leading to a rescue by the characters.

The Wanderer: Framed in moonlight, a robed figure traverses vast desert, seeking an indistinct city, reresenting the Intellect.

GM Note: PCs connected to either William and/or Alano notice the two men departing from the party. This allows the characters the opportunity to participate in this Scene. Also, PCs connected with Alano wishing to press him on his strange behavior may replace William in this Scene.

Act 2: The Unveiling

At midnight, a low bell resounds throughout the gallery, the party-goers falling silent. All eyes go to ***Marielle***, who stands on the second floor balcony. Like a dark angel, she radiates with majestic vitality; the previous exhaustion completely faded. Indeed, she possesses a manic aura to her, something wild and feral. She addresses the crowd, thanking them again for their attendance. She calls for people with a skull on their invitations to join her. The PCs notice this includes them, as well as the main NPCs and thirty other attendees.

People file into the large Dubois gallery; empty except for the nine paintings, arranged on the far wall. Muted spotlights illuminate the eight paintings, casting them in an eerie glow – the canvases appearing wet, as if freshly painted. *The Tears of Djeraba* remains closed, its enormous case exquisitely carved – writhing corpses decorating its exterior, their bodies in pain or pleasure. The air is thick with incense coming from two bronze braziers. Somber music echoes from hidden speakers, barely masking a low, rhythmic chant. A pentagram decorates the polished floor, its pattern contained within a dark circle. A triangle is painted in end of the pentagram closest to the paintings, glowing from beneath; an effect that shouldn't be possible. Various names are written in Enochian symbols within the pentagram. *GM Note: These names represent the various Incarnations of the Death Angel, Togarini. Characters skilled in Death magic recognize these as key elements of the Gateway to the Underworld ritual, albeit a more complex version.*

Once the ***Patrons*** are ushered inside, the security guards close the doors behind them. The walls begin to shimmer and change, a rusty light leeching through. Most people believe these are simply special effects, enjoying the show with nervous laughter and whispers. An oppressive weight fills the air, as the walls seem to move inward, adding to the claustrophobic ambience.

Scene 1: The Sacrifice

Dubois opens the triptych, revealing the painting inside. Excited, people press closer for their first look. After a few moments, the pentagram's glow intensifies, the paintings shimmer, their pigments darkening, becoming increasingly realistic in appearance. As the crowd's attention focuses on the paintings, ***Marielle*** removes a knife hidden behind *The Tears of Djeraba*. Unceremoniously, she steps forward and plunges it into her husband's side. If he isn't available, she stabs the closest person. This happens too quickly to prevent.

The crowd is momentarily stunned, most believing this is part of the show. Blood splashes over the pentagram, causing the glow to flare like summer lightning. As the blood is consumed, the air grows rank with the scent of burning copper. Around the room, the walls crumble and rot, paintings peel, and lights flicker and sputter out. Entropy runs rampant, everything decaying at an advanced rate, stripping away the veneer of Reality to reveal the purgatory beneath. Within moments, the gallery shifts completely over to Inferno; outside the room, the Center undergoes the same fate.

At this point, ***Vauquelin*** sheds Alano's skin, erupting from the man's body in a gruesome display, taking on his full nepharite form (roll ***Keep it Together***). He hovers over Marielle, before sweeping her into an intimate embrace. She doesn't resist him, despite his appearance. Gentle at first, the embrace turns deadly as her flesh begins to calcify and stone wings tears from her back, transforming her into ***The Grieving Angel***.

Scene 2: The Descent

Panic immediately ensues; the ***Patrons*** rush for the only apparent exit. They discover the doors are now chained shut, blocking their escape. People are crushed against the doors, as those behind them continue to push, mad with terror. Characters risk being trampled under this insane rush.

Adding to the panic, ***Purgatides*** and ***Living Dead*** emerge from the paintings, attacking anyone within reach. At this point, they are so hungry, they kill rather than capture, turning the entire chamber into a slaughterhouse. This provides the PCs some maneuvering room, as their attackers aren't unified or strategic in their assault. Even so, they'll be overwhelmed in short order unless they take immediate action. Once ***Vauquelin*** and ***Marielle*** enter the fray, things turn truly deadly.

Even if the PCs manage to escape the gallery, they discover the remainder of the Center similarly transformed. The Black Sun shines through the skylight, casting the world in greasy light. Beyond the front doors, nothing back broken buildings can be seen, burned out and smoldering. Things unholy move and dart just out of sight, shadows on shadows. Swirling sand soon shuts the doors completely, trapping the guests inside.

The main hall devolves into madness and butchery. Patrons fight to escape as statuary, paintings, and photographs come to life, birthing undead abominations from Inferno. With minimal armament, they stand little chance against these creatures, most falling to torturous fates within moments. Others scatter and hide throughout the facility; many of who accidentally wander into the various sections of Vauquelin's purgatory and are lost forever.

Scene 3: The Escape

Just when things look their worst, ***Meri*** beckons frantically to the characters from the opposite side of the room. While most of the crowd remains focused on the locked main exit, she uses her key-pass to open an inconspicuous security door in the far wall, allowing access to the service tunnels. Depending on which NPCs are close by determines the size of the group the GM will need to oversee during most of the scenario. Too soon, the increasing threat forces her to lock the doors behind them, condemning dozens of people to an unspeakable fate.

Although transformed, the service tunnels remain far safer than the exterior areas. Knowing them well, Meri leads the group back to her offices in the basement. She strongly suggests this course of action, as the vault-like offices are easily defended and well supplied. This should provide them enough time to regroup and assess the situation. The journey to Meri's office should be relatively straightforward; the real threats saved for ***Act 3***. However, this is an excellent opportunity for minor encounters with ***Purgatides*** and ***Living Dead***, as well as manifestations of Vauquelin's purgatory.

Meanwhile, ***Vauquelin*** commands his minions to collect the survivors together, locking them into the Center's main office. The Atrocity Exhibition is transported down to the main lobby and placed under guard. He remains here for the scenario's duration, fully devoting his efforts to the temple's consecration and ritual preparations (see ***Threat Escalation***). He discards ***Marielle*** completely, allowing her to wander through his purgatory, lost and enraged.

Scene 4: False Sanctuary

Meri and the group retreat to the vault/lab area. Aspects of Vauquelin's purgatory bleed into it, altering furniture and architecture, overlapping them with items from Paris, Milan, and SidiBou Said. Crumbled sections of wall reveal weird, organic tubing and nonsensical machinery. Rank steam rises from rusty vents in the floor, reverberating with the distant echo of thunderous engines. Otherwise, most of the room remains untouched. It serves as an excellent sanctuary from this point forward. Next door to Meri's offices, there is a tool room, metal and wood shop, as well as a ceramics studio. Characters are free to utilize the various furniture, tools, and chemicals to arm themselves, as well as strengthen their defenses as they see fit. There are also medical supplies, food and water, and even spare clothes.

GM Note: The GM is encouraged to allow the PCs some leniency here, playing up the survival horror aspects of the situation. Surviving NPCs have their own ideas on how to proceed, so this could provide interesting roleplaying opportunities. No matter how far the PCs venture into the purgatory, they eventually find their way back to these rooms. If things slow down too much, the GM can introduce threats to the group, as they see fit. Finally, if the session is running long, this is an excellent place to wrap before the next Act.

Act 3: The Atrocity Exhibition

Utilized to create his purgatory, the Atrocity Exhibition is intimately connected to Vauquelin, physically manifesting his thoughts, desires, and dreams. As such, exploring Vauquelin's personal hell provides insight into the artist's history and intentions; although, not all of its imagery and symbolism will be comprehensible to outward observers. The following Scenes can be run in whatever order the GM desires, but all should be encountered. The GM can invent additional Scenes, adding to this string of events as characters make their way through Vauquelin's purgatory. Furthermore, each Scene provides some clue and/or weapon for

the characters to use in the final confrontation.

As stated above, the Center's infernal manifestation retains much of its general layout and architecture. However, aspects of Vauquelin's purgatory transmogrify random locations, adding hallways, rooms, urban and natural spaces, and even entire landscapes. The GM should avoid railroading the PCs during each Scene, allowing for a free and natural progression as they explore and experience the purgatory's landscape. Even so, the longer they remain, the more prominent – and dangerous – these changes become. The GM may impose a strict time-limit in conjunction to the *Threat Escalation* (see above), although the players will likely be unaware of it.

Three Angels: A dying man chained atop a pile of skulls reaches up toward three stone angels, representing the Imprisonment in the Illusion.

Scene 1: Paris & Montmartre

While exploring, the characters encounter a collapsed crumbling wall, a profound darkness lurking beyond the opening. Once illuminated, the space appears to be an ancient ossuary, the limestone walls lined with moldering human remains stacked with fine precision. Etched above the opposite archway are the words, "Arrête, c'est ici l'empire de la mort!" – *Stop. This is the empire of death!* Strains of gypsy jazz and laughter emerge from the tunnel, sensual and inviting. Some twenty feet beyond the archway, a cracked stairwell leads upward onto a cobblestone street, perpetually slick with rain, the air thick with scents of smoke, coffee, and musk. Neon lights reflect in the oily puddles, casting the malformed buildings in vivd colors.

Characters find themselves in a twisted version of 1950s Paris, specifically the Montmartre district where Vauquelin spent most of his early life. The neighborhood consists of a complex maze of cafes, nightclubs, cabarets, and apartments, all coiling around Montmartre butte. Sporadically, burned-out buildings smolder in the rain and bomb craters serve as algae-choked charnel pits. Hunched figures drift through the twisted streets like smoke, gaunt revelers staggering drunkenly from shadow to shadow. In a darkened doorway, a prostitute coos and gestures to the passersby – her flesh ripe with fungal rot. Music pours from a sex club, an intoxicating mesh of piano and bass.

The famous Rue Foyatier rises up toward the Montmarte's summit; the perilously uneven stairwell lined by rusted lamp-posts, each adorned with fluttering ribbons of flayed skin. Along one side of the street, a funicular railway runs ceaselessly, powered by a system of blood-filled cisterns – decay and grease thick in the air. Stylishly dressed corpses wait for the tram cars, shambling inside when the grimy doors open. Occasionally, one tumbles onto the tracks and is crushed, oiling the gears and chains with their viscera.

The Sacré-Cœur Basilica (Basilica of the Sacred Heart of Paris) crowns the butte's summit, erupting from the ground, as if born from it. The architecture possesses an organic appearance, Romano-Byzantine features glistening like polished bone. A ring of robed pilgrims circles the Basilica, their faces hidden behind masks of calcite. They chant and supplicate themselves, ceaselessly begging forgiveness for their sins. Occasionally, one cries out in ecstasy and press themselves against the building, their body merging with its stone, leaving little more than a vague impression behind. Two bronze statues flank the main entrance; each one depicting Death astride a fleshless steed, bloodied scythe raised high. Their eyes radiate with an unholy awareness whenever approached.

The Basilica's grandiose exterior belies the cramped interior. Stuffy and stagnant, the three rooms reflect Vauquelin's old studio apartment while living in Montamatre. Canvases, sketches, and crushed tubes of paint are scattered everywhere. The walls are painted with increasingly insane graffiti, hinting at the artist's frustration and fragmenting mind. Wine bottles are stacked in crazed patterns, catching the neon light that oozes in through the broken windows. Obscene rats snuffle at spoiled food in the kitchen area, fearless of humans. In the cluttered bedroom, a life-sized human model doll lies atop a filthy mattress, its feminine form posed lewdly. It shifts and moans, as if in ecstasy, whenever someone gets close.

Vauquelin's younger aspect is found in the study, sitting amongst an ocean of crumpled sketch paper and torn canvas. Naked, his body is an open wound, every inch scarred and battered. He ceaselessly draws on a sketchpad, tearing sheet after sheet off in frustration, muttering to himself in French. Rusted chains loop through his flesh, connecting him to the imposing figure standing behind him. Dressed in a barrister's clothing, the stern man berates Vauquelin through sharpened teeth, his skin stretching tighter over sharp bones. Every curse opens another wound on the artist's tortured body. Amongst the vile curses, French-speakers recognize the words, "You'll fade away. You'll be nothing. You'll be forgotten. You are not my son."

A ***Purgatide*** of moderate strength, the gaunt figure represents his father's disappointment, as well as his inner doubts. While it can be physically killed, characters can also debate the creature – proving its son's success dispels it. Destroying the creature breaks its psychic hold over Vauquelin, the chains falling away from his ruined back. These chains can be utilized as a talisman against the true Vauquelin either as a weapon or to strengthen ritual magick. In addition, its destruction temporarily weakens the true Vauquelin mentally and physically, robbing him of his underlying purpose.

GM Note: This section of Vauquelin's purgatory reflects his experiences in Paris and the beginning of his obsession with Immortality. The city itself offers dark temptations, always luring him away from his art with its nihilistic pleasures, and punishing him for succumbing. The Bastille represents his inner struggle against his desires and moralistic upbringing. Its corruptive influence affects the players over time, as well; their base needs manifesting mentally and physically. This is in addition to the real dangers posed by the city's undead inhabitants, who will eventually turn on the living.

Due to the purgatory's extensive and ever-changing nature, the GM can introduce minor encounters during the PCs' exploration. Suggested encounters include:

- *The Pilgrims attempt to 'bless' an unlucky PC by feeding them to the Basilica. True ecstatics, they ignore everything else, even to the point of their destruction.*
- *Planes and the whistle of bombs are heard, accompanied by the cry of air-raid sirens. A moment later, the street erupts in a series of savage explosions, likely killing anyone foolish enough to not seek shelter.*
- *A sickly woman plays her violin in a street café; smooth, dead skin replace her eyes. She addresses the PCs, asking them to free "mon coco" (my rooster) from the "Tyrant's Chains." This is a reflection of Vauquelin's mother.*
- *The characters find themselves swept up in a Dance Macabre of skeletons and corpses; a motley crew of artists, musicians, prostitutes, and bohemians. If they remain, they'll be dragged into this bacchanalian orgy, perhaps forever, devolving into one of the immortal celebrants.*
- *The purgatory physically manifests one of the character's Dark Secret and/or Disadvantage; usually in the form of a person or creature. The manifestation tries to lure the PC away from the group.*
- *Howls erupt from the alleyways, accompanied by a thick, stinking fog. A pack of surrealistic canines emerge from the shadows, eager to dine on living flesh and blood.*

Scene 2: Italy, Milan

Vauquelin's obsession with the artist Caravaggio brought him to Milan, where he found himself swept up in the turmoil of the Years of Lead. Marked by terrorism and street warfare, this period of sociopolitical turmoil deeply affected him, revealing the transitory nature of society. Mimicking Caravaggio's style, his painting depicted the conflict in hyper-realistic portraits of life and death. This insight manifests itself in the purgatory as a painted representation of Milan and its chaos.

As the Scene begins, characters hear the sounds of civil unrest up ahead, including gunfire, explosions, screams, and angry chanting and shouts. The air thickens with the acrid mix of gunpowder and smoke, barely covering the scent of sunbaked corpses. Gaining color and vibrancy, the corridor acquires a surrealistic appearance, its shadows and contrasts exemplified. The smoke thickens, surrounding and blinding them temporarily. When it retreats, they find themselves in the ruins of Piazza Fontana in central Milan.

The piazza's normally tranquil and beatific appearance are marred by endless conflict. Charred trees stand like lonely sentinels, their blackened limbs reaching out to snare the

Fool's Wisdom: A disemboweled man offers his entrails to a seraphim in exchange for divine insight, representing the Instincts.

unwary. Once idyllic gardens now serve as mass graves for Living Dead too injured to fight, their broken bodies crying out in pain and hatred. Trampled pamphlets and signs litter the ground, spouting political rhetoric and profanities, stained dark with blood. Anarchists run rampant, attacking virtually anything in their madness, butchering each other with guns and knives, throwing Molotov's indiscriminately. Unless directly interfered with, the combatants ignore the characters, as if unaware of their presence.

Everything possesses a surreal perfection to it, the colors and shadows unnaturally vibrant in their intensity. Artistically-inclined PCs recognize the Naturalist appearance of this world, as if they're inside a painting. Upon closer examination, the observer notices the use of anamorphosis – *the image with the image* – everywhere. Recurring vanitas symbols are revealed depending on the angle at which things are viewed; skulls, decayed flowers and fruit, musical instruments, and time pieces being the most common. These symbols reflect the triumph and inevitability of Death, the transitory nature of life. In such prevalence, they create an unconscious effect on the viewer, slowly weakening their inner resolve. Prolonged exposure can induce depression, violence, and suicidal tendencies.

From the moment the characters arrive in this chaos, they sense a haunting presence that intensifies as they explore. At first, it's an ephemeral feeling, as if someone is watching them. As time goes on, they catch glimpses of a shadowy figure in the distance, tall and imposing. Dressed in Tunisian fashion, he appears to get closer and closer. His face never becomes visible, a hole of pure darkness. Yet, he never actually reaches the PCs nor can they reach him, always remaining separated somehow. Power and authority radiate from the man, a crushing aura like the inevitability of Death. This is a manifestation of Togarini – the Death Angel.

Away from the fighting, this aspect of Vauquelin has created a home for himself in the ruins of the National Agrarian Bank. It is little more than a makeshift bed, kitchen fire, and collection of wine crates, covered in dust and crumbled mortar. Scattered amongst the rubble are sketches and portraits of the shadowy figure stalking the streets. There are also sketches of Djeraba and the surrounding desert, as well as its terrifying inhabitants (see ***Scene 3***). Vauquelin is a hollow version of himself, crippled by endless nightmares. He tries to empty the images out onto paper or any surface he can, using charcoal, pencils, and even his own blood. Otherwise, he is on the bed, writhing in torment.

Utterly mad, he'll likely attack anyone disturbing his sanctum, claiming they are putting the images in his head. However, persuasive PCs can temporarily calm him long enough for a broken conversation. He can be drugged or intoxicated to suppress his dreams; liquor and medication can be found in the surrounding city. Characters skilled in Dream magic recognize his affliction, and can possibly quell his nightmares.

GM Note: As in Scene 1, freeing this version of Vauquelin from his mental torments temporarily weakens the 'true' one, removing some of his inner strength and purpose. Killing him is a simple option, but clever PCs should be rewarded for their ingenuity.

By studying the sketches and drawings, PCs potentially gain insight into Djeraba's location, as well as create an unconscious connection to Togarini. At the GM's discretion, a character suffers from continual nightmares, beckoning them to Djeraba from this point forward. The sketches can also be used to strengthen Dream magic against the true Vauquelin, as they are directly connected to his nightmares.

Due to the purgatory's extensive and ever-changing nature, the GM can introduce minor encounters during the characters' exploration. Suggested encounters include:

- *The PCs are caught between Living Dead police and anarchists, both sides fighting indiscriminately. They must escape before they're slain in the relentless combat.*
- *A crazed anarchist starts screaming at the PCs, thrusting bloodied parchments into their hands, and demanding they reveal their allegiances. No matter their answer, the anarchist attacks them until incapacitated.*
- *The street opens up into a square lined with crucified protesters. Undead police guide innocent and guilty alike toward their punishments. If the PCs help save the prisoners, they may gain useful allies.*
- *Curled into a doorway, a stinking beggar calls out to the characters, offering his services as a painter. PCs skilled in art history recognize him as the infamous Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio – Vauquelin's revered idol. He can help the characters deal with Vauquelin, breaking through his madness.*
- *Characters stumble onto an arms cache, filled with rifles and explosives; more than enough weapons and ammunition to sustain the group through the scenario.*
- *Graffiti begins to peel itself free from the stone walls, taking on horrid shapes. These strange* ***Purgatides*** *try to pull the characters back into the stone. If successful, the victim becomes nothing more than a painted figure permanently frozen in agony.*

Scene 3: Djeraba

A dry, hot wind wafts down the hallway, raising the temperature and parching the skin. Sand billows around the characters' feet, pooling in the corners. Harsh sunlight blazes ahead of them, growing brighter with every step. The concrete walls crumble away, the tunnel (or room) opening onto a desolate landscape of sand dunes and scrub brush. Other than the wind, everything is silent, sterile, as if every aspect of life has been drained from it. A cracked road disappears behind some dunes, winding its way toward a sheltered valley. Stone markers are scattered across the shifting sands, worn smooth by the relentless wind.

Some distance from the road, a stone house stands amongst a grove of dead date trees. In a paddock of bleached wood and sinew, several horses paw at the cracked earth; bones and dried muscle showing through their rotted flesh. A dozen undead riders wait out the blistering heat inside the building, standing silently in a circle. If disturbed, they relentless hunt down the offenders, dragging them into the desert for ritualistic tortures.

Eventually, the road ends inside the shaded valley, where a tiered village of brightly painted houses of clay and stone rises up to the sheer rock-face. Well-kept, the labyrinth of homes and mosaic-tiled courtyards is a luminous display of aquamarine and white walls, accented by prismatic doors and latticework. Large doors lead to workshops of every artistic talent, including painters, sculptures, and textiles. Palm and orange trees surround an oasis of murky waters, its banks lined by oddly shaped reeds. Fountains and gardens decorate the village, providing it a cool, serene aura. Occasionally, a lone figure dressed in Tunisian garb passes along the street, their bodies transparent and nimbus as any mirage. Otherwise, no life can be found here. Everything possesses a quiet sterility, as if frozen in one endless moment.

The longer the characters remain, the more the mirage fragments. At first, spidery cracks appear in the clay walls and tiled floors. The bright paint surrenders to inky darkness, while the flowered gardens decay and grow feral. Several homes descend into ruin, yet others remain untouched. Sacrifice poles appear throughout the village, decorated with hair, teeth, and skin. An overbearing stench of decaying bodies chokes the streets. The ghostly figures become more substantial, taking on the appearance of mummified corpses, followed by clouds of black flies. In time, Djeraba comes to 'life,' a bustling community of necromancers and undead servants.

Autunno Caldo: A crucified Vauquelin stands before burning ruins, while anarchists dance in the background, representing the Force of Life.

A series of caves cut into the sheer rock face, containing store rooms and other homes. Protection signs are carved and painted around the largest; a coying miasma of incense and rot wafting from its ragged mouth. The air itself feels stagnant, heavy, possessing substance the deeper one goes. The PCs feel the oppressive aura of Death pressing down upon them, as if their bodies are becoming a prison. An icy wind washes down the tunnel, dispelling the heat from outside.

The tunnel opens into a cavern-like temple, occupied by a silent congregation of Living Dead. A collection of tomes and parchments sits in a circle of human-tallow candles, which cast oily light over the otherwise spartan interior. ***Vauquelin*** crouches upon a mildewed prayer mat, lost in his ritualistic chanting. Several protection runes surround him, coating the floor and walls. Before him are a rusted crown, a tarnished knife, and a wand carved from bone. Lost in his studies, he ignores virtually any external stimuli up to the point of physical damage. However, if harmed, he reacts violently. Empowered by this realm, he proves a formidable opponent, using magick and his ritual blade.

GM Note: As above, if this version of Vauquelin is killed, it weakens the true version physically and mentally, as well as dampens some of his magical powers. Persistent PCs can also interact with him, playing to his various personality traits. Disrupting his faith and/or inner belief will also destroy this version of Vauquelin – with similar effect. If the runes are destroyed, the Living Dead descend on Vacquelin and tear him apart.

His ritual tools (the crown, knife, and wand) can act as talismans, empowering anyone utilizing them for Death magick. Also, the numerous notes and books provide the reader with deep insights into Death magic, including whatever rituals the GM wishes to provide.

Djeraba is made for the Dead, and this is reflected in its entropic aura. If the characters remain too long in Djeraba, they begin suffering physical ailments and pains.

Due to the purgatory's extensive and ever-changing nature, the GM can introduce minor encounters during the PCs' exploration. Suggested encounters include:

- *A sandstorm rises up unexpectedly, blinding the PCs, erasing their tracks. They must seek shelter or be consumed by the storm.*
- *The PCs find themselves hunted by the Sand Riders and their undead mounts. If captured, they're dragged to Djeraba to be remade into Living Dead.*
- *Characters encounter several Berbers standing around an open grave, conducting funeral rites. The body, wrapped in a tarp, squirms and moans, begging for release. The body and villagers are Living Dead. If engaged, they speak broken French and talk about the dreaded Djeraba, asking that their loved ones be freed from the Necromancer.*
- *A mummified Berber woman is found wandering aimlessly through sand-worn headstones. Senile and missing her tongue, she uses skeletal hands to 'talk.'*
- *Inside the village, one of the Initiated – skilled necromancers – recognizes the PCs don't belong to their ranks. However, jealous of Vauquelin's power, they betray him – informing them which cave he can be found in.*
- *Characters sense an aura of impending doom, the shadows around them deepening, even in the blistering sun. The air thickens with flies and the scent of rotting meat. A moment later, a tall, dark man walks into view, casting an undulating shadow behind him – its darkness filled with rotted bodies writhing in agony. This is the purgatory's manifestation of Luigi Cantorre – the Death Angel, Torgarini.*

Scene 4: Sidibou Said

This section of the purgatory manifests without warning and at any time. Characters simply open a door and find themselves inside the entrance salon of a small villa. The tiled room is decorated with art from Vauquelin's inspirations; Bosch, Caravaggio, and Dali. It leads to an open-style studio with kitchen, bedrooms, and study off of the main room. Atop a cliff side, the building overlooks the wine-dark Mediterranean. The muggy heat is oppressive, making the jasmine-scented air stick to the skin. A haze of cigarette smoke lingers, heavy with cloves and spice.

Caught in perpetually twilight, each room is a nest of shadows, decorated in a mixture of French colonial and Tunisian styles, all elegance and comfort. Signs of celebration are everywhere; discarded clothes, empty wine bottles, and half-eaten food. Fleshy forms twitch and writhe out of the corner of the eye, echoes of pleasure and lovemaking lingering like sensual music. Black and white images play sporadically across the walls and furniture, projected from some unseen source, playing out moments from Vauquelin and Marielle's sordid past.

The study is a wild mess of paintings and sketches, pigments speckle the furniture, charcoals crushed on the floor. A wood frame for a triptych lies on a table, smelling of drying stain. The characters realize these pieces are the preliminary versions of the Atrocity Exhibition.

With its four-poster bed and Moroccan headboard, the boudoir furnished bedroom once offered the comforts and pleasure of an opium den. Now it resembles an abattoir, blood and viscera paint every surface, torn sheets and pieces of skin scattered like leaves. In the ruined bed, two corpses writhe in endless congress, heedless that their flesh has been peeled away and ropes of intestine mingle and merge with each passionate thrust. Huge, black feathers speckle every surface, each as stone.

A flutter of wings fills the room, the scent of rot and perfume wafting over the PCs. Before they can react, one of the shadows detaches itself from the wall, towering over them. It is Marielle, remade into ***The Grieving Angel***, returned to her old home. Covered in gore, it quickly becomes evident that she's inflicted the destruction upon the purgatides.

Depending on how the characters react, they may be able to talk to her before she attacks them in her insanity. Playing to the semblance of her remaining humanity (or vanity) assists the PCs tremendously. Indeed, if convinced they can free her, Marielle may ally with them. She cannot act directly against Vauquelin, but she can provide them with insight, as well as her obsidian feathers, which act as talismans. If angered or threatened, she attacks in a mad rage until completely incapacitated.

GM Note: Destroying (or otherwise dealing with) Marielle at this point prevents her appearance during the final conflict. Also, the pieces of her body – the feathers, in particular – can be fashioned into weapons or talismans against Vauquelin. If presented with evidence of her destruction, he loses all control – immediately breaking his concentration and disrupting any ritual magick.

More importantly, the characters discover several collections of arcane notes, as well as initial sketches of the Atrocity Exhibition paintings in various stages of creation. Most of the notes are in French and a smattering of Tunisian Darija, containing arcane formula. Once deciphered, they provide insight into the paintings and how they function. With these notes, even a novice magician can create a Dispel Death ritual, reversing the power of the paintings.

Due to the purgatory's extensive and ever-changing nature, the GM can introduce minor encounters during the characters' exploration. Suggested encounters include:

- *A PC walks 'into' one of the black and white images, finding themselves trapped on the other side, looking back out at the apartment. Unless they can escape, they'll become part of Vauquelin's twisted memories, transformed in mind and body.*

Feast of Ignorance: Deep within the Parisian catacombs, haloed figures examine the stigmata of an emaciated corpse, representing the Will.

- *The apartment alters its physical layout, adding rooms, hallways, and courtyards. If standing in different rooms, the PCs risk being separated by these changes.*
- *Inside one of the rooms, the characters encounter a living woman named Philippa. A former art collector, she was pulled into the painting and has struggled to survive ever since. She may be able to assist the characters, although her prolonged time here has driven her to the brink of madness. She'll warn them of the 'Angel,' which recently arrived.*
- *Entering a door, the PCs discover themselves outside in SidiBou Said, an abstract maze of alleys, streets and blue and white buildings. They must find their way back to the apartment through the haunted city.*
- *Characters enter a harem of exquisite corpses, men and women, naked and writhing. They invite the PCs to join their festivities, alluring at first, and then forceful, if denied.*
- *The apartment's garden is overgrown with vines and flowers. Human-shaped plants are hidden within the miniature jungle; bodies that have ripened and sprouted. The pollen from these flowers lulls the unlucky to sleep. Vines and roots soon burrow into slumbering victims, adding them to the garden.*

Scene 5: The Final Act

This section of the purgatory can be encounter at any time, but should be presented last. The PCs turn a corner or pass through a doorway, only to find themselves trapped at the end of a long, arching hallway. Constructed from smooth plaster, it resembles the inside of some great snail shell, slowly spiraling inwardly. Cracks and gouges appear in its surface, increasing in number the farther one goes. Greasy light trickles through these openings, serving as windows onto the purgatory's various locations, as well as glimpses of Inferno. Graffiti and protection symbols stipple the walls, growing increasingly frantic and less coherent. Shadows paint every surface, flowing and shifting like oil. With every step, the world continues to lose its cohesion.

After countless rotations, the hallway opens into a small, barren room. Candles flick in pools of melted wax, barely illuminating the chamber. The air reeks of sweat and linseed, stagnant heat leeching from the walls. In the center, a naked and paint-speckled ***Vauquelin*** kneels reverently before *The Tears of Djeraba.* The other eight paintings float around him in a circle, suspended in the air. As the PCs arrive, he adds the final brushstroke to the triptych, joyful tears streaming down his grimy face. The painting shimmers, rippling organically, radiating with power.

Sensing their arrival, Vauquelin turns his head to the characters, smiling euphorically. "Do you see?" he says through parched lips. So saying, he plunges the sharpened end of the paintbrush into his left eye, followed by the right. It takes him some time to die, the body finally growing still. His blood spreads in thin rivulets, drawn into the paintings, which darken as they drink their fill. Empowered, they radiate with malice, weakening the resolve of anyone looking at them – urging them to join the artist in death.

*GM Note: Connected to his True Death, the paintbrush is Vauquelin's greatest weakness. Despite its normal appearance, the brush automatically inflicts mortal wounds on the nepharite, bypassing all his defenses (**3 Harm** per hit). The first strike blinds his one eye, and then the other. The third wound will be mortal, dispelling the nephrite – and, thusly, returning the Center to Elysium.*

Clever characters realize that the paintings here are intrinsically connected to the ones in the gallery. Destroying this version of the Atrocity Exhibition weakens the real version's connection to Elysium.

*The realm's true dangers stem from the characters themselves. The purgatory's entropic effect strips away their minds and spirit the longer they remain. They begin noticing aspects of Death behind everything; in the light, the shadows, and the sounds. Their Disadvantages and Dark Secrets manifest visually and audibly, reminding them of life's futility and the eternal punishment awaiting them. Eventually, their sins physically manifest, trying to drag them into Inferno. This mental degradation is temporary, but the GM may inflict **Nightmares** and/or mental Disadvantages from this harrowing experience.*

Due to the purgatory's extensive and ever-changing nature, the GM can introduce minor encounters during the PCs' exploration. Suggested encounters include:

- *Turning the corner, the PCs see dozens of corpse-like statues standing in the hallway ahead, silently swaying to some unheard rhythm. The light suddenly fades, plunging the PCs into complete darkness.*
- *The walls, floor, and ceiling crumble away, revealing the horrors of Inferno beyond. Things horrid and shapeless scuttle in the burning shadows. They may notice the characters and come to investigate.*
- *Someone important to a PC physically manifests, calling to them, begging them to save them. If denied, their bodies are inflicted with terrible wounds and sores, tortured by an unseen force. If the player heeds to call, the image drops away to reveal a razide (or similar creature) eager to drag them off.*
- *Artistically-inclined PCs recognize themes within the graffiti, realizing the artist's fear of inadequacy and being forgotten.*
- *The walls and floor become a hideous tapestry of rotted flesh; hands, feet, genitals, mouths, breasts, and blinking eyes. PCs crossing this surface must avoid being bitten or grabbed, as the Living Dead attempt to pull them down into this organic carpet.*
- *Characters encounter a hunched pilgrim, wrapped in befouled barrister's robes, surrounded by human-tallow candles and law books. The Living Dead is Vauquelin's father. Seeing the PCs, he begs them to put his son's soul to rest.*

Act 4: The Triumph of Death

GM Note: This Act occurs whenever the characters decide to face Vauquelin directly. However, they're encouraged to prepare prior to this encounter, as the nepharite's initial power would undoubtedly result in a grim result. The GM should determine how their activities elsewhere have weakened him.

Vauquelin transforms the main gallery into his horrifying workshop; the Atrocity Exhibition at its grim heart. Inferno's Black Sun trickles in through the skylight, bathing everything in inky light, causing the paintings to shimmer like mirages, drinking in corruptive power with each moment. Several Living Dead stand around paintings, swaying in time to some ceaseless prayer.

Having surrendered to Inferno's influence, the main hall possesses a naturalistic quality, its architecture resembling brushstrokes and oils rather than brick and mortar. Protection runes and summoning symbols decorate virtually every surface, Living Dead mindlessly working to complete the complex incantations. Others are lost in a grotesque dance macabre, their butchered corpses circling the room over and over. A group of Living Dead guard the remaining humans in the Center's main office. Occasionally, one of the prisoners is pulled out for use in Vauquelin's designs.

Vauquelin directs the proceedings like a puppet-master. He no longer views people as humans; only instruments for completing his next masterpiece. He's converted several Living Dead into 'paint-pots,' severing their limbs and hollowing out their chests. He fills the helpless victims with blood, oils, and pigments, using this colorful slurry to paint the complex summoning circle. Severed hands scuttle around his feet like pale crabs. At his direction, they attack en masse, swarming over their victim, choking and tearing them apart. This serves as his last line of defense, hoping to incapacitate or tire his opponents before engaging them personally. This will be vitally important if he has been weakened himself (see ***GM Note***).

Vauquelin allows his minions to defend the room while he continues with his work. Attacking him directly immediately breaks his concentration, disrupting whatever ritual he is performing at the time.

If freed, most of the surviving ***Patrons*** become a hindrance, more than a help. They flee and hide, completely unhinged by the experience. Some assist the PCs, but few are martially trained and stand little chance against Living Dead.

If the characters have somehow won over Marielle, she may intervene on their behalf. As ***The Grieving Angel***, she wades into the Living Dead, tearing them limb from limb, heedless of her own injuries.
Eventually, she'll be

overwhelmed by their numbers, but serves as the perfect distraction, drawing guards away from the Atrocity Exhibition and Vauquelin.

Killing Vauquelin's physical form or dispelling him through death magic immediately dispels his purgatory. Destroying the physical Atrocity Exhibit has the similar effect (see below). Other methods of returning the Center to Elysium are possible, limited only by the player's ingenuity. However, anyone transformed into Living Dead at this point remains such.

Once the purgatory collapses, Elysium returns like a tidal wave of sound and prismatic light. Paint and rot rain down on the characters, crushing them with its weigh and fury. Blinded, deafened, they stumble through the tempest until it finally dissipates like fetid smoke. They'll find themselves back in the Center, which appears virtually untouched. Even the bodies have faded into nothingness, leaving behind no sign of the recent violence. If the Atrocity Exhibition survives the final encounter, the paintings stand in a circle in the lobby – as if waiting for their next unveiling.

Triumphator: A haloed Death stands triumphant over above Adam and Eve, who slip blissfully into the churning chaos of Purgatory, representing the Consciousness.

Ending

Once the Center is pulled into Vauquelin's purgatory, the threat may appear insurmountable, pure survival initially taking precedence. Nepharites possess god-like powers, able to manipulate a purgatory's 'reality' as they see fit. As such, facing ***Vauquelin*** directly early on proves difficult at best. However, as powerful as Vauquelin may be, he suffers several weaknesses the characters can exploit.

Spiritually connected to the Atrocity Exhibition, Vauquelin suffers any physical damage done to its components. In particular, solvents and other caustics inflict tremendous harm to the paintings, which is reflected on the nepharite. Furthermore, if enough paintings are destroyed or defaced, their connection between Elysium and Inferno is lost. For this reason, Vauquelin keeps them under heavy guard.

Also, the various talismans in his purgatory can be used against him (see above), and the 'deaths' of his various reflections weaken him considerably. However, at the GMs discretion, Vauquelin becomes aware of this interference and sends his minions to find and kill the offenders. Characters with arcane skills may be able to dispel Vauquelin, once his power wanes.

Killing other ***Patrons*** prevents them from being used in Vauquelin's ritual; a morally questionable, yet effective method for disrupting the final summoning. However, this does not help the PCs return to Elysium, perhaps even condemning them to Inferno.

Upon the Center's return to Elysium, Lictors immediately cover up the incident, citing terrorists releasing a nerve agent with hallucinogenic properties. Alano is crucified in the press, much of the blame falling on his shoulders. The PCs endure intense interrogations, but are released shortly. Even with press coverage manipulation, Vauquelin's infamy increases, lending more power to his legend.

The characters may discover Vauquelin's connection to Djeraba and Togarini. They could potentially have plenty of materials available to them, thanks to ***Marielle*** and the Atrocity Exhibition. Following these leads could involve them in Togarini's continued plans to destroy all life in the Mediterranean countries.

Characters disrupting the final ritual gain the attention and ire of Vauquelin, as well as the Death Angel, Torgarini. These two enemies can return later in the campaign, especially Torgarini – who has influence across the world. Any surviving Living Dead still under their control could make excellent recurring villains.

A truly grim conclusion would have the PCs and NPCs being trapped within Inferno, and Vauquelin triumphant. This ending offers ample opportunities for exploration and harrowing experiences as they struggle to find their way back to Elysium, presenting a campaign-length endeavor.

Non-Player Characters

Guy Vauquelin (Nepharite of Togarini)

Standing nine-feet tall, Vauquelin resembles a desiccated corpse with spidery limbs and leathery flesh. A white funerary shroud wraps around his body, stained with putrefaction and pigments. The parchment-like skin on his torso pulses and stretches obscenely; his victims' agonized faces struggling beneath the taunt surface. His eyes are ragged holes, perpetually oozing ichor down his skeletal face. He wields a hooked, utility knife caked in blood and pieces of skin.

Background

Guy Vauquelin grew up in Paris-La Chapelle during World War II, witnessing many of its horrors. This included nearly being buried alive in the catacombs during an Allied bombing raid. These early experiences with death and destruction defined his life, infusing him with an obsession to attain immortality. He strove to achieve this goal through art, desiring to create the perfect masterpiece. This brought him into continual conflict with his domineering

The Tears of Djeraba

father, an avocathonoraire (barrister). He studied with the free-spirited School of Paris in Montmartre. However, his excessive and morbid nature offended even their bohemian sentimentalities. Desperate to escape several scandals, he fled Paris along with his pilfered inheritance.

Vauquelin traveled the globe to continue his studies, sparing no expense to hone his skills. He also studied death in all its forms and presentations, desperate to unlock its mysteries. Most of his fortune funded his bacchanalian excesses, craving to live life beyond its limits. And yet, the tormented artist felt perpetually incomplete, unfulfilled, as if something called to him from just beyond his perceptions. Nothing filled the void inside him.

Vauquelin ended up in Milan, following in the footsteps of Michelangelo Caravaggio (1573–1610) – the "Antichrist of Painting." Destitute, he lived on the streets and in hovels, capturing the violence of the Years of Lead in paint and charcoal. By chance or providence, he discovered the writings of Luigi Cantorre, a Death Magician. From that day forward, he suffered relentless nightmares, images of death and a hooded figure beckoning to him. Drawn by this torturous calling, he found his way to Djeraba, an artist's colony south of Tunisia. There he encountered Cantorre, who revealed himself to be an Incarnation of Togarini – the Protector of Death Magicians.

Under Cantorre's tutelage, Vauquelin became a skilled death magician, incorporating the arcane knowledge into his art. After several years, the Death Angel sent Vauquelin to Tunis to recruit new disciples and expand its circle of influence in the mortal world. While there he encountered Marielle Cavey – the future Ms. Dubois. Through her wealth and influence, Vauquelin insinuated himself into high society, gaining the fame and notoriety he'd always craved.

However, having witnessed the 'true' meaning of death, Vauquelin became increasingly unhinged by the experience. His excessive indulgences couldn't alleviate his apocalyptic visions. Driven to madness, he created the Atrocity Exhibition, so Death could be unleashed upon the world as a liberator. Having completed his masterpiece, he removed his eyes with the end of a paint brush, bleeding to death from the injuries.

Death offered him little relief. Bound to Togarini, Vauquelin discovered himself reshaped into a nephariте and trapped in his personal hell. Ever since, he has subtly influenced the world through his paintings, trying to bring them together so he might escape his purgatory. When Marielle contacted him, he recognized the perfect opportunity to achieve this freedom. He began mentally guiding her, inspiring her to reassemble the Atrocity Exhibition.

GM Note: As a nepharite, Vauquelin possesses nearly god-like powers inside his purgatory. He can read memories, auras, and emotions through telepathy, as well as mentally control people through possession. He can distort and alter the purgatory's physical laws and appearance by concentrating, as well as change his own appearance – including healing wounds. Extremely resilient and physically powerful, he is formidable in combat. Finally, he can utilize any Death magic spell.

However, by destroying his various manifestations inside the purgatory, he gradually loses these abilities and becomes vulnerable to attack. For each of the four manifestations destroyed, he loses 25% of his normal powers, until he becomes effectively 'human.'

Home: Inferno.

Creature Type: Nepharite under the Death Angel Togarini.

Objectives

- *Spread the Living Death:* Devoted to Togarini's Principle, Vauquelin desires to spread the Living Death throughout Elysium. He intends to empower the Atrocity Exhibition, by any means available to him, thus opening a permanent gateway to the Death Angel's hellish realm.
- *Extend the reach of his art:* Vauquelin's vanity still drives his goals. In addition to protecting the Atrocity Exhibition, he will form a pact with any artistically-inclined person. If they continue his art, he allows them to live – thus connecting him to Elysium.

Abilities

- *Bound to Inferno:* If Vauquelin is annihilated in Elysium, he will be recreated in Inferno.
- *Domain (purgatory):* Vauquelin remains intimately bound to his domain and immediately becomes aware if anyone intrudes on it, even if the creature is elsewhere.
- *Pact-binder:* Vauquelin can make pacts with humans.
- *Shapeshifter:* Vauquelin can alter his physical appearance and form at will.
- *Perform Rituals:* While still human, Vauquelin was a Death Magician of considerable prowess. His extensive arcane knowledge has carried over into death, allowing him to perform complex rituals.

Combat [4], **Influence** [4], **Magic** [5]

Combat [Powerful]

- Grapples and hold victim.
- Torture victim.
- Invokes purgatides/Living Dead.
- Attacks several creatures simultaneously.

Influence [Powerful]

- Leader of Living Dead and purgatides.
- Manipulate and corrupt someone.
- Inspire someone's artistic talent.
- Spread the Principle of compulsion.

Magic [Exceptional]

- Create and reshape Living Dead.
- Reshape surrounding rooms, halls, and stairs.
- Manifest someone's fears.
- Gaze into someone's soul.
- Possess weak-willed individual in Elysium.

Attacks

Unarmed: Grapple & Hold [1] [Distance: arm, the victim is held tight]; Crush [3] [Distance: arm, victim must be held tight]

Utility knife: Flay skin [**Serious Wound**] [Distance: arm, victim must be held tight]; Sweeping slashes [2] [Distance: arm, strikes numerous targets around the nepharite].

Magic: Warp surroundings [–] [***See Through the Illusion*** to orientate yourself]; Incite Compulsion [–] [***Keep it Together*** or be overcome by negative impulses, **–1 Stability**]; Reshape flesh [3] [Distance: arm, victim must be held, their body is mutated].

Wounds & Harm Moves

Wounds: ○○○○○○○○○○ ☠

- Ignores the injuries, flashing a smug grin.
- Momentarily pauses to savor the pain.
- The blow causes him to drop whatever he's holding.
- An arm or leg bone shatters, rendering the limb useless.
- Vauquelin's shroud rips away, along with strips of dried flesh.
- Vauquelin's skull fractures, momentarily staggering him.
- Enraged, Vauquelin violently and randomly reshapes the room (via *Warp surroundings*).
- His torso slips open and Alano's semi-digested, yet living body spills out from the chest cavity [***Keep it Together***].
- Vauquelin collapses to the ground in a pool of pigments, pus, and moldering bones.

Marielle Dubois

Even in her late fifties, Marielle puts women half her age to shame. Tall and elegant, she is a raven-haired beauty with angelic features and forest-shadow eyes. She moves with a predator's grace, dressed in the most sophisticated fashions. Her voice flows like water, the lilt of her French accent adding to its exotic nature. However, her recent bout with cancer has left its mark – hollowing her cheeks and eyes.

Background

Marielle Dubois is a woman with a past, but no future. Recently diagnosed with terminal cancer, she's desperate to avoid death at any costs, even that of her own soul.

Through much of her youth, Marielle Cavey shirked her aristocratic family's demands of her, rebelling against the status quo. She flitted across Europe and Africa, never settling down too long, always chasing the next dream. For her, life was meant to be savored and indulged in to its fullest, without regrets. This mock-philosophy made the infamous Guy Vauquelin far too intoxicating to ignore. Despite their age difference, the pair became inseparable lovers, indulging heedlessly in every excess her money could provide. She recognized his mad genius, learning from him everything she could. They lived together for over a year in the small town of SidiBou Said, testing the limits of morality each day. But, no matter how much she provided him, his yearnings could not be sated. In time, he drifted away from her, drawn by some calling only he understood. Abandoned, the young woman reluctantly returned home to Paris, marrying the first man that showed her attention – Anthony Dubois.

Although she assumed the role of dutiful wife and socialite, Marielle still yearned for her former lover. After learning of Vauquelin's suicide, she fell into a cycle of depression and anger; much to Anthony's dismay. He consoled his wife as best he could, but she continued to slip away from him. Some months later, she received a package containing Vauquelin's notes and journals, as well as several of his sketchbooks. Unable to face the loss, she hid these away, unread.

At least until many years later.

After receiving a prognosis of pancreatic cancer, Marielle became increasingly desperate. Recalling Vauquelin's fascination with immortality, she poured over his writings and soon discovered his powers over death. Any doubt she might have in their validity was stripped away when she opened a window into Vauquelin's purgatory. She communed with her undead lover, falling under his sway, her fear of death blinding her to his grotesque form. He directed her to reassemble the Atrocity Exhibition, promising that she'd be rewarded with immortality.

Marielle did as he asked, using money, blackmail, theft, and even murder to acquire the paintings. Although she suspects the horrors awaiting the viewers, she considers it a small price to achieve true immortality.

The Grieving Angel – Marielle Dubois Remade

This terrible beauty resembles an Angel of Grief – the decorative statues found in numerous cemeteries. Marielle's face is permanently frozen into a mask of pure sorrow, yet her eyes remain horrible alive and aware. Her stone flesh is virtually invulnerable, but moves supplely and without resistance. Raptor talons replace her hands and feet, while vast wings cling to her back, every feather sharpened obsidian. Although bereft of a mouth, her unsettling voice invades the mind.

Background

Upon Vauquelin's released from his prison, he rewards Marielle with everlasting life, but not as she ever could have dreamed. He grants her with the Living Death; immortal but continually decaying. In an act of cruel irony, he remade her into an Angel of Grief, permanently beautiful. Marielle becomes little more than Vauquelin's puppet, encased within a sepulcher of her own stone flesh. She hunts down as many victims as possible, either to be used in Vauquelin's art or to feed her crippling hunger. Eventually released from his power, she returns to their former apartment, descending into self-destructive rage.

Home: Purgatory.

Creature Type: Purgatide.

Abilities

- *Stone Skin:* Firearms and edged weapons do –**1 Harm**.
- *Massive:* Cannot be grappled or knocked over in close combat.
- *Wings:* Can fly short distances or violently buffet the air.

Combat [4], **Influence** [–], **Magic** [1]

Combat [Powerful]

- Trap victim inside wings.
- Violently buffet air with wings.
- Rend victim to shreds with claws and talons.
- Attacks several creatures simultaneously.

Magic [Novice]

- Speak telepathically

Attack

Bladed wings: Cut [2] [Distance: arm]; Buffet [1] [Distance: room, small close group all hit at once, victims must ***Avoid Harm*** or be *knocked down*]; Enfold [3] [Distance: arm, victim is trapped until they escape].

Claws/Talons: Cut [2] [Distance: arm]; Rend [4] [Distance: arm, victim must be trapped or *knocked down*].

Wounds & Harm Moves:

Wounds: ○○○○○○○ ☠

- Ignores the injuries.
- Wing snaps and hangs down loosely.
- Chips of stone break off, reveal the wet meat beneath.
- Face cracks like marble, uncovering Marielle's screaming mouth [***Keep it Together***].
- Flies away to escape the pain.
- Becomes dazed and confused, battering air with her wings.
- Folds wings around her and becomes immobile stone.

Anthony Dubois

In his sixties, Anthony's grey hair matches his eyes, smoke upon smoke. He wears tailored suits that hug his impressive body, the result of constant workouts. His French accent betrays his origins, speaking in confident, measured words.

Background

Anthony Dubois comes from old money, his family being heavily invested in textiles. Much of his life has been spent learning and expanding the family business, establishing its presence in Asia, Europe, and the United States. He also developed a deep fascination with African culture and fashion. So, when his sister introduced him to Marielle Cavey – fresh from her time in Tunisia – he found himself entranced by her stories of the exotic country. Despite her aloof nature, he set himself to wooing and charming Marielle, eventually winning her affections. They were married in short order; their first few years a whirlwind of passion and travel.

However, reality soon set in. Marielle became increasingly distant, and Anthony began spending more time focusing on the business. They drifted apart, sometime not seeing one another for months at a time. This separation did not cool his affections for her, however. If anything, his feelings for her continued to deepen, verging on obsession. He did everything to please her, showering her with gifts when he could not do so with affections. While not unfaithful, Marielle's yearning nature persisted, as if nothing could fill a dark wound in her heart. Unable to fill this hole, Anthony's obsession intensified ever more, until the pair found themselves wrapped in a cycle of codependency.

Anthony has noticed a remarkable change in his wife's sullen nature. She's become increasingly involved in the public, specifically the arts. He's supported this renewed passion, but has begun to suspect that her joy stems not from the work, but from the affections of another man. Blinded by jealousy and suspicion, he has hired William Reeves to follow her. He knows she had been involved with Guy Vauquelin before their marriage, but has no idea of the dark connection between her and the undead artist.

William Reeves

Handsome, tall, and well-dressed, William strikes an imposing figure, carrying himself with unwavering confidence. Blonde, short hair frames his face, accenting his magnetic blue eyes. He holds a person's gaze when speaking, and is highly attentive to every detail.

Background

A private investigator, William is a professional and intelligent man, best known for his discretion. Accustomed to high society, he easily moves through cosmopolitan and affluent circles. From his appearance, most believe he comes from new money, accepting him as one of their own. He's also feared by many, as he is an unofficial keeper of secrets, possessing potential blackmail material on the city's power players. Fortunately, he maintains an unwavering stance on confidentiality, never sharing his knowledge, no matter the price.

For the last two weeks, he's been tailing Marielle Dubois on the behest of her husband, Anthony, who believes she's having an affair. As he's been looking for evidence of infidelity, it's taken some time for William to realize her activities are of a far darker nature. He's observed her trafficking in stolen art, hiding large expenditures, and other suspicious activities, including bribing Alano Toset. He's learned of Ms. Dubois's illness, which has stirred some sympathy for her – his sister passed after battling cancer. As such, he has not provided her husband with the report yet.

He intends to watch her at the midnight showing to learn more about this apparent obsession with the Atrocity Exhibition, possibly confronting her and/or Alano.

Meri Janson

Slightly round in the belly and face, Meri is a reserved woman with a perpetual frown. Her brown eyes hide behind wire-rimmed spectacles, while her silky hair is tied back with a purple ribbon. She wears clothes two sizes too large, hiding her form.

Background

Daughter of Yugoslavian immigrants, Meri Janson raised herself from abject poverty to become one of the country's most prestigious art conservators. She acquired her fascination for the Arts from her father, as well as her appreciation for the past. Having witnessed the burning of the National Library during the Siege of Sarajevo, Meri now strives to preserve art of all kinds. After completing her education, she interned at the Cecil Thorne Art Center. This internship became a permanent curator position, and she now oversees the entire collection.

Quiet and reserved, Meri is more comfortable dealing with paintings than people. She works incredibly long hours, sometimes spending the entire night at the gallery, sleeping her in basement office. Few aspects of the Center's operations escape her attention. As such, she's become increasingly troubled by the secrecy surrounding the Atrocity Exhibition. Unlike most Exhibitions, she's been denied full access to its installation; the duty of which has been given over to private contractors. She's also noticed Alano Toset's odd behavior, as well as unsettling sounds and lights coming from the Dubois Gallery. When she sleeps at the Center, she is plagued by recurring nightmares of her time in Sarajevo.

One late evening, she snuck into the Atrocity Exhibition's gallery. At first, everything appeared normal, if somewhat morbid. But within moments, the entire room shimmered, shadows stretched, and the angles and geometry of the walls lost their coherency. Voices whispered to her from the darkness; the voices of dead friends and relatives, calling for her to join them. She ran for her life, never entering the hall again.

She's tried to convince herself that the experience was simply the result of long hours and stress. However, Meri cannot shake the feeling that something terrible will take place at the midnight show of the Atrocity Exhibition. Her love of the art center outweighs her fear, and she intends to protect her collection from this threat, whatever it may be. She enlists close friends (player characters) toward this end.

Alano Toset

Spanish-born, Alano's blockish features and body resemble a bronze sculpture; a barely contained strength straining his uniform to the limits, belaying his advanced age. His olive complexion has grown sallow, his dark eyes losing their luster. His wrinkled skin sloughs in places, as if ready to fall off.

Background

Alano Toset died of heart failure some weeks ago, poisoned by Marielle Dubois. However, this hasn't prevented him from continuing his duties as head of security at the Cecil Thorne Art Center. Possessed by Guy Vauquelin, Alano suffers the Living Death, trapped inside his slowly putrefying corpse. In this nightmarish existence, he's been forced to prepare the art center for the midnight showing of the Atrocity Exhibition, hiding ritualistic symbols and objects through the facility. He's also helped Dubois provide her forged transfer documents for *The Tears of Djeraba*. Worst of all, Vauquelin utilizes him to murder transients and inflict them with the Living Death, in preparation of the midnight showing. Trapped inside his skull, he can only watch his decaying body commit these horrid acts of violence.

Having worked for the Cecil Thorne Art Center for over thirty years, he knows the building's every nook and cranny. Recently, he's found Vauquelin's control slipping. If possible, he will try to escape his grim fate in an act of self-sacrifice.

Alano was once a vital, exuberant individual, impressively strong for his advanced age. Now, his skin has grown sallow and discolored, his eyes sunken and clouded. Clothing hangs slightly from his frame, but is tight around the belly, which is bloating with gas. He wears too much cologne; masking the smell of decaying flesh.

If one of the characters knows him, Vauquelin's control slips long enough for Alano to send them a cryptic message, warning them of the terrors to come at the Atrocity Exhibition.

Brahim Nasra

Ebony skinned and bright eyed, Brahim has a large smile and louder laugh. His freckled cheeks are accented by an immaculately trimmed beard. He dresses in colorful suits, meshing Tunisian and modern fashions.

Background

A Tunisian art dealer, Brahim Nasra operates a small trade company in village of SidiBou Said in northern Tunisia. He continually trades between local galleries and London, maintaining a collection of rare and specialized pieces. Recently, Marielle Dubois approached him regarding Vauquelin's centerpiece, *The Tears of Djeraba*. Already contracted to another gallery, he refused her offer – even after she tripled the amount. Later that week, *The Tears of Djeraba* mysteriously disappeared from his warehouse. His business contacts soon informed him that Dubois would be hosting the Atrocity Exhibition, featuring the pilfered painting. Despite his attempts to retrieve the painting, he's been stonewalled by Dubois's lawyers, who've somehow produced documents of ownership in her favor.

He's traveled to the Cecil Thorne Art Center to publicly confront Dubois and demand the return of his property. Hoping the threat of public scandal will sway her, Brahim has involved Samantha Church, a society columnist. Through contacts, he's acquired both of them tickets to the midnight showing. Depending on their background, one of the characters may know Brahim and be invited to the Atrocity Exhibition to aid him during his confrontation with Dubois.

Educated at the Edinburgh College of Art, he speaks French, Arabic, and English fluently. Generous to a fault, he is extremely loyal to his friends, family, and clients. When confronted with Inferno, he remains calm and stalwart, empowered by his deep faith in Allah.

Samantha Church

Samantha resembles a prim, shore bird; tiny with long legs and sharp features. Her blonde hair comes from a bottle, while her excessive makeup sharpens her cheek bones and accents her hazel eyes.

Background

Samantha Church works for local newspaper as a society columnist, both feared and respected by the city's socialites. Her gossip page can raise people to the pinnacles of high society or utterly destroy livelihoods. Having grown up from poverty, she possesses a deep grudge against the new 'aristocracy,' and constantly tries to tear them down. Recently contacted by Brahim Nasra, an art dealer, she's found the opportunity to humiliate the Dubois Family. She's uncovered Marielle's sordid history with Guy Vauquelin, tying her to the artist's illegal and immoral activities back in the 1950s. Accompanying Brahim to Cecil Thorne Art Center, she intends to photograph his confrontation with her, as well as reveal the woman's past. Depending on their background, one of the characters knows Samantha and is informed of her 'big scoop.'

Samantha's manner is brusque and too-the-point, rarely shirking from a confrontation. Unforgiving and driven, she'll doing anything to get her story. When faced with her own fears, however, she quickly crumbles under the strain, begging to be protected.

Cecil Thorne Art Center Patrons

The midnight showing of the Atrocity Exhibition has attracted roughly one hundred patrons. Most of these are socialites and debutantes, eager to be seen at this gathering. Others are art collectors and curators, local officials, academics, and the morbidly curious. Also, there are caterers, security, and gallery staff amongst the crowd. The GM is free to create as many – or as few – of these individuals for the characters to interact with during the scenario. Many should die during this scenario, most transformed into the Living Dead or torn apart by the monstrosities of Inferno. This helps establish the severity and danger of the situation, as well as offer an ever-growing threat to the characters.

Togarini

The Death Angel Togarini is the Protector of Death Magicians. Feeding off our fear of death, he seeks to imprison humanity in putrescent flesh, forever denied their reincarnation. The distorted reflection of Tiphareth, he inspires the darker aspects of beauty in Elysium. As such, in addition to countless death magicians, he has amassed a loyal following of artists, musicians, and writers. Most of these disciples worship Togarini through his Incarnation, Luigi Cantorre.

From his stronghold in Djeraba, Tunisia, Cantorre's influence stretches throughout the Mediterranean, as well as internationally. He utilizes this network of artists and death magicians toward his unwavering goal of destroying all life; although most remain ignorant of his true intentions.

Although, it is unlikely that Togarini (or his Incarnation) will be encountered, his machinations play a vital role in this scenario. Cunning and ruthless, the Death Angel lends Vauquelin whatever assistance he can, usually in the form of death magic, Living Dead, and Inferno creatures. He hopes that the Atrocity Exhibition can create a permanent portal from Elysium to Inferno.

Living Dead

The Living Dead are condemned to imprisonment within their animated corpse. It continues to putrefy as normal, slowly reducing the victim to little more than a mummified skeleton – completely aware of its surroundings. However, prior to this, their undead bodies are incredibly resilient, ignoring most wounds. Each body part possesses its own 'life,' acting independently if separated from the whole. Each severed limb will attempt to reunite with the whole, and attacks anything preventing it from doing so. Only complete incineration will destroy the body (or the separate pieces).

Abilities

- *Undead:* Firearms and crushing weapons do **–1 Harm**.
- *Inhuman:* Can't be reasoned with.
- *Slow:* Players suffer *–2 on their rolls* to ***Avoid Harm***.

Combat [3], **Influence** [–], **Magic** [–].

Combat [Considerable]

- Ignore horrible wounds.
- Grapple someone with inhuman strength.
- Tear someone apart.

Attacks

The living dead doesn't react to pain and damage as living creatures do. Their limbs try to re-attach to their bodies when cut off. They try to tear their opponents apart.

Natural weapons: Grapple and hold [1] [Distance: arm, ***Act Under Pressure*** to break free]; Tear apart [2] [Distance: arm, victim must be held]; Hit [1] [Distance: arm].

Wounds & Harm Moves

Wounds: ○○○ ☠

- Shallow wounds.
- A grave wound, it doesn't stop the creature.
- A limb is amputated, but slowly crawls back to the creature.
- Appears defeated but the body parts will reassemble later. [It recovers **1 Wound** after reassembling].
- The creature is cut, smashed, or torn to pieces.

Purgatides

These trapped souls have served Vauquelin since his transformation into a nepharite. Most are victims unlucky enough to be pulled through one of his paintings and into his domain. Once there, they've been used to feed his unquenchable desires, their flesh and minds tortured and ravaged. Each has been transfigured into a grotesque work of art, their putrefying bodies both beautiful and terrible in design. Trapped in this living death, they've gone completely mad and wish to inflict this fate upon anyone they can sink their claws into. They may be slow and clumsy – due to their deteriorated bodies – but the purgatides are incredibly strong and nearly invulnerable. They're extremely dangerous in groups, herding their victims like wild dogs. Some of them have special rules in (*parentheses*). Examples of unique purgatides include:

- A skeletal man and a Rubenesque woman melded together in a lewd mockery of *Death and the Maiden*; their rotting bodies are interwoven monstrously, every shared movement cause them pain and pleasure.
- A plague doctor wielding a smoking censer; its raven mask has been bonded to its face, while feathers erupt from its pocked, oozing flesh. (Dizzying smoke: *–1 on all rolls until free from the smoke.*)
- Dressed in fine vestments, this cadaverous cardinal wields a pastoral staff decorated with writhing snakes.
- Several bal-musette musicians, their gaunt forms waltzing and playing to gypsy music. Their instruments are built from hollowed bones, desiccated flesh, and innards. (Maddening tunes: *Everyone that hears the melody must roll* ***Keep it Together*** *or* **–2 Stability**.)

- Cadaverous woman dressed in Middle Ages finery, wearing a crown of bone. Her torso is hollowed out; serving as the nest for a skeletal dwarf that ceaselessly gnaws at her innards. (Regal aura: *Roll **Keep it Together** to not obey her commands. +2 on the roll if the command is the dangerous to the PC or someone it cares for.*)
- A taxidermied wolf of nightmarish proportions, its claws and teeth replaced with rusted metal. Three human heads have been grafted to its shoulders, each screaming and begging for release. (Bite [3] [Distance: arm].)
- A woman completely denuded of her skin, exposing the glistening anatomy beneath in perfect relief. She leaves a perpetual trail of blood and embalming fluid with every pained step. She screams ceaselessly from the pain of every movement.
- Resembling a moving charnel pile, this collection of severed limbs and rotted heads – animal and human – lumbers forward, trying to add new pieces to its mass. (Resistance to injury: *All attacks against this abomination do **–2 Harm**.*)
- Remade in a Daliesque nightmare, this femme-coccyx (tall bone woman) moans and whimpers behind its featureless face. Drawers have been inserted into its body, while tarnished crutches impale its back and limbs.
- Dressed in bohemian fashions, these exquisite corpses are perfect in every regard, except for the plague sores hidden beneath their clothing and the sickly smell that accompanies them. Their mouths are filled with broken glass.
- A man in chains, his limbs broken and reset so he scuttles like a crab. His spidery fingers allow him to climb and adhere to any surface. A slit-like mouth quivers obscenely, hiding rows of teeth. (Quick: *All attacks against the creature has –2 on the rolls.*)
- Hooded figure that reeks of rotting meat, surrounded by swarms of flies. Beneath the hood, the monk-like creature is a mass of roiling maggots. (Stench: ***Keep it Together** to not get nauseous in the creature's presence.*)
- Woman with her face bisected, each half held apart by wire and rods – her eyes bulging and moving like a chameleon's. Her thick, ropy tongue dangles out of the cavernous mouth.
- A blackened skeleton wreathed in fire, its flesh crisping and boiling like bacon. It eyes are hollow pits of hatred and pain. (*Immune to injury from firearms and fire. Its grip causes 2 Fire damage.*)

Purgatide

Abilities

- *Fanatical:* Cannot be reasoned with.
- *Resistance to injury:* Firearms and edged weapons do **–1 Harm**.

Combat [3], **Influence** [–], **Magic** [–].

Combat [Considerable]

- Surround someone.
- Natural weapons.
- Torture (and make the victim a part of its art).

Attacks

These strange and twisted creatures have weapons shaped out of their bodies. A piece of the artwork. These may differ greatly depending on the purgatide.

Light weapons: Cut/break/pierce [1] [Distance: arm].

Bite/Claw: Cut up [2] [Distance: arm].

Heavy weapons: Brutal slashing [3] [Distance: arm].

Grab hold of and choke: Choke [0] [Distance: arm, ***Act Under Pressure*** to get loose].

Wounds & Harm Moves

Wounds: ○○○○○ ☠

- Ignores the injuries.
- Lose control of something.
- Erratic behaviour that is part of its art [+1 on the next attack].
- Part of the body and art is destroyed.
- Destroyed.

LA CENA

Miami, 1967. Rafael and Ana Cruz haven't seen their eldest son, Eduardo since the beginning of the Cuban Revolution. With the news of his booking on the last Freedom Flight of the month, they have planned an extravagant dinner to welcome him home. All of his immediate family will be there – his parents, his aunt, his younger siblings. Everyone. All in one dining room, for seven courses, the fans lazily turning in the oppressive humidity of the Florida night. Close. Too close.

Hope they don't find out, mijo.

La Cena is a one-night scenario, presented in three Acts. Up to five players take on the roles of members of the Cruz family, all trying to make it through this emotional reunion.

In the summer of 1967, the temperature and tensions are simmering in Little Havana. America hasn't yet forgotten how close she came to nuclear annihilation at the hands of Fidel Castro. Two years ago, the Cuban government declared that its citizenry would be allowed to leave – but that they would have to find their own way out. The small stream of pro-capitalist elite has swelled to a river of immigrants, all desperately trying to escape the embargo-induced famine on Cuba. The US Coast Guard is overwhelmed by fishing boats, makeshift rafts, and other vessels all making their way north through the stormy Florida Straits. Sometimes, all they find is a derelict of corpses, their eyes empty, forever turned towards the capitalist dream of the United States.

To solve this problem, the US government created the Freedom Flights. Two times daily, morning and evening, a flight leaves Havana for Miami International Airport, packed with *cubanos* seeking a new home among the *norteamericanos*. Passengers on the Freedom Flights are given preferential immigration treatment, due to the nuances of Cold War politics, and many become American citizens within three years. The Cuban government refers to these refugees as *gusanos*– the lowest of worms – and harasses them, imprisons them, and occasionally strips them of all of their valuables (including the clothing on their back) if they seek to leave the country. This has not stopped Cuban citizens from taking advantage of the Freedom Flights – there is a waitlist of over five hundred thousand people already.

Rafael Cruz was a Batista supporter who left the country in 1958, a half-step ahead of the revolution. The majority of his family came with him, including his wife's sister, Novia. His eldest son, Eduardo, stayed behind. Eduardo had gone to university in Havana to study finance, but discovered communism instead. He dropped out and joined Castro's revolutionaries. Rafael did not make any attempt to bring his wayward eldest along when he arranged his family's departure.

The Cruzes have done well for themselves. Rafael has found his niche in Little Havana and built a tidy fortune on the backs of immigrants looking for a home. His second son, Anton, has taken Eduardo's place as favored eldest, and is studying medicine. His children are in private schools. His mistress is not known outside of the family. By all appearances, the Cruzes are doing well for themselves in this new *norteamericano* life.

Or they were, until Eduardo called from a payphone and let his mother know he was coming in on a Freedom Flight in July. The family has been scrambling to get everything ready for him since then – all except Rafael, who refuses to acknowledge that his son exists. His coldness has been a strain on the family – but love means never having to say you're sorry, right?

The sad thing is, Rafael is right. The real Eduardo is either dead or disappeared. The creature in Eduardo's place is a dream simulacrum, formed from the resentments and wishes of his family members and comrades, as well as from bits of his human self. It plans to make the rest of the family its slaves, feeding upon their dreams and thoughts – but it will have dinner first. Why waste the seven-course meal, and the feast of the emotions of homecoming and safety?

Player Characters

La Cena runs best with between three and five players, though one could theoretically run for up to seven people. Players can pick from any of the following cast of characters. Any player character (PC) not in play should be used as a non-player character (NPC) by the gamemaster (GM). If possible, the children should be picked first, with Rafael, Ana, and Novia to be used as NPCs by the GM.

Rafael Cruz: The patriarch. A true Cubano machismo, and landlord for Little Havana. Married, with a woman on the side.

Ana Prieto y Cruz: Rafael's wife. Fully aware of her husband's affairs, and is stretched to her breaking point. Deeply attached to her children as a result – except Sol.

Eduardo Cruz: The eldest son, to be played by the GM.

Anton Cruz: The middle child. Studying to be a doctor. Has been having nightmares of an urban hellscape since he was small. Lately, they've been getting worse.

Ramira and Learco Cruz: Twins, still in high school. Deeply emotionally and psychically enmeshed. Their mother's unwilling favorites.

Sol Cruz: The youngest. Quiet, polite, with the exception of an occasional (psychic) outburst. Ana's scapegoat child.

Novia Prieto: Ana's sister, living in one of Rafael's tenements in Little Havana. In order to keep her house, she slept with Rafael – then later gave up her child, Sol, to avoid blackmail.

Stats for NPCs

The dream creature, Eduardo Cruz, has its own stats (see below), but if the GM also plays one of the human family members he can make Moves for them as usual. If Sol is a NPC, the GM can use the options in her ***Telepathy*** Advantage as Moves (without rolling as usual). Each human family member can take **3 Wounds** and have the Harm Moves:

- Subdued.
- Unconcious.
- Dead.

Scenario Themes

Family Strife

For all of their outward-facing wealth and charm, the Cruzes are not a model family internally. There is no healthy flow of information or erection of boundaries between any of them. Screaming fights between Rafael and Ana are common, often with dishware being smashed and one or both of them being slapped or shoved against a wall. Children and servants (the Cruz family has a cook, two maids, and a driver) try their hardest to be out of the room as fast as possible if Ana is drinking or Rafael has gotten quiet. The only reason Anton still lives in the house any more is that his medical residency stipend will not pay for a living situation in the style he's used to. Sol buries her head in her pillows at night. The twins are the only ones who seem relatively unaffected by their parents' enmity – though they are never seen out of each other's sight.

This is where the real horror of *La Cena* comes from. People harm each other all the time, no magic or demonic pacts are necessary. Some build their own hells with tortures that would make a nephalite blush. Some just have their hells bonded to them through blood and birth.

Eduardo is not the monster in this story. Not really.

Claustrophobia

The problem with family is, of course, that one cannot get away from them easily or well. In mainstream US society, forgiving the sins of one's blood is expected. Reasons may range from "it's so hard to be a parent and they didn't know better" to "love means never having to say you're sorry." This norm is exacerbated among southerners and *cubanos*, and taken to its logical extreme within Rafael Cruz's household. Your family is something to kill and die for. Any parental infraction or assault within the bounds of the home is treated like a weather condition: you hit your wife because she's uppity, you hit your children because you love them but you lost your temper once, or you throw a plate at your husband because he's bigger than you and he can take it. The unforgivable sin is leaving the "safe" chains of the family and putting others first. Boundaries are unacceptable. Anything but obeying the absolute will of the parent is anathema.

In a way, the Cruz household is a microcosm of the Illusion. Every servant and family member is trapped under the watchful eye of Rafael and Ana Cruz, all playing out their roles and kept from their true selves by seemingly unbreakable bonds of blood, guilt, and love. Once you fall into the Cruz household, you cannot get back out without heroic effort.

This should be reflected in the choice of scenery and aesthetic throughout the game. From the jangly mix of Johnny Pacheco and Bill Haley and the Comets on the cabbie's stereo, to the fans lazily turning in the dining room but never providing enough of a breeze, there should always be a sense of being slowly crushed and melted beneath the hot Miami skies. See the ***Tips for the Game Master*** section below for more information.

Assimilation

Much to the Cruz's chagrin, however, their norms are not universal outside of their pleasant Mediterranean Revival home on Coral Way. A well-heeled landlord attacking his wife or vice-versa outside of the confines of their home would be the stuff of society gossip for weeks. The Cruz family, for all of their wealth, is still only on the outskirts of *norteamericano* society. For all that they can pass as white Miamians, at the very least their accents betray them. Cubans are regarded with a certain amount of suspicion in Miami at this time; while the US government prioritizes their immigration and repeatedly refers to Castro's *gusanos* as important and valuable allies in the fight against global communism, the American public aren't so sure. *Cubanos* are regarded with the same level of respect as *puertoricanos*, which is to say, not very much at all. Little Havana is regarded by much of Middle America as a chaotic slum in the center of an otherwise pristine beach city. Speaking Spanish as one's first language is a sign that you're an immigrant, and therefore dangerous. *Cubanos* are blamed for all sorts of crimes and accused of bringing down property values.

The Cruzes strive to fit in. Rafael half-regards himself as a *norteamericano* and did so even before he and his family left for Miami. His children are enrolled in the best schools and have private tutors. He rarely attends directly to his tenants and is chauffeured around in a Lincoln. Anything he can do to turn his family into model *norteamericanos*, he will do.

On a more supernatural note, it is deeply important for the Eduardo doppleganger to fit into the social dynamic of the family and pretend to be the black sheep of the Cruz family long enough for his parents to accept him. In that sense, it will be assimilating into several different cultures at once. To not be seen as strange or out-of-place anywhere is of paramount importance.

Tips for the Gamemaster

Setting the Scene

La Cena is an atmosphere-heavy game set in Miami during the late 1960s. As such, a GM should not skimp on description. The players should feel like they are choking on fumes in the back of a taxi with no air conditioning, taking shelter from their family in their room in the afternoon with a window open to the busy street, or bound to a wicker chair by their own obligations at dinner. Some easy ways to do this:

Describe the smells. The cab smells like old cigarette smoke and hot gasoline. Anton's room might smell like air freshener with a faint hint of antiseptic, whereas Sol's room probably smells like warm sunshine and lilacs. Especially important are the heavy smells at dinner. Smell adds a dimension to a game that might otherwise go unnoticed.

Describe the scene in terms of captivity. You can't leave a cab until your destination once you're in it, unless you want to get run over. You can't leave a family dinner without causing a scene. All three parts of the scenario should be a microcosm of our imprisonment under the Demiurge. Make the characters feel as claustrophobic and closed-off as possible. The rest of the world should be viewed through a window or a door.

Describe touch – or lack thereof. Healthy touch is rare in the Cruz family. Every touch should be sudden, desperate, violent, unexpected, or alarming. Any touch could be a slap or a caress. Similarly, characters like Anton and Sol might be suffering from an extreme lack of touch.

Describe tastes, especially during dinner. Does the beef wellington taste coppery and hot on the tongue? Did the garlic soup burn Novia earlier in the dinner? Taste can be a quick way to emotion, especially in a game with some magical realism elements.

Scene prompts. Each central scene comes with italicized prompts that suggest something for the GM to describe to move the scene along. Feel free to use these or not as you see fit.

Music. Each scene comes with a series of songs to build theme and mood. Feel free to use these as appropriate. Experiment and find your own!

Pushing Conversations and Tensions

While the family might have a lively conversation, for a given value of lively, the players may have difficulty doing so. Should this arise, the GM can feel free to make use of both the family's own weirdness and the presence of a dream creature in the house. Feel free to ask open-ended questions when roleplay gets slow. What do the twins notice their mother doing out of the corner of their eyes? What is the unknown voice whispering to Sol during the soup course? Why can't Anton seem to choke down his lemon sorbet? Avoid steering the conversation too much – give the players enough rope to hang themselves, in true *KULT* fashion.

Eduardo

As stated repeatedly above, Eduardo is not the true villain of this piece. Rather, he is a sort of karmic punishment for the seething, hidden violence (both physical and emotional) and sins of the Cruz household. He is a ravenous dream creature who wishes to steal the energy generated by the familial strife to make himself more real. Character's worst fears may be brought to light, or some of their secrets may be dragged screaming into the public eye.

The GM should only use Eduardo's ***Dream Field*** when play is slow and at appropriate moments; not as an engine for a railroaded plot. The focus of the story is the family dynamic, not a dream beast taking a Cuban family on a gonzo, gaslighting adventure. Visions should always relate to things that happened in the game or that were established as character history. The walls should not just bleed because it's creepy. Instead, the ***Dream Field*** should reflect the insecurities, hatreds, and fears of the family member in question. Eduardo is not creating their familial torture. He's just reflecting it.

IC Secrets versus OOC Safety

Some groups who play horror games aren't interested in "spoiling" the adventure before they play through. Others are more interested in knowing everything beforehand so that, while they might be terrified in-character (IC), they can enjoy the experience out-of-character (OOC). Both are valid playstyles, but for some groups, they might be incompatible. Be sure to talk to your players beforehand to establish what they want to know and what they want to find out, both IC and OOC, so that there are no unpleasant surprises for anyone at the table.

Family drama can be intense in a deeply unpleasant way, especially for players who have unhealthy family dynamics in real life. *La Cena* deals with sexual coercion, gaslighting, alcoholism, and child abuse, among other things. These themes can be traumatic and should be handled carefully. The GM should be sure to have a safety mechanic in place for when the play gets too much. Whether it's an X card, a stoplight system, or some other method of the players calling a brief halt to the action for a breather, the GM needs to make sure all players (including the GM themselves) feels safe at the table.

THE SCENARIO

It's July, 1967. Miami is 90 degrees fahrenheit. The heat ripples off the tarmac of the airport and shimmers on the waves off of Biscayne Bay. The city seems to slow down during the hottest parts of the day, like flies buzzing on a beautiful corpse. At night, though, the city comes alive as the neon shines off of the Art Deco buildings and the air sings with Caribbean music, making the whole thing seem like a massive beating heart.

It is into this hot, breathless city that Eduardo Cruz, black sheep of the Cruz family, enters to reunite with his mother, father, and siblings. Play begins with members of the family meeting Eduardo at the Miami International Airport and progresses throughout the evening.

An important thing to remember is that Miami is hot, both literally and figuratively. Lazily turning fans, broken air conditioners, and sulking breezes combined with brightly-colored buildings and light clothing can either seem claustrophobic or sensual, depending on who you ask. When Eduardo returns, Miami is in a mild drought, and the cooling winds are fickle at best. Feel free to play this up as much or as little as suits your game.

CENTRAL SCENES

La Cena has three major scenes, or acts, in which several smaller scenes are contained. These should be run in chronological order.

Miami International Airport

It is July of 1967, and Eduardo Cruz is coming home after supporting Castro's revolution. There was no warning. Three days before the flight came in, the family received a phone call. The Cruz household has been in an uproar ever since.

Before anyone goes to the airport, players should establish how their characters feel about this. Who is looking forward to Eduardo coming home?

Who wishes he'd stayed on the island? Why? If desired, the GM can run the scene where Eduardo Cruz reveals he's coming home to establish further feelings.

This scene begins in the car on the way to Miami International. The ride to the airport is fairly short and smooth. The family will find Eduardo waiting outside of the terminal for them. How do they react?

Rafael: *This is the first time you've seen your son since the screaming fight years ago. He only looks a little older and a little more worn. Do you wish he was dead? Do you embrace him?*

Ana: *Your eldest son is finally home. Why do you feel tears in your eyes? Shouldn't you be happy?*

Novia: *This is the first time you've ever laid eyes on Eduardo, except for the photos you've spied carefully tucked away in Ana's bureau. How do you feel? Why do you catch your breath?*

Anton: *Something is wrong. Your brother was your age now, when you left Cuba. Why does he not look a year older?*

Learco and Ramira: *Your joy at seeing your older brother melts away into panic when you realize you can't hear each other thinking.*

Sol: *You're curious about this new older brother of yours. He seems different from everyone else, somehow.*

On the way back home, the Cruzes' car gets stuck in Miami afternoon traffic. The family members are now stuck in a small box in the heat, and the air conditioner is broken. The family driver has what might be called an eclectic taste in music, ranging from Frank Sinatra to the Box Tops to Los Compadres. He seems to prefer it loud and jangly, whatever it is.

The GM should run this act until the silence outlasts the conversation, and then move on to the next scene.

Music

- "Something Stupid" by Frank and Nancy Sinatra
- "Letter" by the Box Tops
- "Cuban Pete and Sally Sweet" by Desi Arnaz and Lucille Ball
- "Apple Peaches Pumpkin Pie" by Jay and the Techniques
- "Higher and Higher" by Jackie Wilson
- "You Can't Hurry Love" by The Supremes
- "We Can Work It Out" by the Beatles
- "Guantanamera" by Los Compadres
- "Y Sabes Bien" by Los Zafiros
- "Guarachi Guaro" by Dizzie Gillespie and His Orchestra
- "Bossa Cubana" by Los Zafiros

Coral Way

This act begins when the car finally arrives at the house on Coral Way. Eduardo unceremoniously throws the half-empty duffel bag out of the trunk, and looks around as though expecting something to happen. Family members might notice that this is nowhere near the amount of luggage they might have expected him to have.

There are tearful greetings and not-so-tearful introductions. Throughout all of this Eduardo appears slightly dazed, as though he's not quite sure where he's found himself.

Though siestas are not customary in Cuba, the Cruzes are wealthy and are taking an hour or two to freshen up before dinner. The GM should use this time to explore the house. It's a beautiful, airy, Mediterranean revival, painted and decorated to Ana's obsessively perfectionist standards. Every room is bleach white or a bright pastel, with brass and earthenware fixtures everywhere. The back yard has just a few too many palms on the tiled patio, and fans turn lazily in every room, stopping just short of an actually useful breeze. The entire house is a little too warm and stifling, but very pretty.

The thing in Eduardo's skin might take this time to get used to its new surroundings. Other family members can take this time to have scenes with each other and establish relationships. Some suggestions:

Learco and Ramira *are tormenting Sol. When she cries and yells at them to stop, one of them says "well you're not our real sister!"*

Rafael *corners Novia in the kitchen. The other servants try not to watch as her protests turn into desperate shrieks.*

Eduardo *runs into Sol on his way to the bathroom. If she's fleeing the twins, she's crying. He has no basis for how to interact with her. Their conversation is odd and robotic.*

Ana and Novia *get into a fight, ostensibly over the quality over the meal, really over Rafael and Sol.*

Anton *finds Eduardo or Sol or both in Limbo. Where Eduardo has a black hole for a face, Sol has suns for eyes.*

Sol *takes a nap and has dreams about a man with no head and Anton falling into hell.*

Eduardo *gets to know different members of his family.*

Music

- "Downtown" by Petula Clark
- "Fever" by La Lupe
- "Cuando Calienta El Sol" by Hermanos Rigual
- "Tanga" by Machito
- "Call of the Jungle Birds" by Tito Puento
- "Recuerdos de Ipacarai" by Orquestra Aragon
- "Puro Teatro" by La Lupe

The Dinner

The Dinner, or *La Cena*, is a little different than the rest of this scenario. There are seven courses, and each is rigidly defined. Each course has a question attached, and a result depending on the answer to that question. Limbo begins to bleed into the dining room as the courses go on, and polite conversation is forced to its limit.

Establish who is sitting where at the long dining room table before playing out the courses. Novia is the only exception, as she is serving.

This section includes a question to be asked at the beginning of each course. Each question is also associated with one of the seven deadly sins. If answering the questions prompts the character to act out the appropriate sin, the players may roll to ***See Through the Illusion***. Each character description (see ***Player Characters***)

also includes a series of action or conversation prompts during the dinner. The players should all look at the questions at the bottom of their character sheets for inspiration, if conversation slows to a lull. Rearrange the game table to look like a dining room table, if that would lend more verisimilitude to your players' experience.

If conflict occurs, Eduardo's dreamy nature gets stronger, preying on the energy generated by the resentment, anger, etc. Those ***Seeing Through the Illusion*** will notice small things amiss with their meal – blood where it shouldn't be, shrimp coming alive and skittering away, the screams of dying calves, etc. This is Limbo leaking in. If someone sees through the Illusion, they are halfway between Elysium and Limbo, and may not leave the table. To those not ***Seeing Through the Illusion***, those who are appear to be carrying on the conversation/argument. As the family fights, the Limbo visions get stronger and more violent.

If the family works out their differences, he subsides. Eduardo's presence becomes wispier with every apology and may fade away completely. It is entirely likely (though not probable) that the dream creature will starve during this dinner, if the family resolves their conflicts. Should this happen, those who were stuck in Eduardo's dream realm are struck with an agonizing migraine as they tumble back into Elysium. They suffer nightmares for a week thereafter.

Shrimp Cocktail. *What do you resent most about those around you? Envy.*

Sopa de Ajo. *What do you feel most pressured by? Sloth.*

Caesar Salad. *What makes you an exception to the rest of your family? Pride.*

Lemon Sorbet. *What can you not get enough of that another family member has too much of? Gluttony.*

Pollo de Coco. *What do you hate most about Eduardo? Wrath.*

Beef Wellington with Truffles. *What punishment is worth those at the table? Lust.*

Diplomatic Bread Pudding. *What do you want most now? Greed.*

Music

- "La Luna in tu Mirada" by Los Zafiros
- "Mis Anhelos" by Celia Cruz
- " Obsesión" by Rolando Laserie
- "Tiene Sabor" by Sensacion
- "Todos Locos" by Herbie Mann
- "Cubano Chant" by Martin Denny

Ending

The dinner ends, but the family lives on. How does this change them? Are there new alliances made and forgiveness doled out? Or does the night end with bruises and broken plates? Consider how the family might go down the paths towards Enlightenment and Awakening after this.

Eduardo visibly changes during the dinner. He grows stronger the longer a conflict is prolonged, and weaker if resolutions are made. If the family continues arguing all the way to the end of the dessert course, he becomes fully solid, but filled with anger, resentment, and confusion. He is cemented in the world as a dream of rage and pain, and he will take that out on those he can reach. This might be his family – or, due to the seed of love and expectation planted by those arguments, might be other people in Miami. Eduardo will rack up a truly massive body count if he is not killed – likely starting with his own family.

Either way, he is a vicious force of destruction, and the only way to stop him is to go into Limbo and cut his connection to the real world; otherwise, he just manifests again in his bedroom if hurt or trapped or killed. Should a family member or other character manage to make it into Limbo, they will find a dream of Eduardo's agonizing dying moments in a Cuban prison. They will need to cut out his heart to sever the connection to the dream creature.

If the family *successfully and genuinely* resolves *all* of their differences at dinner, however, the dream creature disappears in wisps of smoke. The family are temporarily put into shock, then the phone rings and it is a friend who is still in Cuba, letting them know that Eduardo's body was found, mutilated and burnt. It looks like he was heavily tortured with clubs and electricity before being put to death. He was tossed on top of a mass grave and covered with a thin layer of soil. Removal of his body might mean death for the doppelganger. Now the family can mourn or take action as they see fit.

Characters

Show this list to the players.

- **Rafael Cruz:** The patriarch. A true Cubano machismo, and landlord for Little Havana. Married, with a woman on the side. Late 50s. His sin is *Lust*.
- **Ana Prieto y Cruz:** Rafael's wife. Fully aware of her husband's affairs, and is stretched to her breaking point. Deeply attached to her children as a result – except Sol. Mid-to-late 50s. Her sin is *Gluttony*.
- **Eduardo Cruz:** The eldest son, who has been missing in Cuba for quite some time. His sin is *Wrath*.
- **Anton Cruz:** The middle child. Studying to be a doctor. Has been having nightmares of an urban hellscape since he was small. Lately, they've been getting worse. Mid-20s. His sin is *Envy*.
- **Ramira and Learco Cruz:** Twins, still in high school. Deeply emotionally and psychically enmeshed. Their mother's unwilling favorites. Mid-teens. Their sin is *Pride*.
- **Sol Cruz:** The youngest. Quiet, polite, with the exception of an occasional (psychic) outburst. Ana's scapegoat child. 7 years old. Her sin is *Greed*.
- **Novia Prieto:** Ana's sister, living in one of Rafael's tenements in Little Havana. In order to keep her house, she slept with Rafael – then later gave up her child, Sol, to avoid blackmail. Early 30s. Her sin is *Sloth*.

Eduardo Cruz

Eduardo Cruz was the firstborn son of the family. He was talented, clever, and always interested in the newest "thing." He graduated just short of valedictorian in his high school and went on to study finance at the university of Havana. Instead, he discovered communism. The last time the family saw him, he was being thrown out by Rafael, whose screams shook the windows. He went on to fight for Castro, and as expected, died a torturous death after being captured in the guerilla battles.

The creature who came over on the freedom flight is not Eduardo Cruz. All of the dying dreams and visions of the communists, and Eduardo's own dying dreams of his family, pulled a creature into the Illusion from Limbo. It has gathered what it can from Eduardo's effects, but it hungers. It hungers for the heartbreak in his dying dreams, and it wants more. It decided the Cruz family would be the best place to get it.

Where Eduardo was vivacious, this creature is dazed and flighty. Where Eduardo was compassionate and fiery, this creature is robotic and cunning. It tries its best to present how it thinks Eduardo would to each person, but it just can't quite manage it. It is looking for love and conflict to sustain it, and it is desperate to get it from Eduardo's dysfunctional family.

La Cena

Shrimp Cocktail

- Respond to all inquiries politely. Ask someone if this is a "new American thing." Innocently ask your parents how they feel about the new regime.

Sopa de Ajo

- Engineer a fight between two people. Pour your mother more wine. Treat Novia coldly.

Caesar Salad

- Shut down anything Sol has to say. Agree with Anton. Be frightened that Sol can see you for what you are. Exacerbate an existing conflict.

Lemon Sorbet

- Denounce Anton. Agree with the twins. Drink water when alcohol is offered to you. Spit at someone and deny that you did.

Pollo de Coco

- Act confused when someone tells you this is your favorite dish. Demand something else. Prevent an apology. Drink.

Beef Wellington with Truffles

- Prevent another apology. Make a toast to Novia. Try to make the twins fight each other. Make sure your parents don't apologize to each other.

Diplomatic Bread Pudding

- Prevent another apology. Desperately try to make any conflicts last. If you fail, fade into hateful wisps. Blame Sol and Anton.

Eduardo Cruz

Home: Dream.

Creature Type: Dream creature.

Abilities

- *Dream Creature:* Can only be killed by cutting the bond to Eduardos dying dream-self in Limbo. Otherwise, the creature manifests again.
- *Emotional Feeder:* As emotional conflicts in the Cruz family grow, the dream creature get stronger. Treat this as letting the creature be more dominant and aggressive the more the conflicts escalate between the family members.

Combat [2], **Influence** [4], **Magic** [3].

Combat [Novice]

- Grab hold of someone and pin them down.
- Give up and beg for mercy.

Influence [Powerful]

- Act as a mediator and then escalate things.
- Know someones dirty secrets.
- Tell a convincing lie.
- Play out Rafael and Ana against their children.

Magic [Considerable]

- Inflict a tear between Elysium and Limbo.
- Feed on the emotions of the living [**Stability –1**].
- Enhance someone's emotions [***Keep it Together***].

Attacks

Eduardo only uses physical force to inflict strong emotions in others and defend himself. His end goal in the beginning is not to critically harm someone of his family members, but may change if the creature get powerful enough.

Unarmed: Grapple and pin down [–] [Distance: arm, the victim must ***Act Under Pressure*** to get away]; Twist arm [1] [Distance: arm]; Defile* [**Stability –2**] [Distance: arm, the victim must be pinned down].

** For example kiss or touch a brother or sister in a disgusting way.*

Edged weapon: Cut up [2] [Distance: arm].

Magic: Feed on emotion [**Stability –1**] [Distance: room, the victim must ***Keep it Together***]; Enhance someone's emotions [–] [Distance: room, the victim must ***Keep it Together*** to control himself].

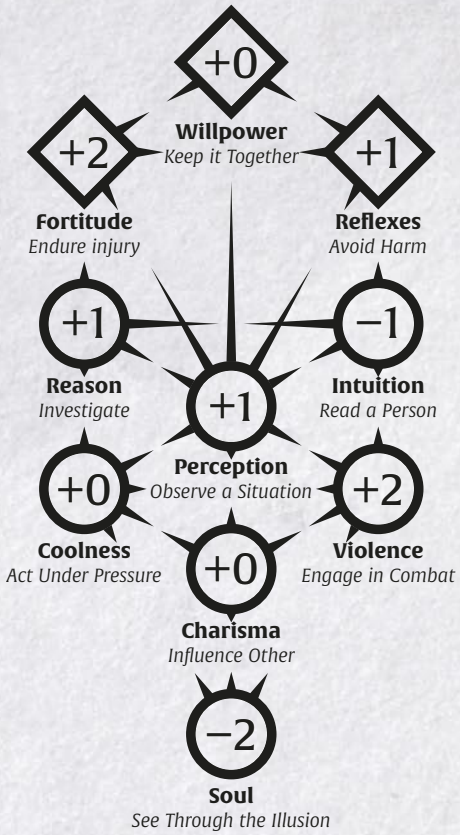
Wounds & Harm Moves

Wounds: ○○○○ ☠

- It's only a scratch.
- The creature plays subdued and begs for mercy.
- The eyes darken with wrath and the creature tries to kill the victim [***Keep it Together*** to not get struck by fear].
- The creature ignores a serious wound.
- The creature cries for help.
- The creature is killed (but will return if the connection to Eduardo's dream-self aren't returned).

RAFAEL CRUZ

• Attributes



• Wounds

Serious Wounds (−1 *ongoing*)	Stabilized
	☐
	☐
	☐
	☐

Critical Wound (−1 *ongoing*)	Stabilized
	☐

• Stability

☐	*Composed*	
☐	*Uneasy*	**Moderate stress:**
☐	*Unfocused*	−1 to Disadvantage rolls
☐	*Shaken*	**Serious stress:**
☐	*Distressed*	−1 ***Keep it Together***
☐	*Neurotic*	−2 to Disadvantage rolls
☐	*Anxious*	**Critical stress:**
☐	*Irrational*	−2 ***Keep it Together***
☐	*Unhinged*	−3 to Disadvantage rolls
		+1 ***See Through the Illusion***
☐	*Broken*	The GM makes a Move

• Who you are

Rafael Cruz is the patriarch of the Cruz family, and he makes no effort to hide or excuse that. Approaching his sixties, he is only just now starting to salt-and-pepper in both his hair and mustache. He is tall, broad-shouldered, and bellows like a bull.

Rafael was raised to provide for the family. He views this as his only mission, even to the exclusion of loving and caring about his wife and children. This causes a great deal of tension in the household, as any "gift" (including food or clothes) that is not met with sufficient gratitude will send him off on a torrent of roared emotional abuse. He swears he's never hit a woman, and he hasn't hit anyone since Eduardo left. Everyone inside the household knows how laughably untrue this is.

Rafael is deeply unapologetic for any of his behavior, including his ongoing sexual coercion of his wife's sister, the rent squeeze on his tenants, and his bastard daughter's continued existence in his household. If Castro could point to a more egregious example of capitalism than Batista, it might be Rafael Cruz. His purpose in life is to be rich and make sure his family is rich. Nothing else matters.

Not since he had to throw out Eduardo, anyway. Rafael would never admit it, but telling his eldest son he was no longer welcome in the family broke his heart. He has become less physical, but louder and crueller, since that night.

• La Cena

Shrimp Cocktail
- Tell someone they're dressed improperly. Say how nice someone looks while undercutting someone else. Ask a child about their schoolwork – it's never good enough. Praise Sol. Harass Novia.

Sopa de Ajo
- Taunt Ana. Harass Novia. Drink. Scold a child for slurping their soup.

Caesar Salad
- Complain about "rabbit food", eat it noisily anyway. Demand more dressing. Demand more wine. Demand a whiskey. Speak with an exaggerated American accent.

Lemon Sorbet
- Threaten to slap a child for misbehavior. Harass Novia. Harass Ana. Make it clear you think the children are your property. Get louder as you drink more.

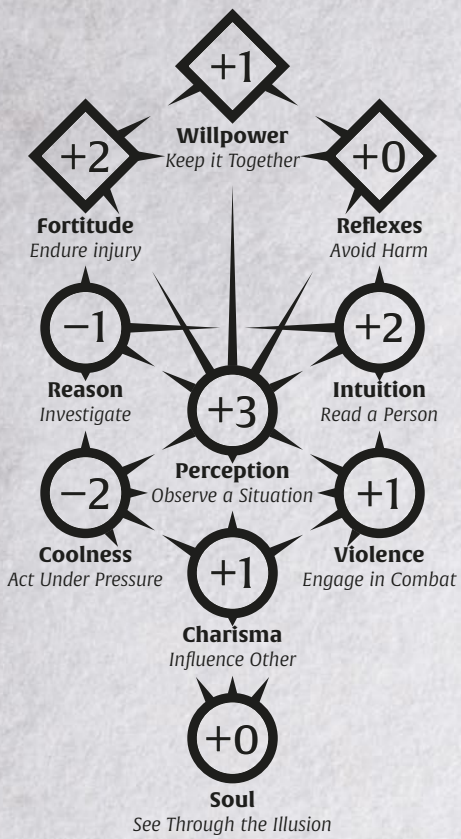
Pollo de Coco
- Argue with someone. Do not let up until they agree you're right – even if they've convinced you. Drink. Consider crying. Tell your wife you love her. Tell Novia you love her. Tell Sol her actual parentage.

Beef Wellington with Truffles
- If you feel it's appropriate, apologize to someone. Consider crying. Actually cry. Tell your family you love them. Tell your family they're a huge disappointment. Drink.

Diplomatic Bread Pudding
- Propose a toast, angry or no. Storm out. Prevent someone else from storming out. Kiss someone.

Ana Prieto y Cruz

• Attributes



• Wounds

Serious Wounds (−1 *ongoing*)	Stabilized
	☐
	☐
	☐
	☐

Critical Wound (−1 *ongoing*)	Stabilized
	☐

• Stability

☐	*Composed*	
☐	*Uneasy*	**Moderate stress:**
☐	*Unfocused*	−1 to Disadvantage rolls
☐	*Shaken*	**Serious stress:**
☐	*Distressed*	−1 ***Keep it Together***
☐	*Neurotic*	−2 to Disadvantage rolls
☐	*Anxious*	**Critical stress:**
☐	*Irrational*	−2 ***Keep it Together***
☐	*Unhinged*	−3 to Disadvantage rolls
		+1 ***See Through the Illusion***
☐	*Broken*	The GM makes a Move

• Who you are

Ana was raised in the classic Catholic style. Be a good wife, be a good mother, be a good housekeeper, and you will be rewarded in Heaven. If your husband is a bastard, turn the other cheek. Our Savior will kiss your bruises.

They said nothing about emotional scars, but Ana figures she has enough kisses from Jesus at this point to make a priest raise his eyebrows. She makes no secret that she hates her husband. Her children are her everything, and she's traded what little love she may have had for him for obsessive attention to them. She protects them from Rafael and gives them every advantage she can, to the point of smothering them. When Eduardo left, it completely broke her heart.

That's when she started drinking. Ana, once a beautiful matriarch, is now a haggard alcoholic with a constant wine flush. She miscarried several times due to her drinking habit, and her husband got so fed up that he stole her sister's baby for her to raise instead. Ana has no clear idea that Rafael is sleeping with Novia, but she has some strong suspicions, and that's enough for her to hate her sister too. She treats Sol coldly and clings to Anton and the twins with what little strength is left in her alcohol-soaked body.

• La Cena

Shrimp Cocktail
- Drink. Scold someone for being underdressed. Ignore Rafael. Snipe at Novia. Snipe at Sol. Talk sweetly to the twins.

Sopa de Ajo
- Drink. Drink more. Ignore the problems around you. Wipe off a twin's face.

Caesar Salad
- Drink. Ask Anton about his residency. Ask Eduardo an awkward question. Insinuate that Rafael can no longer perform his marital duties. Burp and don't excuse yourself. Commit another act of rebellion. Have an outburst at Eduardo.

Lemon Sorbet
- Drink heavily. Demand more wine. No, the better wine. Refuse to acknowledge Novia's questions until someone else asks them. Consider crying. Actually cry noisily into your sorbet.

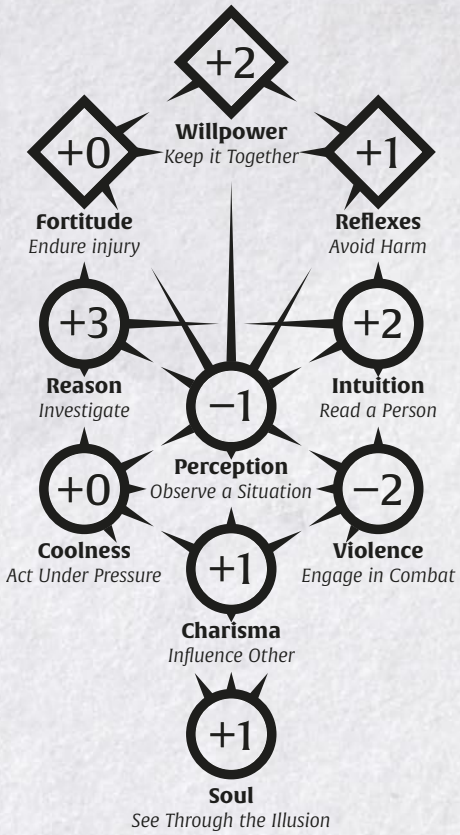
Pollo de Coco
- Drink. Demand another napkin. Tell Eduardo how much you love him. Tell Sol what you think her parentage is. Scold the twins. Slap your husband. Cry. Pray in Spanish for something.

Beef Wellington with Truffles
- Drink. Demand more wine. Steal your husband's whiskey. Propose a toast. If you feel it appropriate, apologize to someone. Possibly apologize to Novia. Break a dish.

Diplomatic Bread Pudding
- Drink. Pass out. Demand a bucket and more wine. Apologize to someone else. Tell someone you love them.

Anton Cruz

• Attributes



• Wounds

Serious Wounds (−1 *ongoing*)	Stabilized
	☐
	☐
	☐
	☐

Critical Wound (−1 *ongoing*)	Stabilized
	☐

• Stability

☐	*Composed*	
☐	*Uneasy*	**Moderate stress:**
☐	*Unfocused*	−1 to Disadvantage rolls
☐	*Shaken*	**Serious stress:**
☐	*Distressed*	−1 ***Keep it Together***
☐	*Neurotic*	−2 to Disadvantage rolls
☐	*Anxious*	**Critical stress:**
☐	*Irrational*	−2 ***Keep it Together***
☐	*Unhinged*	−3 to Disadvantage rolls
		+1 ***See Through the Illusion***
☐	*Broken*	The GM makes a Move

• Who you are

Anton was always second-best to Eduardo. It is difficult to say whether or not he was upset when his elder brother was thrown out of the house, but he's certainly upset now. Because Eduardo is gone, all of Rafael's scrutiny has fallen onto his second eldest. He is his father's last chance.

Anton isn't interested in medicine, but he enjoys helping people, so he agreed to study to be a doctor. He's currently in his residental rotations at Mercy Hospital, and hates seeing children in pain. He will never work in pediatrics – but then again, maybe that's where he's best suited. He protects his sister, Sol, from the worst of the family abuse as best as he can, and he hopes to move out with her once he gets a house or an apartment. He has no idea of her real parentage.

Part of Anton's desperate need to care for other people is his terrifying visions. They started when he was a child as occasional nightmares. Now they happen at random. They haven't happened in the middle of surgery or care, thankfully, but it's only a matter of time. His visions are always the same: visions of a ruined city with a burning skyline and corpses littering the streets. He could explain it away as seizures, but he wonders if he's possessed.

• La Cena

Shrimp Cocktail
- Try to prevent someone else from being insulted. Talk kindly to Sol. Compliment Novia. Pour your mother some wine. Be cowed by your father.

Sopa de Ajo
- Keep any bitter or hateful thoughts to yourself. Let them leak out anyway. Drink. Be passive-aggressive to Eduardo. Ask Sol what she is doing in school. Talk to the twins about their interests.

Caesar Salad
- Pet and sooth Sol. Protect her from everyone else at the table. Be firm about this. Be nervous and stressed.

Lemon Sorbet
- Experience Limbo. Be shaken. Respond to questions as though you are being attacked. Respond with confusion. Choke on your sorbet to avoid talking to someone.

Pollo de Coco
- Resent Eduardo. Protect Sol. Argue with the twins. Yell at your father. Yell at your mother. Yell at Novia. Let all your negative feelings loose.

Beef Wellington with Truffles
- Apologize, if you feel it's appropriate. Tell Sol you'll take her away soon. Drink. Get drunk. Roll Falling, if necessary. Have an outburst at Eduardo.

Diplomatic Bread Pudding
- Leave early. Take Sol. Mean everything you say.

• Disadvantage

Falling

Sometimes you get terrible visions of a nightmarish city. *When you get stressed*, **roll +0**:

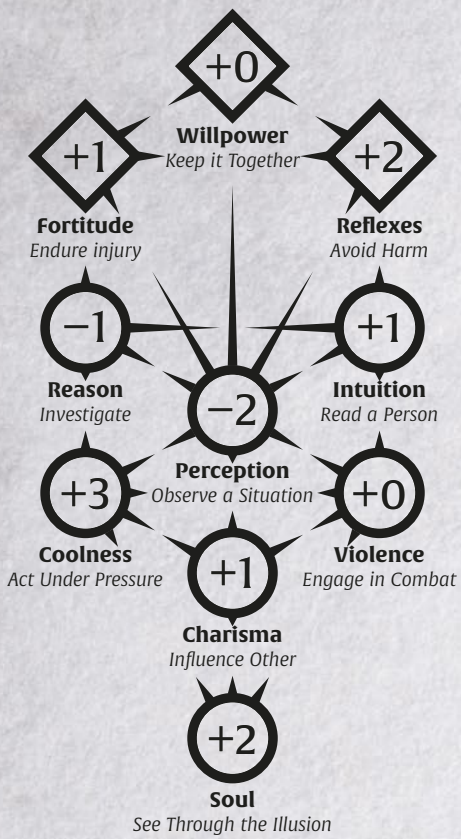
(15+) You resist the vision.

(10–14) The vision overpower you.

(–9) You get stuck in the vision until you find a door back. Sometimes other people follow with you.

LEARCO CRUZ

• Attributes



• Wounds

Serious Wounds (−1 *ongoing*)	Stabilized
	☐
	☐
	☐
	☐

Critical Wound (−1 *ongoing*)	Stabilized
	☐

• Stability

☐	*Composed*	
☐	*Uneasy*	**Moderate stress:**
☐	*Unfocused*	−1 to Disadvantage rolls
☐	*Shaken*	**Serious stress:**
☐	*Distressed*	−1 ***Keep it Together***
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☐	*Unhinged*	−3 to Disadvantage rolls
		+1 ***See Through the Illusion***
☐	*Broken*	The GM makes a Move

• Who you are

Learco and Ramira Cruz were born thirty second apart. Ramira is the eldest, but to hear them tell it, they were born at the same time. They are both freshmen in high school, taking the same classes and participating in the same activities. Rafael tried to send Ramira to a girl's school, initially, but half a shelf of broken crockery later, and both of them are riding the same bus.

Ramira and Learco are each other's shields in the madness of the Cruz household. They may seem cruel, but that's because they both decided long ago that only the other matters. It's the only way to survive an abusive father and an alcoholic mother. They both plan on attending the University of Miami together, and probably getting married together as well. If they could get married to each other, they would, but no one understands.

They know Sol isn't their sister, and to see her be doted on by their father upsets them. While they know it's wrong, they torment her anyway. They too need their releases after all. Both wish their mother would stop clinging onto them so, but they deal with it. It's how they got new bikes last Christmas.

Learco and Ramira always know what's going on in the other's head without a roll and can communicate telepathically, unless this power is disrupted by an outside power.

• La Cena

Shrimp Cocktail
- Bully Sol. Talk nicely to Anton and Eduardo. Ask a lot of questions. Look knowingly at each other. Brush off your mother's concerns.

Sopa de Ajo
- Complain when your mother wipes off your or the other twin's face. Make faces. Ask about dessert.

Caesar Salad
- Fidget and complain when your mother gets drunker. Sneak some booze from someone else at the table. Defend each other from your father. Make fun of Sol.

Lemon Sorbet
- Complain about the ice cream. Fidget. Poke each other. Tug Novia's hair. Talk about school. Make fun of Anton.

Pollo de Coco
- Devour your food greedily. Tell your mother to stop drinking. "Accidentally" spill her wine. React to Eduardo's dream fields.

Beef Wellington with Truffles
- Apologize to someone, if you mean it and if your twin agrees. Yell at your mother. Talk about plans for the University of Miami.

Diplomatic Bread Pudding
- Fake sick so you can leave the table. Get drunk. Apologize to someone else if you mean it.

• Advantage

Mental Bond
You and your twin can talk to each other telepathically and know each other's thoughts. No rolls needed.

Ramira Cruz

• Attributes

• Wounds

Serious Wounds (−1 *ongoing*) — Stabilized

- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐

Critical Wound (−1 *ongoing*) — Stabilized

- ☐

• Stability

- ☐ *Composed*

☐ *Uneasy*	**Moderate stress:**
☐ *Unfocused*	−1 to Disadvantage rolls

☐ *Shaken*	**Serious stress:**
☐ *Distressed*	−1 ***Keep it Together***
☐ *Neurotic*	−2 to Disadvantage rolls

☐ *Anxious*	**Critical stress:**
☐ *Irrational*	−2 ***Keep it Together***
☐ *Unhinged*	−3 to Disadvantage rolls
	+1 ***See Through the Illusion***

- ☐ *Broken* — The GM makes a Move

• Who you are

Learco and Ramira Cruz were born thirty second apart. Ramira is the eldest, but to hear them tell it, they were born at the same time. They are both freshmen in high school, taking the same classes and participating in the same activities. Rafael tried to send Ramira to a girl's school, initially, but half a shelf of broken crockery later, and both of them are riding the same bus.

Ramira and Learco are each other's shields in the madness of the Cruz household. They may seem cruel, but that's because they both decided long ago that only the other matters. It's the only way to survive an abusive father and an alcoholic mother. They both plan on attending the University of Miami together, and probably getting married together as well. If they could get married to each other, they would, but no one understands.

They know Sol isn't their sister, and to see her be doted on by their father upsets them. While they know it's wrong, they torment her anyway. They too need their releases after all. Both wish their mother would stop clinging onto them so, but they deal with it. It's how they got new bikes last Christmas.

Learco and Ramira always know what's going on in the other's head without a roll and can communicate telepathically, unless this power is disrupted by an outside power.

• La Cena

Shrimp Cocktail
- Bully Sol. Talk nicely to Anton and Eduardo. Ask a lot of questions. Look knowingly at each other. Brush off your mother's concerns.

Sopa de Ajo
- Complain when your mother wipes off your or the other twin's face. Make faces. Ask about dessert.

Caesar Salad
- Fidget and complain when your mother gets drunker. Sneak some booze from someone else at the table. Defend each other from your father. Make fun of Sol.

Lemon Sorbet
- Complain about the ice cream. Fidget. Poke each other. Tug Novia's hair. Talk about school. Make fun of Anton.

Pollo de Coco
- Devour your food greedily. Tell your mother to stop drinking. "Accidentally" spill her wine. React to Eduardo's dream fields.

Beef Wellington with Truffles
- Apologize to someone, if you mean it and if your twin agrees. Yell at your mother. Talk about plans for the University of Miami.

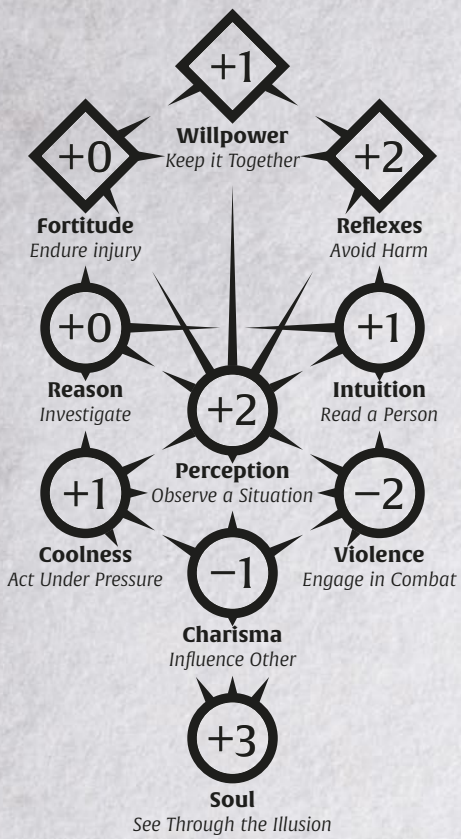
Diplomatic Bread Pudding
- Fake sick so you can leave the table. Get drunk. Apologize to someone else if you mean it.

• Advantage

Mental Bond
You and your twin can talk to each other telepathically and know each other's thoughts. No rolls needed.

SOL CRUZ

• Attributes



• Wounds

Serious Wounds (−1 *ongoing*)	Stabilized
	☐
	☐
	☐
	☐

Critical Wound (−1 *ongoing*)	Stabilized
	☐

• Stability

☐	*Composed*	
☐	*Uneasy*	**Moderate stress:**
☐	*Unfocused*	−1 to Disadvantage rolls
☐	*Shaken*	**Serious stress:**
☐	*Distressed*	−1 ***Keep it Together***
☐	*Neurotic*	−2 to Disadvantage rolls
☐	*Anxious*	**Critical stress:**
☐	*Irrational*	−2 ***Keep it Together***
☐	*Unhinged*	−3 to Disadvantage rolls
		+1 ***See Through the Illusion***
☐	*Broken*	The GM makes a Move

• Who you are

Sol is the youngest of the Cruz children, and the second girl. Born in 1960, she is also the only one to have spent her entire life on American soil. She is currently attending a private elementary school, plays piano, and always colors inside the lines.

Sol is extremely quiet and polite for a seven-year-old girl, to the point where her teachers have expressed concern. At home, she is rarely seen out of her room except for her tutoring sessions, piano lessons, and meals. Neither Rafael nor Ana finds this to be anything but a good trait. Her art teacher, after repeated attempts at parent-teacher conferences, gave up and wrote in her file that she has "a rich inner life."

This is true, though not quite in the way her teacher suggests. Sol has been able to hear the thoughts of others since she could talk. She cannot focus this power, nor does she get to decide when it happens, so it's no wonder she stays in her room most of the time. It used to give her nightmares, and it still does, from time to time, but she has discovered that making art of the thoughts she hears makes her feel better.

Sol is closest to her brother Anton, and doesn't understand why her mother hates her. The maid, Novia, has always been nice to her, though, and she appreciates that – though she doesn't know why all of Novia's thoughts are so sad all the time. She wishes she could help.

• La Cena

Shrimp Cocktail
- Refuse the shrimp because they look like bugs. Incur punishment. Cry at your father.

Sopa de Ajo
- Drink your soup loudly. Tell Anton what you're playing on the piano now. Get mad at the twins. Try to interrupt the twins' thoughts. Fail.

Caesar Salad
- Sneak a sip of someone's drink. Avoid answering questions. Get fussy at all of this adult food, but try to hide it.

Lemon Sorbet
- Get really excited about ice cream. Sneak another sip from someone's drink. Say something nice to Novia.

Pollo de Coco
- Ask Eduardo an awkward question. Try to listen to his thoughts. Offer to play piano. Complain that you're bored.

Beef Wellington with Truffles
- Refuse to eat the weird beefcake. Try it anyway. Love it. Say something nice to Anton. Be confused as to why people are crying. Drink more wine.

Diplomatic Bread Pudding
- Throw up from the wine. Leave, with either Anton or Novia.

• Advantage

Telepathy
You can intrude upon people's minds, in order to find information there. *When you force yourself into someone's head*, **roll +Soul**:

(15+) Choose up to 3 options.

(10–14) Choose up to 2 options.

(–9) Choose 1 option, but you also open your mind to the person you're reading. They pick one option to use against you as well.

Options
- Search their memories for a specific event. You experience this memory as if it was your own.
- Ask the person what their surface thoughts are at the moment.
- Search for specific information the person should know.

Novia Prieto

• Attributes

• Wounds

Serious Wounds (−1 *ongoing*)	Stabilized
	☐
	☐
	☐
	☐

Critical Wound (−1 *ongoing*)	Stabilized
	☐

• Stability

☐	*Composed*	
☐	*Uneasy*	**Moderate stress:**
☐	*Unfocused*	−1 to Disadvantage rolls
☐	*Shaken*	**Serious stress:**
☐	*Distressed*	−1 ***Keep it Together***
☐	*Neurotic*	−2 to Disadvantage rolls
☐	*Anxious*	**Critical stress:**
☐	*Irrational*	−2 ***Keep it Together***
☐	*Unhinged*	−3 to Disadvantage rolls
		+1 ***See Through the Illusion***
☐	*Broken*	The GM makes a Move

• Who you are

Technically, Novia is not a Cruz at all, but Ana's younger sister. Born two decades after Ana, she's closer to Eduardo in age than any of the "adults" of the family. She is unmarried and holds a degree – a rarity among women in pre-Castro Cuba. She came over to the US as part of the "freedom flotilla" on one of the many thousands of boats and makeshift rafts that made their way north after the revolution. Novia hoped to be taken in by her sister and her husband – but that was not the case.

Instead, Rafael put her in one of his tenements and slowly raised the rent. She had known for some time that he had his eye on her – Novia had always been prettier and less of an alcoholic than her older sister. She agreed to fuck him when he came to her and offered her the choice between an eviction notice and his bed.

That was not the end of her torment. The rent went down, but her stomach got bigger, and she delivered Sol alone on Christmas Eve, 1959. Sol was her own for three days before Rafael showed up and demanded her child. Ana had a miscarriage, and Novia couldn't care for his child anyway. If Novia gave up the child, he promised, Sol would be raised in the best of care and never know hunger. If she didn't, he would have Novia arrested for prostitution and Sol taken into foster care.

Novia gave the child up, but never forgave Rafael, even as she continued to sleep with him. She moved into the big house on Coral Way and began to work for the family as a maid, enduring the taunts of her sister and the hard domestic work just to be close to her daughter. Some days, she wonders if the indignity is worth it.

• La Cena

Shrimp Cocktail
- Serve the course. Try to ignore the taunts.

Sopa de Ajo
- Serve the course. Grit your teeth. Try to ignore the taunts. Start to fail.

Caesar Salad
- Serve the course. Notice Sol's distress. Try to comfort her. Pour your sister more wine. Flirt with Anton. Flirt with Eduardo.

Lemon Sorbet
- Serve the course. Desperately flirt with the younger men to get back at Rafael. Give Sol extra sorbet.

Pollo de Coco
- Serve the course. Tell Eduardo he can't have another portion. Let your control slip. Sneak some wine.

Beef Wellington with Truffles
- Unleash your resentment and anger. Cry. Apologize, if you feel it. Serve the course.

Diplomatic Bread Pudding
- Serve the course. Leave: either through escape or suicide, with or without Sol.

THE ISLAND OF THE DEAD

THE TREE TRUNK CRACKED OPEN LIKE A ROTTING CADAVER AND out of the bark flowed blood-red sap filled with crawling insects. The sound of a branch snapping made her look up into the dark jungle. For a moment she thought she saw the silhouette of a child among the bushes, but when she focused her gaze there was nothing there. She turned around and started to walk back to the campfire and the others. Her sore soles pulsated at every step, sweat pouring down her grimy body. The thought of eating one of the energy cookies for supper for the third consecutive day made her long for the food in Pattaya. A whistling sound stopped her in her tracks. Someone struck her on the shoulder. Surprised, she spun around and stared at a native's ash-grey countenance amid the trees. Then her shoulder started to pound with pain and she saw the arrowhead protruding from beneath the skin. A wave of nausea came over her while she started to hobble towards the others with a high-pitched scream.

Description

The Island of the Dead revolves around a group of people who are marooned on an island in the Indian Ocean after their jumbo jet has crashed at sea. However, the fate of the player characters (PCs) is far worse than they might have at first believed. The island is permeated by the wild boar god Babi Ngepet, one of the Death Angel Golab's many incarnations, which requires ritual sacrifices of drawn-out suffering from its worshippers. On the island there are rivalling tribes of natives and a cult of sailors who were marooned on the island many years earlier. The many sacrifices to Babi Ngepet have weakened the Illusion on the island of Babingepa vis-à-vis the realms of the dead. Here the living can meet the dead and death does not mean the end. To escape the island alive, the characters must figure out the island's dark secret and find a way to escape or vanquish Babi Ngepet while not falling under the dark influence of the Death Angel.

The scenario is inspired by films such as *Cannibal Holocaust*, *Lord of the Flies*, *The Green Inferno*, *Robinson Crusoe*, and *Battle Royale*.

The Island of the Dead can be played at a long game session (5–7 hours), but can also to great advantage be played during several sessions to give the players time to explore the island and its secrets.

Player Characters

At the outset of the scenario, all PCs in *The Island of the Dead* are heading home on a flight from Thailand to New York. They are complete strangers to each other, but will be knit into a group early on in the scenario.

Premade PCs

Amber Wilson: A young party girl and blogger from New York who has partied in Thailand with her best friend. Amber is sociable, resourceful, and adept at manipulating people.

Simon Wilkes: A newly-graduated technical engineer heading home from a backpacking trip. Simon is intelligent and good at inventing and fixing things.

Wendy Lydon: A middle-aged business woman and mother of two on her way home from a business trip. Wendy is dominant, tough, and intrepid.

Adam Gaulin: A 12-year-old boy on his way home to New Jersey from his summer vacation at his dad's place in Bangkok. Adam is attentive and clairvoyant.

Create Your Own PC

It is possible to substitute the fixed PCs in the scenario for characters that the players create themselves. The fixed PCs all have connections to death or the dead in their Dark Secrets, so this might be a good theme to bear in mind if you are creating your own PCs for the scenario, as the boundaries between the realms of the living and the dead are weakened on *The Island of the Dead*. The fixed PCs all have one Advantage and one Disadvantage. Thus, they are somewhat weaker than Aware PCs and there is a limited number of Disadvantages since *The Island of the Dead* is already replete with so many threats. The GM may of course increase resistance and the number of threats to balance more powerful PCs.

Change the Campaign Environment

It is possible to relocate *The Island of the Dead* to another part of the world with some preparation from the gamemaster (GM). The jungles of Babingepa can, for instance, be replaced by a snow-clad forest, leopards by polar bears, and the natives by the Inuit in the Arctic area. Just make sure you adapt the equipment and the PCs to the campaign environment in which the scenario is located.

Central Themes

The Island of the Dead revolves around survival, violence, and guilt. These three themes recur in the Dark Secrets of the PCs, the backdrop to the scenario, and the threats and choices that the PCs are faced with.

Survival: What are the PCs willing to do to survive? Will they help others or prioritise saving themselves?

Violence & suffering: Will the PCs yield to the violence on Babingepa or manage to withstand Golab's temptation?

Guilt: Will the PCs seek forgiveness for their sins from the dead who haunt them?

Tips for the Gamemaster

Interleaved Scenes of Calm and Stress

The Island of the Dead starts with a bang and throws the characters right into a traumatic fight for life and death in a sinking aircraft wreck. As GM it is important to dramatise the key scenes of the scenario, but also to give the players and their PCs time to recover with calmer intermediate scenes before all hell breaks loose again. Therefore, it is important to give the characters time to rest and build relations around the campfire, explore the environments, and chart their way forward on the island. The GM can also describe environments with a hint of a threat where the threats are never materialised.

Scarce Resources

The PCs in *The Island of the Dead* have few resources at the scenario's outset. Ensure that the characters get to value every belonging and save their resources amid the uncertainty that they might need them later. Food and drink may run out and everything on the island appears decayed and corrupt. The first aid kit can only be used a few times and more threats may await tomorrow. The gun only has a few cartridges. Is it worth sacrificing them now or save them for later?

A Creeping Sense of Danger

As GM you can exploit the prepared events of the scenario to initially plan threats, then create a creeping dread by hinting how the threats are approaching, and finally when the PCs least expect it, let the threats appear. There are several examples of this type of threat in the scenario, such as a leopard that stalks the PC, natives who follow their trail, and sailors that are searching for them on the island. You should also exploit the island's distorted nature to give the PC a sense that something is wrong.

Mysticism and Secrets

The island of Babingepa is ancient and teeming with secrets. Places such as the research station and the city of ruins, and events such as Adam's clairvoyant visions reveal that the island is more than it at first purports to be. So who are these sailors? What do the natives want? What is the wild boar god? Give the PCs time to explore the mystery.

Create Your Own Story

It is up to you as GM to decide what events will transpire during the course of the scenario. The events that are listed with each of the scenario's various locations are suggestions that you can use as they are, ignore, or modify as you please. You need not activate all the events during the course of the story.

Background – Babi Ngepet

Once upon a time, a long time ago, on an island in the Indian Ocean, a people created a temple to their god on the island's highest mountain. Around the temple, the people built a city that sparked envy in the chieftains on the other islands. When the warriors of these rival tribes came to steal the treasures of the people, the people turned to their priests to gain the strength to vanquish their enemies. The priests asked their god for help and they were offered powers, but at a grim price. The price of human suffering. People made cruel sacrifices to their god and they were made able to defeat their enemies. Time after time, the chieftains from the other islands met with defeat as they tried to capture the city on the mountain. The chieftains said that the people's god was too strong and that no army could defeat the people as long as their god protected them.

Then there arrived a foreign army led by a gigantic king on hundreds of ships from across the sea. They marched through the jungles of the island, climbed up on its mountain, and invaded the people's city. The people were massacred and the few who survived fled down into the jungle. However, the king was not satisfied, and wanted to show that not even the people's god was strong enough to oppose him. The gigantic king met the people's three priests on the stone steps leading up to the temple. The king slew two of the priests, but the third priest managed to plunge her dagger into the giant's eye before she died. When the king's soldiers saw their general fall, they fled from the ransacked city and left the temple untouched. Those people who survived never returned to the city on the mountain, and ultimately they forgot who they once were.

In 1992, the fishing vessel *Sudur Havid* foundered outside the same island in the Indian Ocean. The sailors encountered the island's population of what to them were dark, little savages, and after bloody conflicts, they subdued the primitive tribesmen. The deity on the island was actually an Incarnation of the Death Angel Golab and required long, drawn-out rituals of torture and suffering to be satisfied. After repairing their ship and sailing out to sea, the fishermen came into contact with Indonesian pirates. Their years on the island had, however, left their captain and his closest circle obsessed with suffering and made them loyal servants of the god, Babi Ngepet. Instead of going home, the sailors purchased weapons and started to attack ships and aircraft, ever seeking to get new victims for their rituals.

The First Scene – The Plane Crash

It is late evening and the large aircraft is crossing the Indian Ocean when a rocket suddenly hits one of the plane's wings. The passengers hear the terrible bang. One of the PCs, who is sitting near one of the wings, sees the sheen and how half the wing has been blown away. Then the plane starts to shake violently, while the pilots desperately try to prevent a crash. Choking down tears, flight attendants try to calm the passengers and instruct them on how to pick up life jackets from under the seats, while people call out their terror and fear of dying. Passengers walking through the aisles are tossed around like dolls by the careening plane. Eventually, one of the pilots tells the passengers with a shaky voice to get ready for an emergency landing. Travelling much too fast, the plane tumbles down towards the dark waters of the Indian Ocean.

The aircraft lands with an abrupt impact, which causes the passengers to lose consciousness. When the PCs come to, water is pouring into the plane, people are screaming, some are already dead, while others are badly injured. The hull has been torn apart and it is only a matter of time before it pulls everyone who remains in the plane thousands of meters down to the bottom of the ocean.

Swimming out of the wreck and up to the surface requires ***Acting Under Pressure***. The threat is that the PC swallows water on their way up and must ***Endure Injury*** **(0)**. On a **(–9)**, the character falls unconscious and may either be picked up amongst the floating bodies by the other characters as soon as they are in the dinghy, or may be washed ashore to awake there, later.

The Lifeboat

When the PC reach the surface, they see burning aircraft debris all around them and witness how the plane's screeching metal hull is pulled down into the dark water. Hundreds of bodies are afloat in the water, but in the darkness it is hard to see whether they are alive or dead. All around them they can hear screams. There are enormous waves on the ocean and it is hard to stay on the surface.

The Dinghy

One of the PCs finds one of the lifeboats in the water and can make it inflate itself by pulling a handle. The lifeboat is around 5 meters long and 2 meters wide, made of yellow rubber. The other PCs are in the water around the dinghy.

One of the PCs gets hold of a floating plastic box. If they manage to get the plastic box into the boat and open it, they will find basic necessities:

- Flare gun with four cartridges (Distance: Room/Field, *Attacks:* Direct hit [2] [−1 Ammo]; Shock [0] [Targets at the impact point are temporarily dazed] [−1 Ammo]. Ammo: 0).
- A flashlight with batteries for 12 hours.
- A few days' provisions in the form of 24 food rations packages and 24 half-litre water bottles.
- A first aid kit (2 uses).
- A knife.
- A ten-meter light but robust rope.
- A roll of duct tape.

Bodies

The bodies in the water around the PCs belong to strangers that either are dead or seriously injured. Someone is covered with burns, another had his arm torn off at the shoulder, while a third has broken both his legs. The PCs can take up ten people in total into the boat before water starts seeping in. There is no way they can save all the people. The screams and bloody bodies in the water can activate *Simon's* ***Repressed Memories***.

The "Rescue Vessel"

While the tall waves drive the dinghy away from the crash site, the PCs can hear the engines of a ship. A bit further away they see the floodlights from a fishing vessel that appears to approach the wreckage site. The dinghy is, however, inexorably drawn away from the ship until they cannot see anything other than its lights from afar.

The Island of Babingepa – The Beach

Eventually, the PCs can see the silhouette of mountains and jungles on a large island. At the ebb tide, the wind takes them to the reefs on one of the beaches of the island where sharp corals cut through the hull of the boat. By carefully wading through the reef, the PCs can make their way to the beach.

High mountains tower towards the sky and all around and upon them there is jungle. The beach is around fifty meters deep before the jungle starts. But here and there, brooks are running into the ocean, appearing to emanate from the mountains. The PCs can see light from the sailors' camp site atop the mountain.

The PCs can make camp here if they wish to rest and recover after the trauma.

On the beach there is driftwood that can be used as clubs and for making fire.

Food & Water

The PCs can survive if they eat at least one cookie and drink one bottle of water per day, but to feel reasonably full and satisfied they'll need three times that number. Every day on reduced rations causes **Stability** to drop **(–1)**.

Water

The water in the island's brooks and springs is generally undrinkable (it tastes bad when you drink it) and the sea water is too salty and dehydrates the body when ingested. A creative PC such as *Simon* can invent a simple water purification system through cooking and carbon filtering, if he finds the right parts and can then create drinkable water from the sources on the island. However, the process is slow and takes around two hours for one litre of water.

Food

Aside from people and orangutans, only predators, reptiles, snakes, spiders, and insects remain in Babingepa's inland areas. None of them taste good no matter how you prepare them, but the PCs can trap and hunt some edible, if bad-tasting food. Larger prey such as orangutans provide plenty of meat, but it is much more dangerous to hunt them. The shallow waters at the beaches hold surprisingly few edible fish, but at the coral reefs there are little, hard crabs and sundry curious hybrids of plants and animals. Some of them are edible, but they taste really bad and provide scant nourishment.

Events

- *The girl (Wendy):* The ***ghost*** of the girl that Wendy murdered turns up on the beach.
- *The native:* A scout of the island's ***natives*** stealthily stalks the PCs to find out who they are.
- *The ship:* A few hours after the PCs have arrived at the beach they will hear the ship's horn and glimpse light at sea. It is Captain Harkness, returning with the survivors of the crash who have been taken captive by the cult. The ship appears to be travelling around the island and disappears from view.
- *The siren:* Every day, a siren wails all over the island. It is the cultists who activate a tornado siren every time a victim has died in Babi Ngepet's honour.
- ***Enhanced Awareness*** *(Adam):* Adam sees how blood pours from the jungle onto the beach. On a roll of **(15+)**, Adam sees an enormous, naked and scarred man with the head of a wild boar standing in the jungle, watching him. In one of his hands he holds a crooked knife.
- *Torrential rain:* A whipping rain soaks the island. The wet freezes the characters and soaks unprotected food.
- *Suffocating heatwave:* A sudden heatwave wears the PCs down and makes every physical activity exhausting. The PCs must drink double rations of water to avoid losing **Stability**. All **Wounds** risk becoming infected if not cleaned regularly.

Golab's Influence

Golab's influence on the island has distorted all animals so they have become sadistic and violent. The Illusion is weakened vis-à-vis Inferno and ghosts of the cult's victims remain captive on the island, where they call out their insanity, desperation and wrath. The thin Illusion causes PCs to be contacted by the dead from their past and unconsciously capture the ghosts along with those on the island.

Enjoyment through suffering: When the PCs kill or torture another creature on the island they recover +1 **Stability**. Describe how the violence fills the PC with a gorgeous sense of euphoria. Make it clear that the emotions are unnatural.

The Island of the Dead: A PC who is killed on the island later wakes up again, healed from her wounds. The PC is now tied to the island and can no longer leave it. If she removes herself from the island (out into the sea) the PC will disappear and wake up in the jungle.

The Island of Babingepa – The Jungle

The jungle is dense and meandering plants, slippery stones, brooks, and tall trees make it difficult to move forward. There is something rotten and mouldy about the entire jungle. Trees crack open to reveal blood-colored resin with crawling insects, the ground is moist and bones and rotting cadavers are concealed beneath the vegetation. There is an omnipresent stench of death. It is extremely hard to orient oneself in the jungle.

Events

- ***Enhanced Awareness*** *(Adam):* The trees crack open and blood pours out along with pus and larvae. The screams of the dead echo through the jungle.
- *The leopard:* A ***leopard*** stalks a PC who has been separated from the group. Describe how the PC senses movements in the vegetation. If it is nighttime, the PC can glimpse two glowing eyes in the darkness. The leopard has picked up the scent of the PC, but does not attack right away, staying at a distance instead.
- *The orangutan:* A large, male ***orangutan*** attempts to steal food from the PCs and escapes up a tree.
- *The orangutan torture:* The PCs hear a group of ***natives*** torture an ***orangutan*** that they have strung up with ropes around its arms and legs between two trees. They burn the orangutan with glowing sticks from a fire and pierce it with their spears [can activate *Simon's* ***Repressed Memories***].
- *The warriors:* A group of the ***natives' warriors*** lie in ambush for the PCs.
- *The collectors:* A group of native women collect food in the forest with some young children. They carry their children in skin bags on their bellies and have sacks with bananas, berries, and insects. Around the women, children between 3 and 6 years old run about. The women flee if they discover the PCs. If they are pushed into a corner they form a ring around the children, pronounce guttural oaths, and threaten the PCs with stone knives.

Stressed-out PCs who have previously been attacked by native warriors might mistake the native women and children for warriors. Perhaps they only perceive movements amid the trees and are the first to attack.

- *The native settlement:* The PCs arrive at one of the natives' settlements. Possibly one of the ***survivors*** of the plane crash is currently being tortured to death by the settlement's ***wild boar priest*** [the screams would activate Simon's ***Repressed Memories***].
- *The refugee:* The PCs meet James, one of the ***survivors*** from the plane crash who has escaped from Captain Harkness' camp on the mountain. James is confused and wounded from having been shot in the shoulder as he escaped. He believes that the PCs belong to the cult and first attacks one of the PCs (club, **1 Harm**). If the characters succeed in overpowering James, he faints from his wound. He needs first aid to survive (***Act Under Pressure***). Under trauma, James can tell them about the fishing vessel that picked up the survivors, how they were brought into a cave inside a mountain, and were later taken through dark passages to a larger cave, where they were locked up in wooden cages. One by one, the prisoners were taken to an altar, where they were tied up and tortured to death by a man with a wild boar's head and dark tattoos. When the hour-long torture sessions were over and the victims had died, the captors set off a wailing siren. James saw Amber's friend Jennifer and Wendy's colleague Bryan among the survivors who were captured.
- *The cultist:* ***Captain Harkness*** turns up in the jungle. He tries to win the PCs' trust and lure them up to the mountain. Harkness says that he has a fishing vessel and that he has saved several of the survivors from the crash. He points out the direction to the mountain and says that if the PCs make their way there, Harkness and his men can help them. Should Harkness be seen through by the PCs, he will escape into the jungle. Harkness' knife could activate *Simon's* ***Repressed Memories***.
- *Blondie (Amber):* Amber sees Blondie in the jungle. The ***ghost*** pursues Amber at a distance and then disappears.
- *Kerrie (Simon):* Simon is woken by Kerrie kissing him and asking him to come with her. She leads him firmly into the jungle and disappears if Simon does not follow. Kerrie does not react if he calls her, but just keeps on walking. Should Simon follow, Kerrie's girlfriends Hannah, Ashley, and Alexis, and Andy and his two male friends, will be waiting at a glade in the jungle. They believe that they are still on the island outside Bangkok and wonder where Simon has gone. None of them believe Simon if he tells them what has happened, but they say that they must go to the beach and go back with the Thai fishermen who are to return at dawn. Kerrie and the others are actually dead, but have come to the island through Simon. Should Simon go back to the other PCs, Kerrie and the other ghosts will disappear.
- *The girl (Wendy):* Wendy wakes up upon hearing a girl crying. She cannot see the ***ghost***, but her sobbing continues through the jungle all night.
- *May (Adam):* Adam's vanished nanny, May, comes walking out of the jungle. She cries and gives him a gold-colored amulet with Buddha and Thai inscriptions. She tells him that he must wear the amulet so that the dead cannot harm him and warns him that the boy in the cellar wants to bring harm to Adam. "*The boy in the cellar is not your friend. He wants you in order to be able to live again through you.*" May says that she must go and hurries out into the jungle.
- *The siren:* The siren wails, a long, drawn-out mechanical droning that feels crassly out of place amidst the otherwise entirely natural sounds of the jungle.
- *The other group:* Another group of ***survivors*** turn up in the jungle. They are starving, thirsty, and likely have wounded people with them. They ask the PCs for help and might become desperate if the PCs refuse to share their resources. The survivors may be from the plane crash or ***ghosts*** from previous aircraft or ships that the wild boar cult have shot down. Shocked PCs are able to ***See Through the Illusion*** and recognize the ghosts' mortal injuries.
- *Torrential rain:* A whipping rain soaks the island. The wet freezes the PCs and soaks unprotected food.
- *Suffocating heatwave:* A sudden heatwave wears the PCs down and makes every physical activity exhausting. The PCs must drink double rations of water to avoid losing **Stability**. All **Wounds** risk becoming infected if not cleaned regularly.
- *Tropic storm:* A storm rips through the jungle and wreaks havoc on the PCs, crushing huts, and causing disorientation. Equipment may be lost and the PCs risk injury when trees break off.

The Natives

The natives on the island are 150 cm tall, emaciated, and dark-skinned, with scar marks and body paintings of white ash. They walk around naked except for penis sheaths of wood and adornments, such as bird feathers (in their hair) and bone fragments (through noses, cheeks, and ears), and file their teeth pointy. The ***warriors*** are armed with stone axes, clubs, stone knives, and bows and arrows. There are three different tribes on the island from three separate villages. The three tribes fight each other and take prisoners, whom they sacrifice to Babi Ngepet. All the natives are scared of Captain Harkness and his men, but show no mercy to the prisoners who successfully escape down into the jungle from the cult's village atop the mountain. The natives believe sacrifice of "the large" (normally people from the outside) gives greater pleasure to Babi Ngepet and they are particularly ruthless when they torture these victims in their vile god's honour.

The native settlements lie on the outskirts of the jungle on the eastern, western, and southern side. They build tents of palm leaves and each has a sacrificial site in the middle of the settlement where victims are strung up on a pole over a pit of glowing coal with a bridge across it. Victims are tortured to death by the priests of the tribe; the bodies of the victims are eaten by the natives during the rituals and the skulls are gathered on piles around the sacrificial site. Every village is governed by a ***wild boar priest***, at present two women and a man. Each wears a wild boar hide as a mantle, and have their faces painted like skulls. The priests have long, age-old, crooked knives with which they torture the victims of the rituals. The knives are remnants of the extinct civilisation that once ruled the island.

The Research Station

In the middle of the jungle, there is an old research station from the 1950s. The small group of researchers were captured and sacrificed by the natives on the island and the research station was left to its destiny. The station is now partly overgrown by the jungle and the radio mast on the ceiling has snapped. The little wooden building is made from local tree trunks and is standing on poles one meter above ground.

Enhanced Awareness **(*Adam*):** Adam sees native warriors running out of the jungle. A sturdy white man with a mustache blocks the entrance and shoots down the attackers with a hunting rifle. An arrow hits him in the shoulder and when he lowers his rifle for a moment, he is overpowered by the natives. They pour into the station and from the inside you can hear screams. On a roll of **(15+)**, Adam hears sobbing from inside the building.

Exploring the Research Station

Give the players the direct clues no matter what they roll. On a success with a complication **(10–14)**, a ***native*** scout can glimpse them and then escape out into the vegetation, on a miss **(–9)**, a direct threat may appear (a ***leopard***, ***natives***, or ***sailors*** from the wild boar cult).

Direct clues: The research station is built by civilised people (both the handicraft and the interior clearly show that it weren't the natives who built it). There are traces of a battle inside and outside the research station (dried blood stains, empty shell casings, and primitive arrowheads that are still stuck in the walls of the building).

- *The hunting rifle:* Concealed by the grass under the radio station lies Raymond Bolton's hunting rifle, which he lost during the last battle with the natives. The rifle needs to be repaired for it to be used (hunting rifle with a scope).
- *The diary:* Concealed under a loose log, one of the researchers has hidden a diary. In it, Oxford anthropologist Anne Smith describes how she, the ethnology professor William Chainsworth, his modest research assistent Rickard Alderton, and a boastful and loud-mouthed American hunter and survival expert called Raymond Bolton arrived at the mythical island of Babingepa. They came to "the Island of the Dead" with a boat from the island of Pulau Taliabu on April 4, 1951, to explore the myth of a lost civilisation of demon worshippers.

Babingepa does not exist on any maps, so to find their way there, the researchers had to use the tales told by the inhabitants of Pulau Taliabu as their point of departure. They journeyed for three days at sea and were almost forced to turn back because of a storm, but eventually sighted land.

Anne further describes how the researchers built the research station in the jungle and at an early stage made contact with the natives on the island. They did, however, experience the natives as being very aggressive and during the researchers' explorations on the island, Bolton was forced to shoot natives who attacked the researchers.

With the aid of Bolton, Chainsworth charted Babingepa and they discovered that there were three rivaling tribes on the island. Warriors would take members from the other tribes captive, and Anne was there herself to observe how the tribe on the eastern side of the island sacrificed a young woman during drawn-out torture on a pole over a pit filled with glowing coal. The priest of the tribe bore a mantle of what Bolton believed to be wild boar and had their faces painted like skulls.

On the 19th of February 1952, the researchers found the ruins of the mythic civilisation they were searching for up in the mountains. In an old stone city, the researchers discovered bones and relics and a stone staircase leading into a temple inside the mountain. Chainsworth believed that the people who built the city must have been annihilated by another civilisation. Anne wrote that the temple was filled with skulls from thousands of people and that a god statue of a man bearing a wild boar's head filled her with inexplicable fear. However, during the exploration of the temple, the natives attacked and Anne recounted how Alderton was dragged away screaming by natives while the others had to escape.

The diary concluded on February 25, 1952 by Anne describing how natives scouted around the research station over several nights and the

research station's members were afraid to go out, fearing they might be attacked. In the final entry they were merely waiting for the natives, and their greater numbers, to attack the research station and take them prisoner.

Questions:

- How can I find out more about what I'm investigating?

The investigator believes that there surely is more information about the research expedition if one later gets into contact with Oxford University.

- What is my gut feel about what I'm investigating?

While the PC is at the research station she is filled with an inexplicable sense of fear and death anxiety.

- Is there anything weird about what I'm investigating?

The research station is in extremely good shape considering it is more than 60 years old and was abandoned many years ago. The canned food is inedible, but otherwise most things in the station seem to have escaped decay, mouldering, and rust, which ought to be impossible in the moist jungle. It is almost as though the research station has been frozen in time.

Objects Inside the Research Station

- An old radio. It is broken but it is possible to mend it with the right parts, a power source, and if the PCs mend the radio mast.
- A .38 revolver and a dozen cartridges (revolver), jammed with rust but possible to mend. The cartridges are sufficient for a full drum and an additional reload.
- A half-finished map of the island. Damaged by water and mould, but still usable to see where the research station is in relation to the natives' settlements and the temple on the mountain.
- A large backback for long walks.
- A pair of walking boots.
- A machete (chopping weapon). [can activate *Simon's* ***Repressed Memories***]
- A yellowed photograph of the four researchers: A white-bearded man, a slender man in his thirties with small, round spectacles, a man's man with a mustache and a hunting rifle on his back, and a beautiful, blond woman around 35 years of age. They are dressed in hats and expedition clothes. On the back it says "June 14, 1951".
- Four hammocks with insect nets.
- Tins of inedible food.
- Vacuum-packed coffee. Still possible to use for brewing coffee.
- A coffee pot.
- A compass.
- A first aid kit (4 uses).
- A box with some rifle cartridges (enough for a full round and 1 extra reload of the hunting rifle).

Enhanced Awareness **– The ghost (*Adam*):** Anne's *ghost* is still there in the research station. The PC feels observed as though someone were watching them in the outskirts of their field of vision. If they explore it further, they suddenly discover Anne's sobbing semblance cowering in a corner inside the building. If the PC approaches, Anne notices them and stretches out her hand. If they take her hand, Anne shares a memory with them:

> The PC finds themself inside a hanging wooden cage in a large cave lit by torches. Suspended from scaffolding at an altar hangs professor Chainsworth. A native with a wild boar's head is skinning him alive while Chainsworth cries, screams, and begs for mercy. Two other natives with their faces painted like skulls watch, along with hundreds of other natives who intone rhythmically in their guttural language. Above the altar there towers a stone statue of a naked man with a wild boar head. On a pole beside the altar hangs the bloody, skinned corpse of a man (Alderton). In a cage beside the PC, Bolton lies unconscious with a bloody wound on his head. The torture continues for a protracted time and Chainsworth loses consciousness repeatedly, only to wake up again and continue screaming. Finally, Chainsworth dies from the torture and the priest cuts out his heart and tears off a bite. The heart is shared with the two other priests, amid loud calls from the natives. Chainsworth's bloody cadaver is lowered and strung up on one of the poles next to Alderton. Then the torturer calls out something and painted warriors advance towards the PC's cage. While the character weepingly tries to resist, they are dragged towards the altar. Their clothes are torn off and while they scream for help in vain, the warriors hang the character naked above the altar. They feel how the knife starts to cut into the skin of their leg and vomit from the pain.

Anne's ghost disappears after she has shared the memory with the PC.

The Radio

If the PCs succeed in mending the radio and the radio mast on the research station, they can try to make contact with the surrounding world.

The *Sudur Havid*: The strongest signal is from the cult's ship, the *Sudur Havid*. Tucker, one of the sailors keeps surveying the ship's radio in the hunt for other ships and aircraft that are travelling past Babingepa. If Tucker makes contact with the PCs, he will pretend that the *Sudur Havid* wants to help the survivors of the plane crash. He offers rescue to the PCs if they make their way up to the sailors' camp site on the mountain.

The amateur radiographer: The technician Rama, who lives on the Indonesian island of Pulau Taliabu, has a radio of his own that he normally uses to make contact with other amateur radiographers around the world. When the PCs tune into his frequency Rama, is happily surprised. Rama has studied at Bandung Institute of Technology, and speaks English. Rama can help the PC notify the authorities about the plane crash. He can also recount the myth of the island of Babingepa where a lost people are said to sacrifice humans to Babi Ngepet.

The Island of Babingepa – The Mountains

The mountains on the island tower several hundred meters above the sea and consist of jungle-clad mountain ranges lined with precipices and ravines. To make their way up there, the PCs occasionally have to climb up steep cliffs or take long detours. Here and there, there are waterfalls lined with creepers and trees. The precipices may be upwards of hundreds of meters high but trees and lianas meander down to the mountain walls and can be used as aids when the PCs are climbing.

Events

- *Sheen from lights:* The PCs glimpse fires from the cult's camp site up in the City of Ruins.
- *The siren:* The siren wails to signal that yet another victim has been sacrificed to Babi Ngepet.
- *Spring flood:* A flood rushes down the mountain, forcing trees and debris with it. PCs caught in the spring flood risk injury (**1–2 Harm**) and will probably end up some hundred meters down the mountain.
- *Cat-and-mouse game:* The PCs whom the ***leopard*** got the scent of in the jungle is attacked when she is separated from the other PCs. The leopard can jump down on the PC from a tree or attack from out of the shrubbery. It does not kill the PC directly, but wounds them instead to start a cat-and-mouse game where the character may try to escape while the leopard pursues its prey.
- *The sailors:* A group of five ***sailors*** armed with axes and knives go searching for the PCs on the mountain. The PCs hear them approach before they are discovered.
- *Gan (Adam):* Gan saves Adam in a critical situation. Perhaps he drags him into a bush just before a threat arrives, or saves Adam from plunging towards certain death. Afterwards, Gan tells him that he should beware of the man with the wild boar's head if Adam is to be able to leave the island with Gan.
- *Blondie (Amber):* On one occasion when Amber is alone or vulnerable, Blondie turns up. His head is bloody and he has a mean smile on his lips and a crooked knife in his hand (**2 Harm**). The ***ghost*** is there to exact revenge by raping and killing Amber. Before he harms her, he wants to frighten and violate her. The only way of getting rid of Blondie is to kill him again.
- *Kerrie's death (Simon):* Simon sees Kerrie come running, naked and bloody. She cries and is severely shocked. Soon afterwards Simon hears Andy call out, "*Kerrie, where are you?*," with a mocking and mad tone of voice. Kerrie entreats Simon to save her. Soon Andy arrives, naked and bloody, with a large knife in his hand. He will rape and kill Kerrie unless Simon stops him. In case Simon manages to save Kerrie, she would like to go with him [activates Simon's ***Repressed Memories***].
- *The girl (Wendy):* On one occasion when Wendy least expects it, the Thai girl attacks her with a slicer (**2 Harm**).
- *The god statue [can activate Simon's **Repressed Memories**]:* The PCs find a large, circa three-meter-tall and age-old stone statue of the wild boar god (a naked man with a wild boar's head). The statue has recently been splattered with blood. Next to the statue, the PCs find a skinned man strung up by a rope from a tree. The man is not dead, but is a ***purgatide*** who will pursue the PCs. The purgatide has strayed out from Golab's torture chamber and now he is seeking pain (others' and his own). He refuses to yield until the PCs harm him and then flees laughing into the jungle.

The Fallen Giant's Armor and Weapon

On the ledge of a cliff where a beautiful waterfall cascades down into the jungle, with a view across the island over the sea, sits the body of the lictor that once overthrew the civilisation atop the mountain (see ***Enhanced Awareness: The City's Downfall*** in the part ***The City of Ruins***). It is as though the dead giant is gazing out across the island and the sea. Only the bones remain of the gigantic body, but the lictor's gilded armor and helmet still sit across the bones. The skulls of slain enemies are still attached to the armor, and in one of the skull's eyes sits a sacrificial dagger akin to those the wild boar priests carry. The giant's six-foot-long ornamented sword rests across the knees of the creature. The sword and the armor are artefacts tied to the Archon Netzach. The armor is far too large for a human being to wear.

***Enhanced Awareness* (*Adam*):** Adam can see how an enormous, grotesquely fat monster with white, almost transparent skin and a great mouth full of sharp teeth, bobbles out of the lush, green jungle, out on the ledge of the cliff. The giant is clad in gigantic armor and bears the long, ornamented sword in its hand. The armor is covered in red blood and fresh, dark-skinned heads from slain enemies are attached to it with metal rings. The giant's pale, bloated face is covered with black blood and the sacrificial dagger is deeply buried in one of its eyes. With gravity, it seats itself with its back to the cliff and with the sword on its knees and gazes out towards the sea where hundreds of ships with square, red sails drift away from the island. Then the giant draws its final breath and dies.

On a roll of **(15+)**: When the giant draws its last breath, it is as though a wave of energy moves across the island and causes plants and trees to quiver. Adam can see how all plants lose their lustre and in between the branches of the trees spiders, beetles, and centipedes flee into the sea. The island is cursed.

The Sword

A PC who lifts up the sword from the giant's knee notices how the darkness is temporarily dispelled and the jungle seems to be teeming with life again. The other PCs have disappeared and from out of the jungle there emerges a curious female semblance, bowing to the PC before it attacks. It is Netzach's ***challenger*** whom the PC must defeat to be able to carry the sword for the Archon. During the fight, the PC and the challenger may try to push each other down the waterfall so that the victim plunges into a natural lake fifteen meters below.

Should the PC win the fight through the challenger giving up or being killed, the PC immediately increases **Violence** by +1, acquires the ornamented sword (edged weapon with **+1 Harm**) and has all her **Wounds** healed, but she also becomes bound in a pact to Netzach. The pact makes it easier to defeat Babi

Ngepet and Harkness in the temple (see ***The Temple***). Should the PC lose the fight and be slain by the challenger, she will be resurrected later without the sword (thereafter, the PC is a ghost and cannot leave Babingepa). For the other PCs, it is as though the PC disappears without a trace. If the PC wins the fight by killing the challenger, the PC turns up on the cliff ledge again.

The City of Ruins

Atop one of the mountains lie the ruins of a vanished civilisation. Stone ruins partly overgrown by creepers and shrubbery bear witness to hundreds, perhaps thousands of people having lived here once, long ago. There are still traces of the civilisation's stone cutting art in the form of staircases chiseled out of the mountain, statues of a male semblance with a wild boar's head (the civilisation's god) and images carved into walls of houses. In and around the ruins, there are bones and mouldered relics made by the people who once lived here. At the cave in the mountain, a big, broad stone staircase has been cut into the bedrock. Giant stone statues of the wild boar god line the sides of the staircase.

The Sailors' Camp

Captain Harkness' men have made their camp in the parts of the stone city that lie closest to the staircase up to the cave entrance into the temple. With tarps and wooden constructions they have made the ruins inhabitable and built palisades, originally to keep the natives out. Since Harkness became the cult's high priest and assumed power over the tribes, the purpose of the palisades is rather to keep people trapped in the camp than to keep enemies out. In the camp, fires are burning where the cult's members sit when they are not working.

The Repository

This bamboo shed is secured with a padlock and watched by the American war veteran, ***Jim***, with an old Kalashnikov AK-47 automatic carbine. The key to the repository is carried by the coxswain ***Dima***.

Objects: If the ***sailors*** do not feel threatened by the PCs, the following can be found in the repository:

- Three additional magazines to the automatic carbine.
- Six hand grenades.
- Eighteen handguns and revolvers of various makes and models, as well as ammunition.
- Lots of clothes and objects that the cult have taken from the people sacrificed over the years.

Should the PCs set fire to the repository where the ammunition is kept, it will cause a major explosion.

If the alarm has been set off in the camp, the sailors who are most loyal to Harkness arm themselves with these guns and grenades.

The Alarm

If the PCs are discovered, an alarm soon sounds and the ***sailors*** quickly organise a hunting party to search for the PCs in groups of four men each. The sailors do not want to kill the PCs as Harkness has threatened to replace any dead victims with the sailor who is responsible for the murder. They aim at arms and legs and use close-combat weapons whenever possible.

Events

- ***Enhanced Awareness****: The city's downfall (Adam):* Adam suddenly sees the city as it must have appeared in its heyday. The sun shines and around the stone city lies the lush, green jungle. Everywhere there are scarred, dark-skinned, bare-chested warriors with small, round shields and spears, or curious, hooked swords fighting a much larger army of fair-skinned, Asian-looking warriors with metal armor and straight swords. The fair-skinned invaders massacre the city's inhabitants and murder the children and women in their houses. Adam can see how several of the metal-clad victors upend a statue of the wild boar god. On a roll of **(15+)**, he sees up on the chiseled-out steps leading up the mountain there stand two men and a woman, each clad in beautiful broadcloth with helmets that look like wild boar's heads and carry crooked knives in their hands. At the sides of the stone staircase, numerous statues of the god with the wild boar's head tower over everything. The high priests intone, "*Babi Ngepet, Babi Ngepet,*" again and again while the army of Asian warriors approach the staircase, drenched in blood and dirt from the burning city. They are led by an enormous, grotesquely fat monster, pale as death and yelling orders from a contorted, inhuman mouth. The giant bears a gilded helmet and armor from which hundreds of decapitated heads hang attached by rings, and it holds a man-sized, ornamented sword in its hand. While the army stops and waits at the foot of the staircase, the giant walks up the steps towards the three guardians on its own. The first guard is truncated at the chest by the giant's sword. The second one has his head crushed in the monster's free hand. The last guard is pierced through the belly by the giant's blade, but while the foreign warrior-king lifts up its weapon, already laughing out its victory, she glides down the sword and thrusts her dagger's black, hooked blade into the giant's eye. The giant immediately falls to the ground roaring and crushes the woman beneath. Its enormous body rolls down the stairs and lies motionless before the army. Someone calls out and points towards the gateways of the temple. Then the army flees back through the burning city, past the thousands of bodies of massacred dark-skinned warriors, women, and children.
- *The mutineer:* The ***sailor***, Jaime, discovers one of the PCs sneaking around the camp. He holds his hands up in a defusing gesture. Does the PC trust that he means well?
- *The assault:* The PCs bears witness to how ***Dima***, Harkness' right-hand man, burns a young woman, hardly more than a girl, who has been strung up naked at a pole with a smouldering torch across her back. Dima appears to enjoy the punishment with a sadistic smile upon his lips while the woman screams and begs for mercy. One of the PCs may recognise the woman from the plane.
- *The revenge (Wendy):* When Wendy attempts to sneak or hide, the murdered girl turns up and reveals her position to the cultists.
- *A rescuer in need? (Adam):* In a situation where Adam is to be discovered or captured, Gan turns up and diverts attention from Adam, or kills the cultist.

The Wild Boar Cult

The fishing vessel the *Sudur Havid* ran aground outside the island of Babingepa's north coast during a storm in 1992. Captain Rhys Harkness led the survivors ashore, but as the island was not on the nautical chart they had no idea where they had been stranded. They made camp on the beach and the next day went out on simple rafts to bring equipment and provisions back to the island. At first, the plan was to wait for rescuers, but when no ships turned up and as the sailors lacked communication radio, Harkness decided to explore the island in the hope of finding people.

The mountain with Babi Ngepet's temple lay above the beach where the sailors had arrived and by following natural caves, Harkness reached the sacrifical caverns where he was shocked upon seeing the altar and the bones of thousands of people. Outside the temple, the sailors found the City of Ruins and Harkness decided to make camp there and forge a plan for rescuing his crew back to civilisation.

The natives on the island soon noticed that the sailors had made camp on the mountain, and dispatched warriors to capture the intruders. The encounter with the natives was bloody but, despite casualties, Harkness and his men won the battle with the firearms they had brought from the *Sudur Havid*. The natives that survived the battle were themselves captured and kept in cages in the camp.

Harkness felt an irresistible attraction to the natives' temple. In Harkness' dreams, Golab spoke to him in the form of Babi Ngepet and commanded the captain to sacrifice the natives. During the days, Harkness spent hours in the dark under the statue of Babi Ngepet and slowly Harkness' mind was filled with Golab's ruinous influence. Eventually Harkness succumbed and ordered that the captured natives be taken to the cave hall. With his sailors as spectators, Harkness strung up the natives above the altar and tortured them to death.

The sailors who opposed Harkness' new god were themselves sacrificed above the altar and soon none of the sailors dared antagonize the captain in his insanity. While they participated in the rituals, many of the sailors were themselves influenced by Golab and started to enjoy seeing others suffer.

Captain Harkness led his men towards the settlements of the natives and subdued them with violence. The three wild boar priests were brought up to the temple where they assisted Harkness in going through Babi Ngepet's sanctification ritual. During several days of torture, Harkness' ties to Golab were strengthened. The Death Angel had blessed him with with magical powers and the natives' wild boar priests bowed their heads before their high priest.

Harkness soon realised that the natives and his own men would not suffice as sacrifices to keep Babi Ngepet satisfied for long. Over several years' hard work, the sailors and the natives pulled the wreck of the *Sudur Havid* to the island and repaired the ship, so it became seaworthy again. The *Sudur Havid* went out at sea once more, but Harkness no longer really entertained any thoughts of going home. The ship's new task was now to take new victims to Babi Ngepet. First Harkness took other fishing vessels, which he attacked and defeated, successful through his cunning, ruthlessness, and many years worth of experience at sea. In an encounter with Indonesian pirates, Harkness offered stolen goods in exchange for firearms and a surface-to-air-missile. The unscrupulous thieves saw Harkness as a lucrative trading partner and over the years their collaboration continued. From the *Sudur Havid*, Harkness could now shoot down passenger planes traveling across the sea and take the surviving passengers as prisoners on Babingepa.

Agenda

Harkness' objective is to carry out the sacrifices in order to be filled with Golab's power and become an incarnation of the Death Angel, a demi-god, and the manifestation of Golab's will on Earth.

Escalation:

- The cult shoots down the aircraft.
- The victims are fetched from the sea.
- The first sacrificial rites begin.
- The cult attempt to capture the PCs.
- Harkness sacrifices all the prisoners from the plane crash.
- Captain Harkness is filled with Golab's essence and becomes the Death Angel's Incarnate.

Jaime – The Mutineer

Jaime is a sturdy man with a mean, scarred face and black teeth. Despite his crude appearance, Jaime is one of the ***sailors*** who is opposed to Harkness and what the sailors do to innocent people. Jaime wishes to escape from the island, but does not believe that he can make it alone.

- Armed with a *knife:* Stab [2].
- He can provide the PCs with information if he discovers them in the camp and is also capable of steering the *Sudur Havid*.

Jaime can recount that:

- He believes the sailors who are not particularly loyal to Harkness will stand up to Harkness' twenty or so closest confidantes, if Harkness is killed or sufficiently weakened.
- He explains what keeps the men in check is the fear of being sacrificed and the fact that Dima has control of the camp's firearms in the repository at one end of the camp. The repository is guarded by the war veteran, Jim, who is armed with an AK-47.
- The prisoners from the downed aircraft are kept in wooden cages inside the temple cave and that they are watched by the giant South African sailor, Khumbu.

THE TEMPLE

After one goes up the steps from the City of Ruins, they enter a natural cave path that leads into the mountain. The cave path opens into a large cave where the temple lies. At one end of the hall hang wooden cages with the cult's victims secured by padlocks (the jailer ***Khumbu*** has the keys). At the other end stands a blood-drenched stone altar under a gigantic statue of Babi Ngepet. At the sides of the altar, there are skinned bodies of adults and children strung up on poles, and behind them are thousands of human craniums and bones piled up. Several narrow, natural cave paths lead out from the temple into the mountain. The cave paths twist and turn and combine to form a labyrinth, and in order not to go astray in there, the cultists have marked the correct path with white paintings on the stone walls. If one follows the marked path, they arrives at a large, water-filled cave that opens towards the sea. The *Sudur Havid* s anchored here. Three of Harkness' loyal ***sailors*** constantly guard the ship. They are armed with guns.

Golab's Influence

In the temple, the Illusion is very thin in relation to Inferno and Golab's Citadel. If the PCs go astray, some of the pathways lead to parts of Golab's Citadel. It's easy to get seperated from each other here, and PCs may find themselves on their own without warning while wandering through these tunnels.

The Hall of the Strung-Up: The PCs can see how one of the paths in the cave suddenly opens onto a hall with a curious echoing choir of voices; no words and yet melodic. Only when they enter the hall do they see the innumerable naked and truncated bodies that wriggle on hooks suspended far up in the ceiling.

- One of the bodies suddenly falls down as the flesh gives way to the weight of the body. The bloody, mutilated man creeps towards the PCs.

The Prison Cells: A cave opening leads towards an endless corridor with rows upon rows of cells behind rusty bars.

- In one of the cells, a six-year-old girl peers out. She asks the PCs to help her, but if anyone comes near, the girl tries to grasp them with her disfigured fingers, where razor blades have been pressed through the flesh. If the character does not break loose (***Avoid Harm***), the girl slashes the PC's hands and laughs shrilly (**Serious Wound**).

The Torture Chamber: In a filthy industrial hall with razor-sharp machines that spew smoke and oil, screaming and crying people are nailed and chained to the walls and floor while saw blades, hooks, and bone crushers cut, tear, and break their bodies. A giant, inhuman creature of rotten, mangled flesh and rusty steel enters through a doorway on the other side of the hall with a flouncing sack over its shoulder. Over the creature's head, where its face would be, the flayed face of a young woman has been nailed in place.

- The razide suddenly stops and gazes right into a PC's eyes. Then it opens the sack and pulls out a screaming, crying, deceased relative of the PC and starts to strap her into an empty torture machine (***Keep it Together***).

Events

- *The sacrificial ritual (Amber):* When Amber enters the temple, ***Harkness*** is in the process of skinning Jennifer, who cries and begs for mercy while dozens of the cult's members look on. Thus far, he has only had time to skin one of her feet, so many more hours will pass before Jennifer dies from her injuries.
- ***Enhanced Awareness****: Golab's citadel (Adam):* He can see how the skinned bodies on the poles writhe and scream in a choir of suffering.
- *Netzach's chosen one:* If a PC has taken the ornamented sword and won the duel against Netzach's challenger, she is now Netzach's chosen one. She sees Harkness' true semblance (with the wild boar's head) and Harkness immediately senses her presence. The PC can see how the statue of Babi Ngepet radiates dark energy and feels a strong impulse to try and destroy the statue in order to break Golab's power. The statue can endure **10 Wounds** before it is destroyed and can only be damaged by explosive weapons or by the ornamented sword. For every **Wound** caused to the statue, an identical **Wound** appears on Captain Harkness' body. If the statue is destroyed, Harkness and the sailors will be freed of Golab's influence. The unnatural darkness over the island is dispelled and all the living dead (even PCs) drop lifelessly to the ground, finally dead. The corpses bear the injuries that they originally died from. Harkness is released from the Death Angel's dominion and falls to the ground weeping when he realises what he has done. The sailors who have been loyal to Harkness so far now mutiny against the captain.
- *Harkness dies:* If Harkness dies and the statue is not destroyed, Golab tries to find a new servant among the PCs.

He probably chooses Wendy, who already has a seed of sadism in her, unless she is now Netzach's chosen one. Golab reveals himself to Wendy in the form of Babi Ngepet and offers her Harkness' sacrificial dagger and Wendy's two bound, naked daughters Liza and Ashley. Should Wendy say 'yes,' she will be filled with Golab's power and must sacrifice her daughters, the other PCs, and the prisoners.

Any PC who becomes Golab's chosen one, gets *+2 to* ***Endure Injury***. Any ***purgatides*** present in the temple will obey the will of the PC, and the sailors that are bound to Golab now obey the PC as well.

The Prisoners

The cult has taken dozens of *survivors* from the plane crash to the temple. Over time, a number of prisoners are tortured to death on the altar. The remaining prisoners are deeply traumatised, exhausted, and in many cases injured. The prisoners largely consist of adults who made it out of the water after the crash, but some children have also been saved by their parents. Even if the PCs should succeed in opening the cages, the majority of the prisoners are too exhausted to be able to act rationally and in concert. Some just sit there apathetically, others only consider their own survival, and some have been influenced by Golab after having witnessed the rituals and are now willingly waiting to be sacrificed (or eager to switch sides and join the tormentors if possible in any way).

Possible Endings

- Netzach's chosen one destroys the statue and dispels Golab's influence over Babingepa.
- The PCs are captured and sacrificed by Harkness who becomes Golab's Incarnation.
- The PCs kill Harkness and flee the island (only the PCs who have not been turned into living dead can leave the island).
- The PCs kill Harkness and Wendy (or another PC) becomes Golab's new chosen one.
- The PCs revolt against Harkness, along with the sailors who are not loyal. Jaime (or any other of the sailors) helps them leave the island (only the PCs who are not living dead can leave the island).

Non-Player Characters

Ghosts

The ghosts on the island assume a physical form, but are not aware that they are dead. The ghosts of those people sacrificed by the cult are often confused and want to escape from the island or save people important to them, who they think are prisoners of the cult. If the characters convince the ghosts that they are dead, they show their semblances at the moment of their death and can share memories from their moment of death by grabbing the characters.

Home: Inferno.

Creature Type: Ghost.

In their physical form, the ghosts assume the semblances of themselves as they were before their death. They are often prisoners of the wild boar cult or the natives, with torn clothes and dirty, and emaciated bodies. Their gaze is desperate and their faces frightened.

See Through the Illusion: Should the characters see the ghosts for what they really are, they can behold the ghosts' wounds at the moment of death.

Abilities

- *Ghosts:* They cannot die. If one of them is incapacitated, it will re-emerge again later.

Combat [2], **Influence** [1], **Magic** [3].

Combat [Novice]

- Hold someone.
- Attack someone from behind or by surprise.

Influence [Weak]

- Ask someone for help.

Magic [Considerable]

- Disappear without a trace.
- Emerge out of nowhere.
- Share memories of their moment of death.

Attacks

The ghosts are sometimes armed with weapons. They can interact physically with their environment on the island.

Unarmed attack: Strike [1] [Distance: arm]; Grab [0] [Distance: arm]; Push [0–3] [Distance: arm, the injury varies depending on the height one falls from].

Knife: Stab [2] [Distance: arm].

Club: Strike [2] [Distance: arm]. Knock down [1] [Distance: arm, the victim must choose *knocked out* on a failed ***Endure Injury***].

Harm & Harm Moves

Wounds: ○○ ☠

- Knocked out.
- Dying.
- Dead. (The ghosts can be 'killed' temporarily, but will soon reemerge).

Leopards

Leopards constitute a threat against the characters whenever they are in the jungle. In contrast to normal predators, the leopards on the island are extremely bloodthirsty and once they have found prey, they follow it with a sinister persistence. Influenced by Golab, they do not eat their prey until they have tormented them over a long period of time. It is common for the predators to release their prey and play with them in a sort of cat-and-mouse game before they cripple them so severely that they're unable to get away.

Home: Elysium.

Creature Type: Animal, servant of Golab.

Abilities

- *Animal Intellect:* The leopard cannot be persuaded, read or in any other way influenced through social abilities.
- *Heightened Senses:* The leopard has excellent hearing, sees in the dark and can trace the player characters via their scent. All rolls to hide or flee from the leopard are at –2.

Combat [3], **Influence** [–], **Magic** [–].

Combat [Considerable]

- Leap attack.
- Strangle an opponent.
- Camouflage itself.

Attacks

The leopard attacks with claw rakes and bites. It sneaks up on its prey and often attacks it from ambush with a large leap, trying to knock over and suffocate the prey with a bite around its neck. If it is attacked, it snarls and tries to tear or bite its opponent.

Bite: Bite a limb [3] [Distance: arm]; Suffocation bite [2] [Distance: arm, the victim must choose *knocked out* on a failed ***Endure Injury***].

Claws: Tear [2] [Distance : arm]; Leap attack [2] [Distance: room, the victim is knocked over and pinned by the leopard], [if done from ambush against an unsuspecting prey*, the victim can only ***Avoid Harm***].

* *Anyone who hasn't either **Observed the Situation** and asked "What should I be on the lookout for?" or "What is hidden from me?," or has explicitly announced that their PC is staying watchful against something coming out of the jungle's dense undergrowth.*

Harm & Harm Moves

Wounds: ○○○○ ☠

- Just a scratch.
- The attack mutilates the leopard, causing it to roar in anguish.
- Escapes wounded into the underbrush and leaves bloody trails behind.
- Makes a desperate counter-attack.
- Dies.

Orangutans

The orangutans on the island are afraid of humans. Both the natives and Captain Harkness' sailors often torture and sacrifice orangutans to Baba Ngepet. The orangutans that have survived in the jungle are often emaciated with mangy fur and wild eyes. Larger males (90 kg) might become aggressive if the characters surprise them, and they are astonishingly strong if they attack.

Home: Elysium.

Creature Type: Animal.

Abilities

- *Primate:* The orangutan is a reasonably intelligent ape, capable of limited communication through body language alone. A character who can get on the ape's good side (e.g., by giving it food or saving its young) can read the ape and maybe even earn its trust and assistance.
- *Strong:* The orangutan can grab a character and throw her. It is not possible to grapple or pin an orangutan with bare hands.
- *Climbers:* The orangutan can scurry up the trunks and branches of jungle trees with great speed and agility.

Combat [2], **Influence** [–], **Magic** [–].

Combat [Novice]

- Crush someone.
- Throw someone.

Attacks

An enraged orangutan fights with its big fists and inhuman strength.

Fists: Pummel [2] [Distance: Arm]; Grab [1] [Distance: arm, grabbed until the victim manages to break loose]; Crush [3] [Requires that the victim is grabbed]; Throw [1] [Grabbed victims only, the victim is launched into the air].

Harm & Harm Moves

Wounds: ○○○ ☠

- Flees.
- Knocked out.
- Gives up.
- Dies.

Native Warriors

Home: Elysium.

Creature Type: Human being, servant of Golab.

The natives on the island are 150 cm tall, emaciated and dark-skinned, covered with scar marks and body paintings of white ash. They walk around naked, except for penis sheaths of wood and adornments such as bird feathers (in their hair) and bone fragments through noses, cheeks and ears) and file their teeth pointy. The warriors are armed with stone axes, clubs, stone knives, and bows and arrows.

Abilities

- *Primitive:* The natives speak only their own language and come from a culture totally alien to a Westerners' perspective, which means it is only possible to communicate with them with the aid of body language (***Influencing*** and ***Reading*** them is possible but hard, *–2 on every roll*).

Combat [3], **Influence** [–], **Magic** [–].

Combat [Considerable]

- Call for reinforcements.
- Shoot a poisonous arrow.
- Disappear into the jungle without a trace.

Attacks

The natives often lie in ambush and attack with bows and arrows first, then enter into a ferocious close combat with clubs, axes and stone knives. Should the natives be defeated and have their lives spared by an enemy, it is natural for them to regard themselves as the victor's slave.

Stone knife: Stab [2] [Distance: arm].

Stone axe: Chop [2] [Distance: arm].

Mace: Strike [2] [Distance: arm]; Knock down [1] [Distance: arm, the victim must choose *knocked out* on a failed ***Endure Injury***].

Bow: Ordinary arrow [2] [Distance: field]; Poisoned arrow [3] [Distance: field, the victim must choose *knocked out* on a failed ***Endure Injury***].

Harm & Harm Moves

Wounds (lone native): ○○○ ☠

- Injured.
- Knocked out.
- Dead.

Wounds (hunting group): ○○○○○○○○ ☠

- A wounded person.
- Several wounded.
- Some dead, many wounded, the group calls for reinforcements.
- Many dead, the group retreats.
- Those who are not dead give up and regard their adversaries as their new masters.
- All dead.

Wild Boar Priest

The wild boar priests are natives who have been chosen by Babi Ngepet to lead their tribe's worship of the god. The lost island civilisation's original rituals have been handed down from one generation of priests to another through oral traditions. In two of the natives' settlements, the wild boar priests are women; in one it is a man. The wild boar priests view all outsiders as good sacrifices to Babi Ngepet, but they respect strength. If the characters can show them that they are strong, the wild boar priests might consider helping them challenge Captain Harkness. For the wild boar priests, strength is above all the ability to endure pain. They have learned bad English after their communication with Harkness.

Home: Elysium.

Creature Type: Human, servant of Golab.

The wild boar priest is naked but for a mantle of wild boar pelt and her face is painted skull-white. Her head is shaven and her body is covered with scars and engravings. Sheathed around her body dangle long knives with curved blades of black metal and golden handles. The blades are covered with golden engravings in the old language of the island civilisation.

Abilities

- *Chosen by Babi Ngepet:* The wild boar priest is selected by Babi Ngepet through a painful ritual where only one in ten people survive. After the ritual, the priest becomes Babi Ngepet's mouthpiece in the tribe.
- *Tied to a Higher Power:* The wild boar priest is tied to the Death Angel Golab.
- *Masters of torture:* The ultimate knowledge of how one, via pain, humiliation, and suffering, can break down someone's will and draw out all shame and all truth. The victims take *–2 to their roll* to ***Keep it Together***.

Combat [3], **Influence** [3], **Magic** [3].

Combat [Considerable]

- Cause extreme pain.
- Ignore pain.
- Cut off a trophy from the enemy.

Influence [Significance]

- Command the natives to do something.
- Reveal something about Captain Harkness and his cult.
- Make an agreement with someone.

Magic [Novice]

- Beset a person and take control of their body.
- Invoke Babi Ngepet.
- Heal a person's **Wounds**.

Attacks

The wild boar priests fight without fear of being injured or killed. They know that Babi Ngepet awaits them after death.

Sacrificial dagger: Carve up [2] [Distance: Arm]; Painful damage [1] [Distance: arm, ***Keep it Together*** in order not to lose control]; Take a trophy [**Serious Wound**] [Distance: arm, the priest cuts off a finger, an ear or a piece of skin from the victim].

Death magic: Possess a person [–2 **Stability**] [Distance: room, ***Keep it Together*** to withstand being controlled for one action].

Harm & Harm Moves

Wounds: ○○○○ ☠

- Ignores the injury.
- Enjoys the pain, laughing insanely.
- Takes a bite of her own flesh, praising Babi Ngepet as she does so.
- Gets back up despite having suffered a terrible wound that ought to have killed the priest.
- Death.

The Challenger

The Challenger is a warrior bound in an age-old pact with the Archon, Netzach. She has the great honour of testing the beings who wish to serve as Netzach's chosen warriors. After every duel, the Challenger springs to life again regardless of how severe the injuries she has suffered are. Her wounds never heal, but remain as a reminder of the Challenger's defeat.

Home: Metropolis.

Creature Type: Human servant under the Archon Netzach.

A pale and delicate woman of Asian origin with a black cloth blindfold over her eyes and long, wavy black hair. She is barefoot and wrapped in a chainmail cloak. She carries a long, hooked sword in one hand and a long, single-edged dagger in the other, fighting gracefully, as though she were dancing.

Abilities

- *Chainmail cloak:* 1 armor against all attacks.
- *Fanatical:* Impossible to persuade or reason with.

Combat [5], **Influence** [–], **Magic** [–].

Combat [Exceptional]

- Move and attack in the same motion.
- Truncating chop [**Critical Wound**].
- Nail down an adversary.
- Topple an adversary.
- Disarm an adversary.

Attacks

The Challenger fights with lightning fast swirling movements where attacks may come from all directions. She exploits her adversary's own force to topple them and throw them off balance.

Unarmed: Throw [1] [Distance: arm, the victim flies off balance].

Katana (sword): Thrust [2] [Distance: arm]; Disarming attack [–] [Distance: arm, the victim loses their weapon]; Truncating chop [**Critical Wound**] [Distance: arm, cuts off one of the victim's limbs]; Leap and piercing thrust [3] [Distance: room, the victim is stuck on the sword until they break loose]; Thrust the sword through the body down into the ground [4] [Distance: arm, the victim must be lying down, ***Act Under Pressure*** to break loose].

Tanto (dagger): Pierce [2] [Distance: arm]; Nail down [1] [Distance: arm, ***Act Under Pressure*** to break loose, otherwise take *–2 on all rolls*].

Harm & Harm Moves

Wounds: ○○○○ ☠

- The hauberk is torn off and reveals a naked, sinewy female body covered with hundreds of wounds from all her duels.
- The blindfold falls and reveals a terrible wound right across the face that has destroyed her eyes.
- A leg is cut off but the challenger continues to fight while bleeding and crawling on the ground.
- The challenger bows before the player character and gives up.
- The challenger's head is chopped off and rolls away while the body is collapsing on the ground.

Survivors

People from the same plane that the characters travelled with. They probably found a lifeboat of their own and drifted ashore on another part of Babingepa. One of the plane's captains might still be among the survivors. In that case, that person considers himself entitled to make decisions. They are, just like the characters, badly equipped, traumatised, and have perhaps been injured in the crash or in events on the island. The survivors do not know the truth about the natives on the island or the wild boar cult upon the mountain, but they may have been attacked and may have seen strange, short natives or have happened upon and battled men from the wild boar cult. The survivors are desperate and if the characters do not wish to cooperate or share their resources, the survivors, when persuasion proves ineffective, might try to acquire them by force.

The survivors are armed with weapons in the form of wooden clubs or stones that they have found on the island.

The gangster: One of the survivors could be a gangster connected to Amber's murder victim, Blondie, in Bangkok. She could have followed Amber on the plane in order to find out more or revenge the death of her lover/brother/boss.

Suggestions for names: Rhonda Daniels, Emily Ellis, Kelly Phillips, Tina Ross, Juan Gomez, Terry Peters, Michael Lowe, Ruby Maldonado, Shen Yang, Kannika Boirirak, Sirikit Angchuan.

Home: Elysium.

Creature Type: Humans.

The survivors from the plane crash are tired, frightened, and ill-equipped for life on the island. Their clothes are tattered and squalid and several of them have minor injuries after the crash. Their time on the island has made the survivors suspicious and desperate. They can bring themselves to commit immoral acts to survive.

Abilities

- *Group:* part of a group that protect each other and cooperate to attain objectives.

Combat [2], **Influence** [2], **Magic** [–].

Combat [Novice]

- Call for reinforcements.
- Carry out coordinated attacks with others.

Influence [Novice]

- Steal something from someone.
- Offer something or do something with a catch.

Attacks

The survivors are scared and not used to fighting. They give up if they are injured and try to single out and gang up on people as a group. If they are outnumbered, they would rather flee than get into trouble.

Rock/Club: Strike [2] [Distance: arm]; Knock down [1] [The victim must choose *knocked out* on a failed ***Endure Injury***].

Harm & Harm Moves

Wounds: ○○ ☠ *Wounds:* ○○ ☠ *Wounds:* ○○ ☠
Wounds: ○○ ☠ *Wounds:* ○○ ☠ *Wounds:* ○○ ☠

- Knocked out/Retreating.
- Mortally injured.
- Dead.

The Sailors

The sailors of the cult stem from all over the world. They are all male and obey Harkness of their own volition or in fear of being sacrificed if they appear dissatisfied. As you do not age while on the island, the sailors are as old as they were when they first arrived in the 1990s. Their ages vary from 17 to 60. Of the eighty sailors who once served on the fishing vessel the *Sudur Havid* only fifty or so remain after several sailors were killed in battles with the natives, executed as punishment for mutiny, or died during the storm when their ship foundered in 1992.

Around twenty sailors who are regarded as completely loyal have permission from Harkness to arm themselves with guns when given the signal, while the other sailors are only allowed to carry melee weapons to prevent a mutiny.

Home: Elysium.

Creature Type: Humans, servants of the death angel Golab.

The time at Babingepa has given the sailors emaciated faces, sunburned, weathered skin, and dark gazes. The Death Angel's influence has made them more aggressive and ruthless, which is seen in their hard-set faces and scarred bodies. Their clothes are either torn sailor clothes or stolen from the wild boar cult's victims and occasionally bear blood stains, bullet holes, and improvised patching. Many of the men wear leather straps with teeth, dried eyeballs, and bone fragments as amulets.

Abilities

- *Islanders:* The sailors are used to orienting themselves on the island. Characters hunting for, or fleeing from, sailors on the island take *–1 on their rolls*.

Combat [3], **Influence** [2], **Magic** [–].

Combat [Considerable]

- Surround an opponent together with other sailors (*–1 to all rolls* for the opponent).
- Lie in ambush.
- Flee into the vegetation.

Influence [Novice]

- Know where something is on the island.
- Threaten someone, either directly or veiled.

Attacks

The sailors are armed with knives, axes, machetes, and automatic rifles. The sailors who are loyal to Harkness fight with fanatical frenzy while the other sailors are more cautious.

Knife: Pierce/cut [2] [Distance: arm].

Axe/Machete: Chop [2] [Distance: arm].

Kalashnikov AK-47: Controlled fire [3] [Distance: room/field]. Empty the mag [3] [Distance: room/field, a chance of up to 3 targets being hit, but empties the magazine].

Harm & Harm Moves

Wounds: ○○ ☠ *Wounds:* ○○ ☠ *Wounds:* ○○ ☠
Wounds: ○○ ☠ *Wounds:* ○○ ☠ *Wounds:* ○○ ☠

- Knocked out.
- Mortally injured.
- Dead.

The Sentinel

A sailor constantly stands guard at a lookout post on a cliff above the city of ruins. The sailors take turns in having a scoped hunting rifle with which they both can discover enemies and thwart threats. The sentinel has a horn that he can blow to warn the sailors in the camp.

Attacks

Hunting rifle: Single shot [3] [Distance: room/field/horizon].

Harm & Harm Moves

Wounds: ○○ ☠

- Knocked out.
- Mortally injured.
- Dead.

Jim – the Repository Guard

Jim is one of the sailors who is loyal to Harkness and has found meaning in the suffering within the rituals in honour of Babi Ngepet. Jim is a dark-skinned man dressed in a well-worn green cloth jacket with the American flag sewn onto its sleeve. If Jim is attacked, he will not hesitate to kill the aggressors with his automatic carbine. Its very audible gunfire will also alert the rest of the camp.

Attacks

Kalashnikov AK-47: Controlled fire [3] [Distance: room/field]. Empty the mag [3] [Distance: room/field, a chance of up to 3 targets being hit, but Jim empties his magazine].

Knife: Stab [2] [Distance: arm]; Twist the blade [**Serious Wound**] [Distance: arm, target has to be unbalanced, dazed, prone, or grappled].

Harm & Harm Moves

Wounds: ○○ ☠

- Knocked out.
- Mortally injured.
- Dead.

Dima – Harkness' Right-Hand Man

Dima is a short, skinny man with sharp features and a malicious gaze. His ginger hair is greasy and lank, and his ruddy, freckled, and scaly face is covered by a thin, patchy beard. Dima wears a dirty, blood-stained coxswain's jacket that once was white, orange tight shorts, and pointed crocodile boots. In a holster at his side, there is a sawed-off shotgun on a belt with a dozen cartridges.

Abilities

- *Cold-hearted:* Cannot be ***Influenced*** or charmed.
- *Sadist:* Dima heals **1 Wound** when he causes at least **1 Wound** to a defenseless victim.

Combat [4], **Influence** [3], **Magic** [–].

Combat [Powerful]

- Surprise attack [PCs can only ***Avoid Harm***].
- Belly cut [**Serious Wound**].
- Play dead.
- Call for reinforcements.

Influence [Considerable]

- Bark orders to underlings.
- Reveal or offer significant knowledge about Captain Harkness.
- Force someone into obedience, preferably by brute force.

Attacks

Dima has a sawed-off shotgun that is brutal at short range. He would rather flee than be seriously injured. There is a knife hidden in his boot that he can use to surprise adversaries. Dima does not balk at cheating adversaries and fighting as dishonestly as possible to win.

Sawed-off shotgun: Single shot [3] [Distance: room]; Both barrels [3], [Distance: room, hits up to 2 targets].

Knife: Belly cut [**Serious Wound**] [Distance: arm]; Repeated stabs [2] [Distance: Arm]; Surprise attack [2] [Distance: arm, surprised victim, PCs can only ***Avoid Harm***].

Harm & Harm Moves

Wounds: ○○○ ☠

- Flees.
- Pretends to be knocked out or dead, only to surprisingly attack with his knife.
- Mortally injured.
- Dead.

- Dima has the key to the repository in the camp.

Home: Elysium.

Creature Type: Human, servant of the Death Angel Golab.

Captain Rhys Harkness

Impulse: To appease Babi Ngepet.

Harkness is a tall (about 195 cm) and forceful man in his fifties with a weathered face, penetrating dark eyes, and a full, white beard. He usually wears a fisherman's hat and a poncho in worn-down leather, boots, jeans, and a large Bowie knife in his belt, but during the rituals, Harkness is naked but for a wild boar pelt and a mask made of a wild boar's head. Harkness' body is covered with symbols carved into his skin from the natives' ritual in honour of Babi Ngepet. In longer conversations with Harkness, the characters may notice minor details that might cause them concern:

- Harkness appears to drift into his thoughts, the fatherly smile momentarily becomes a cruel grin, until the facade is restored.
- Under Harkness' nails there is dried blood from the rituals.
- The character notices the scars from carved symbols through the collar or sleeves of Harkness' clothing.
- Harkness catches an insect between his fingers, looks at it while it wriggles and crushes it between his fingers with a satisfied smile.

See Through the Illusion: If a PC is able to look at his true form, Harkness' head is twisted like that of a contorted wild boar with a long snout and tusks.

Behaviour: Harkness is a charismatic man who despite Golab's influence can instill admiration and respect in his men. Behind the fatherly smile there is complete ruthlessness and an utter disregard for other living creatures. Harkness views it as an honour to be sacrificed to Babi Ngepet and sees suffering as the only true path to insight for humankind. From Harkness' perspective, he gives his victims a gift that they aren't worthy of receiving. Harkness has no qualms about betraying the characters, such as offering them to switch places with other captives. However, he has no intention of setting anyone free.

Objective: To conclude the sacrifice and become Golab's incarnation.

Home: Elysium.

Creature Type: Human, Death magician, vessel for Golab's incarnation.

Abilities

- *Filled with Babi Ngepet:* Harkness is suffused in the Death Angel's influence, and well on his way to become an Incarnate of the Lord of Screams
- *Armor:* Leather poncho [–1 to all **Harm**].
- *Slayer:* When a creature is slain by Harkness, he regains **1 Wound**.

Combat [5], **Influence** [4], **Magic** [4].

Combat [Exceptional]

- Disarm an opponent.
- Attack several creatures at once.
- Tear off an arm or a leg.
- Tear a person apart.
- Display superhuman strength and fortitude.

Influence [Powerful]

- Give orders to the sailors.
- Threaten someone, either directly or veiled.
- See through a lie.
- Call for reinforcements.

Magic [Powerful]

- Invoke purgatides.
- Manipulate the environment towards sadism and insanity.
- Assume the form of Babi Ngepet.
- Open a gateway to Golab's Citadel.

Attacks

Harkness fights with fearlessness and terrible force.

Unarmed: Grab someone [1] [Distance: arm, ***Act Under Pressure*** to break loose]; Tear to pieces [4] [Distance: arm, the victim must be grabbed]; Tear off a limb [**Critical Wound**] [Distance: arm, the victim must be grabbed].

Bowie knife: Cut open [3] [Distance: Arm]; Impale & nail down [2] [Distance: arm, ***Act Under Pressure*** to break loose or take 1 additional **Harm**]; Roundhouse slash [2] [Distance: arm, can affect several opponents at once]; Disarming slash [2] [Distance: arm, victim must ***Avoid Harm*** or lose a hand-held weapon or object].

S&W Model 29 .44 Magnum: Combat shooting [3] [Distance: room]; Overkill [4] [Distance: room, can affect several opponents at once, empties the revolver's Ammo].

Magic: Summon purgatides [–] [Distance: room]; Open gateway to Golab's Citadel [–] [Distance: room, unprepared witnesses must ***Keep it Together*** or panic].

Harm & Harm Moves

Wounds: ○○○○○○○○ ☠

- Ignores the injuries.
- Enjoys the pain.
- Survives grotesque damage that ought to have killed an ordinary man.
- Shows his true form (***Keep it Together***).
- Knocked out.
- Dead.

Purgatides

The purgatides are humans who have been connected to Golab's Citadel through Captain Harkness' sacrificial rituals. Only those humans who find enjoyment in torture become purgatides and are permitted to be tortured eternally in Golab's citadel. When Captain Harkness summons the purgatides, a portal is opened to a torture chamber through which purgatides are set loose and rush out towards Harkness' enemies.

Home: Inferno.

Creature Type: Slaves of the Death Angel Golab.

Men, women, and children whose skinned bodies reveal muscles, bones, sinews, and inner organs. The white, staring eyes glow with insanity and the mouths are contorted with mad grins. Most of them are unarmed and attack with their teeth and nails, but a small number of purgatides carry sharpened pieces of metal or improvised slashing weapons

Abilities

- *Tough Bodies:* Firearms and piercing weapons cause **–1 Harm**.
- *Insanity:* Impossible to communicate with.

Combat [3], **Influence** [–], **Magic** [–].

Combat [Considerable]

- Attack someone from behind or by surprise.
- Surround someone.
- Hold someone.

Attacks

The purgatides fight with no consideration for self-preservation. Rather, they seem to enjoy being subjected to pain and injuries.

Unarmed: Bite [1] [Distance: arm]; Strike and kick [1] [Distance: arm]; Knock over [–], [Distance: arm]; Kick someone lying down [2] [Distance: arm, victim must be *knocked over*].

Piercing and slashing weapons: Cut open [2], [Distance: arm]. Nail down [1], [Distance: arm, victim must ***Act Under Pressure*** to break loose].

Harm & Harm Moves

Wounds: ○○○○ ☠

- Ignores the injury.
- Stops and enjoys the pain in ecstasy.
- Laughs hysterically and tears or cuts open new injuries on itself.
- Appears defeated, only to arise again later.
- Dead.

Khumbu, the Jailer

Khumbu, the sailor who guards the prisoners in the temple, is an extremely bulky man from South Africa who is capable of lifting a normal man with one hand and beating him to a pulp with the other. Khumbu often drags female prisoners to the altar to abuse them in between sacrificial rituals.

- Khumbu has the keys to the padlocks of the prisoners' cages.

Home: Elysium.

Creature Type: Human being, servant of the Death Angel Golab.

An extremely bulky man with skin so dark it's almost black. As the giant charges Babi Ngepet's enemies, his brown eyes glow in defiance of death and his teeth are laid bare in a twisted grimace. His bare chest shows scars from carved engravings. Khumbu is dressed in blue shorts and black rubber sandals.

Abilities

- *Bulky:* Anyone fighting Khumbu in close combat takes *–1 to their rolls*.

Combat [4], **Influence** [–], **Magic** [–].

Combat [Forceful]

- Bear hug [crushes a victim in his arms].
- Tear a weapon out of someone's hands.
- Bull rush into an opponent.
- Toss an opponent away.

Attacks

Khumbu is very strong and capable of killing people with his bare hands.

Unarmed: Punch [2] [Distance: Arm]; Grab [–] [Distance: arm, grabbed until the victim breaks loose: must take *–2 on the roll* to break loose]; Beat to a pulp [3] [Victim must be grabbed]; Tear weapon out of hands [–] [Distance: arm, victim loses their weapon and if the weapon is edged Khumbu takes **1 Wound**]; Bull rush [1] [Distance: room, injures everyone that stands in Khumbu's way]; Toss away [2] [Distance: arm, the victim flies several meters through the air before connecting with a cave wall or jagged stalagmite].

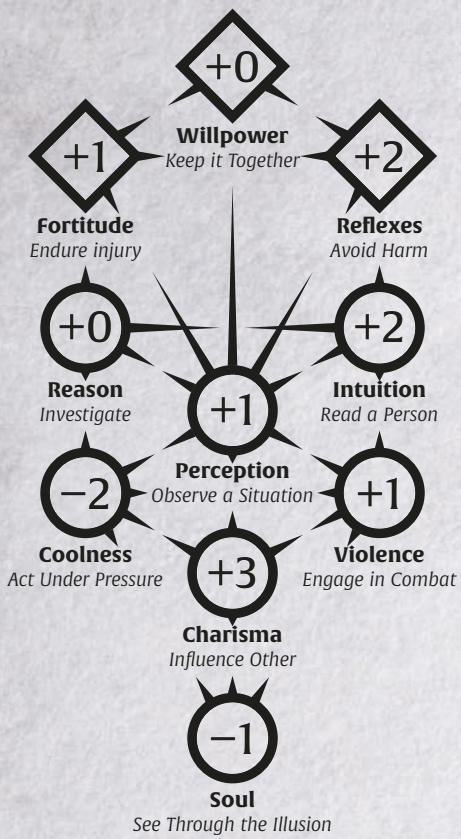
Harm & Harm Moves

Wounds: ○○○○ ☠

- Laughs and continues unimpeded.
- Large, bleeding wound.
- Disfigured face, momentarily dazed.
- Rushes bloody and roaring towards the assailant.
- Dies.

Amber Wilson

• Attributes



• Wounds

Serious Wounds (−1 *ongoing*) Stabilized

- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐

Critical Wound (−1 *ongoing*) Stabilized

- ☐

• Stability

- ☐ *Composed*

☐ *Uneasy*	**Moderate stress:**
☐ *Unfocused*	−1 to Disadvantage rolls
☐ *Shaken*	**Serious stress:**
☐ *Distressed*	−1 ***Keep it Together***
☐ *Neurotic*	−2 to Disadvantage rolls
☐ *Anxious*	**Critical stress:**
☐ *Irrational*	−2 ***Keep it Together***
☐ *Unhinged*	−3 to Disadvantage rolls
	+1 ***See Through the Illusion***
☐ *Broken*	The GM makes a Move

• Appearance

Amber is tall and fit with long, blond hair, a perfect tan, and intensely green eyes. She dresses in designer clothes that show a lot of skin, a black handbag, high-heeled shoes, and minimalist underwear

• Right now

You are sitting on the aircraft from Bangkok to New York with a painful hangover after partying for the last two weeks. The mini vodka bottle has not eased your headache and your best friend, Jennifer, is sleeping on your shoulder in the seat next to you. You know that it would be best to just sleep your way through the flight, but returning to Bangkok made you think of Blondie. What if someone knows what you have done?

• Who you are

You are a 19-year-old party girl from New York who has been to Thailand with your best friend, Jennifer, to party and screw around for two weeks. In the autumn, you are starting college, but you really want to skip school and go all in for your fashion blog *Fashion Amber*, which has a few thousand followers. You sort of have a boyfriend, Eric, but you are taking a break right now, so the guys you slept with in Thailand don't count. It is important to you that people perceive you as good-looking and urbane.

• Dark Secret

Just over a week ago, you killed a Thai man to defend Jennifer. You were at the popular club Ku De Ta in Bangkok and were invited to the VIP room by a Thai gangster who called himself Blondie. As customary, you were offered drinks and drugs, but this evening Jennifer got totally plastered. When you snuggled with some European celebrity for a while, Jennifer disappeared. You started to look for her and went through the personnel entrance to a corridor where you could hear Jennifer calling for help. In an office, Blondie had tied Jennifer's hands behind her back, raping her while a camera was filming her. The music from the club was loud and the gangster did not hear when you picked up a statue of Buddha from the floor and snuck up behind him. Blondie fell down after the first hit, but you continued to pound him until his skull cracked open. You and Jennifer took the bus to Pattaya later in the morning and you did not return to Bangkok until today's flight.

• Relations

Jennifer – best friend (+2)

• Things in your possession

Handbag with a passport, an extra pair of thongs, condoms, lipstick, make-up, refreshing tissue, Iphone 4, $180 in crumpled bills.

• Advantage

Seducer
You can consciously make people fall in love with you. *Whenever you have an intimate moment with someone*, **Roll +Charisma**:

(15+) Choose up to three options, useable any time in the story.

(10–14) Choose up to two options, useable any time in the story.

(–9) Choose one option, useable any time in the story, but you also develop feelings for the person. Increase your **Relation** to them by +1.

Options:

- Give you something you want.
- Reveal a secret.
- Fight to protect you.

NPCs who fall in love with you cannot oppose you, as long as you haven't expended all your options.

Against PCs, you may only choose the following options:

- Make them feel bad for opposing you (they must ***Keep it Together***)
- They feel happy in your presence, and gain **Stability (+2)**.

Simon Wilkes

• Attributes

• Wounds

Serious Wounds (−1 *ongoing*) Stabilized

- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐

Critical Wound (−1 *ongoing*) Stabilized

- ☐

• Stability

- ☐ *Composed*

Moderate stress:
−1 to Disadvantage rolls

- ☐ *Uneasy*
- ☐ *Unfocused*

Serious stress:
−1 ***Keep it Together***
−2 to Disadvantage rolls

- ☐ *Shaken*
- ☐ *Distressed*
- ☐ *Neurotic*

Critical stress:
−2 ***Keep it Together***
−3 to Disadvantage rolls
+1 ***See Through the Illusion***

- ☐ *Anxious*
- ☐ *Irrational*
- ☐ *Unhinged*

- ☐ *Broken* — The GM makes a Move

• Appearance

Simon is around 175 cm tall and slim with dark eyes, brown buzz cut hair, and a few days' stubble on his face. He looks pleasant and has an intelligent gaze. Simon wears a bandana, a frayed t-shirt, knee-long shorts, and sandals.

• Right now

You are sitting on the flight from Bangkok on your way to Boston, full of anxiety in anticipation of meeting your fiancee. You don't know how to explain that you were unfaithful or whether you should even mention the trip to the island. To be able to relax, you have drunk a few mini bottles of liquor and now slightly tipsy, you have tried to watch a movie on your tablet.

• Who you are

You are a 27-year-old technology engineer who graduated from MIT (Boston) in early summer. You have already got a well-paying job at a tech company in the autumn, but went to the Indochinese peninsula to do some backpacking over the summer. You got engaged to your girlfriend, Janet Baker, right before you left, and now after two months of backpacking you are finally on your way home. You have many friends and are often described as a funny, slightly crazy guy who is always keen for new experiences.

• Dark Secret

A week ago you met Kerry, a 22-year-old backbacker from New York who was in Bangkok with her three girlfriends. You gelled nicely and after a drinks competition you ended up in bed together. The next day you had a really bad conscience, but Kerry still managed to persuade you to go along with her, her friends and some European guys on a boat to one of the islands off the coast. You were dropped off at a veritable paradise island and were to be fetched a few days later. An Englishman, Andy, offered you pills that he had bought from a dealer in Bangkok. You took all of them at the camp fire and the rest is a blur. When you woke up on the beach a few days later you were covered with blood and all the others were gone. When the Thai sailors who were to pick you up found you, you had managed to wash off all the blood and change your clothes. They spent some time looking for the others on the beach, but then gave up and drove you back to Bangkok on your own.

• Relations

Kerry – vanished lover (+1)

Andy – an Englishman who was on the island (+0)

• Things in your possession

Sony Xperia Z2 (waterproof smartphone). Pilot glasses. Unopened packet of Thai cigarettes and a lighter. Wallet with a credit card, passport, etc. and 1,800 bath (ca $50) in cash.

• Advantage

Inventor

Whenever you are about to create or repair something, explain what you are about to do. The GM will tell you what you need to succeed, and once you have collected these materials, you may **roll +Reason**:

(15+) The construction is successful and you may pick two options from below.

(10–14) The construction has minor flaws. You may choose one option from below.

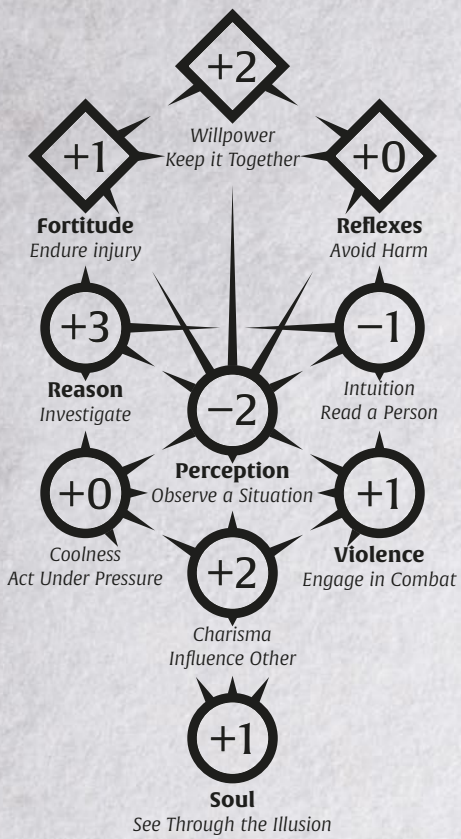
(–9) You complete the construction or repair, but it has significant flaws, some of which are hidden. The GM makes a Move.

Options:

- *Durable:* The construction can be used multiple times and doesn't break easily.
- *Effective:* The construction confers *+1 on rolls* where it is used for its intended purpose.
- *Lethal:* The construction causes **+1 Harm**.
- *Protective:* The construction confers **+1 armor**.

Wendy Lydon

• Attributes



• Wounds

Serious Wounds (−1 *ongoing*)	Stabilized
	☐
	☐
	☐
	☐

Critical Wound (−1 *ongoing*)	Stabilized
	☐

• Stability

☐	*Composed*	
☐	*Uneasy*	**Moderate stress:**
☐	*Unfocused*	−1 to Disadvantage rolls
☐	*Shaken*	**Serious stress:**
☐	*Distressed*	−1 ***Keep it Together***
☐	*Neurotic*	−2 to Disadvantage rolls
☐	*Anxious*	**Critical stress:**
☐	*Irrational*	−2 ***Keep it Together***
☐	*Unhinged*	−3 to Disadvantage rolls
		+1 ***See Through the Illusion***
☐	*Broken*	The GM makes a Move

• Appearance

Wendy is a late middle-aged, stocky woman of medium height. Her fringed, bleached blonde hair runs down to her neck, her eyes are blue and friendly and her face every so often lighting up with a large, confidence-inspiring smile. She is dressed in a suit and white shirt.

• Right now

You are sitting in the business class section in a plane from Bangkok to New York on your way home from a business trip for the company. Next to you is your colleague, Bryan, a business assistant at Yangzin, laughing boisterously at a screwball comedy. Flight attendants are at your beck and call and while you're smiling towards them you are fuming inside. You wonder whether they see you for the monster you really are?

• Who you are

You are 46 years old and work as a business manager at the pharmaceutical company, Yangzin. You are married to Aron Lydon, who is a surgeon at New York Memorial hospital. You have an expensive apartment in Manhattan and two teenage daughters, Liza and Ashley. People view you as the perfect couple. On the inside, your anger is rumbling. You hate your meaningless job, your marriage largely consists of quarrels, and your daughters seem to despise you. In spite of this, you always have a winning smile on your lips and are the perfect salesperson at the company. It feels as though you are constantly on the verge of exploding and you are always fantasising about tearing apart and battering the people around you.

• Dark Secret

You have long fantasised about harming your daughters, but have naturally managed to control yourself. When you were in Bangkok one night, a young Thai girl came up to you and asked if you wanted company. You encouraged her and asked if she knew some place you could go to be alone. She led you to a filthy hotel where there wasn't even someone watching the reception desk. Once you were up in her room you couldn't control yourself anymore. You stabbed her again and again with the stiletto you'd bought on a whim earlier that night, until she moaned and screamed for mercy. But you continued until she collapsed on the floor bleeding. That night you slept well for the first time in a very long time. But now the anxiety tears inside you. What have you actually become?

• Relations

Bryan – colleague (+0)

• Things in your possession

A handbag with necessities such as make-up, mouth spray, mirror, brush, a jar of sleeping pills, and an Iphone 4S. Wallet with a credit card, driving license, and $89 in cash.

• Advantage

Rage

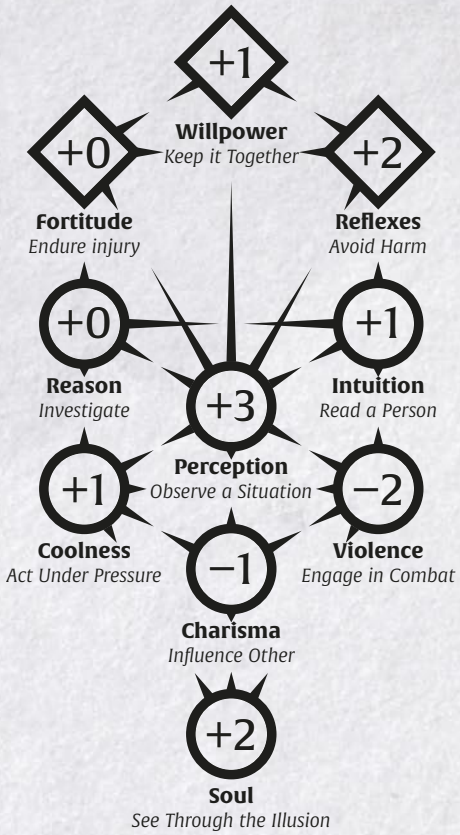
When in combat, you may awaken your inner rage. Lose **Stability (−1)** and mark 1 Rage. Every time you get a **Wound** and every time you defeat a foe, increase Rage **(+1)**. Rage lasts until the end of the combat.

During combat, you may spend 1 Rage to choose 1 Edge:

- *Brutal assault:* take **+1 Harm** to your attack.
- *Ignore the pain:* take +2 to ***Endure Injury***.
- *Lost in frenzy:* Shake off and ignore psychological or supernatural influence.

Adam Gaulin

• Attributes



• Wounds

Serious Wounds (−1 *ongoing*)	Stabilized
	☐
	☐
	☐
	☐

Critical Wound (−1 *ongoing*)	Stabilized
	☐

• Stability

☐	*Composed*	
☐	*Uneasy*	**Moderate stress:**
☐	*Unfocused*	−1 to Disadvantage rolls
☐	*Shaken*	**Serious stress:**
☐	*Distressed*	−1 ***Keep it Together***
☐	*Neurotic*	−2 to Disadvantage rolls
☐	*Anxious*	**Critical stress:**
☐	*Irrational*	−2 ***Keep it Together***
☐	*Unhinged*	−3 to Disadvantage rolls
		+1 ***See Through the Illusion***
☐	*Broken*	The GM makes a Move

• Appearance

Adam is a 12-year-old boy with brown buzz cut hair and blue eyes. He is around 155 cm tall and rather fit for his age. Adam wears a black t-shirt, beige shorts, and sneakers.

• Right now

You are sitting in the business class section on the plane from Bangkok to New York playing Minecraft on your iPad. All around you there are grown-ups in their costumes and no one seems to care about you. Over the summer you have been living with your father Aron who is working as a manager at the Yangzin company's Bangkok office. Now you are on your way home to your mother, Erin, and her new husband, Sander, to start the autumn term.

• Who you are

You are 12 years old and come from New Jersey. Your mother and father divorced when you were 7 years old and your father then moved to Bangkok. You love to play baseball and computer games and you get everything you point at from your parents. Your mother works as a physician and her new husband is a real estate owner. You live in one of New Jersey's richest areas and go to a private school. In spite of all that you have, you are quite unhappy deep inside. Secretly, you wish that your parents would get back together again and that you father could live in New Jersey. You are used to getting what you want and don't care very much about what grown-ups say.

• Dark Secret

The summer in Bangkok has been quite boring. Your father worked almost constantly and you spent time with a Thai nanny, May, who dared not let you out of her sight. Over the last month you got to know Gan, a Thai boy, who lives beneath your dad's house. It was yours and Gan's secret that he lives there and you snuck away from May and played in the cellar of the house. Gan was a rather odd boy, pale and shabby, but he made you laugh and liked teasing May. One night during your last week in Bangkok, May asked why you had taken her things. When you told her about Gan she called him "Phi Tai Hong" and made you promise not to see him again. The next morning May had disappeared and a new nanny came to the house.

• Relations

Gan – a friend from dad's cellar (+1)

May – nanny in Bangkok (+0)

• Things in your possession

A packet of chewing gum with various fruit flavours. Waterproof sports' watch with a glowing digital clock. Wallet with a passport and $40 that your father gave you. Sony Xperia Z3 (waterproof smartphone).

• Advantage

Enhanced Awareness

When you focus your senses at a location where the Illusion is weak, **roll +Soul**. On a success, you have visions about the place and may be able to speak to entities tied to it:

(15+) You can discern clear details regarding the location.

(10–14) You get some basic impressions regarding the location.

(–9) The Illusion tears. The veil is lifted temporarily, revealing an alternate dimension – the GM determines which one. The PC could be sucked into it or something may cross over into our reality. The GM makes a Move.

Adam

The summer in Bangkok has been quite boring. Your father worked almost constantly and you spent time with a Thai nanny, May, who dared not let you out of her sight. Over the last month you got to know Gan, a Thai boy, who lives beneath your dad's house. It was yours and Gan's secret that he lives there and you snuck away from May and played in the cellar of the house. Gan was a rather odd boy, pale and shabby, but he made you laugh and liked teasing May. One night during your last week in Bangkok, May asked why you had taken her things. When you told her about Gan she called him "Phi Tai Hong" and made you promise not to see him again. The next morning May had disappeared and a new nanny came to the house.

• Haunted

You are haunted by supernatural forces. With the GM's assistance, determine the nature of what you believe is haunting you. *In the first session and whenever you are distracted or weakened,* **roll +0** to see if the entity gains power over you:

(15+) The entity leaves you alone.

(10–14) The GM takes 1 Hold.

(–9) The GM takes 3 Hold.

The GM can spend Hold to make a Move for the entity. For example, it requests a service from you and threatens retribution if you refuse, the entity possesses your body for the night, or the entity reveals a clue of what it is and what it wants from you.

Amber

Just over a week ago, you killed a Thai man to defend Jennifer. You were at the popular club Ku De Ta in Bangkok and were invited to the VIP room by a Thai gangster who called himself Blondie. As customary, you were offered drinks and drugs, but this evening Jennifer got totally plastered. When you snuggled with some European celebrity for a while, Jennifer disappeared. You started to look for her and went through the personnel entrance to a corridor where you could hear Jennifer calling for help. In an office, Blondie had tied Jennifer's hands behind her back, raping her while a camera was filming her. The music from the club was loud and the gangster did not hear when you picked up a statue of Buddha from the floor and snuck up behind him. Blondie fell down after the first hit, but you continued to pound him until his skull was cracked open. You and Jennifer took the bus to Pattaya later in the morning and you did not return to Bangkok until today's flight.

• Nightmares

You suffer from recurring nightmares, probably connected to your Dark Secrets. *During any scene when you sleep,* **roll +0**:

(15+) You sleep in peace.

(10–14) The nightmares torment you. The GM may make a Move for your nightmares. For example, you are unable to sleep at all during the night (*–1 ongoing* until you sleep), something follows you back into reality, the nightmares provide you insight into the Truth, or you are forced to process some trauma (***Keep it Together***) when you wake up.

(–9) The nightmares take over completely. You are trapped in the dream until you find a way to wake up, and everything that happens there also directly affects your sleeping body.

Simon

A week ago you met Kerry, a 22-year-old backbacker from New York who was in Bangkok with her three girlfriends. You gelled nicely and after a drinks competition you ended up in bed together. The next day you had a really bad conscience, but Kerry still managed to persuade you to go along with her, her friends and some European guys on a boat to one of the islands off the coast. You were dropped off at a veritable paradise island and were to be fetched a few days later. An Englishman, Andy, offered you pills that he had bought from a dealer in Bangkok. You took all of them at the camp fire and the rest is a blur. When you woke up on the beach a few days later you were covered with blood and all the others were gone. When the Thai sailors who were to pick you up found you, you had managed to wash off all the blood and change your clothes. They spent some time looking for the others on the beach, but then gave up and drove you back to Bangkok on your own.

• Repressed Memories

You have repressed a particularly unpleasant event from your past, but the memory of it sometimes rises to the surface. It could be a crime or some horrible thing you have done, been subjected to, or witnessed. The GM decides the nature of your repressed memory, usually based on your Dark Secrets. *In situations associated with your repressed memories,* **roll +0** to determine if the memories resurface:

(15+) You continue to suppress the memories.

(10–14) The memories partly resurface, taking the form of flashbacks and/or hallucinations. You must ***Keep it Together***.

(–9) You are overwhelmed by your repressed memories, completely losing yourself to them. The GM makes a hard Move and you reduce **Stability (–2)**.

Wendy

You have long fantasised about harming your daughters, but have naturally managed to control yourself. When you were in Bangkok one night, a young Thai girl came up to you and asked if you wanted company. You encouraged her and asked if she knew some place you could go to be alone. She led you to a filthy hotel where there wasn't even someone watching the reception desk. Once you were up in her room you couldn't control yourself anymore. You stabbed her again and again with the stiletto you'd bought on a whim earlier that night, until she moaned and screamed for mercy. But you continued until she collapsed on the floor bleeding. That night you slept well for the first time in a very long period. But now the anxiety tears inside you. What have you actually become?

• Schizophrenia

You struggle with recurring psychotic episodes and terrifying hallucinations. *In the first game session and whenever you go through difficult experiences,* **roll +0**:

(15+) You maintain control of your insanity.

(10–14) The GM takes 1 Hold.

(–9) Schizophrenia overtakes you. The GM takes 3 Hold.

The GM may spend Hold to make a Move for your schizophrenia. For example, one of your hallucinations takes on physical form, you view your current surroundings as being hostile to you, you're afflicted by terrifying hallucinations, you're subjected to dark visions (true or false), or someone in your vicinity turns out to not actually be real.

Equipment Cards

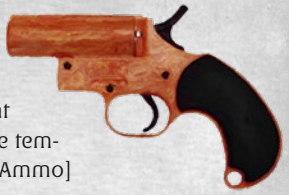
These cards can be used to keep count of the PCs equipment in *Babingepa – The Island of the Dead.*

Flare Gun with Four Cartridges

Distance: Room/Field.

Attacks

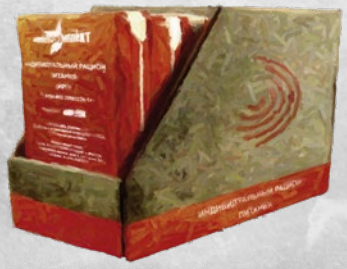
- Direct hit [2] [–1 Ammo]
- Shock [0] [Targets at the impact point are temporarily dazed] [–1 Ammo]



Ammo: ○

Food Rations

Uses: ○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○



Torch

Distance: Arm.

Attacks

- Burn [2] [Risk of fire going out]

First Aid Kit

Uses: ○○

Flashlight

Water Bottles

Uses: ○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○

Knife

Distance: arm

Attacks:

- Cut, slice, and stab [2]
- Edge at the throat [0] [you are in control of the target until they break free]

Rope

A ten-meter light but robust rope.

Automatic Pistol

Distance: arm/room

Attacks:

- Combat shooting [2] [–1 Ammo]
- Overkill [3] [–2 Ammo]
- Multiple targets [2] [hit up to one additional target] [–3 Ammo]

Ammo: ○○○○

Hunting Rifle

Distance: room/field/horizon

Attacks:

- Aim & fire [3] [–1 Ammo]

Ammo: ○○○

Hiking Backpack

A large backpack for long walks.

Hunting Rifle

Distance: room/field/horizon

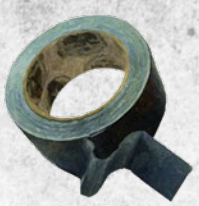
Attacks:

- Aim & fire [3] [–1 Ammo]

Ammo: ○○○

Duct Tape

A roll of duct tape. Can be used to repair or build things.



Machete

Distance: arm

Attacks:

- Hack, slash, and chop [2]
- Momentum [1] [may hit one additional target]

.38 Revolver and a Dozen Cartridges

Distance: arm/room

Attacks:

- Combat shooting [2] [−1 Ammo]
- Overkill [3] [−2 Ammo]
- Multiple targets [2] [hit up to one additional target] [−3 Ammo]

Ammo: ○○○○

Club

Distance: arm

Attacks:

- Pummel, maul, and crush [2]
- Knock down [1] [the target falls to the ground]
- Knock out [1] [target is knocked out; PCs must successfully ***Endure Injury*** to avoid getting *knocked out*]

Vacuum-Packed Coffee

Still possible to use for brewing coffee. A cup of coffee gives +1 **Stability** each day (max +1/day).

Uses: □□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□

First Aid Bag

Uses: ○○○○

Hammock with Insect Net

Gives **+1 Stability** per 8 hours of sleep.

Compass

Axe

Distance: arm

Attacks:

- Hack, slash, and chop [2]
- Momentum [1] [may hit one additional target]

Coffee Pot

Bow and Arrow

Distance: Room/Field.

Attacks

- Arrow shot [2], [–1 Arrow].

Arrows: ○○○○○○○○○○

The Ornate Sword

Distance: Arm.

Attacks

- Close combat [3]
- Momentum [2] [May hit one additional target]

Stone Axe

Distance: arm

Attacks:

- Hack, slash, and chop [2]
- Momentum [1] [may hit one additional target]

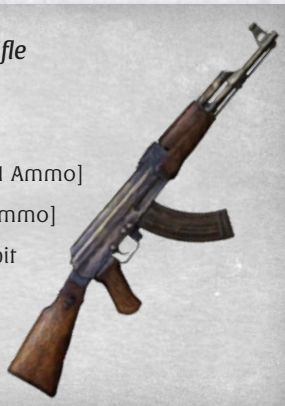
AK-47 Assault Rifle

Distance: room/field

Attacks:

- Controlled fire [3] [–1 Ammo]
- Mow down [4] [–2 Ammo]
- Empty the mag [3] [hit up to two additional targets] [–4 Ammo]

Ammo: ○○○○



Stone Knife

Distance: arm

Attacks:

- Cut, slice, and stab [2]
- Edge at the throat [0] [you are in control of the target until they break free]

Sawed-Off Shotgun

Distance: Room.

Attacks

- Single shot [3] [–1 Ammo]
- Double shot [3] [Small close group all hit at once] [–2 Ammo]

Ammo: ○○

Grenade

Distance: room/field

Attacks:

- Detonation [4] [hits several targets] [–1 Ammo]

Ammo: ○

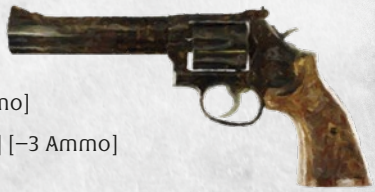
.44 Revolver

Distance: arm/room

Attacks:

- Combat shooting [3] [–1 Ammo]
- Overkill [4] [–3 Ammo]

Ammo: ○○○



A Half-Finished Map of the Island

THE LARAINE ESTATE

In this scenario you will be playing a group of people searching for a lost urban explorer. You know she went into the Laraine Estate, but never came out. But someone found some of her footage and uploaded it. In it, she is screaming and crying about the beautiful fire.

Includes five pre-generated characters, non-player characters, and a map.

This scenario has the player characters (PCs) investigating the disappearance of a small group during an urban exploration jaunt to the Laraine Estate. The estate has been the site of many horrific events over the years, and urban legend has it to be haunted. In truth, a Mad Angel has recently taken up residence in the basement of the Laraine Estate, and has plans for anyone stumbling into its domain.

Scenario Theme

This scenario is all about types of love. Physical love, familial love, romantic love, spiritual love – and all the shades in between as well as the dark spaces that people tell themselves they're in a form of love. The Angel believes it is doing something wonderful for the missing people by allowing them to fully express their love. The Angel's devotees feel the burning fire within, and it is the closest thing to being touched by god the devotees have known. It believes itself to be the Archon of Love, and seeks to bring that love to as many people as possible.

Tips for the Gamemaster

One of the best pieces of advice I can give is simply, if you want to scare your players, use something that scares you.

Horror is best portrayed in a quiet environment, with dim lights and maybe some mood music. Take your time in describing a scene, and make sure to touch on at least two senses in order to immerse your players in the horrific things around their characters. You can describe what a damp underground tunnel looks like, but if you tell your players how the sounds echo off the round walls and bounce back amplified, or how the slime coats their fingers when they catch themselves on a wall, or how the smell of wet earth, incense, and sweat combine into a miasma that lingers on their clothes and hair, then you've made it real for them.

The majority of the scenario takes place in and under the Laraine estate, so make sure to flesh out the individual rooms. Linger on the clues of the estate's history, such as old diaries, paintings, or graffiti marked wallpaper peeling back to reveal childish scribblings on the plaster underneath. Buildings that have been abandoned for a long time tend to have inhabitants that move furniture and objects around to suit them, regardless of the room's intended purpose. This means that rooms will have odd contents, such as a dresser in the kitchen, or a bed frame placed to block the doors into a room so that the only entrance is through an exterior window. Squatters will also leave some of their own belongings in the places they stay, but be careful when placing random items in a room. Players tend to believe every object is vital to the plot, and they may focus on a random item that you intended to be just window-dressing. If this happens, see if you can incorporate the object into the plot by tying it to one of the missing people.

Once your players find the entrance to the caverns, you may be tempted to speed up the pace, but don't. Slowly describe the sounds of the Angel's Followers performing their acts of love. The air should be full of moans, screams, grunts, prayers, and the slap of bare skin against bare skin. The incense is so thick that it lingers even on the tongue, and so too the taste of copper, mold, and wet earth. The shadows flicker in the candlelight, and the darkness seems to writhe if stared at it for too long. There is an energy in the air they can feel, and the Angel itself is truly frightening and wondrous, overwhelming to even look at.

Other than that, all I can advise is to have fun!

The Scenario

The Laraine family's estate sprawls among towering weeping willows, its crumbling foundations slowly sinking into the swampy ground in the backwaters of a southern state. Mist hovers even on the sunniest of days, as if the grounds themselves try to avoid notice. The Laraine family descended from the founders of the nearby city, Colchester. In 1858, Viliulfo Laraine built a grand mansion for his new bride, Aldonza, on the outskirts of the city, funded by his successful brewing company.

Their history quickly devolved into sorrow, and the house was the site of many tragedies. Aldonza died giving birth to their third child, and Viliulfo committed suicide shortly thereafter, claiming he did not want to live in a world without his love, leaving their children to be raised by the staff. Murder, mental illness, and suicide played out each generation, with the scandals hushed up through the judicial application of money, until the family home was inevitably auctioned off. Few buyers wanted a property steeped in death and madness, and the Laraine property sat vacant until recently.

Rumors of caves under the house have persisted among the younger population of the town for years, but the recent popularity of urban exploration had increased vandalism and the presence of homeless squatters on the Laraine home. A Youtube video surfaced of a fairly well known cataphile going by the handle of "Popper Polly" crying and screaming that she was lost somewhere underneath the Laraine house, and there was a "beautiful fire." It was widely debunked as a hoax put on by Popper Polly in order to assume a new identity by "killing" off the old, and sturdier fences had to be put in place as more urban explorers flocked to the site. No one seemed to notice how few explorers returned from their trip to the Laraine Estate.

Threat Escalation

The Mad Angel's Ritual

[1] *Gather their Prime Follower*, an individual able to channel the Angel's energy.

[2] *Set up ritual space* to prepare for the event.

[3] *Draw in other followers* to provide energy for the ritual.

[4] *Perform ritual*, which will destroy followers in an orgy of sex and fire while imbuing the Prime with the pure fire of love.

[5] *Unleash the Prime Follower* into the area, following in their wake to view the greatness they have created.

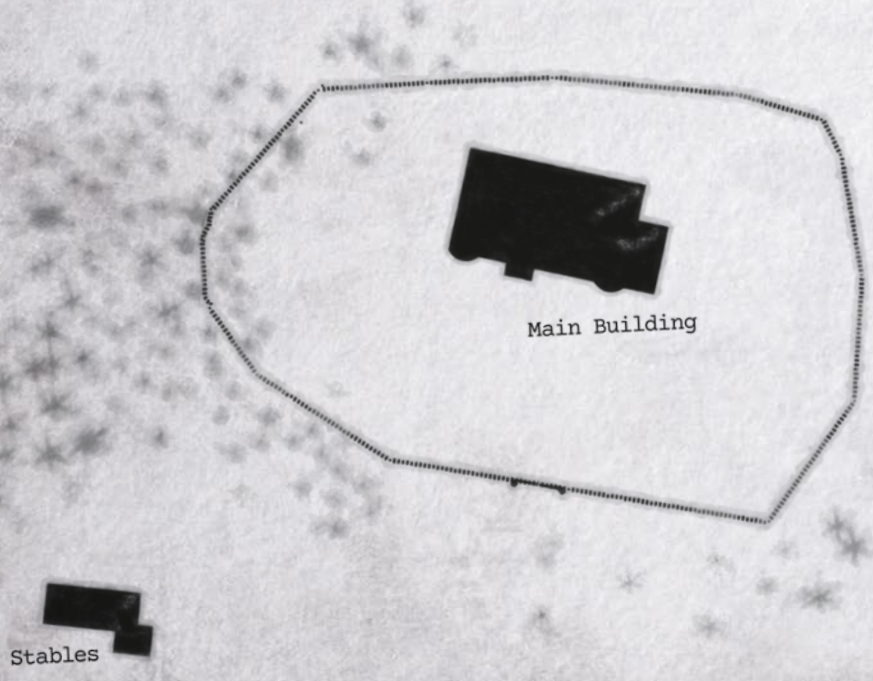
Goal: Spread the fire of pure love and become the true Archon of Love once more.

Central Scenes

Act 1: The Estate is Located, and the Exploration Begins

Scene 1: The Stables

The scenario starts with the PCs approaching the Laraine Estate. They will first encounter the outbuilding that Maram has been squatting in. The former stable is trashed from years of squatters using it as a temporary home, but there are no occupants currently. It is a wooden building showing signs of minor fires and the ravages of time, but is still structurally sound enough to attract the itinerant and those looking for a private spot for illegal activities. There is a room that was once an office in front, and some of the stalls are still intact. Some of the decorative stained glass survived the years, and bats roost among the rafters. Bits of leather and some equipment such as combs and old horseshoes still clutter the corners, and a perpetual musk lingers, courtesy of its original inhabitants.



The PCs may discover Maram Jahani's belongings in one of the stalls, including her mother's wedding ring – the only keepsake Maram had refrained from pawning to fuel her drug habit, which Jona would recognize. There are chalk diagrams on the wall of Maram's spot that Paz and Cassidy would recognize as the scribbled notes a practitioner would use as part of a summoning ritual to open gates to Metropolis.

Scene 2: The House

After the PCs finish their search of the former stable, they will find the overgrown road leading to the main house. There is a tall wrought iron fence surrounding the whole estate, but it is easily surpassed, and there are plenty of places where other people have broken in before them. There is a large gate blocking the road, but it swings open when the wind blows, creaking loudly. It has a large crest in the middle of the gates that features a fancy 'L,' as well as hops, barley, and other brewing-related symbols. A bit of the gilding can still be seen on the old iron. The points of the fence also feature stylized hops, although many are broken off. Native grasses and plants such as skunk cabbages, bristly sedge, and cattails obscure the base of the fence, and it's overrun at times by wild roses and brambles.

The house itself is visible between weeping willows from all angles of approach. It is a three story Victorian mansion, with a widow's walk on the top floor surrounded by more wrought iron. The outside has black paint peeling off in long strips, and the remains of a brick walkway leads up to the double front doors. There is a tower on the northwest corner, topped with tarnished copper tiles. The entire structure is tilted slightly down in that direction, part of the foundation having sunk a few feet into the swamp. Tall, narrow windows dot the exterior in a haphazard fashion, as if they may not always match up with floors correctly. Stylized hop leaves are a recurring motif in many of the decorative elements, from cornices to stained glass windows to the finials of stairs.

The Entryway

This large, decrepit room is strangely free of the marks of squatters. There is a fireplace taking up a large portion of one wall. It is made of sandstone and bears the motto "Dum exspiro spero" (While I Breathe, I Hope) carved into its face, along with stylized sprites puffing up their cheeks and blowing out tendrils of air. There is the rustle of rats, but nothing else stirs here. This room smells of wet wood and mold, underlaid with the musky scent of rats, and a lingering trace of honey.

Anyone who stands in front of the fireplace for more than a few moments will begin to feel sexually aroused, and soon believes the nearest individual fitting their sexual orientation is to blame. Aldonza's body was displayed here for two days following her death, and before her funeral.

The Grand Stairwell

There are 111 steps to get all the way to the top of the tower, and each step creaks under the weight of anyone walking. There are several landings and small alcoves that may contain interesting artifacts such as: a small skull with a demonic symbol carved into it which Cassidy may recognize, a ceramic lamb whose eyes have been replaced with tangled, red Christmas lights, one of Popper Polly's signature hot pink carabiners, and a family bible inscribed with the Reyes family tree – although Desi's name has been violently scratched out. The banisters on a landing halfway up are blackened and there is a lingering smell of smoke, although there is no other signs of fire. This is where William Laraine, an heir of Viliulfo, hung himself after a love affair ended badly. He shot his lover before tying some of her hair into his noose.

On the floor lies a crumpled note filled with deranged poetry about love for a heavenly creature. Anyone reading this to themselves will have vivid memories of a love they have not yet experienced, and reading it aloud causes all within earshot to drop whatever they are doing and relive the last time they felt truly, deeply loved. All are left with a deep melancholy for several minutes afterwards.

The Drawing Room

At one time this was the entertainment hub of the house. There is a grand piano in the alcove created by a bow window, its stained glass now broken and lying on the floor, and bits of broken furniture stick out from the trash gathered along the sides of the room. Another fireplace faces the bow window, this one carved with the motto "Ardenter amo" (Ardently Love), and features an Angel holding the ribbon the letters are carved into. There is an ornate iron gate in one wall, and the entrance to the non-functional elevator is located in the basement. The gate has more Angels and fairies worked into the metal, and the gilded frame resembles a heavily flowering rose vine. It looks down into darkness, and there is the faintest whisper of moans if you listen closely. The room has a sweet, yeasty smell, like a bakery. Marcelina Laraine-Abaroa poisoned three of her five children in this room by serving arsenic to them in fairy cakes.

There is a child's water-soaked swimming suit lying crumpled in a corner, which Chen Wu recognizes. Anyone picking it up find themselves unable to breathe, gasping for breath while a deepening pressure fills their lungs instead of air. Their hands clutch the swimsuit convulsively, so that it has to be violently torn from them. Once separated from the swimsuit, PCs recover the ability to breathe.

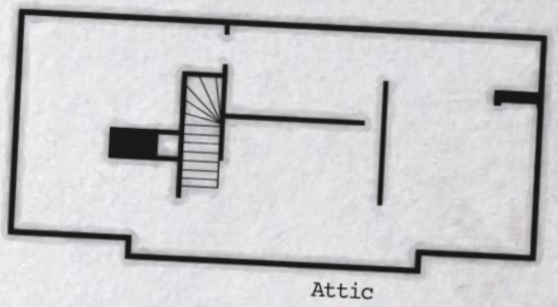
The Bedroom

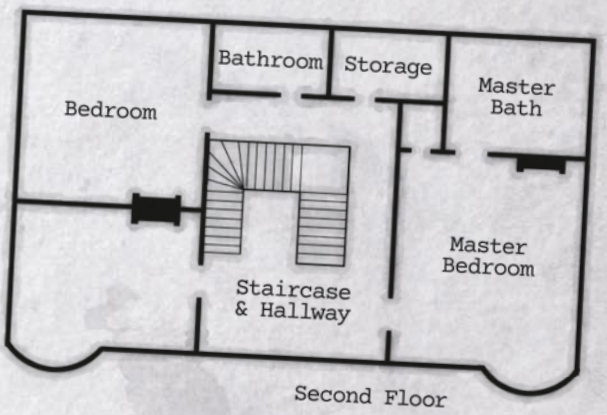
Upstairs in the main bedroom, the substantial marital bed still dominates the room. The carved wooden headboard rises up to the ceiling, and the frame for curtains now carries only ragged bits of velvet and the iron rings used to secure the fabric to it. The fireplace in this room is bricked up, and all of the windows have been smashed. Ravens have made a nest in one corner of the ceiling, held up by the elaborate molding, and the room smells of fresh air and bird shit. Black feathers drift in the breeze. Charlotte Laraine died giving birth to her second child in this bed, as did Aldonza.

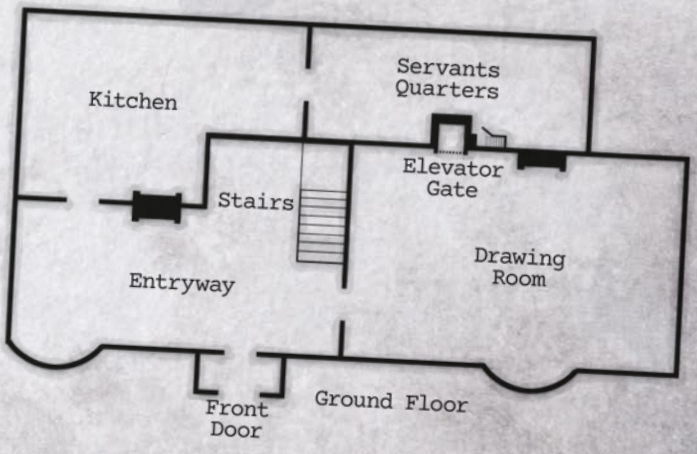
Someone tore out the pages of a children's coloring book about the sea and then pasted them to the wall in the southeastern corner, while pieces of glass and sea shells have been arranged in a semi-circle before it. Chen Wu recognizes these as belonging to their lost sister. Anyone standing inside the circle smells the sea air, feels the sun on their skin, and is reminded of a happy childhood memory.

The Attic

At some previous point, someone disarticulated hundreds of rat skeletons and then reassembled them into patterns across the walls and ceiling of the attic, rendering intricate mandalas and mosaics across wooden beams and plaster alike. There is a foul-smelling, unkempt bed in one corner, and a rolled up copy of a pornography magazine stuffed in a gap in the floorboards nearby. Cassidy will recognize it as a particularly well-loved issue. Elian Laraine died by falling through the rose window in the front wall; he had snuck up here to play despite his parents warnings.







A half-burned photograph is tucked inside the magazine; it depicts Jona, Maram, and their father, all smiling at the camera in front of an unassuming, suburban home. Jona can identify it as the home in which her father cast his ritual. The sunlight coming through what remains of the rose window reminds her of the pattern her father drew on the floor with her older sister's blood. Anyone gazing at the light on the floor detects a coppery tang to the air.

The Servant's Quarters

These cramped, dark rooms still reeks of onions and sweat. The empty bed stands suggest people slept three or more to a room, and debris is piled high here. There are financial records, newspapers, and diaries mixed into the trash, in no order and from all time periods, including some related to Paz Laraine-Ortiz's current financial difficulties. It looks like at some point someone was using them as fuel for one of the fireplaces dedicated to this area. It was at the largest fireplace that Wendall Becke, a groom and bastard of Flavio Laraine, stabbed Rebecca Braden, a scullion, to death over a lost wager.

At some point a doppelganger of the first PC to walk into the room appears in the corner, opposite the door. They are sweating heavily, panting, and seem to be in the grip of an uncontrollable lust. The doppelganger attempts to persuade all of the PCs to join them in an orgy, and will grow violent if refused. If killed, a mark similar to a port-wine birthmark mirroring the death blow appears on the copied PC's body.

There is a secret entrance in this room, concealed behind an old, battered cupboard. It is accessed by pressing on the back of the cabinet, which causes the entire unit to swing out, revealing a rough opening torn into the wall. There is a handle on the concealed side, so they may close the cupboard behind themselves after entering.

The Kitchen

A large wooden table still occupies the center of the room, appearing to be too heavy for one or two people to shift easily. Burnt cans are piled in the fireplace, and the heavy iron is missing all of its doors. A squirrel has made its nest in the smallest compartment. There is the lingering scent of Popper Polly's perfume – a combination of vetiver, frankincense, and patchouli, which Desi recognizes. Benicio Laraine, the last of the family to own the house, fell and broke his hip while preparing breakfast. His body wasn't found for months.

Act 2: The Caverns are Revealed

Scene 1: The Entrance

When the characters find the secret staircase in the servant's quarters, they may choose to go into the caverns. The stairwell is concealed behind a cupboard, and is accessed by pressing on the back of the cabinet, which causes the entire unit to swing out, revealing a rough opening in the wall. There is a handle on the concealed side, so they may close it behind themselves.

The staircase itself is decayed and rickety. It spirals tightly around itself, and the walls on both sides are slick with condensation and slant slightly in. It will be difficult for the PCs to tell how far into the earth they are going, aside from estimating the number of stairs they've passed. There are no windows or markings on the walls or floor. The air is heavy, almost stifling, and as they draw closer to the bottom, the faint scent of wet rock reaches them.

The staircase eventually ends in a stone antechamber that splits off into several paths, all leading to either dead ends, or the First Room. It also contains a non-functioning elevator, its Art Deco metal frame rusting in the darkness. It is shaped like an abstract rose, and pieces of the original light fixture can still be seen. Intact, it would have appeared as a glowing rose rising through the building. This is where the characters encounter the first Follower.

An older woman lies on pillows lining the floor of the elevator with her legs sprawled wide as she leisurely masterbates. She has no interest in the PCs aside from encouraging them to join in her activity. She is white, with very pale, smooth skin that highlights the blue veins visible in her breasts and wrists. Her hair is dyed blonde with dark roots shot through with silver, and she is completely naked except for a diamond and gold engagement ring, a wedding band, and diamond solitaire earrings. A thorough search of the elevator reveals some withered apple cores, a pair of torn and stained purple satin underwear, a ring of keys with all of the ends broken off, shards of glass, a scrap of crimson silk, and a small bag of tiny bones of unknown origin. If one would climb the elevator shaft upwards you would not get back to the top floor of the estate, but instead end up in Metropolis.

GM Note: The path forward winds through various sized rooms, each containing Followers. It is not necessary for the PCs to enter all the rooms, and some paths double back or even dead end. Some of these rooms contain barrels leftover from their time as beer storage for the Laraine Brewery, and others still bear the mark of their conversion into pleasure rooms for the Laraine family. It is possible to find a passageway that leads down into the Underworld if one strives to go deeper and deeper.

If the PCs attempt to stop any of the Followers from their activities, they will plead with the characters to join them. Some react violently if physically prevented from continuing, and all will tell the PCs that wonders await them further in, encouraging them to find the Angel.

Scene 2: The Participants Show Their Love

The First Room

The first large cavern was converted by the Laraine family into a private theater during a boom time. Gilded private boxes were set in among fake stalagmites, and the stage still has its red velvet curtain hangs in place, heavy with moisture, although now mold spreads across it in delicate tracery. Some of the old sets are still in place: a moon hangs from a

catwalk with a swing suspended underneath, an iron spiral staircase leads to nowhere. and a living room with only two walls. Fat white candles light the area, and the smoke mingles with the faint blue mist of incense as it drifts to the ceiling. Moans and cries echo around the chamber, underlaid by the sound of trickling water. Damp red velvet pillows and fringed throws have been strewn around the rock floor, along with condom wrappers and empty bottles of lube.

On stage and in the boxes are ***Followers*** indulging in their passion – sex. Singles watch couples, who recline next to larger groups, and all permutations of desire are on display. There is one woman who simply kisses all who is near – kisses their mouth, cheeks, and eyelids until her lips have been worn raw, and now blood traces her path across her lover's skin. There is a man who bellows loudly from his supine position on the floor, urging those who take him to become one with him, and a younger man who laughs as he penetrates himself with one of the candles. There is a couple who take turns whipping each other until their skin splits, and a woman who demands her male lovers pull her hair and ride her hard. There is a foursome so lost in each other's bodies they have forgotten to eat, and the candlelight makes crazed shadows in the hollows of their ribs.

The Second Room

The second cavern was converted into a private bowling lane. The lanes, once inlaid with rich woods in intricate patterns, are now scarred with rough use, and splinters jut up from the planks. The racks where bowling balls were once stored now contain rows of human skulls, all meticulously cleaned and wired together. A large hole pierces the ceiling near the end of the lanes, and filtered sunlight will come through during the day. The hole is concealed by large thorn bushes in the yard above. When the wind blows, red petals from the wild roses drift down into the room below.

Here one Follower holds court. He is tall and lean, with a shaved head and smooth olive skin, and there is nothing in his gaze but blankness. He stands near the end of the lanes with bodies piled around him, his ankles awash in blood, steel blades jutting from each fist, and waits for his loved ones to come to him. They linger around the edges of the room, like shy lovers, and occasionally one flits from shadow to shadow, until they stand revealed in his light. Then the tall Follower loves them, with sharp gleaming steel and bright flowing blood, and lets their empty body fall at his feet. Two small, hunched ***Followers*** dart out occasionally and pull a body into the darkness. Small bits of flesh fly out into the light, until eventually a newly pristine skull is set out on display with the others.

If the PCs attempt to talk to anyone in the shadows, they will bow their heads and move silently away. If they attempt to talk to the Follower with the knives, he will stare at them silently, unless one steps forward or otherwise separates themselves from the group of PCs. If so, the Follower attempts to kill them, and will not stop unless killed himself. If he dies, the room will erupt in wails as the ones in the shadows crowd around his body, still ignoring the PCs, and mourn the loss of this Follower.

The Third Room

The third room is still a cavern, untouched by whimsy. There are a few muddy paths through this space, and candles are clumped together at the intersections. Pools of water in low places reflect the light, but most of this cavern is very dark. From the shadows come the sounds of chewing and bones being cracked. The ***Followers*** here hide from the light, but there are glimpses of pale skin, wide eyes, and gobbets of flesh clutched in fists. Embedded in the wax of the candles are fingerbones, some still wearing rings, and various other jewelry, such as a silver cross on a necklace, an amber earring, and a silver tooth. There is a greasy, meaty smell to the smoke, underlaid with wet rock and old blood.

An urban explorer, Mark Straub, who found Popper Polly's footage is here. He is a tall man in his mid-thirties who is either of caucasian or hispanic descent. He has long, dark hair normally worn up, but is now currently matted with gore and stuck to an equally bloody face. It almost completely covers his left eye, which is a burned crater in his face. Mark looked directly at one of the Angel's wings, and the light burnt out one eye. The light burned through his brain as well, and ignited the love in his heart. Mark's lust is to know others as well as he knows himself, and so this room called to him.

Mark had seen Popper Polly's Youtube video announcing her intent to explore the estate and, convinced that she was in actual danger after she never checked back in, had come here to see what he could learn. He found Popper Polly's camera on the grounds of the estate, dropped among the trash in the drawing room. Mark got spooked when he heard the noises coming from the stairwell and ran. Once he was safely at home, he examined the footage on Popper Polly's camera, and became incensed at his feeling of being tricked by the sounds at the estate, certain he was looking at a hoax. Mark hacked into Popper Polly's account and posted the video there, thinking that this would let Popper Polly know someone was onto her. Mark eventually talked himself into going back to look for Popper Polly, and was instead entranced by the Angel. His online presence has been inactive since he uploaded the clip.

Mark can tell the PCs about his attempt to find Popper Polly, as well as his encounter with the Angel. His recollection is fragmented and dreamlike, punctuated with crying. Mark is more likely to talk to the PCs than any of the other inhabitants, as he's been here the shortest amount of time. He isn't in his right mind, and will only answer a few questions before attacking the PCs in an attempt to kill and eat them. Before attacking, Mark will ask the PCs if they would like to know him, and if he may know them intimately. He does not take their answer into account when attacking.

The Fourth Room

The fourth room was used for storage, and racks used to hold beer barrels still line three walls. One portion of the room is filled with gargoyle heads, monstrous statuary, and metal things that are sharp but rusty. Along one wall is a wine scale, and throngs of younger ***Followers*** giggle as they weigh themselves against a particularly ugly gargoyle. These Followers are all in their late

teens and early twenties, of various races, and wearing a mishmash of obviously scavenged clothes. Many of them have smeared glow-in-the-dark paint over their faces and bodies, which only emits a faint glow when in shadow. Some have used mud and paint to sculpt their hair into spikes and mohawks, while others have used carabiners and small climbing pitons for face and body piercings. ***Deshawn Taylor*** is one of these Followers. He is an African American man in his early twenties with light skin and his hair is styled in short twists. He is tall and thin, and has pierced both cheeks with some of Popper Polly's hot pink carabiners. He will not speak, but only giggle maniacally.

The young Followers romp around and play, swarming over every corner of the room with a pack-like intensity. They will view the PCs as prey, and will giggle as they chase them around the room, heedlessly of the harm they may do to either themselves or the PCs. If any of the pack capture a PC, they will cease chasing the others in order to drag the captured PC to a huge gargoyle head with bloody fangs. They will attempt to impale the PC upon the fangs; if successful, they will return to their play unless they catch sight of another PC. They may be persuaded to stop the sacrifice if offered something distracting, pretty, or tasty, in which case the pack will begin to fight amongst themselves tooth and nail for possession of the new treasure.

The Fifth Room

The Follower who has claimed this room is the one who left the objects upstairs related to the PCs. He will only refer to himself as ***Lazarus***, although Desi will recognize him as Father Antonio, the priest who performed her exorcism as a child. He stumbled upon the Angel when the current owner, Jeremiah Smith, had requested he bless the property before renovation of the structure was to begin. Jeremiah was one of the first victims consumed in the third room, and no traces are left of him aside from a plain silver cross he normally wore around his neck.

Lazarus is an emaciated older man of Spanish descent, with wild tufts of grey hair sticking up around his partially bald pate. His fingernails are yellow and curl several inches past his fingertips before breaking off into jagged lines. There is dirt ground into the lines of his skin, making Lazarus' face and neck appear to be darker than the rest of his body. He is clad in dirty white rags wrapped around his waist and upper thighs, and his filthy priest's collar is still perched on his neck. Lazarus smells of dirt and human waste, and is missing most of his teeth.

The room is a grimy nest of personal materials from the PCs, as well as some other local sensitives, ranging from birth certificates and financial records to photographs of them going about their daily activities to detailed accounts of their Dark Secrets, which Lazarus apparently dredged up by communicating with a minor demon through the battered Ouija board lying in one corner. Lazarus is under the mistaken impression that the demon is actually Aldonza's ghost. The only light comes from a series of flashlights and glow sticks strung across the ceiling. A bucket in one corner emits a terrible smell that will make the PCs eyes water, and is Lazarus' only form of sanitation.

Lazarus decided the ritual was progressing far too slowly, and thus began searching out people he thought would provide better fuel. He has promised his soul to the demon in return for information, and the older man is very ill from lack of food and the unhygienic living conditions. Lazarus cackles at the sight of the PCs, and urges them to meet the Angel. He will guide them on request, and is also happy to introduce them to "Aldonza" if asked.

SCENE 3: POPPER POLLY IS FOUND

The central chamber contains an altar the Angel built. It is a stone slab covered with offerings comprised of what the Followers had in their pockets at the time of their initiation: change, cough drops, spray paint, condoms, batteries, keys, and a couple of steroid inhalers for asthma. It is lit by bonfires, and a meaty stench fills the warm air from slowly charring bones. The walls are covered with eldritch scratchings, and a rhythmic thumping from an unknown source rises through the stone.

Floating above the altar is Pollyanna Wright, aka ***Popper Polly***. Popper Polly is a mixed race woman in her early-twenties. She has medium skin, curly hair shaved on the sides, and several facial piercings. Golden light streams from her skin as she slowly undulates in mid-air, tears streaming down her smiling face. She is still wearing all of her exploring gear, and a few additional items, such as her now-dead cell phone, headlamp, and pink work-gloves float alongside her, moving in tandem with Polly's body.

In a circle around the altar are the Inner Circle ***Followers***, those who show their love through pain. The Inner Circle Followers are naked and suspended from piercings on their back that mimic a wing pattern. These Followers moan in ecstasy as they sway above the ground, while the blood dripping from their wounds creates a mirrored, wing shape on the dusty floor. See the ***Followers of the Angel*** section for information on their *Bloodwing* Power. They will not attack unless attacked first, or if Popper Polly is in danger.

One of the Followers is ***Joshua Harris***, a white man in his mid-thirties. He has rough, red skin with an obvious burn on one side of his face and a military haircut. He is short and stocky. He has found his true purpose in life.

Polly can be freed from her position above the altar, but she has been permanently altered. Popper Polly will advocate for love of all kinds, and suggest the PCs speak with the Angel if they have any doubts. She will then serenely crawl back up on the altar and sit on top of it. If undisturbed, she will begin to float again in about 15 minutes.

Act 3: The Angel is Found, and the Ritual is Realized

Scene 1: The Angel is Revealed

If the PCs decide to go in search of the Angel, they will find it in the lowermost cavern, a damp, dark alcove of mud. It is singing to itself, while petting the hair of any nearby ***Followers***. There are many of them crowded into this section, bare flesh pressed against each other with abandon. The cave echoes with their pants and groans, and the air is heavy with the scent of sex. The PCs find ***Maram Jahani*** here, caught in an embrace with a red-haired woman with jade-green eyes. Maram is an Indian woman in her early-thirties. She has medium skin, long messy hair, and a nose ring. She is really thin and angular, and her hoodie and jeans are nearby. Her companion is around the same age and is of a similar build, and has track marks on both arms. The only word either of them will say is 'love.'

The rhythmic thumping from above is centered around ***the Angel***, as if the very air is disrupted by its presence. Its physical form is baffling. The Angel has multiple wings that shine with a light that burns those who look, eyes all over its body, and a voice that sounds like lightning and causes eardrums to burst and bleed. It constantly hums and strokes its own skin if no one else is within reach, and has trouble paying attention to anything for long.

The Angel will attempt to lure the PCs into its ritual by entrancing them. It must touch them to do so, but only if the PCs fail on a roll or put themselves in a position where they are in reach. Entranced PCs can be woken from it by their companions, but they will be filled with a horrible sensation of emptiness, which will linger for months. Later, they will always dream of their time with the Angel, and those dreams will always be pleasant.

It is extremely difficult for mere humans to kill an Angel. It will not listen to reason, and it is convinced that this ritual is the only way for it to regain its true power. It chose the Laraine Estate after being drawn by the emotional residue lingering from its troubled past. The Angel will defend itself if either it or its ritual are attacked.

Scene 2: The Ritual

The ritual is nearing completion when the PCs stumble upon the caverns, and any sensitive individuals will sense the intense energy collecting here. It traces like flashes of lighting across the skin of the ***Followers*** throughout the caverns, growing brighter until it is a constant glow. This is a sign that the energy is ready to be transferred into ***Popper Polly***, who will become incandescent and begin her journey to the surface before heading to the nearest town. Those left behind will be reduced to blackened husks. ***The Angel*** will then leave, following in Popper Polly's wake, in order to bask in the glorious beauty it has wrought.

Ending

It is up to the characters to stop or somehow interrupt the Angel's ritual. If allowed to play out, all of the people in the cavern connected to the ritual will begin burning alive, while desperately attempting to continue their specific acts of love. The ritual may be stopped by killing at least half of the participants or employing a ritual of their own to reverse the flow of energy. The latter will kill ***Popper Polly***, as well as the Inner Circle ***Followers***. Only if the ritual is stopped will any of the Followers be able to leave alive.

If this happens, however, everyone who was a Follower will also have dreams of the Angel, and will exhibit symptoms of a deep depression. Any PC following up on them will discover a higher-than-average rate of suicide, institutionalization, and issues such as alcoholism and drug use.

If the ritual is not stopped, Popper Polly will finish her transformation into the Prime Follower, killing all Followers in the cavern. She will then go in search of more people, who she transforms into Followers with a touch, inspiring them to carnal acts and feeding on their energy until they are all burned up. ***The Angel*** will follow, and when Popper Polly can no longer contain the energy she has gathered, will either become the true Archon of Love, or use her bones to start the bonfire of its next ritual to try again.

Non-Player Characters

Popper Polly

Pollyanna Wright, a.k.a. Popper Polly, is a serious practitioner of urban exploration, and her regular crew consisted of her camera person, Deshawn Taylor, her bodyguard, Joshua Harris, and a local guide, Maram Jahani. Other catphiles like Chen Wu sometimes tagged along, as long as they respected Popper Polly's rules: disturb nothing, don't get caught, and leave a surprise for the next explorer. Popper Polly also made a rule of leaving a small tag in every building she explored; it consists of a neon pink smiley face, with a manhole cover hook forming the mouth.

Popper Polly had posted online that she was planning something big for Halloween, and that she would be scouting locations before then. That was the last time anyone heard from her, until the Youtube video surfaced. It was uploaded to Polly's account using her credentials at 1:11 am on October 11th by Mark Straub.

She has been chosen by the Angel to be its Prime Follower, and so is bound in an magical circle that funnels the energy generated by the ritual into her. She can look into other's minds and see their heart's desire. She can almost look at the Angel without pain. She will never be the same.

Deshawn Taylor

Deshawn Taylor is a film student at the same local community college as the urban explorers. He met Popper Polly while doing a project on urban exploration, and enjoyed it enough to become part of her regular crew. His mother does not approve of these expeditions, but hopes that the time he spends with Joshua Harris will end up being a good influence.

Joshua Harris

Joshua Harris is a veteran of the Iraq War, and is now retired from service. He picks up part-time work as bouncers for clubs and various other security jobs, but he has known Popper Polly since she was a child. Joshua has taken a brotherly interest in her welfare when she is exploring.

Maram Jahani

Maram Jahani is a former waitress who is now homeless and unemployed. She did have a drug problem, but lately Maram has been going to group counseling and is working on making her life better. She has been meeting with her younger sibling, Jona, in an attempt to reconcile with them.

Dark Secret: Family Secret.

Maram and her twin sister, Mariah, were used as part of a ritual to summon a dark power by their father, and Mariah was sacrificed as part of the ritual. Maram eventually turned to drugs to try to forget that night.

Followers of the Angel

All of the Followers were normal people, urban explorers, or teenagers out for a thrill, concerned relatives or homeless drifters looking for a place to spend the night. But once the Angel touched them, they became overwhelmed by desire. Desire for love, touch, death, and play. They are full of love, and the need to share that love.

As Followers, they have supernatural strength and contact with their saliva will cause the same effect as being infected by the Angel. Their skin is warm to the touch. Their only thought is fulfilling their strongest desire.

The Inner Circle Followers are conduits of the energy flowing into Popper Polly. They no longer feel pain, as their nerve endings have been burnt away. They have all of the same abilities as the regular Followers, except that they can set fire to the blood wings on their back at will. Once aflame, the wings extend from the Followers back and allow them to fly, as well as fan sparks and set nearby flammable objects alight.

Home: Elysium.

Creature Type: Humans touched by the Angel.

Abilities

- *Fanatical:* Cannot be influenced or otherwise reasoned with.
- *Supernatural strength:* All close-combat Moves against this being are at *–1 to the roll.*
- *Painless [only the Inner Circle]:* All **Harm** is reduced by –1.
- *Blood wings [only the Inner Circle]:* The creature can fly. The blood wings can burn people [**2 Harm**] close to the being.

Combat [3], **Influence** [2], **Magic** [1].

Combat [Considerable]

- Grab hold of someone and drag the victim away.
- Work together with their allies to surround an opponent [opponent takes *–1 to all rolls*].
- Jump someone from behind, or as a sudden surprise.

Influence [Novice]

- Know where something is located.
- Steal something from someone.

Magic [Weak*]

- Extend flaming, blood wings.

** Only the Inner Circle Followers.*

Attacks

The followers are driven by their emotions and their attacks is irrational and unorganized. When satisfying their immediate urges the Followers often forget their surroundings.

Unarmed: Bite [1] [Distance: arm]; Knock over [0] [Distance: arm, victim is Knocked over]; Grapple and drag away [1] [Distance: arm, the victim is separated from the group].

Edged weapon: Slash [2] [Distance: arm].

Blood wings: Wingbeats [2] [Distance: close, area, victims must ***Act Under Pressure*** to extinguish burning clothes or get burned, **3 Harm**].

Wounds & Harm Moves

Wounds: ○○○○ ☠

- It's only a flesh wound.
- The Follower is seriously maimed but keeps going.
- The Follower gives out an unnatural high pitched scream attracting more aggressive followers.
- The Follower realize for a short moment who she is before returning to her touched state (+1 on next roll for attacking the follower).
- The Followers collapses on the floor.
- The Follower is killed.

Lazarus (Father Antonio)

Home: Elysium.

Creature Type: Human touched by the Angel.

Abilities

- *Fanatical:* Cannot be influenced or otherwise reasoned with.
- *Supernatural strength:* All close-combat Moves against this being are at *–1 to the roll.*

Combat [2], **Influence** [3], **Magic** [1].

Combat [Novice]

- Burst out in sudden, senseless violence.
- Grab hold of and pin someone.

Influence [Considerable]

- Know where something is located.
- Trick someone.
- Reveal a player character's Dark Secret.

Magic [Weak]

- Summon the demon ("Aldonza") through the Ouija board.

Attacks

Lazarus can burst out in sudden fits of rage and is much more dangerous than his appearance let out.

Unarmed: Punch & kick [1] [Distance: arm]; Strangulation [1] [Distance: arm, victim is pinned and must ***Act Under Pressure*** to get free; otherwise, they suffer **+2 Harm** from oxygen loss].

Wounds & Harm Moves

Wounds: ○○○○ ☠

- It's only a flesh wound.
- Lazarus is seriously maimed but keeps going.
- Lazarus spills his blood on the floor and a woman in an old white gown and veil ("Aldonza") enters the room [the demon will watch the fight without interfering, anyone killed is taken by her].
- Lazarus realize for a short moment who he is and ask for forgiveness before returning to his touched state (+1 on next roll for attacking the follower).
- Lazarus collapses on the floor.
- Lazarus is killed.

The Angel

The Angel once served the Archon Tiphareth with uttermost devotion. No doubts existed in its mind that it lived to serve and obey, that it was made perfect in servitude. But then, all of that was shattered. The fall of the Demiurge. Malkuth's betrayal. The war between the Archons. Angels tore themselves apart by the command of the powers that ruled them. Screams, swirling feathers, and broken bodies falling from the skies over Metropolis. In terror and madness it fled into Elysium, where it tried to forget the feeling of hollow bones splintering underfoot, how the smell of burning feathers lingered in its nostrils.

It found the Laraine estate, drawn by the residue of the strong emotions of those who once lived there. Now the Angel has settled in the lowermost caverns. It laid in the dark, humming to itself and stroking its own skin in an attempt to soothe its disordered mind, until one day a bright light woke it from its stupor – and provided it new purpose. In its madness, the Angel believes itself to be a new Archon. And the Angel has a true calling – it will guide and bind mankind with love and passion, which are so lacking in their daily lives. And so it draws in followers who demonstrate the physical, emotional, and spiritual variants of this emotion.

The Angel has been luring people to the caves so that they can enact rituals meant to signify great love. The Angel believes that once its ritual is perfected, the humans involved in it will turn into the pure fire of love. Then they will then go out into the world, spreading their fire, and the Angel can rest at last, its purpose fulfilled and identity regained. Some of its chosen engage in continuous orgies, the wet slap of skin echoing through the limestone walls. Others find quiet corners and lose themselves in every inch of their lover's skin, each breath tasted, each drop of fluid consumed. And still more find that love in darker ways...

Its physical form is baffling. The Angel has multiple wings, which shine with a light that burns those who look upon its form, while eyes cover most of its body, and its voice sounds like lightning and causes eardrums to burst and bleed. It constantly hums, which is both soothing and irritating to human ears, like a song you don't quite remember but can't get out of your head.

Home: Elysium.

Creature Type: Malakhim, former Angel of Tiphareth.

Abilities

- *Fanatical:* Cannot be influenced or otherwise reasoned with.
- *Gigantic:* Cannot be held in place or *knocked over* in close combat. If the being's attacks connect in close combat, they always *knock over* their victim, in addition to any other results.
- *Pact-weaver:* This being can seal pacts with humans.
- *Entrancing touch:* Anyone being touched by the Angel falls into a state of euphoria and becomes entranced. If a PC becomes entranced, for every day that passes without the Angel 's touch, they must reduce **Stability (–1)**.
- *Resurrector:* When this being dies, it reawakens unharmed several days later – unless its physical body has been completely destroyed.
- *Spiritual connection:* The being's soul is tied to one or several others. Should the being die, those it is tied to will lose –5 **Stability** and take **2 Harm**.

Combat [3], **Influence** [2], **Magic** [5].

Combat [Considerable]

- Tear someone apart [**3 Harm**].
- Forceful hit [**2 Harm**, victim is thrown away].
- Burning light [**2 Harm**, area].

Influence [Weak]

- Call for reinforcements.

Magic [Exceptional]

- Entrance someone [***Keep it Together***].
- Make a small city fall into their clutches.
- Steal memories.
- Seduce a crowd.
- Daze those in their surroundings with bewitching song [***Keep it Together*** to resist].

Attacks

The Angel tries to entrance the PCs and will not attack them unless they start slaughtering its Followers and disrupt the ritual.

Unarmed: Grab someone [–] [Distance: arm, victim must ***Act Under Pressure*** to escape]; Tear apart [3] [Distance: arm, victim must be grappled]; Forceful hit [2] [Distance: arm, victim is *knocked over* and thrown away to distance: room]; Grapple and drag away [1] [Distance: arm, the victim is separated from the group].

Magic: Entrance someone [**Stability –4**] [Distance: arm, victim must ***Keep it Together*** to not fall under the Angel's spell and become a Follower]; Bewitching song [–] [Distance: room, everyone subjected to the song must ***Keep it Together*** or get *–1 to all their rolls*]; Burning light [2] [Distance: room].

Wounds & Harm Moves

Wounds: ○○○○○○○○○○○○○ ☠

- The attack pierce on of the Angel's hundreds of eyes.
- The Angel blocks the attack with its shining wings and emits a burning light [**2 Harm**, area].
- The Angel releases a thundering scream with the risk of causing all surrounding humans eardrums to burst and bleed [**1 Harm**, Disoriented: *–1 on next roll*].
- The Angel crawls like an insect up on the nearest roof.
- The Angel grabs after the nearest attacker [***Avoid Harm***].
- The attack penetrate the Angel's body and make it beat its wings in pulses of weak light.
- The Angel falls to the ground and emits a loud moan, calling for all the Followers in the caves.
- The Angel gives out a final cry and falls bleeding to the ground, all Followers are immediately freed, but suffer deadly trauma and loss of sanity as result (**2 Harm**, **Stability** –5).

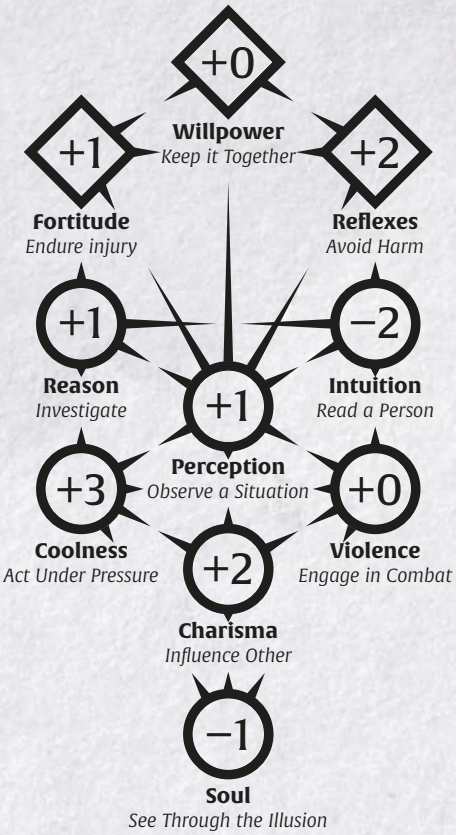
PLAYER CHARACTERS

There are five pre-generated characters included in this scenario, although you should feel free to make your own. The pre-gen characters have ties to either the missing person or the Estate, or you can take some of these elements and incorporate them into your own group.

CHEN WU

(student/urban explorer)

• Attributes



• Who you are

You are an urban explorer and best friend of Popper Polly. You have been seeking out increasingly dangerous places to explore with Popper, and you are always ready for an adrenaline high. You and Popper had been trying to one-up each other since you met, but this time she went without you, and it looks like Popper couldn't handle what she found. You pursue other high-risk activities, such as skydiving, rock-climbing, snowboarding, and anything that gets your pulse going. Your parents provide a generous allowance that enables yours hobbies while also ensuring that you do not need to work while in school.

• Dark Secret

Guilty of Crime

When you were a child, your younger sister drowned while under you care. You were talking with friends instead of paying attention. You have carried that guilt your entire life, and believe your parents also secretly blame you.

• Advantages

Awe-inspiring (Charisma)

Daredevil (Perception)

At any Cost (–)

• Disadvantages

Guilt

Nightmares

• Notes

• Wounds

Serious Wounds (−1 *ongoing*)	Stabilized
	☐
	☐
	☐
	☐

Critical Wound (−1 *ongoing*)	Stabilized
	☐

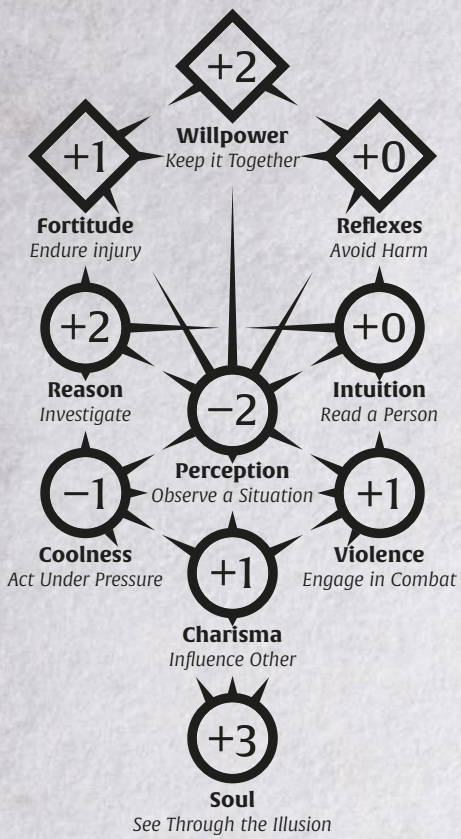
• Stability

☐	*Composed*	
☐	*Uneasy*	**Moderate stress:**
☐	*Unfocused*	−1 to Disadvantage rolls
☐	*Shaken*	**Serious stress:**
☐	*Distressed*	−1 ***Keep it Together***
☐	*Neurotic*	−2 to Disadvantage rolls
☐	*Anxious*	**Critical stress:**
☐	*Irrational*	−2 ***Keep it Together***
☐	*Unhinged*	−3 to Disadvantage rolls
		+1 ***See Through the Illusion***
☐	*Broken*	The GM makes a Move

PAZ LARAINE-ORTIZ

(student/urban explorer)

• Attributes



• Wounds

Serious Wounds (−1 *ongoing*) — Stabilized

- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐

Critical Wound (−1 *ongoing*) — Stabilized

- ☐

• Stability

- ☐ *Composed*

☐ *Uneasy*	**Moderate stress:**
☐ *Unfocused*	−1 to Disadvantage rolls
☐ *Shaken*	**Serious stress:**
☐ *Distressed*	−1 ***Keep it Together***
☐ *Neurotic*	−2 to Disadvantage rolls
☐ *Anxious*	**Critical stress:**
☐ *Irrational*	−2 ***Keep it Together***
☐ *Unhinged*	−3 to Disadvantage rolls
	+1 ***See Through the Illusion***
☐ *Broken*	The GM makes a Move

• Who you are

You are a university student, and last descendant of the Laraine family. You have been researching the dark arts recently, as you found out more about your lineage. Your teachers would disapprove if they knew, but you has been successfully hiding your interests before now. You heard of urban explorers breaking into the Laraine estate, and have been slowly infiltrating the group over the past six months. You had been dipping into a trust fund in order to pay for their activities, but that fund is beginning to run low.

• Dark Secret

Family Curse

You believe that there is a madness handed down through your genetics, and that it is only a matter of time before you either give into that darkness, or you remove yourself as a threat – through suicide.

• Advantages

Occult Studies (Reason)

Sixth Sense (Soul)

Stubborn (Soul)

• Disadvantages

Cursed

Mental Compulsion (Kleptomania)

• Notes

JOHN HARRIS
(student/urban explorer)

• Attributes

• Wounds

Serious Wounds (−1 *ongoing*)	Stabilized
	☐
	☐
	☐
	☐

Critical Wound (−1 *ongoing*)	Stabilized
	☐

• Stability

☐	*Composed*	
☐	*Uneasy*	**Moderate stress:**
☐	*Unfocused*	−1 to Disadvantage rolls
☐	*Shaken*	**Serious stress:**
☐	*Distressed*	−1 ***Keep it Together***
☐	*Neurotic*	−2 to Disadvantage rolls
☐	*Anxious*	**Critical stress:**
☐	*Irrational*	−2 ***Keep it Together***
☐	*Unhinged*	−3 to Disadvantage rolls
		+1 ***See Through the Illusion***
☐	*Broken*	The GM makes a Move

• Who you are

You are a university student, and younger sibling of Maram. You are studying to become a social worker, and joined the urban exploration group as a means of expanding your knowledge of the city and where its homeless population lives. You hold down several part-time jobs in addition to volunteering at a shelter for at-risk youth, but money is always tight.

• Dark Secret

Family Secret
As a child, you witnessed your father summoning a dark power. Maram and her twin sister, Mariah, were used as part of the ritual, and Mariah was sacrificed to the Power. You have buried these memories deep in your subconscious, but remnants emerge in your nightmares.

• Advantages

Street Contacts (Charisma)

Expert (Reason)

- Psychology
- Sociology

Intuitive (Intuition)

• Disadvantages

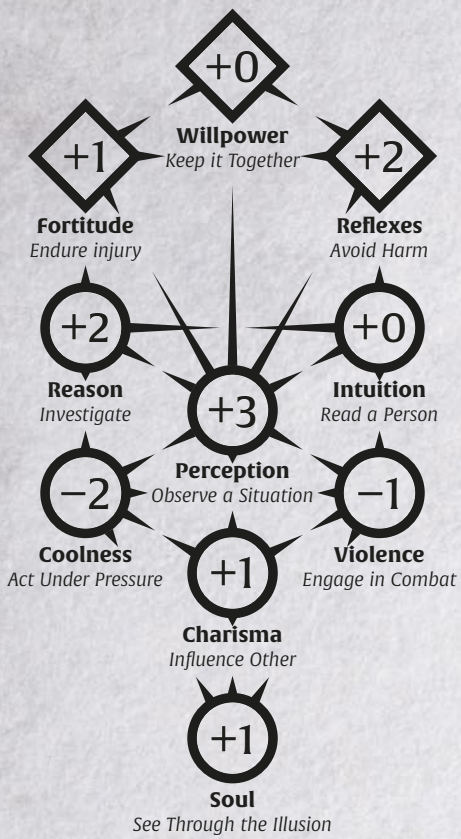
Repressed Memories

Nightmares

• Notes

Desi Reyes
(private investigator)

• Attributes



• Wounds

Serious Wounds (−1 *ongoing*) Stabilized

- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐

Critical Wound (−1 *ongoing*) Stabilized

- ☐

• Stability

☐ *Composed*	
☐ *Uneasy*	**Moderate stress:**
☐ *Unfocused*	−1 to Disadvantage rolls
☐ *Shaken*	**Serious stress:**
☐ *Distressed*	−1 ***Keep it Together***
☐ *Neurotic*	−2 to Disadvantage rolls
☐ *Anxious*	**Critical stress:**
☐ *Irrational*	−2 ***Keep it Together***
☐ *Unhinged*	−3 to Disadvantage rolls
	+1 ***See Through the Illusion***
☐ *Broken*	The GM makes a Move

• Who you are

You are a private investigator hired by a Ms. Cordelia Thomas to find her missing niece, Pollyanna Wright, a.k.a. Popper Polly. Unbeknownst to Ms. Thomas, you and Polly have been romantically involved, making you a particularly motivated investigator. You contacted Chen, Paz, and Jona during the course of your search, and agreed to accompany the group to the Estate.

• Dark Secrets

Possessed and **Haunted**
As a child, you were possessed by a malicious spirit. You were hospitalized and eventually exorcised. After a few years of intense therapy, you was released and went on to obtain a degree in religious studies. After a series of frustrating encounters with religious authorities, you decided to strike out on your own. You do take mundane cases as well as supernatural ones, and mistakenly assumed that this case was one of the mundane ones.

• Advantages

Instinct (Perception)
Crime Scene Investigator (Reason)
Enhanced Awareness (Soul)

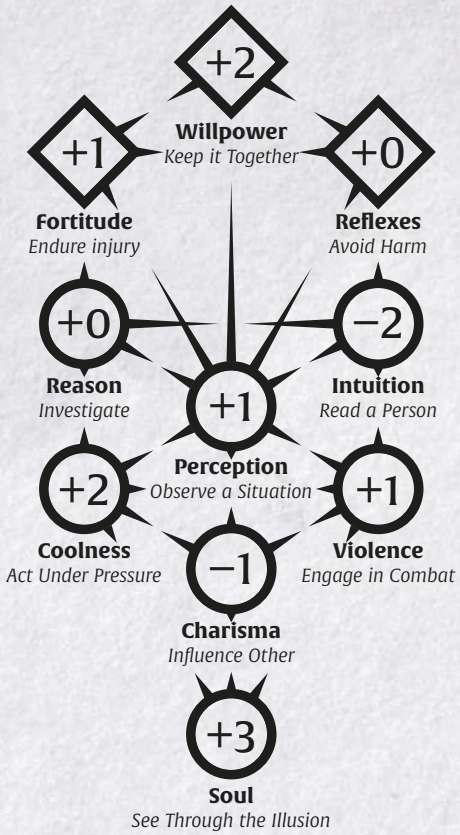
• Disadvantages

Involuntary Medium
Victim of Passion (Popper Polly)

• Notes

Cassidy Devlin
(sidekick)

• Attributes



• Who you are

You are a permanent fixture at Desi's side, and are well versed in a variety of useful skills and trivia. You proved your worth to Desi with some freelance projects, including background investigation, stakeouts, and research, and now regularly accompany Desi on jobs.

• Dark Secret

Pact with Dark Powers
You got in a little too deep with researching the dark arts, and found yourself performing progressively debauched acts in order to gain power. You hit rock bottom when you attended a ritual where children were sacrificed in return for forbidden knowledge, including the one Maram and Jona were involved in. You have a nagging feeling of familiarity about the two, but may not put together how you know each other. You have never told Desi exactly how far you went to satisfy your curiosity, and fear you may fall into that pit once again.

• Advantages

Crafty (Intuition)
Dabbler in the Occult (Soul)
Magical Intuition (Soul)

• Disadvantages

Haunted
Nightmares

• Notes

• Wounds

Serious Wounds (−1 *ongoing*)	Stabilized
	☐
	☐
	☐
	☐

Critical Wound (−1 *ongoing*)	Stabilized
	☐

• Stability

☐	*Composed*	
☐	*Uneasy*	**Moderate stress:**
☐	*Unfocused*	−1 to Disadvantage rolls
☐	*Shaken*	**Serious stress:**
☐	*Distressed*	−1 ***Keep it Together***
☐	*Neurotic*	−2 to Disadvantage rolls
☐	*Anxious*	**Critical stress:**
☐	*Irrational*	−2 ***Keep it Together***
☐	*Unhinged*	−3 to Disadvantage rolls
		+1 ***See Through the Illusion***
☐	*Broken*	The GM makes a Move

OAKWOOD HEIGHTS

THE SCENARIO REVOLVES AROUND FRANKLIN MILLS, a man who has done everything possible to escape his dark destiny. During the course of the scenario, the player characters will unconsciously break down the barriers Franklin Mills has built up around himself, and when the illusion crumbles their own horrors will be awakened.

The Story of Franklin Mills

Franklin Mills grew up in Detroit. His father, Richard, abandoned the family when Franklin was 5 years old, leaving him alone with his mother, Martha, and his younger sister, Lisa.

His mother, Martha Mills, was dominant and harsh, struggling to support the divided family. She worked long shifts as a nurse anesthetist at *Detroit General Hospital*. The family had few friends. The shame from having been rejected caused Martha to avoid people if she could, and her children were not allowed to bring friends home. The atmosphere in the home was smothering for Franklin and Lisa. The tiniest offense resulted in them being locked in the dark closet in their mother's bedroom, where they were to wait for "the Devil" to come and fetch them.

Fueled by his home's repressive atmosphere, Franklin took out his frustrations in the schoolyard. He became a bully and troublemaker, who used his fists to express his

anger towards those weaker than him. He had no real friends. The only person he was close to was his sister, Lisa; who was quiet, shy, and introverted. Franklin tried to protect her from their mother's sadistic reprimands.

When he turned 15, Franklin ran away from home. He couldn't stand living there any longer. He left his sister and his mother, and traveled by train to Chicago, where he made a living from various odd jobs. However, he was also forced into prostitution and exposed to assaults from the older men he worked with. He swallowed this suffering with bitter silence.

For Martha, Franklin's escape was the deepest of betrayals. Once again, she had been abandoned. She was completely convinced the neighbors were gossiping about her, colleagues at work werw laughing behind her back, and people in the grocery store were giving her strange looks. She increasingly isolated herself and kept Lisa in an even tighter grip. The home was an oppressive, cold place devoted to order and Christ. And there, in smothering madness, Martha's fragmenting mind reached a nepharite tied to the Death Angel, Sathariel. The nepharite sharpened Martha's harshness into an odd cruelty, whispering she had been too weak and forgiving when she had let Franklin escape and Lisa would also betray her as soon as she got the chance. In total anxiety over being abandoned, Martha locked Lisa in the upstairs wardrobe. And this time she didn't open the door.

The authorities found Lisa's body two months later. She had died alone in the darkness. Martha was prosecuted and after being assessed as psychologically ill, she was incarcerated at *Long Hill Asylum*. All of this resulted in sensational newspaper headlines, and Franklin soon read about his mother and his sister's death.

Franklin visited his mother, and demanded to know why she had murdered his sister. However, Martha was wild and unfettered, throwing accusations back at him, saying if he had stayed Lisa would still have been alive. Not long after the visit, Martha got hold of a sharp object, cut open her wrists, and sacrificed herself to the nepharite and Sathariel. Franklin never attended the funeral. But his hell had only just begun, as his mother's words, the feelings of guilt over his sister's death, and the suffering he had experienced allowed the nepharite to latch onto him.

The nepharite assumed the form of his mother and tormented his dreams, visions, and thoughts. The feelings of guilt over her sister's death were suffocating, and the nepharite forced him to reject everyone and everything. Franklin attempted to escape, but she always found him. He felt stifled, captive, and as though he were a child once again. No friends, no toys, nothing but his mother's cold, demanding gazes and her honey-coated, yet harsh, words.

Alcohol and drugs occasionally kept her at bay, but when she eventually returned things invariably became worse. The only thing preventing Franklin from taking his own life was he knew she waited for him there on the other side. Then, he would become hers forever.

While working as a welder in Sterling Heights, he met a man by the name of Sergei – a mechanic and undocumented worker who lived outside society. A haggard, elderly man, Sergei spent his nights reading tarot cards and carving arcane symbols and messages into the factory's porous, cement walls. His fingers were yellowed with nicotine and blackened by soot and motor oil; his savage gaze bore its way straight into Franklin's soul.

One night, after he had drunk an entire bottle of vodka, Sergei grasped Franklin's arm and whispered into his ear, revealing the secret to his liberation from the curse laid upon him. A sacrifice would release the devouring mother's grip; his life in exchange for another's, a child offered as a tribute to his tormentor.

The day after, Sergei left his work place and wandered away, but Franklin could not get the man's words out of his head. Slowly, he began making his plans to be free.

It was autumn when Franklin returned to his familial home. The house still stood there, just the way he remembered it. Thirty years had passed since he'd last seen it. Now, the house belonged to the Bedford family – Ryan, Janice, and their son, William. As if by divine fate, they would become his victims, serving his dark goal. Numbed by drugs and alcohol, he walked into the house to begin his salvation.

The ritual's aim was to recreate the suffering of childhood. The boy, William Bedford, would become the new 'Franklin.' Everything would be taken from him, torn away in the most painful way possible to create a dark cavity in William's heart, where the nepharite could take root. Before William's eyes, his father and babysitter were murdered one after the other. His toys were burned and dog beaten and tortured to death. William's best friend, Soraya Nadell, was locked in the wardrobe where Franklin's sister had died, and suffocated to death. Finally, Franklin needed to get hold of William's mother, Janice. He locked William in the wardrobe, and then drove to the hospital where she worked, in order to kidnap her.

When Franklin returned, he discovered Police Constable Aidan Kostroff had arrived at the scene. Franklin ambushed and knocked him unconscious. Then, Franklin dragged Aidan and William into the car, where the unconscious Janice lay. He then drove them all out to Zug Island. Franklin had worked there before, dismantling one of the coal ships; the perfect place to conclude the ritual.

In the darkness, he carried out the last elements of the grotesque rite. Janice was strapped to the engine room's rusty machinery and ritually butchered, while William and Aidan looked on in horror. The Illusion crumbled, and reality drifted toward Inferno. Janice's body refused to die and continued screaming and twisting, even though drained of blood and the intestines torn out. In this macabre metaphor, Franklin finally severed the umbilical cord to his mother and his past. Janice's cut-out heart was placed on a dirty, oil barrel, as an offering.

Following a lead, Officers Felicia Jenner and Clark Glover, arrived at the scene. But they were already too late. Using Aidan's service revolver, Franklin shot Clark Glover to death and then sealed the door to the engine room.

The nepharite appeared, but Franklin ate Janice's heart and concluded the ritual. His mind descended into oblivion, falling to sleep so the nepharite could no longer see him through the Illusion. William assumed Franklin's role and the nepharite dragged him into her purgatory, unaware she had been duped.

As long as this veil of forgetfulness clouds Franklin's mind, he remains safe. Even after death, the nepharite cannot find and claim him. However, during the investigation, the veil becomes increasingly fragmented, and the nepharite returns to demand the soul that escaped her. Worse still, she releases the player characters' feelings of guilt and their darkest secrets.

The Player Characters

The player characters for this scenario are ready-made and can be found in the *Appendix*. They are:

Felicia Jenner: The detective who apprehended Franklin Mills. Her partner, Clark Glover, was killed during the arrest.

Joshua Katz: The prosecutor who arranged this tour of the crime scenes to attain clarity in the mysteries surrounding Franklin Mills' case.

Caitlyn Debamre: The psychologist charged with evaluating Franklin Mills, and is planning to write a book about the murders.

Aidan Kostroff: The police officer who was first on the scene of Franklin's crimes. He was kidnapped by Franklin Mills, experienced strange things, and now teeters on the edge of madness.

The Theme of the Scenario

The scenario has two primary themes.

Affirmation: The desire for recognition and appreciation from others. Feeling chosen, competent, and being someone whom people look up to. In this, there is also the inherent fear of being denigrated, rejected, despised, or forgotten.

The relationship between parents and children: The complicated relationship between parents and their children, as well as the secrets, anxieties, and torments which stem from this connection.

Tips for the Gamemaster

A slowly escalating unease: This scenario is focused on developing atmosphere and emotion, rather than following a strict plotline. It begins in an ordinary fashion with the meeting at the police station, where the case is presented. Things become increasingly unsettling after the characters arrive at the first crime scene – the old Mills' house – and the illusion starts to crumble. Finally, the characters become personally involved and are pulled deeper into the scenario, either becoming an assailant or a victim themselves. Try to attain this slow, yet inexorable, descent from the perfectly normal and mundane to being totally consumed by their inner demons, both figurative and literal. For example, going from simply looking at a photo of a victim with an awl driven into their stomach, only to experience actually having an awl driven into your belly at the end. But this descent also means you – as the gamemaster – must hold back the horrors until the final act, so the players can continue their task and don't deviate from the scenario.

Let the weather isolate them: Allow the weather to enwrap them more and more, separating them from the outside world. When they leave the police station, there may be a blue streak in the sky. By the time they arrive at the house, there is sleet raining down on them. When they finally get out to Zug Island, it is raining relentlessly and in the hazy dusk, they can barely see the fires from the coal plant. Make them feel increasingly isolated.

Don't let this become a detective scenario: It often happens the player characters will want to focus solely on detective work; for example, reexamining the entire Mills' house. Allow them to confirm the stated clues and evidence. But, be clear in saying the information they already have at the beginning is what they know, and this is quickly proven correct. There is nothing new to be found, such as forgotten clues. This will prevent the scenario bogging down in unnecessary minutiae.

Use the Internet and paint the scene: Before the scenario starts, you can benefit from using the Internet to show the players pictures of Oakwood Heights and Zug Island, in order to provide them with a general sense of what these locations look like. Also, tell them a bit about Detroit (as a whole) during the introduction, so they get a sense of the city's unique character.

THE SCENARIO

Detroit, Michigan in November 2015 – a city in decay. Desolate houses, dilapidated city blocks, and rusting industries, all drenched in snowy grit, chilling rain, and icy winds off the Great Lakes. Formerly the hub of North America's auto industry, the city is now in serious decline. The population has dwindled from 2 million to 700,000 in only a few decades. In the central regions, there are empty and abandoned skyscrapers; in the surrounding areas, many of the houses lie desolate. Entire neighborhoods have been swallowed up by urban decay, left forgotten and fallow. On the streets, the gangs hold sway over the urban jungle, while those living in the gutter try to suppress their misery through drugs and alcohol. Per capita, the average income in Detroit is two-thirds lower than elsewhere in the United States, and the majority of the white population has moved away. Pockets of hope remain, but they are few and far between.

Oakwood Heights

Located in south-western Detroit, Oakwood Heights is a suburb of detached houses. As it lies right next to factories and industries, it is one of the most polluted areas in Detroit. The neighborhood is run down and in rapid decline, which has been accelerated by recent buyouts of homes. The largest industry is the Marathon Petroleum Company refinery.

Zug Island

Zug Island is a manmade island on the River Rogue, located in southern Detroit. Once a slough-covered peninsula, used as a burial ground for local aborigines, the island is now the site of a major steelworks and other industries. The entire island is black with soot from the chimneys, while ships and trains unload ton after ton of coal for running the steelworks. There is both a railroad track and a road leading to the island. In addition to the choking haze, an unnatural hum hangs in the air.

The Scenario has Five Key Scenes

- The briefing at the police station
- South Waring Street
- The Bedford/Mills house (Crime Scene one)
- The ship on Zug Island (Crime Scene Two)
- The Illusion crumbles

Each of these scenes presents suggested events the gamemaster can choose to play out. They should be presented in the sequence above.

The Police Station: 12000 Livernois Ave

Tuesday, November 17, 2015 (2 p.m.)

The Livernois Police Station is a dilapidated building in central Detroit. In one of the conference rooms, the player characters and Lieutenant Pierce gather for a run-though of the day's planned activities.

The conference room is, to a large extent, inconspicuous. It features a whiteboard with pens, every other one spent. There's a projector for presentations, while uncomfortable chairs sit around a conference table marked with patterns of coffee stains. The floor is covered by thick, dark-brown, wall-to-wall carpeting. Outside, the sleet patters against the window. Since the station has problems with heating, an electric radiator stands at the far end of the room, vainly fighting to chase away the bitter November chill.

As the gamemaster, you now have the opportunity to present the players with the background materials and story, but do so in-game by relaying the information as Lieutenant Pierce.

Allow the players the opportunity to describe their characters, and what they might know about each other. You can draw them into the game by posing questions to them and/or by establishing additional details for the player characters.

Briefing

The run-through consists of Lieutenant Pierce sifting through his papers, showing images of the house and ship in a Power Point presentation, sharing crime-scene photos, and occasionally taking a sip from his cold cup of coffee.

Franklin Mills has been incarcerated since August 22. Among several minor charges, he is accused of kidnapping and four counts of first-degree murder, including of a police officer. The forensic evidence is strong and there are numerous witnesses. This should be an open-and-shut case.

However, the accused himself maintains he doesn't remember anything that happened during the commission of the crimes. According to the forensic-psychiatric review, as well as his polygraph test, Mills appears to be telling the truth – at least, in his own mind.

Also, there are certain discrepancies around Mills' activities, and one of the victims remains missing – William Bedford, aged 9. There is also evidence of another – as yet unidentified – party. As such, Prosecutor Joshua Katz has requested Mills be temporarily removed from custody and be allowed to revisit the two crime scenes to hopefully reawaken his memories and provide clues as to where William's body might be located.

Lieutenant Pierce introduces the participants at the meeting – the player characters – and explains their roles. They can make their own introductions, as well.

- Pierce goes through the chronological events of the day of the murders, and then hands out the information found in the ***Appendixes*** to the characters.
- Pierce explains the forensic investigation is officially 'closed' and no one is looking for new leads. As far as everyone is concerned, they have their man. Rather, he hopes this excursion will help Franklin Mills awaken from his mental fugue, and the police officers involved in the events of that day might also remember additional details.
- The tour may also become part of the psychological evaluation Doctor Caitlyn Debamre is currently carrying out.
- The prisoner transport – from the jail where Franklin Mills is being held – is estimated to arrive at Crime Scene One, the Bedford family home on 514 South Waring Street, at 3:30 p.m.
- Once the tour at the house is finished, they are to travel to Crime Scene Two – the derelict ship at Zug Island.
- By 6:30 p.m., at the latest, the tour must be concluded. At that time, Franklin Mills is to be returned to the Detroit Penitentiary.

South Waring Street

Crime Scene 1 is the house on 514 South Waring Street, where the murders of Ryan Bedford and Lynne Jaskolski took place, and where William was kidnapped. It was also Franklin Mills' familial home. The full description is detailed below (see ***The House***).

The Journalists

Almost as soon as the characters arrive, a van pulls up and stops outside the house. On the side, it reads *Detroit News*. Journalist Kate Dickson and her cameraman step out. She explains her station received an anonymous tip

saying Franklin Mills was being returned to the murder scene for a tour through it. She addresses each of the characters, in kind:

[TO JOSHUA KATZ]

"*Prosecutor Katz, sources have said you are planning a tour of the Bedford crime scene with the suspect Franklin Mills. Is this correct?*"

"*What new information do you hope to find?*"

"*The missing boy, William Bedford. Is there any possible chance he is still alive?*"

"*Mr Katz, you are a highly educated lawyer, originally from Washington D.C. Why have you chosen to serve the law in Detroit?*"

[TO FELICIA JENNER]

"*Detective Jenner. It was you who originally apprehended Franklin Mills. Do you have any comment on this?*"

"*How does it feel to soon face the man that shot your partner?*"

[TO CAITLYN DEHAMRE]

"*Mrs Dehamre. Do you hope this tour of the crime scene will provide you additional insight into Franklin Mills' psychological profile and why he committed the crimes?*"

"*This, of course, was the house where Franklin Mills originally grew up. Is there any reason why he would return to his parental home to commit this crime?*"

[TO AIDAN KOSTROFF]

"*Mr. Kostroff, you were injured in the line of duty. How does it feel return here?*"

"*The detective who died, Clark Glover. Is it true he was shot with your service pistol and how do you feel about this?*"

After the police van with Franklin Mills arrives, they film him getting out and try to pose questions such as: "Franklin Mills, is it true that you do not remember anything," and "Why did you return to your parental home to carry out the murders?" Franklin does not reply.

A fire in another part of Detroit requires the journalists to leave soon after filming their segment.

Franklin Mills Arrives

Around 3:36 p.m., an anonymous white van belonging to the penitentiary drives up and parks.

FRANKLIN MILLS

A 45-year-old man, dressed in orange, penitentiary overalls with a quilted jacket atop. With grayish skin, ***Franklin*** is emaciated and continually quivering. He seems confused and appears to have lived a hard life. He wears hand- and foot-cuffs, which restrict his walking speed down to short steps.

PRESTON MILES

A sturdy man from the penitentiary, who is there to ensure Franklin Mills does not escape. He often has a firm grip on Franklin's forearm, but otherwise remains silent and seems largely bored by all this. Often, he uses his smartphone to watch a game being played; an earbud in one of his ears. The rules stipulate there should be two people escorting prisoners, but because of cutbacks Preston is there alone.

THE HOUSE

The Outside

A two-story building. A dilapidated façade. The white paint is peeling. Its garden is overgrown, and lawn all yellow, thorny grass. Pale, plastic children's toys lay scattered. Sleet gathers in pools on the driveway. Around the front door, there are remains of police tape, apparently having been torn down. Refineries and factories tower behind the house. From these, there emanates monotonous, machine sounds.

The Tour

The plan is for Aidan Kostroff to begin the tour, as he was the first person on the scene.

Places in the House [The Bottom Floor]

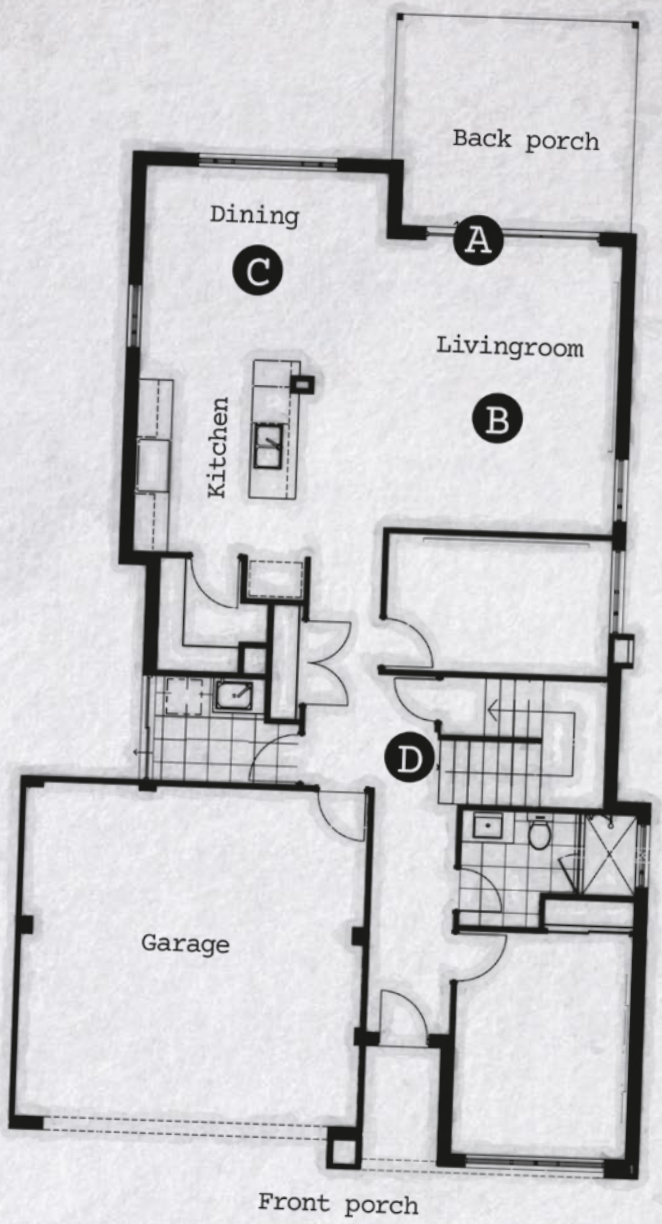
Inside, it is crude and cold; there is a persistent scent of mildew. Furniture, photos, wall tapestries – all these still remain. There is no electricity in the house, so the only light comes from the windows or your flashlights.

[A] **The porch door:** The door to the porch is slightly ajar and there are clear signs someone has forced it open. Rain has been trickling in and there is a smell of mold and mildew.

[B] **The living room:** There is a large burn spot on the wall-to-wall carpet and the roof is black from soot. There are remains of burnt clothes and toys, which belonged to William Bedford. The wallpaper is torn down in places and is peeling from the walls in large sheets, exposing the yellowed, medallion-print wallpaper behind them. What remains of the furniture stands against the wall, but there is a vacant place where the TV-set once stood.

[C] **The kitchen:** Kitchen chairs and the table stand against one of the walls. A dark spot on the wall-to-wall carpet comes from Ryan Bedford's blood. Close inspection shows the two holes where nails were driven through his feet. A musty stench emanates from the sink; a can of spray paint stands beside it.

[D] **The hall:** Family photos and framed drawings – done by William – hang along the walls. Much of it is spray-painted with simple graffiti and tags. This is the location where Aidan Kostroff was knocked out by Franklin Mills.



Places in the House [The Upper Floor]

The upper floor is not in as bad shape as the bottom floor. The light trickling in shares the grey sheen of the dusky sky, accented by the spotlights of the refinery buildings, which lie some distance away.

[E] **Bathroom with yellowed tiles:** Some of the tiles have fallen from the wall, leaving black patches. The smell of mold and waste oil is heavy. Behind a dirty and discolored shower curtain, the bathtub is almost brimming over with oily, filthy water. It is impossible to see the bottom. The chain to the plug is broken, so anyone brave enough to empty the tub must stick their hand down.

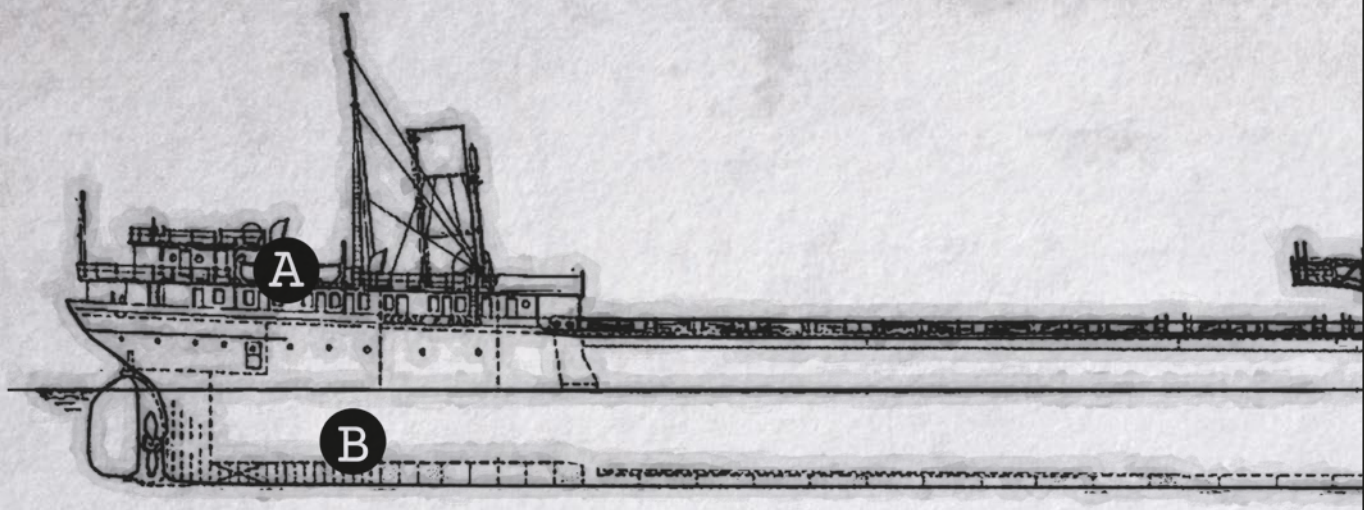
GM Note: This bathtub is a gateway to the Purgatory aboard the ship on Zug Island. Sometimes the dark waters from its depths seep up here when the Illusion is weakened. However, do not let the characters travel to the ship or the Purgatory this way at the start of the scenario.

[F] **The bedroom & the wardrobe:** The air here is cold and raw. There is water dripping from the ceiling. The bed is immaculately made up. On the floor rug, all the fringes are perfectly laid out. The wardrobe door is closed. If you open the wardrobe, you find it empty. It is just a small space. A lightbulb hangs from the ceiling, but since there is no electricity, it isn't of much use. In some cardboard boxes on the top shelves, there are old children's clothes. All the clothes in the wardrobe and on the hangers were removed and used for forensic evidence.

The Illusion Starts to Crumble

When *Franklin Mills* arrives at the house, the barrier of forgetfulness he placed over himself starts to weaken. With this, the Illusion starts to peel away like the paint on the house's façade. The black, oily water in the bathroom is in itself a gateway to Zug Island, which flows into and merges with the nepharite's Purgatory. Sensing this disturbance, the nepharite stretches out its consciousness and searches for Franklin – and he can feel it. He becomes increasingly erratic and fearful, although does not know why. At the same time, the guilt haunting the player characters also comes to life in this borderland where the Illusion is weak.

As the Illusion slips away, the gamemaster should remain focused on introducing subtle innuendo and curious phenomena, rather than frightening the players to the extent they do not continue with the crime reenactment. For example, the brackish water in the tub seems to ripple, as if something is moving beneath it – but nothing can be found.



Franklin Mills

When he arrives on scene, ***Franklin Mills*** is frustrated and agitated – only worsened by the exchange with Jerome Allen. He says the player characters are wasting his time and this is part of a major conspiracy against him. They have drugged him and stolen his memories. Now they are trying to pin these terrible murders on him, as well. However, after he enters the house and sees the crime scene, his defiance soon fades.

Within moments, his demeanor takes a radical change. He becomes like a little boy trapped in a grown man's body, shifting between the two roles (Adult and Child) with increasing frequency. He talks as though he had not been part of the murders, yet still possesses an uncanny knowledge of their details.

Below are things Franklin Mills – in either role – can say while in the house. He utters the *italicized* sentences, whenever he becomes afraid or is pressed.

Franklin [The Adult]

- What motive would I have for killing someone? That is bullshit.
- The State is trying to frame me.
- They are doing experiments on us vulnerable folks. Drugging and brainwashing us. Blaming us for crimes.
- I took a polygraph test. It proved that I wasn't lying.
- I have never seen this place. I have never killed anyone.
- Don't think you will get away with this. When all is revealed, you will get what's coming to you, you bastards. I'll sue every last one of you.
- This is the police's doing. And that cop, Kostroff. Hell, he did all this and now they're framing me. Covering for each other.
- [At the wardrobe] *No. Wait! Okay, I'll confess. I'll tell you whatever you want, just as long as we get out of here right now.*
- *Wait? Shut up! Did you hear something? It sounded like someone was walking around down there.*

Franklin [The Child]

- You have to take off your shoes. Mum would never let you walk in the house with shoes on.
- We gotta be quiet so mum doesn't wake up. She worked the night shift again.
- Someone changed things and put up new wallpaper. Mum would never go along with it.
- No wonder mum punished them. They are so messy.
- We gotta wait for my sister. She should be home from school any time.
- *We gotta get out of here. Now! Mum will find us, if we don't.*
- *When I was bad, she burned me with her cigarettes. Or worse.*
- *My sister made my mum very angry. So she was punished.*
- [The murder scene in the Kitchen] *I was so scared. I could hear Mum's steps. She came by and watched him bleed to death and tasted his blood. He mustn't die too quickly, she said. She doesn't want them to die quickly.*
- [The burnt-up things] *He'll have nothing left. Nothing at all. No friends. No toys. If you have nothing left, you are empty. Then there is nothing holding onto you.*
- [The wardrobe] *No, please, don't open. Don't open it. She is inside. She is inside, right behind the door. Please. Don't open it.*

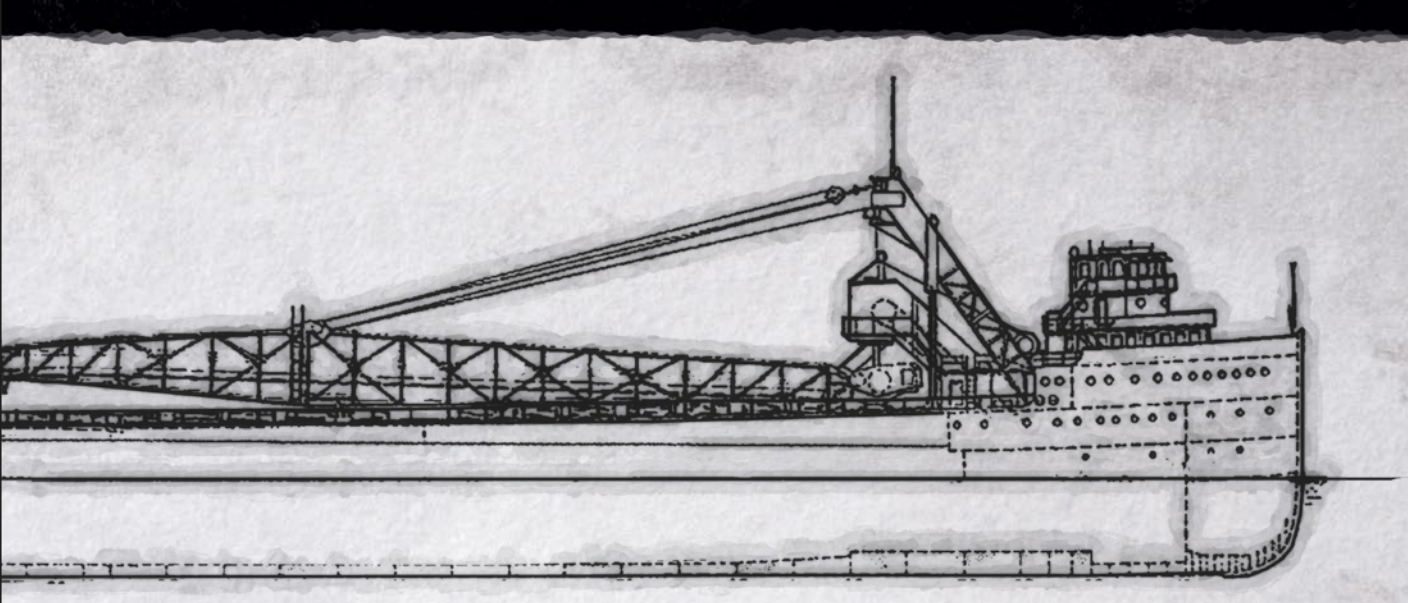
The Personal Experiences

The following events happen while the group are in the house; each connected to the player characters' pasts, dark secrets, or observations.

Felicia Jenner

An 11-year old girl in a pink padded jacket is standing down the street, peeking out behind a lamp post. She appears to stare intensely towards the house. She looks so familiar. If you go look for her, she is nowhere to be seen.

Franklin looks right at Felicia and says, in an accusatory tone, "*You killed a child too, huh? That makes us the same.*"



If Felicia has not been drinking:

You feel how the tremors are starting to come. The cold sweats. The liquor, the pills. You need anything that can deaden reality a little.

CAITLYN DEHAMRE

Caitlyn receives a text from one of her dead patients (***Josie***) on her phone, "*I am feeling terrible. I have cut myself again. When do you have time to talk? I need you.*" Caitlyn recognizes the number, but if she dials it, it has long been disconnected.

Franklin mutters, "*You're a doctor. You should be helping others, so why are you killing us?*"

JOSHUA KATZ

It is dirty and messy, but in certain places there is a curious perfection. The carpet on the floor has its fringes neatly laid out. The bed on the upper floor is perfectly made.

A cigarette pack of *Virginia Slims* sits on the table. It looks completely new, but is the old-style package, as though it came right out of the 1970s. It is open and there are a few cigarettes missing.

In a compassionate voice, Franklin says, "*I know what it's like to want to kill your mother.*"

AIDAN KOSTROFF

Franklin Mills stops and stares intently at him. For a moment, it looks as though blood is forming around his mouth and his eyes gain a manic glow.

A picture message arrives from Amy, but the image of Dominic appears distorted. It looks smeared and blackened around the edges. It almost looks like Amy has a hard grip on Dominic's neck. The text reads, "Come home soon. The boy has been bad."

A flickering image of a memory: *The screams, the woman's screams. The sound of Franklin chewing. Wet, gobbling, grunting. The flickering light from the torch reflected in the water. And the stench of waste oil and rust. Overpowering, everywhere. A pale child's face in the massive darkness. A shadow towering ever larger rising up behind Franklin.*

THE SHIP AT ZUG ISLAND

Fog, chill, and pattering rain. Stench of smoke and rust. Rippling water and oily puddles. Zug Island is a manmade island with factories and steelworks. Heaps of coal are delivered there by ship. It looks like another world driving into this ashen landscape. Everything is wreathed in a white-grey haze. Fires from the smelting plant create strange halos in the mist. The wrecked ship rests at the dock. The entire ship is rusty and moldering. The gangway is in bad shape.

The player characters can park their cars at the quay. The wreck is dark and uninviting like some beached corpse. Crime Scene 2 is located deep inside the vessel. In order to reach the engine room, they must ascend the gangway, walk to the stern, and then make their way down via one of the stairwells. Aboard the ship, they are greeted by the stench of rust and waste oil – the scent oddly familiar. A cold wind emanates from the Great Lakes, and in the distance a lone fog-horn is wailing.

[A] The Stairwells

It is dark and cold. The stairs are of steel, the paint peels from the walls and everything is dripping with moisture. Amid the clatter and noise, their flashlights cast shadows around the ship, and every breath can be seen in the rank air. A great weight presses in on them, the too-numerous sounds distorting into a cacophonous murmur.

[B] The Engine Room

The engine room's door is steel, and when it is opened emits a shrieking, jarring sound, which cuts through the entire hull. It echoes like a scream; a premonition of what will awaken in the depths. In order to get into the engine room, the characters must take three steps down a metal staircase into a pool of murky water.

The entire space is a distorted landscape of rusted machinery, twisted pipes, and long shadows. Everything drips with moisture, and the floor is covered with knee-deep, oily water. It reflects the flashlights like a glassy surface, which is only disturbed by the incessant leaks from the ceiling. There is another flight of steps leading to

the engine room on the other side. Those who studied the water in the bathtub of the Mills' family house can immediately see, or rather smell, the similarity.

At this point in time, the Illusion starts to truly crumble. Franklin's protective fugue unravels with every passing moment, and he becomes increasingly agitated.

Events at the Ship

Below are a number of minor events the gamemaster can introduce while at the ship.

Franklin breaks down: Franklin suffers a panic attack and begins rapidly shifting between his child-self and his adult-self. He becomes confused and does not know where he is. He accuses the player characters of punishing him and being on his mother's side.

A child's sobbing echoes through the rusty hull: There is child's wailing and sobbing. The sound is weak, but emanates from deep inside the ship.

Felicia Jenner

Felicia suffers a flashback of when she first entered the engine room and discovered the victim, butchered and ritually dismembered. Yet, the woman continued to plead and struggle – even though she could not possibly do so.

Caitlyn Dehamre

Although dead, ***Dermont*** phones, "*I will be right over. We need to talk.*"

From the ship's railing, she can discern four silhouettes – her victims – out in the fog and smoke. They are backlit by the smelting plant farther up the island, and seem to slowly stalk towards the ship. They disappear from view behind a pile of coal.

Joshua Katz

The overpowering stink of old wine and cigarette smoke drifts out of a darkened corridor. No matter how he tries, he can't get it out of his nose. Yet no one else notices it.

Aidan Kostroff

There's a faint scratching from behind the walls, persistent and desperate. When Aidan listens closer, Dominic's voice whispers through the rusted steel, "*Daddy. Why didn't you save me?*"

The Illusion is Torn Asunder

When Franklin's memories fully return, the Illusion rips apart. The anxiety and feelings of guilt come rushing back, washing over him like a tidal wave. However, he is still protected by the ritual, so the nepharite cannot simply claim him. She needs to enlist the help of the player characters to do so. But, she also senses the guilt in them and allows their own personal horrors to manifest.

She chooses one or two of the most susceptible characters and tries to form a pact with them. If they give her Franklin, either by drowning him in the dirty water or making him confess he is her son, she will allow them to escape. She also surrenders ***William*** into their care – provided they swear to adopt the boy. *GM Note: William has a purpose to fulfill, as she has sown her seed in him and he will be one of her servants in Elysium.* Although, the nepharite lets the person who helped her leave the ship with William unharmed, she allows the ***purgatides*** to claim the other characters and tear them to pieces. As such, forming the pact can become a desperate race for the characters.

As the Illusion surrenders to the Purgatory, let the events slowly escalate. Try to separate them in the darkness before things spiral out of control.

The Ship Becomes a Labyrinth

The nepharite causes the Illusion to crumble. Staircases and corridors are altered. Everything becomes labyrinthine and nightmarish, while an increasing number of paths and stairwells lead into the Purgatory. The player characters' perception of their surroundings cannot be trusted. The way they entered has suddenly vanished – where there was once a staircase, there is now only a dark corridor. The nepharite tries to trap the characters on the ship until she has made them give her Franklin. Below are some suitable moves to use on the ship.

- The oily water suddenly becomes deep; possibly swallowing the character up entirely.
- A breeze of fresh air descends down the staircase leading upwards, but the farther they follow it, the deeper into the ship they actually go.
- A door slams shut, separating the player characters.
- The semblance of ***Martha Mills*** can be seen as a reflection in the water.
- The flashlight flickers and dies.
- A body floats face down in the water. It is one of the ***purgatides***, waiting to pounce.
- One of the rusty machines coughs to life and starts to operate. The roar is ear-deafening and the enclosed space quickly fills with the poisonous fumes.
- For a moment, Christian music echoes through the hull and is accompanied by the scent of cooking meatloaf.
- A door leads directly to the Purgatory.
- Janice Bedford's screams echo through Time and Space, and Aidan Kostroff recognizes them. She calls for help.
- The characters are blocked by a chamber half-filled with black water. On the far side, they see a glimmer of daylight, but they must swim across the sludge to get there.
- The floor collapses; the characters fall through, tearing up their bodies on rusty metal shards. One character gets impaled at chest height, and in order to get up, they must tear themselves up further on the sharp metal (the player gets a **Serious wound**).

Events in the Depths of the Ship

Franklin Mills

Franklin comes aboard the ship and starts to mentally break down. The ritual he carried out, woven from suffering and insanity, is beginning to lose its grip. He can sense how his mother is looking for him and tries to hide.

Breaks loose: While Preston is distracted, Franklin manages to get hold of his keys. He breaks free and hides aboard the ship. He attempts to hide or hold one of the player characters hostage. He will be utterly terrified if he realizes the characters have made a pact with his mother, doing anything to escape.

The prey becomes hunter: Franklin can try to knock out the characters; possibly taking them hostage. With iron pipes, his bare hands, or weapons he steals, he attacks the characters. He sneaks in the shadows, strikes from ambush, and tries to attack lone player characters whenever he has the upper hand – see *Franklin Mills* in *Non-Player Characters*.

William's Presence

William is a little boy, pale and scared. Dressed in sweat pants and an oversized Spider-Man t-shirt. His forearms, neck, and shoulders – at his collar bones – show marks from being burned with cigarettes.

William is held prisoner in the Purgatory, which resembles the Mills' family home, albeit distorted. In the ship, *Martha* uses him as bait to attract the characters or lead them astray. In the engine room, they can glimpse William's pale face between two large engine parts and rusty pipes, far in towards the wall. He is apparently stuck in there. Only one person can get into the small space, and they must crawl or squeeze through. As they do so, it seems to get increasingly narrow and tight. Instead of reaching William, this can lead to them into the Purgatory or they end up eye-to-eye with one of the *purgatides* or *Martha Mills* herself.

Felicia Jenner

Lydia Gibbs: A shoe belonging to a child is discovered. There is a girl in a pink padded jacket, curled up against a wall in the ship. She is breathing painfully and her eyes are darting. One of her legs is broken at a strange angle, and a ragged bone protrudes from her leggings. This is the memory of Lydia; the child Felicia Jenner ran over. She opens her eyes and angrily accuses Felicia of having abandoned her. "*Why didn't you take me to the hospital?*" When the other characters are not close by, she pulls herself up on her feet, picks up a rusty screwdriver, and begins hunting Felicia (see *Purgatides*).

Caitlyn Dehamre

The purgatides awaken: Filled with hatred and an icy lust for revenge, the *purgatides* of her former patients awaken. They emerge from the water deep down below decks or from the waste-oil tank. First, perhaps, they appear as someone who is wounded, but Caitlyn quickly recognizes them. The purgatides move towards Caitlyn, ignoring anything standing in their way.

Josie [16]: Scrawny, Asian girl. Emo and Goth in style. Her forearms are cut up and she has a razor blade in her hand. She is covered with self-inflicted scars, and continually coughs up blood – as she has swallowed several razor blades.

Dermont [17]: A muscular black man. Wears jeans and hooded sweater. From the front, he looks perfectly normal, but the back of his head is completely blown away – from when he put a revolver in his mouth and pulled the trigger. The revolver is now in his hand.

Kyle [16]: Obese, white man. His face is discolored black and blue, and his neck covered in ligature marks from where he hanged himself.

Sarah [13]: Blond hair, hollow-eyed, very pale. Took sleeping pills. Wears a large t-shirt and knickers, and is holding a heavy, rusted iron pipe.

Aidan Kostroff

The weapon: Aidan sees a service pistol, *his* service pistol. It is oddly clean and shiny, despite the constant damp. If he picks it up, a memory flares up within him of how Franklin Mills released him. Gave him his weapon and ordered him to stop the police officers. He moves upwards, led by his weapon, and meets Clark Glover on the stairs. He shoots him in the chest, feeling a euphoric rush. Then he walks back down and seals the door to the engine room. Aidan senses the weapon's eagerness to kill again. If this memory is false or true is up to the GM.

The Purgatory

The player characters can be drawn into the Purgatory, which resembles the Mills' family house. They can, for example, be dragged beneath the water and pop up in the bathtub on the upper floor of the family's house.

The Purgatory looks like the Mills' family house, but in its original state; the way it appeared back when Franklin grew up there. Everything is meticulously arranged and tended. There is not a single speck of dust and the scent of detergent and cigarettes lingers everywhere. On the walls, there are paintings of Jesus and several crucifixes. Otherwise, it is quite barren and uninviting.

Getting to the Purgatory

This can happen when one sinks down into the water in the depths of the ship, rushes through a door, becomes drawn in amid the machines, or through other similar instances. In a split moment, one finds themselves inside the house.

The bedroom and the wardrobe

The bedroom is locked. If anyone forces the door open or steals the key from Martha Mills' apron, they can enter. In the wardrobe, the characters find ***William***, who is sitting there crouched, hungry, and trembling with fear.

Outside the Purgatory and Lisa Mills

Outside the house, there is an endless grey haze. Characters can see semblances moving out there – this is Martha Mills' paranoid perceptions of her neighbors and colleagues, menacingly spying on her. If anyone ventures out into the chilly haze, they travel through the ruined neighborhood, but eventually always return to the Mills' family home.

While outside the Mills' family house, the characters notice an emaciated girl through the cold mist. This is ***Lisa Mills***. She is shaking and frozen, but attacks anyone trying to help her with a shard of rusty metal (see ***Purgatides***. She is insane from her torments, and does not respond when spoken to.

Martha Mills (the nepharite)

Martha stalks through the house. Sometimes she sits and watches television in her living room; usually Christian songs and sermons. Other times, she stands in the kitchen preparing meatloaf, hacking manically at something on the cutting board. Sometimes she opens the porch door and stands there smoking. She almost always keeps her back to the person watching her.

The Pact

Martha Mills wants to select someone willing to give ***Franklin*** over to her, as well as adopt and take ***William*** with them – providing her a gateway into Elysium through him. Outlined below are suggestions for how she can form pacts with each of the player characters.

Felicia Jenner

Silent and scared, ***Lydia Gibbs*** sits at the dinner table in the Mills family home. The table is set and gospel music plays on television. The air is heavy the scent of meatloaf and cigarettes. Martha Mills is frantically hacking at something by the sink. "*Sit down,*" she orders, as though talking to a child. "*Lydia told me what you did. How you ran her over and killed her. But you have a chance to atone for your sins.*" Thereafter, Martha serves the meatloaf, but not until Felicia Jenner has washed her hands thoroughly. Martha offers Felicia a way to atone for what she did; if she gives Franklin to Martha, she may take William and Lydia up to the surface. Felicia must also promise she will take care of them. Lydia cannot talk, but nods and obeys Martha in everything. After a while, it is apparent Martha has cut out Lydia's tongue and she will never be able to leave the Purgatory.

Joshua Katz

Joshua is drawn into the Purgatory. In the kitchen, Martha Mills stands hacking frenetically at something with her back towards him. His mother, ***Laura Katz***, is sitting on the sofa in the living room (see ***Purgatides***). She is obviously drunk; a glass of white wine sits in front of her on the table. Also on the living room table, there is a hammer. Laura says she has been talking to Martha and she promises if he gives her Franklin Mills, Martha will give him William in exchange. But only as long as Joshua promises to raise him as his own son.

If Joshua answers 'no,' his mother becomes livid and attacks him, "*You ungrateful brat! I have done everything for you.*" If he answers 'yes,' he must seal the deed by beating Laura to death with a hammer. She willingly places her head on the table, entreating him to hit hard. She is encouraging, but it takes several blows before she is dead. Her scalp is knocked open and bleeds profusely, exposing bone and brain alike.

Caitlyn DeHamre

If the Purgatides get hold of Caitlyn, they drag her down into the depths and start assaulting her. They will try to drown her in the dirty water or strangle her with cables, causing her as much suffering as possible before she dies. Suddenly, a sharp voice from Martha makes the Purgatides back off like scared children. Martha offers Caitlyn a cigarette and says she definitely understands disobedient children need to be punished. She explains how her own disobedient son, Franklin, ran away from her. But if Caitlyn only would kill him, Martha will make sure the Purgatides never harm her again. However, Caitlyn must take William back with her and raise him, as penance for the souls she took without permission.

Aidan Kostroff

Receives a multimedia message on his phone. It is a photo of Amy sitting with Dominic in her lap. Dominic holds a whisk in his hand. "*We're making pancakes tonight. Can't wait to see you,*" the message says. However, in the background, he notices an enormous silhouette standing in the living room doorway. It is Martha Mills with a gigantic meat-cleaver in her hand.

Soon after, the phone rings. The telephone line is noisy with static. Martha Mills' harsh and strict voice comes on, "*Franklin has been a very naughty boy. Give him to me. Drown him in the engine room, and I will not punish your family.*" Then the phone starts to crackle and dies. If Aidan fulfills the pact, William appears from the dark, crying and scared, and turning to Aidan for protection.

Closing

One or more player characters seal the pact with the nepharite

Franklin is drowned in the ship by one or more player characters. William returns to the characters. Characters who do not participate in the sacrifice remain trapped in the Purgatory with Franklin.

The player characters succeed in stopping the nepharite

After a hard and lethal battle, the player characters incapacitate the nepharite and the purgatides. The nepharite's power over the ship is temporarily weakened, allowing the characters to escape from it. Maybe they will also bring William and Franklin with them. However, the nepharite has not been vanquished, and is eventually recreated in Inferno. The scenario can end with an epilogue, where the nepharite haunts the surviving characters in their dreams.

The player characters turn on each other

Aware there is only one player character who can make the pact with the nepharite and escape the ship, the characters may start fighting among themselves. The characters who die in the Purgatory are captured by and bound to the nepharite.

Franklin succeeds in outsmarting the player characters

Through cunning and ruthlessness, Franklin succeeds in killing the player characters one by one and escapes from the ship.

Epilogue

Describe how the killed or captured player characters wake up in Martha's home – the Purgatory. Let the ***purgatides*** and/or ***Martha*** show up and drop a hint as to the torments awaiting them.

The characters who managed to escape from the nepharite without sealing the pact wake up to Christian music playing from the kitchen in their home. Someone is baking meatloaf in the middle of the night.

The character who takes ***William*** eventually discovers a strangeness in his behavior. Sometimes his wording sounds like that of Martha Mills and he has a natural tendency for cruelty. Torturing pets, locking in siblings in closets, or similar things.

Non-Player Characters

The higher powers and important characters appearing in the scenario are outlined below.

Franklin Mills

Home: Elysium.

Creature Type: Human.

Dressed in orange, prison overalls with a padded jacket atop. A grey-haired, haggard man, 45 years old. Continually shaking, he appears confused and to have lived a harsh life. Initially, he has hand- and foot-cuffs limiting him to very short steps.

When he arrives on scene, Franklin Mills is confused. He is coarse and his language is uncouth. He says the player characters are wasting his time and there is a major conspiracy against him. They have drugged him and stolen his memories, and now they are trying to pin these murders on him as well. However, when he is brought into the first crime scene, his cockiness begins to quickly evaporate.

He becomes a little boy in a grown man's body, shifting between the two roles (Adult and Child). He talks as though he had not been involved with the murders, but still has an uncanny knowledge of them. Occasionally, it is as though his innocent and boyish quality disappears and he becomes hard-set – his gaze somber.

Abilities

- *Tied to a greater power:* Franklin is bound to the nepharite and becomes paralyzed in its presence.
- *Desperate:* Because of Franklin's desperation, everyone that attacks Franklin has *–1 on their rolls*.

Combat [3], **Influence** [2], **Magic** [2].

Combat [Considerable]

- Hiding.
- Attacking from behind.
- Knock out.

Influence [Novice]

- Cheat someone.
- Threaten someone.

Magic [Novice] (repressed up until Franklin's breakdown)

- Practitioner of Death magic.
- Call the nepharite.

Attacks

Fighting with his bare hands, implements, or any weapons he takes from the player characters.

Unarmed: Stranglehold [1] [Distance: arm]; Push [1] [Distance: arm]; Hit [1] [Distance: arm].

Iron bars/pipes: Attack from behind [3] [Distance: arm]; Knock out [2] [The victim must choose *Knocked out* at **(–9)**]; [Distance: arm].

Small firearm: Directed fire [2] [Distance: room].

Harm & Harm Moves

Wounds: ○○○○ ☠

- Stumbles.
- Dazed.
- Escapes bleeding.
- Dying.
- Dies.

The Nepharite [Martha Mills]

Home: Inferno & the Purgatory.

Creature type: Nepharite under the Death Angel, Sathariel.

The nepharite has assumed the countenance of Martha Mills. She seems unnaturally tall and imposing, as though seen through a child's eyes, gazing up at her. She is dressed either in a skirt, blouse, or cardigan with an apron, or in a nurse's uniform. It is decidedly unpleasant to look at her face, the viewer unconsciously needing to lower their gaze. When anyone actually looks at her, they notice there is something wrong with her face. It does not move quite as it should, almost as though there is something else hiding under the skin – something alien.

Occasionally, she picks up a packet of menthol cigarettes, *Virginia Slims*, which she enjoys burning people with – as a warning, in case they go against her. She talks to people as though they were children, with a forcefully chiding, yet maternal, tone. She continually remarks how the characters are dirty, need to wash their hands, and don't know how to behave properly.

Objectives

To regain the grip on Franklin Mills' soul: The nepharite wants Franklin Mills back with her. During his escape, he concealed his soul from her perceptions. Now, the nepharite will try to make a pact with one of the player characters to kill Franklin Mills aboard the ship – drown or beat him to death. If he dies within her domain, she can sink her claws into him and take him 'home.'

Allowing William to be brought back to Elysium: William, whom the nepharite has brought into its fold, now carries her seed within him. She wants William to return to Elysium and grow up there, becoming a tool and/or a gateway for her.

Abilities

- *Tied to Inferno:* Should the creature be annihilated in Elysium, it will be recreated in Inferno.
- *Domain (Purgatory):* The creature is bound to its domain and immediately knows if someone enters it, even when the creature isn't present.
- *Pact-binder:* The creature can make pacts with humans.
- *Shapeshifter:* The creature can change its appearance at will.
- *Adult-child relationship:* The nepharite appears much larger than the player characters (–2 all attacks) and has an authoritative influence over them (–2 all forms of social interactions).

Combat [4], **Influence** [3], **Magic** [5].

Combat [Forceful]

- Takes hold of and lifts someone up.
- Throws someone around.
- Invokes purgatides.
- Attacks several creatures simultaneously.

Influence [Significant]

- Leader of purgatides.
- Manipulate someone.
- Create a sense of isolation.

Magic [Exceptional]

- Commanding voice.
- Distort rooms, streets, roads, and stairs.
- Manifest someone's fears.
- Peer into someone's soul and previous life.
- Summon purgatides.

Attacks

The nepharite primarily uses manipulation, magic, and purgatides to break down and control her victims. If directly attacked, she proves to be calculating and ruthless. She uses her cigarettes to punish unruly 'children' and the slicer to kill irritating people. The nepharite is also larger and stronger than a human being.

Unarmed: Lifting up [–] [Distance: arm, the victim is held tight]; Throw away [2] [Distance: arm, victim flies away several meters].

Cigarette: Burn [1] [Distance: arm]; Put out a cigarette in someone's eye [**Serious Wound**] [Distance: arm, the victim must be held tight].

Slicer: Pierce [2] [Distance: arm]; Rip up [3] [Distance: arm, the victim must be held tight]; Sweeping slashes [2] [Distance: arm, attacks many targets around the nepharite].

Magic: Distorting the environment [–] [***See Through the Illusion*** to orient oneself]; Manifest fear [–] [***Keep it Together*** for the fear not to manifest]; Commanding voice [–] [***Keep it Together*** in order not to obey].

Harm & Harm Moves

Wounds: ○○○○○○○○○ ☠

- Ignores the harm.
- Stops and enjoys the pain.
- Unnatural smile despite the face being disfigured by the attack.
- The skin cracking like a bloated larva, and blackened pus oozing out.
- An arm is cut off and continues to writhe on the floor.
- One leg is mutilated and is dragged along at an unnatural angle by the nepharite.
- The nepharite falls to the ground, seemingly dead, but rises a moment later.
- The nepharite's head is destroyed, and it is rendered harmless until it has been recreated.

Purgatides

Home: Inferno.

Creature type: Slave to a Death Angel or a nepharite.

Abilities

- *Controlled:* The purgatides are controlled by the nepharite and cannot defy her will.
- *Hardy body:* Guns and piercing weapons inflict **–1 harm**.

Combat [3], **Influence** [–], Magic [–].

Combat [Significant]

- Attack someone from behind or through an ambush.
- Surround someone.
- Pin someone down.

Attacks

The purgatides are controlled by the nepharite and are filled with uncontrolled rage against the perpetrators who directly or indirectly caused their death. They do not care about the harm inflicted upon themselves, but fear the nepharite.

Unarmed: Bite [1] [Distance: arm]; Hit & kick [1] [Distance: arm]; Knock over [1] [Distance: arm]; Kick someone who is lying down [2] [Distance: arm, must first *Knock over*].

Piercing & slashing weapons: Cut open [2] [Distance: arm]; Nail down [1] [Distance: arm, ***Act Under Pressure*** to break free].

Crushing weapons: Wild swings [2] [Distance: arm].

Light gun: Directed fire [2] [Distance: room].

Harm & Harm Moves

Wounds: ○○○○○ ☠

- Ignores the harm.
- Loses control.
- Seems defeated.
- Dies.

Lisa Mills

A 9-year-old girl in pajamas, who is so emaciated she almost resembles a skeleton. Her eyes are pained from hunger, and she is trembles with cold. She attacks with a shard of rusty metal (piercing weapons).

Wounds: ○○○○○ ☠

Josie

Scrawny Asian girl. Emo and Goth in style. Her forearms are cut up and she has a razor blade in her hand (slashing weapon). *She is covered with self-inflicted scars, and continually coughs up blood – as she has swallowed razor blades.*

Wounds: ○○○○○ ☠

Dermont

A muscular black man. Jeans and hooded sweater. From the front, he looks perfectly normal, but the back of his head is completely blown away; from when he put a revolver in his mouth and pulled the trigger. The revolver is now in his hand (light gun).

Wounds: ○○○○○ ☠

Kyle

Obese, white man. His face is discolored black and blue, and his neck covered in ligature marks from where he hanged himself (unarmed).

Wounds: ○○○○○ ☠

Sarah

Blond hair, hollow-eyed, very pale. Took sleeping pills. Wears a large T-shirt and knickers, and is holding a heavy, rusted iron pipe (crushing weapon).

Wounds: ○○○○○ ☠

Lydia Gibbs

An 11-year-old girl in a pink, padded jacket. She struggles to breath, as if in great pain, and her eyes are flickering wildly. One of her legs is broken at a strange angle; a bone protrudes from one of her leggings. Lydia is armed with a rusty screwdriver (piercing weapon).

Wounds: ○○○○○ ☠

Laura Katz

A well-dressed, yet emaciated, middle-aged woman, who stinks of wine and smokes cigarettes. Her eyes are bloodshot and fingers nicotine yellow. She speaks with a faint slur. Possibly attacks Joshua with a hammer (crushing weapon).

Wounds: ○○○○○ ☠

William Bedford

William is a little boy, pale and scared. Dressed in sweat pants and an oversized Spider-Man t-shirt. His forearms, neck, and shoulders – at his collar bones – show marks from being burned with cigarettes.

Unique moves

- Run away.
- Scream in panic.
- Apathy.

Harm & Harm Moves

Wounds: ○ ☠

- Hides.
- Dying.
- Dies.

Important Characters

Felicia Jenner

Clark Glover: Felicia's partner, who died during the apprehension of Franklin Mills.

Lydia Gibbs: An 11-year-old girl Felicia ran over and killed.

Joshua Katz

Laura Katz: His mother who killed herself with alcohol and pills. Joshua told her to do it.

Caitlyn DeHamre

Josie, Dermont, Kyle, and Sarah: Former patients, who Caitlyn persuaded to commit suicide.

Jakob: The husband who abandoned her.

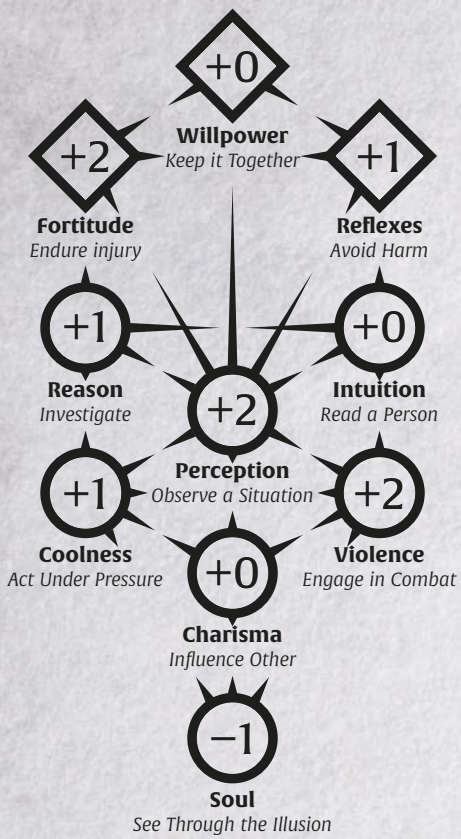
Aidan Kostroff

Amy: Worried wife

Dominic: Four-year-old son.

Detective Felicia Jenner

• Attributes



• Wounds

Serious Wounds (−1 *ongoing*) — Stabilized

- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐

Critical Wound (−1 *ongoing*) — Stabilized

- ☐

• Stability

- ■ *Composed*

■ *Uneasy*	**Moderate stress:**
■ *Unfocused*	−1 to Disadvantage rolls
☐ *Shaken*	**Serious stress:**
☐ *Distressed*	−1 ***Keep it Together***
☐ *Neurotic*	−2 to Disadvantage rolls
☐ *Anxious*	**Critical stress:**
☐ *Irrational*	−2 ***Keep it Together***
☐ *Unhinged*	−3 to Disadvantage rolls
	+1 ***See Through the Illusion***
☐ *Broken*	The GM makes a Move

• Who you are

As a Detroit homicide detective, you have seen the city go from bad to worse. Being number one in murder statistics in the United States speaks volumes. You are tired, dejected, and feel as though nothing in your job really makes a difference. One does what one must to survive in Detroit, which is why you ease your life with liquor, pills, and bribes. You do business with several gangs in Detroit, but primarily the Almighty Vice Lord Nation. You leave them in peace and they give you a substantial bonus to supplement your meager police salary. By the classic definition, you are a "dirty cop," but your colleagues are no different. You have found it increasingly hard to conceal your alcoholism, but you just cannot keep sober.

• Connection to Franklin Mills

Franklin Mills is a dangerous and sick person. One of the worst you have come across. You apprehended him at the ship on Zug Island and now after all the commotion, you regret not putting a bullet in him there and then. You are disgusted with all the talk of him getting psychiatric care, of being psychologically evaluated. Life in prison is the only thing he deserves, but the death penalty would have been fairer. Your partner, Clark Glover, died when Franklin was apprehended, shot with police constable Aidan Kostroff's service weapon. You know deep down it wasn't young Kostroff's fault, but you still cannot keep yourself from blaming him. Also, something has been gnawing in you since that day. After you shackled Franklin Mills, you searched for the kidnapped boy, William, but never found him. You know you heard a child wailing from somewhere, echoing in the dark halls of the derelict ship.

• Dark Secret

After a night on the town with the colleagues, you drove home while more inebriated than usual. You reacted too late and ran over a child. It was nighttime; the girl ran into the street and you did not have time to stop. She couldn't have been more than ten and should have been curled up in her bed – probably the child of some negligent junkie. You tried to help, but she was already dead. Your badge was on the line and there were no witnesses. So, you jumped into the car and drove home. The day after you found her in the night's police reports; Lydia Gibbs, 11 years old. The moment you ran over her plays in your dreams again and again. Her surprised gaze into the headlights of the car. The thud as you ran over her and crushed her rib cage.

• Things in your possession

Suit and thick coat tailored for the weather. An automatic pistol in a shoulder holster with three additional magazines. Smartphone. Pack of cigarettes. A bottle of tranquilizers. A half-empty flask in your coat pocket. Strong, spearmint chewing gum to conceal the smell of liquor. Keys. A lighter and $340.

• Motivation

Prove Franklin Mills only is faking his forgetfulness.

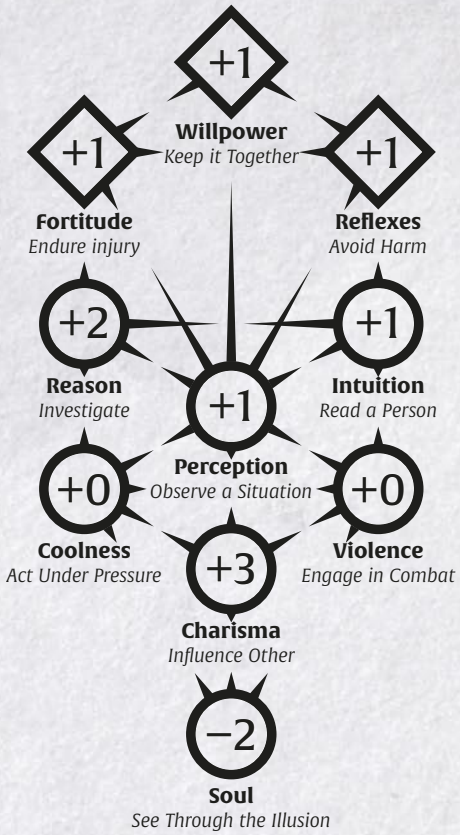
Get Aidan Kostroff to recognize his own dereliction of duty, which led to your partner – Clark Glover – being killed with Kostroff's service pistol.

Show you are still a good cop, who knows your job.

Get the opportunity to squeeze the truth out of Franklin Mills, and what he did with William – the vanished boy. Where did he hide the body? You are certain you heard the boy aboard the ship.

PROSECUTOR JOSHUA KATZ

• Attributes



• Wounds

Serious Wounds (−1 *ongoing*)	Stabilized
	☐
	☐
	☐
	☐

Critical Wound (−1 *ongoing*)	Stabilized
	☐

• Stability

■	*Composed*	
☐	*Uneasy*	**Moderate stress:**
☐	*Unfocused*	−1 to Disadvantage rolls
☐	*Shaken*	**Serious stress:**
☐	*Distressed*	−1 ***Keep it Together***
☐	*Neurotic*	−2 to Disadvantage rolls
☐	*Anxious*	**Critical stress:**
☐	*Irrational*	−2 ***Keep it Together***
☐	*Unhinged*	−3 to Disadvantage rolls
		+1 ***See Through the Illusion***
☐	*Broken*	The GM makes a Move

• Who you are

A recently graduated lawyer, who took the job no one wanted in Detroit. You have a nice house in the uptown area. Your looks and social status make you very popular among women, and you are aware of your charm. You are a perfectionist, both when it comes to yourself and to others. Your home is as immaculately arranged as your own personal appearance. It is hard for you to handle emotions and feel sympathy for other people, particularly those who are sloppy, overweight, ugly, or people who do not take care of themselves. You hide this contempt behind a perfect smile and a veneer of compassion. You see Detroit as a vehicle for your career. After a number of high-profile cases, you intend to get into politics, as you believe having fought for justice in a city like Detroit will look excellent on your resume. Finding the Bedford boy could be your meal ticket.

• Connection to Franklin Mills

Franklin Mills is apprehended and accused of a series of murders, as well as the abduction of a young boy, William Bedford – who is now presumed dead. The case has attracted the media's attention and engaged many in Detroit. Intent on using this to your advantage, you forced through the arrangements for Franklin Mills being shepherded around the crime scenes. He maintains he has lost his memory, and you are hoping to make him remember and confess, and perhaps, most importantly, find out what he did with the missing boy. The forensic evidence and witnesses ensure Franklin cannot escape justice – you are certain of nailing him. But the case and the crime-scene reenactment offer the perfect opportunity to position yourself as the prosecutor who cares about the common people. You have already tipped off the journalists anonymously, assuring they will show up at the house where you will hold the first reconstruction, so you can spark some media coverage.

• Dark Secret

You grew up in a nice home in Washington, DC. Your father, Robert, was a Republican politician and died of cancer when you were 7 years old. Your mother, Laura, took care of you during your entire childhood. She was respected in high society, and concealed her alcoholism and depression well. But you knew. You found her unconscious several times and had to console and take care of her, as she drunkenly threatened to kill herself. She became increasingly embarrassing, nearly disgracing your family name and your and her reputation. So when she stood there with the pill box and the liquor bottle and wanting your pity, you said you didn't love her anymore and she should just go ahead and do it. The next day, she was dead from an overdose of sleeping pills. She was found lying in her own vomit on the upper floor of the house. You felt relieved. The outpouring of sympathy definitely helped you as well.

• Things in your possession

Impeccably dressed in brand-name clothes. Black leather gloves. Expensive coat. Robust winter shoes, as you will go into desolate houses and Zug Island. Portfolio with a laptop and important documents. Smartphone of the latest model. Small video camera to film Franklin, if needed. Keys. Wallet with various credit cards and a few business cards. Antibacterial tissue in your pocket.

• Motivation

Reconstruct the crime scenes. Let Aidan Kostroff demonstrate how he entered the house, and Felicia Jenner show you where she found Franklin Mills. See if you can get Franklin Mills to demonstrate how he killed his victims.

See if you can find William Bedford's body.

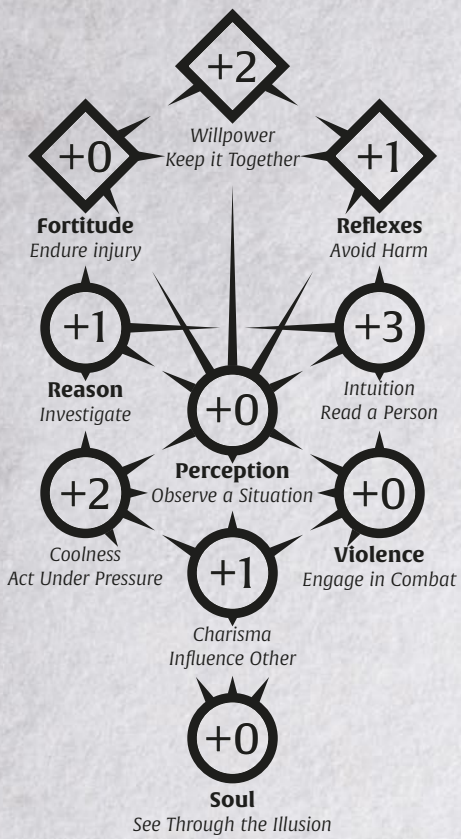
Get Franklin Mills to confess.

Maintain the appearance of being a moral and responsible person.

Felicia Jenner has the reputation of being corrupt and she is quite definitely an alcoholic (you know one when you see one). You want to dig up more dirt on her. She might be a good scapegoat to dangle in front of the media or someone you can have a hold over.

Psychologist Caitlyn Dehamre

• Attributes



• Wounds

Serious Wounds (–1 *ongoing*)	Stabilized
	☐
	☐
	☐
	☐

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☐	*Irrational*	–2 ***Keep it Together***
☐	*Unhinged*	–3 to Disadvantage rolls
		+1 ***See Through the Illusion***
☐	*Broken*	The GM makes a Move

• Who you are

You are a psychologist who handles large amounts of psychological evaluations for the State. On the side, you are running a private clinic and working as a consultant. You have authored a number of articles on your blog, *Mazes of the Murderous Mind*, about criminals and macabre murder cases connected to mental illness. You have a number of followers, but your dream is to be published by one of the big publishing houses. You constantly feel overlooked and are frustrated the world doesn't recognize your genius. Your husband, Jakob, left you for another man and moved to Detroit. This is a source of great shame for you.

• Connection to Franklin Mills

Franklin Mills is a gold mine. He will make you famous. You will do anything to maintain he is mentally ill and ensure he is placed in a psychiatric clinic with rigorous surveillance under your care. You are sure that the macabre murders he carried out are connected to his past. A few years after Franklin ran away from home, Franklin's mother, Martha Mills locked his kid-sister, Lisa Mills, in a wardrobe, where she starved to death. Martha was judged mentally ill and incarcerated at a psychiatric hospital – where she took her own life. Now, 30 years later, Franklin has committed murders in the house where he grew up. You are already authoring the book, *The Murderous Mills*, about the macabre deeds of two generations of the same family. Franklin appears to have lost his memory for real, probably a deep form of repression, but you have noticed by talking about his mother or his sister, he can be stirred from his fugue. Among other things, Franklin said he often talks with his mother and she is furious with him for escaping. Franklin does not seem to understand – or want to understand – his mother is dead.

• Dark secret

So many patients have sat opposite to you, talking about their meaningless problems, humdrum lives, anxieties, and inner pain. Perhaps it was the feeling of power, but systematically you convinced four patients to take their own lives. You used innuendos to convince them their suicidal thoughts weren't so wrong after all, and they probably weren't loved by anyone. To avoid suspicion, you have assured nothing was recorded and your patient journals say something completely different. And when you received the phone calls and emails telling you they took their lives, you felt a curiously joyful sensation in your chest, leaving you walking on air. You literally have the power over life and death. You memorized their names and look at their pictures on your phone several times a day: Josie, Dermont, Kyle, and Sarah. You are itching to find another vulnerable person and gain power over their life.

• Things in your possession

Warm and practical clothes. Ipad, where you take notes and keep files. A hand-held, video camera. A briefcase containing sedatives, as well as a syringe of tranquilizer, which can knock out an adult in a flash. A file with photos of Martha Mills and Lisa Mills, which you can display if you want to trigger Franklin. Handbag with pepper spray, keys, wallet, smartphone, and credit card.

• Motivation

Get Franklin Mills to talk more about his mother and reveal his inner darkness.

Convince Prosecutor Joshua Katz Franklin Mills is mentally ill and you should be given responsibility for him.

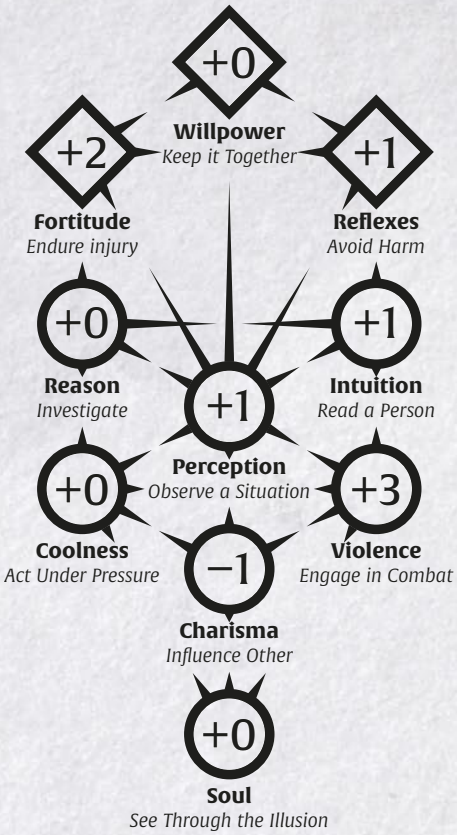
Try to understand what Franklin Mills wanted with the boy, William, whom he kidnapped.

Aidan Kostroff is under your finger. He is being evaluated to see whether he is fit to return to duty, and an email from you can make sure he is given clearance or is deemed completely unsuitable for work within the police force.

You feel a strong desire for Prosecutor Joshua Katz and would like to work more closely with him.

AIDAN KOSTROFF

• Attributes



• Wounds

Serious Wounds (−1 *ongoing*)	Stabilized
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	☐
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☐	*Irrational*	−2 ***Keep it Together***
☐	*Unhinged*	−3 to Disadvantage rolls
		+1 ***See Through the Illusion***
☐	*Broken*	The GM makes a Move

• Who you are

You are a uniformed police officer in Detroit's police department. Even though your job is tough, you enjoy it. You like making a difference and the respect you get from wearing the badge and uniform, as well as the camaraderie with your colleagues. You are married to Amy and your son, Dominic, has just turned four. You live in a semidetached house in a suburb, struggling to manage with everyday life, making ends meet, and maintaining your marriage. You were seriously injured in service by the killer Franklin Mills, and have been on sick-leave since then. You are itching to put your badge back on and prove you are focused and competent, in particular to your colleague, Felicia Jenner, and your State-appointed psychologist, Caitlyn Dehamre. Amy has pleaded with you to look for another job. She is afraid you will be killed in the line of duty, but this is what you live for.

• Connection to Franklin Mills

You were first on the scene at 514 South Waring Street. You received a call about possible trespassing in progress. You were alone in your patrol car on that day. When your knock on the door was unanswered, you peered through a window and saw evidence of a massacre. You called for reinforcements and let yourself into the house, which seemed empty save for the victims. You heard cries from the upper floor. In a wardrobe, you found a young boy, William, who lay weeping with duct tape around his hands and feet, next to the body of a suffocated girl. You took the boy in your arms, but were knocked down from behind while leaving the house. When you came to, you were handcuffed and being dragged into a derelict ship by the perpetrator Franklin Mills – down into the dirty engine room. There in the darkness, the chill, and the oily water, you once again lost consciousness.

• Dark secret

What happened in the engine room haunts you. Nightmares, panic attacks, and hallucinations have become part of your daily life. Handcuffed to rusty machinery, you watched how Franklin Mills carried out some bizarre ritual. He butchered Janice Bedford before your eyes, yet she just wouldn't stop screaming. Not even when she was completely cut open. You were sure you would be killed next, never to lay eyes on Amy and Dominic again. Franklin had violent outbursts and beat you repeatedly, all the while chanting something. The last thing you remember before losing consciousness was him sinking his teeth into the woman's eviscerated heart, tearing off a piece of meat from it, and swallowing it – and all the while she kept screaming.

You woke up at the hospital and soon learned Franklin Mills was apprehended, William was missing, and Detective Felicia Jenner's partner, Clark Glover, had been shot to death with your service pistol. You were released early from hospital, but are still suspended from service whilst undergoing a psychological evaluation. If you pass this, you will return to work with the police force. Keep your mouth shut about what happened down there in the darkness and the woman who refused to stop screaming, even though she was dead. No one would believe you.

• Things in your possession

Suit with a shirt and tie Amy has chosen; you want to make the best possible impression. Thick winter coat of wool, and a scarf Amy knitted. Sturdy shoes. Bag with a coffee thermos and sandwiches. Wallet with $23 in crumpled bills. Keys, wallet with a picture of Amy and Dominic, and smartphone (a 2-year-old model with hundreds of pictures of Amy and Dominic, which Amy sent). You feel naked without your service pistol, but have packed a baton in your bag. Just in case.

• Motivation

Get confirmation/forgiveness from Felicia Jenner.

Prove yourself a stable and competent person to Caitlyn Dehamre.

Have the courage to face Franklin Mills and find out what he was doing in the ship's engine room.

Make sure Amy isn't worried.

The Course of Events

Saturday 22 August 2015

10:10
17 Powell Street

Franklin Mills attacks and beats up Colin Thomas – a former work colleague – in Thomas' home. He wants his weapons, but Colin Thomas has already sold them. Franklin ties Colin up. Finds little more than $100 in cash, and steals Colin Thomas' car – a dark-green, 1998 Ford Contour with the license plate, CHK-4PL8.

11:01 to 11:17
414 Oakwood Street

Franklin Mills is caught on a surveillance camera as he buys duct tape, rope, nails, knives, hammers, and a crowbar at Acme Bolts & Nuts.

12:00 to 15:30
514 South Waring Street

Franklin Mills enters the Bedford family home on 514 South Waring Street via the porch door at the back.

William Bedford, 9, and the neighbor, Lynne Jaskolski, 55, are at home. Lynne has been recruited by the Bedford family as babysitter.

Franklin Mills kills Lynne Jaskolski and holds William prisoner.

During the afternoon, Franklin Mills vandalizes the house. Tears down wallpaper. Burns up William Bedford's toys and other belongings on the floor of the living room area. Thereafter, Franklin Mills cuts off the legs of the family's dog, Zappy.

13:16 to 13:18
17 Powell Street

Colin Thomas, who has escaped, reports the assault and the car theft to the police. An arrest warrant is issued for Franklin Mills and the car is reported stolen.

15:30
514 South Waring Street

Ryan Bedford, 43, is believed to have come home from work at the discount store, Target. Franklin Mills is lying in wait for him. Ryan Bedford is executed under torture-style circumstances.

16:42
514 South Waring Street

Franklin Mills forces William Bedford to phone his schoolmate, Soraya Nadell, and asks if she wants to play.

17:00
514 South Waring Street

Soraya Nadell arrives at the house on her bicycle. Franklin Mills suffocates her in a wardrobe on the top floor of the house.

17:52
514 South Waring Street

Franklin Mills leaves William Bedford tied up in the wardrobe on the house's top floor, along with Soraya Nadell's body, and drives off in his stolen car. He is seen leaving by a neighbor, Jerome Allen, who becomes suspicious. Jerome goes over and knocks on the door, but there is no response. He then calls the police and gives a description of Franklin Mills and the vehicle.

18:15 to 18:30
58 Parsons Street

Franklin Mills parks his car outside St. Patrick Senior Centre at 58 Parsons St, where Janice Bedford (mother), 37, works. He lures her out of the car, knocks her down, and kidnaps her.

18:43
514 South Waring Street

Police officer, Aidan Kostroff, arrives at 514 South Waring Street in response to Jerome Allen's reported complaint. He discovers signs of violence in the house and calls for back-up, and then enters the house to look for survivors and perpetrators.

18:50
514 South Waring Street

Franklin Mills returns to 514 South Waring Street and overpowers Aidan Kostroff. He takes him as hostage and travels southwest in the car, along with William Bedford and Janice Bedford. They drive along St. Ford Street where witnesses lose track of them.

19:01
514 South Waring Street

Detectives Felicia Jenner and Clark Glover arrive at the crime scene on 514 South Waring Street. After discovering the bodies and Officer Aidan Kostroff missing, a State-wide arrest warrant is issued for Franklin Mills. Police patrols are dispatched to his home and his workplace. They follow up on the stolen car report.

20:13
Zug Island

Detective Felicia Jenner learns through Colin Thomas, while former workmates, he and Franklin were involved with dismantling a derelict ship at Zug Island.

20:32
Zug Island

Felicia Jenner and Clark Glover go to Zug Island and discover the stolen vehicle on the pier. Felicia Jenner calls for backup and they board the ship.

20:43 to 20:49
Zug Island

Clark Glover is slain aboard the ship duing a shootout with Franklin Mills, who then locks himself in the engine room. When Felicia Jenner finally gains entrance to the engine room, she discovers Franklin Mills in a catatonic state, along with the unconscious Officer Aidan Kostroff and the body of Janice Bedford. William Bedford is nowhere to be found.

20:49
Zug Island

Police reinforcements, ambulance, and forensic personnel arrive at the ship at Zug Island.

Conclusion

Despite a thorough forensic sweep, Aidan Kostroff's testimony, and a search with dogs, William Bedford's body is never recovered. He is presumed dead, either drowned in the river or on the lower levels of the ship, or hidden away somewhere in the rusty hull where the coal and waste oil hides the smell from the dogs.

Victims

The Bedford family

Ryan Bedford 43 **(Deceased)** Works at Target (discount store). Signs of extreme trauma/torture. *Death attributed to blood-loss.*

Janice Bedford 37 **(Deceased)** Works as an enrolled nurse at St. Colonial Senior Centre (retirement home). Signs of extreme trauma/torture. *Death attributed to blood-loss.*

William Bedford 9 **(Missing, presumed dead)** Son of Ryan and Janice. Signs of trauma at Crime Scene 1. Body not located at Crime Scene 2.

Other victims

Soraya Nadell 9 **(Deceased)** Playmate of William Bedford. Signs of trauma. *Death attributed to asphyxiation.*

Lynne Jaskolski 55 **(Deceased)** Neighbor and babysitter to William Bedford. Signs of trauma. *Death attributed to blood-loss.*

Clark Glover 43 **(Deceased)** Detective. *Death attributed to gun-shot wound.*

Crime Profile Franklin Mills

Name: Franklin Oscar Mills

Race: Caucasian

Sex: Male

DOB: 3/13/1970 **Age:** 45

Height: 6'1" **Weight:** 165

Hair: Brown/Gray **Eyes:** Brown

Home address: 1563 Waterman St. Detroit, MI 48209

State: Michigan

Prior occupation: Welder, Odd-jobber, Construction worker.

Summary:

Franklin Mills grew up in Oakwoods Heights in Detroit. His father, Richard, left the family early and Franklin grew up with his mother, Martha, and his younger sister Lisa. Franklin might have suffered from behavioral disorders, and didn't have many friends. He was known as a problem child, who got into fights, and on two occasions he was forced to change schools.

Franklin ran away from home in 1985. He took several odd jobs in the northern states. On occasion, he got into trouble with the law, mostly for lesser infractions. He was, among other charges, apprehended for assault, theft, car theft, possession of drugs, and making unlawful threats.

The autumn of 1991, Franklin's mother, Martha Mills, was arrested for the murder of her daughter Lisa Mills, Franklin's sister. Martha had locked her up in a wardrobe on the upper floor of the house (514 South Waring Street), resulting in Lisa's death from extreme dehydration, as she was denied food or water over a prolonged period. Martha underwent a forensic psychiatric investigation and was incarcerated at the Long Hill psychiatric hospital. Franklin visited his mother at Long Hill on one occasion. Six months later, Martha Mills took her own life.

Franklin Mills has over the years held sundry jobs within construction, industry, welding, and dismantling. He has mainly stayed around Michigan. Now and then, he has been arrested for petty crimes and has spent brief periods in prison.

On Saturday, August 22, 2015, Franklin Mills returned to his parental home at 514 South Waring Street. There he committed several murders with sadistic features directed against the family who were living in the house. He was eventually apprehended on a derelict ship at Zug Island; discovered in a catatonic state. When he regained the full capacity of his senses, he claimed to have no memory of the events, nor about large chunks of his life. He has gone through a psychological evaluation, but appears unable to understand he has committed the crimes and any possible motives for this.

The forensic evidence (DNA, finger prints, trails of blood, textiles, gunshot residue, footprints) all suggest Franklin Mills' guilt for all attributed crimes.

Criminal record

5/12/1988 Theft, illegal sale of copper conductors

10/10/1989 Assault

8/23/1990 Car theft

12/18/1994 Possession of drugs

2/14/1995 Vandalism

8/07/1995 Assault

6/04/1999 Offensive behavior

2/12/2003 Illegal threat

9/14/2009 Theft

8/22/2015 Murder, kidnapping, theft, assault.

Aidan Kostroff's Report

Aidan Kostroff's report on the intervention on Saturday August 22, 2015

Arrives with patrol car to 514 South Waring Street at 6:43 p.m. Dispatched after a neighbor saw an unauthorized person moving around the Bedford family house and gave the description matching a dark-green 1998 Ford Contour reported stolen earlier during the day.

Does not see any movement on the premises or in the driveway. Starts by walking up and knocking on the front door, checking the door. No reply. Walks around the house on the right side, looks through the window in the living room and sees signs of a burglary, vandalism, and a person who might be seriously injured (later identified as Ryan Bedford) tied-up naked on a chair and covered with blood.

Called for reinforcements and entered the house on his own to determine whether the perpetrator was still there and see whether the injured person was still alive. Checks the pulse of the victim, who appears to have died from his wounds. Secures the bottom floor, but sees trails of blood leading to the upper floor. Also hears sounds of sobbing, as if coming from a child.

Sends another message to the emergency call center and entreats them to speed up the reinforcements.

To the upper floor. Trails of blood on the stairs indicate signs of further violence. Secures the upper floor and discovers a body in the tub in the bathroom (later identified as Lynn Jaskolski). From the wardrobe in the main bedroom, there is the sound of sobbing. Opens the wardrobe. Finds the body of the girl later identified as Soraya Nadell, and William Bedford, who is alive with his hands tied behind his back. William Bedford is in a state of panic. Takes William Bedford, carrying him out of the closet.

While attempting to leave the crime scene, walks down the stairs and is attacked there by Franklin Mills, knocked unconscious with a crowbar.

Wakes up in a dark engine room after elapsed time of unknown length. Handcuffed to a rusty machine, missing his service pistol. Sees Franklin Mills kill a woman (later identified as Janice Bedford). Because of the injuries and the lack of light in the engine room, it is impossible to confirm whether someone else was there. Slips in and out of consciousness.

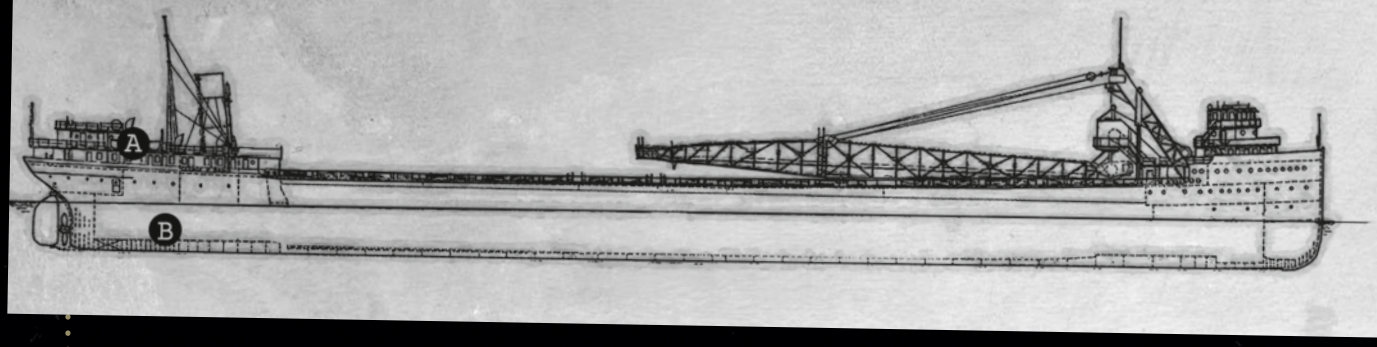
Later wakes up in hospital.

Murder Scene

The ship at Zug Island

A. [The stairwell]: Clark Glover was shot to death in the stairwell on the way down to the ship's engine room.

B. [The engine room]: Janice Bedford was found dismembered and handcuffed. Aidan Kostroff was kept captive and assaulted in the southern part of the engine room. Franklin Mills was found in a catatonic state, leaning against one of the walls, drenched in blood.



Murder Scene

The house on South Waring Street

A. [The porch door] Franklin Mills forces the porch door with his crowbar. It is also by this route he leaves the house.

B. [The living room] Trails of blood from Lynn Jaskolski suggests she was incapacitated here. There are traces of her being dragged through the hall and up the stairs to the upper floor.

In the middle of the living room floor, Franklin burnt up toys and clothes belonging to William Bedford. The wall-to-wall carpet is blackened from fire. Found here was the cadaver of the family dog, which was dismembered and beaten to death.

C. [The kitchen]: Ryan Bedford was found naked and bound to a chair. The feet were nailed to the floor with thick nails. The femoral artery was cut open with a clean incision, leaving him to bleed to death. The well-sharpened knife used for this was found washed-up and neatly placed on a cloth on the sink.

D. [The hall]: The place where Aidan Kostroff was attacked and beaten unconscious as he carried the boy, William, down the stairs.

E. [The bathroom on the upper floor]: Lynne Jaskolski, William's baby-sitter. Brutally assaulted with a crowbar. The assault occurred on the bottom floor, but she was dragged up to the bathroom and drowned in the bathtub – where the body was later found.

F. [Soraya Nadell]: Soraya Nadell, her hands tied behind her back and her mouth and nose taped over, left to suffocate to death in a wardrobe on the upper floor. William Bedford was also tied up in the wardrobe when Aidan Kostroff found him.

THE SUMMIT

THE SUMMIT IS A SCENARIO ABOUT ISOLATION, AND the horrors humans will perpetrate when given a little push over the edge of sanity. The player characters (PCs) lost something, or someone, and all evidence points to an abandoned part of the city, housing a failed, luxury apartment complex. The reasons for the district's dilapidation are the subject of rumour, but the characters soon discover the truth for the area's abandonment. The PCs must endure body horrors and the subjugations of an Inferno cult if they are to summit the high-rise, and retrieve that which is dear to them. This scenario contains the storyline for a one- or two part game, with guidelines for the Archetypes the gamemaster (GM) could incorporate as PCs.

The characters in this scenario could be any cohesive group capable of action and violence. A distressed group of parents looking for their children, a gang from high school venturing into a hostile environment to prove a point, or even a cohort of mobsters attempting to retrieve their boss' briefcase – any group might want to enter the city blocks for their own desperate reasons. Once they enter, of course, leaving may not be an option.

The scenario commences with action. A group of depraved thugs assault the characters, mugging them, kidnapping loved ones in their care, or perhaps merely wounding their pride. The characters immediately have the opportunity to fight back, but at least some of the antagonists escape into their nearby van, speeding off into the abandoned blocks.

In seeking their objective – whether loved ones, wealth, or recovery of pride – the characters must venture into a quietly hostile region of their home city. The district was abandoned several years before under government authority. Citations that the area was geologically unsafe were common, as were the rumours of a prowling cognate of serial killers, rife gang violence, poisons in the water supply, and something in the architecture that drove inhabitants insane. Though the hostility of the region is subtle to start, it grows to a horrifyingly loud crescendo.

At the centre of the blocks is the Monarch Apartment Complex – the district's pride and joy, and flagship building for the city's expansion. The building's failure contributed hugely to the area's abandonment. The characters' investigations throughout the block all point to the building, but gaining entry to the former luxury high-rise is far from easy, and once inside, escape is almost impossible.

Soon, the PCs discover the sacrifices they must make within the Monarch Apartment Complex, and the losses they must suffer in order to reach its summit. They must endure the actions of a violent Inferno cult dedicated to the Lore of Madness and the Death Angel of Power, Thaumiel. The cult inhabits the building, its high priests residing in the penthouse along with the personal magician of Thaumiel – a mortal naming himself "Monarch" and architect of the high-rise. The characters must appease or fight off the murderers, rapists, and savage cultists if they are to stand any chance of reaching the penthouse. Each floor poses a new, horrifying challenge. As they ascend higher and higher, the building descends further into Inferno. Monarch engineered the entire city district to form a natural gateway, with the apartment complex as its nexus.

The Player Characters

The characters in *The Summit* are a group with a shared cause. Each of them must be capable of violence, whether due to their nature, or extraneous circumstances forcing them to aggressive action. The GM should allow the players to choose which of the following groups they want to play. Each group will result in a slightly different telling of the story, as they must weigh up the worth of the summit, and the sacrifices they will be forced to endure.

The Parents. This group of parents are the last out of the school hall following the annual play put on by their children. As the parents are about to depart, having locked up the hall, the cultists emerge from the shadows and snatches the kids. A fight ensues. Even though some children may be saved at this point, the cultists takes the others to the abandoned district. The parents must band together and travel into the desolate city blocks to save their children.

The High Schoolers. This gang of high schoolers are a less-refined Breakfast Club, sharing detention until they're kicked out of school at nightfall. The collection of jocks, malcontents, and juvenile delinquents are about to fight one another when the cultists arrive. They slash the high schoolers' tires, batter each of the youths, and speed off into the night with mocking chicken sounds in their wake. The high schoolers must reclaim their pride and give the cultists a damn good beating, despite knowing they're walking into a clear trap.

The Criminals. The criminals are in the middle of an important deal, exchanging firearms for cases of cash, when the cultists arrive in force and hold both the buyers and sellers at gunpoint. As the cultists attempt to seize both the cash and the weapons, one of the trigger-happy criminals instigates violence. The cult members escape with sufficient weapons and money to warrant the PCs chasing them down to the abandoned part of town. Going back to their boss without either of these things is a guaranteed death sentence.

The Junkies. The junkies do pretty well for themselves, as far as addicts go. That is, until the cult raids their stash house. The cultists' theft of their gear, combined with tales of a much better product's availability in the abandoned sector appeals to the desperate junkies, who lack the money but possess the raw anger to set them on a course of self-destruction.

The Reality TV Crew. A group of hard men and women, recruited for a "Haunted City Challenge" are about to film their stay in a supposedly haunted hotel. That's when the cult arrives to steal the filming equipment and footage recorded earlier in the day. For the sake of their pride, a day's work, and the producer's property, the reality TV crew propose to their stars an alternative venue. The cult members head to the worst part of town, and the documentary is now going to show the characters attempting to recover their lost footage.

In short, this scenario requires a group sufficiently desperate to make their journey to the abandoned district believable. The item or people they seek are "the McGuffin" and it/they will be referred to as such throughout the remainder of the scenario.

Scenario Theme

The Summit is about isolation, violence, and desperation. The GM should keep these concepts at the forefront of her mind while running this scenario. How far will the characters go to prove a point, rescue a loved one, or impress their boss? Will the desperate reality TV stars risk death for higher ratings? Will the junkies sacrifice their limbs for the best fix of their meagre existences? What losses are the characters prepared to take, and what violence will they mete out to get what they want? How does a group cope when they are the only sane individuals in a city of the damned? When they realise how isolated the Monarch Apartment Complex truly is, will they attempt to flee back home, or embrace their new existence as members of the cult?

The key theme is ascension. *The Summit* requires characters to overcome their weakness and fear, along with their rationality and self-preservation instinct. The PCs know their ultimate reward sits atop the high-rise, but will they sacrifice all that makes them human to reach that peak? By ascending to the summit, the characters will have also ascended beyond human frailty and logic, becoming something other as they enter Inferno.

Tips for the Gamemaster

The GM should read this scenario in advance of running, or, if not, keep careful track of characters' locations so she can describe the appropriate scenes they encounter.

Italicised text appears occasionally throughout this scenario. The GM can either read this aloud, or reword it into something appropriate for the scene. Each central scene has associated text in this format.

This scenario is built around the locations and set pieces. The GM should thoroughly read the information pertaining to each scene so she feels comfortable running each segment.

The GM should describe the abandoned district in advance of the game. It's no secret the game will take place in that area. If your group plays within a large city, choose a run-down area of your surrounding urban environment. The blocks have fallen to poverty and ultimately abandonment. Explain how buildings were routinely evacuated due to unusual geological and gas activity, that crime swiftly dominated the area, and after a rash of killings the city council offered to re-house the district's inhabitants. This latter reason was supposed to be temporary, but few moved back to the abandoned blocks. Those who remained vanished or quietly drifted out of touch. For some inexplicable reason, nobody ever mourned or missed the individuals who remained in the district. Sleepers remained ignorant to anything supernatural taking place around the Monarch Apartment Complex, while Enlightened residents sensed something deeply disturbing lingering in the area.

Gamemaster Tips to Keep in Mind:

- Emphasise the cold night, the incessant rain, and the lack of shelter. Despite the frequent vacant buildings in the district, not one has heating, and few have electricity. The characters are still in the city, but it's an urban wilderness.
- Hammer home the characters' reasons for entering the district. If characters feel they could just leave, the tension disappears.
- Inevitably, if the group is comprised of the parents of kidnap victims, or a group who had their property stolen, at least one player will suggest their character calls the police. This call can go ahead, but the police offer a curt response. "*The district was purchased wholesale by a property syndicate after it was abandoned, up to and including the roads, pipes, and local grid. Technically, the police line of jurisdiction is everywhere up to that district. Only the military or FBI could warrant entering, no matter the crime. Our hands are tied.*"
- Emphasise the smell of ozone as the rain hammers down, and the stench of age, sweat, and concrete dust as the characters enter abandoned buildings. When the characters first discover a dead body, take the time to explain the greasiness of its skin, the rank odour emanating from its evacuated bowels, and the thick richness of the blood's scent. Evoke players' memories of the breath of a conjunctivitis sufferer, the taste of soured milk imbibed before its rancidity was realised, or the sweet stink of old menstrual blood or rank smegma. Make the district come alive with olfactory senses.
- The feeling of instability, confusion, and ultimately madness should be placed at the scenario's forefront as the party delve deeper into the district. The cult inhabiting the high-rise dedicate their incantations and rituals to the Lore of Madness, making their appearances and actions unpredictable. Describe an individual to the players in one way, and within the next sentence explain how his face has changed, how his clothes shimmer, how his voice is accompanied by a low wavelength inducing nausea, or how he's just suddenly not there. Play on the characters' perceptions.
- Play music appropriate to search and survival in a hostile city or apartment complex. The soundtracks to *The Warriors*, *High-Rise*, *A Field in England*, *Assault on Precinct 13*, and *Dawn of the Dead* are particularly appropriate.
- Though the Novaville residents are often referred to as "savages" in this scenario, and practice every depravation from rape to cannibalism, they are not mindless. Few are idiotic. Instead, their madness manifests as an insidious wisdom, allowing them to charm and placate before abruptly turning on someone with unexpected violence. Remember to play them in this flexible way, as grunting brutes swiftly lose the sense of horror.

The Summit handles a scenario told in a non-linear fashion, split across two Acts. Act One comprises set pieces that may be encountered in any order, though the characters will need to experience at least three before they can enter the Monarch Apartment Complex. Entering the high-rise signifies the start of Act Two. While challenges exist on every floor of the Monarch Apartment Complex, it is not obligatory for the characters to encounter each one. The more they experience, the greater the likelihood of achieving their objective. However, the chance of brutally losing a connection to reality also increases.

THE SCENARIO

The scenario takes place split across the party's home city and Inferno. The characters may not be able to tell the difference between one and other, by the time they've made the journey.

Several years ago, the city's slums received major gentrification treatment. Where once they were called the Ghettos, they became the Projects. As gentrification concluded, the council dubbed the kilometre square part of the city "Novaville," a series of blocks dedicated to urban rejuvenation, prosperity, and renewed commercial interest in a dying city.

Sadly, change did not take hold in this part of the city long drenched in crime, violence, and depravity. Few wealthy individuals took advantage of the new offices, houses, shops, and recreation centres built specifically for their interests. The stain on Novaville was a permanent one, and no amount of polish removed the that the columns and white-washed walls were built atop dead drug dealers, corrupt cops, and worst of all – the unemployed. Buildings were sold to less desirable clientele, who were determined to make the best of it, despite the city council's rapidly fading interest in the area. As far as the governing bodies were concerned, the project failed as soon as the well-to-do declined involvement despite years of promises to the contrary.

The only parts of Novaville that drew massive interest were the pioneering Monarch Apartments. Built as luxury flats with access to every modern amenity, the Monarch Complex contained not only houses, but a supermarket, a bank, leisure centre, a pool encompassing an entire floor, and cinema, as well as other exciting features. Investments in the building came immediately. Middle class professionals made an exodus from their own parts of the city, to occupy the radical new development.

Once the building hit critical mass, every apartment occupied and service facility manned, things started going wrong in Novaville. Through the design of the apartment complex's architect, the eponymous Mr. Monarch, the district inhabitants immediately began acting strangely. Individuals with no predisposition for crime began committing heinous acts against one another. Property vandalism became commonplace. Muggings, rapes, assaults, and eventually murders spiralled out of control. The police stationed in Novaville adopted an aggressive approach. Routinely, officers handled criminals with deadly violence citing "self-defence" and "pro-active responses." Genuine victims of crimes were told they were wasting time or mocking the police officers. Eventually, the city stepped in and disbanded the precinct for retraining. It was never re-staffed.

Without a police presence, violence ensued unbridled. Any remaining citizens of unsoiled spirit quickly abandoned the district and swiftly put their brief, turbulent experiences in Novaville from their minds. Few these days could be pressed into remembering the district. The people who stayed behind devolved rapidly into territorial savages, fighting wars over buildings and engaging in lethal personal vendettas. Most of these individuals simply disappeared from record. Whether they died, eventually left Novaville, or still remain is unknown, and frankly, the city doesn't care much about the truth. Novaville was a costly project, and remains on city records, but the tenants and buyers within it are simply classed as defaulting on mortgages, rental payments, and taxes. Due to the bureaucratic nightmare of handling all these issues, the city stopped maintaining roads, power, and water leading into Novaville. No fences were erected or roadblocks put in place. The road bridge to Novaville remained in place. Just, nobody travelled there. Everyone could sense there was something *off* about Novaville, and knew to never turn their car on to the bridge. Even criminals avoided the place. Empty as it was, there was nothing to steal and no addicts to buy the drugs they were peddling.

But what of the Monarch Apartment Complex? As Novaville collapsed around it, the high-rise blithely continued on with life. For some reason, despite the chaos surrounding it, no attacks were launched at the building, leaving it an immaculate pillar in a block of hell. Self-contained, housing all amenities a person might want for a satisfied life, the Monarch residents could look down from their balconies and watch the street fights while sipping cocktails and eating canapés. By virtue of their physically high station, the residents – materially no richer than those living in the buildings surrounding them – could look down upon the conflict at street level and ascend to an upper class. Monarch himself shut himself away in his penthouse and only reappeared months later.

Of course, no party lasts forever. As Novaville died, the Monarch Apartment Complex was all that was left. Food began to run out. Nobody came to clean the pool. The building's generator broke intermittently, and nobody knew how to fix it. Water stopped running. The Monarch residents attempted to leave the building on raids and scouting missions, but each time, the surviving Novaville denizens met them with brutal violence. There was no escape. They ate the dogs and started drinking alcohol more than water. Then they turned on each other. Monarch's inhabitants' fought their booze-fuelled, punctual, fierce war every night. They slept off their hangovers during the day. With even the luxury apartments reduced to dilapidation, everyone within Novaville suffered insanity to some degree or other, nobody can recount how the upper levels of the high-rise entered Inferno. In truth, Monarch himself was a cultist of Thaumiel in communion with the Death Angel, who sacrificed Novaville in a calculated bid for power, escaping the district's residents. The configuration of Novaville formed a mass psychic event, with Monarch at its centre. The madness cult consumed the remaining survivors. These days, anyone living in Novaville is a cultist, and anyone within the Monarch Apartment Complex is touched, both physically and mentally, by Inferno. Mr. Monarch and his high priests live in the penthouse, their every need catered by the anarchic masses beneath them.

Now, the cult has decided to spread its reach beyond Novaville's confines. Inferno is chaos, and chaos cannot be caged. The Novaville savages drive to the city's main body and kidnap families, steal provisions, and lure the sane to follow them back to their home territory. Once someone enters Novaville, they always have the option to flee. As soon as someone enters the Monarch Complex, they remain forever Inferno-tainted. All lures go back to the Monarch, in sacrifice to Thaumiel and as a means of infecting more mortals with the cult's unique band of madness.

The cultists brutally murder the unworthy. Any group capable of reaching the summit penthouse is revered, rewarded with their prey to keep or kill, and sent home with blessings. The house, apartment block, or hotel in which they live soon succumbs to the same spiralling madness that originally emanated from the Monarch Complex.

All of the above can be revealed throughout the scenario, if the characters choose to ask Novaville's residents, perform investigations, or piece together clues surrounding the infernal city district.

Threat Escalation

The threat escalates in *The Summit* from the moment the characters enter Novaville. Immediately, the surviving district residents take notice of the interlopers. Faces appear at windows, figures scurry between alleys spreading word of the cityfolk making their way into Novaville, and sporadic attacks and holdups occur.

While the majority of Novaville residents are hostile, it is important to remember they are each insane. Insanity drives Novaville's inhabitants to unpredictable behaviour, so some of the Novaville savages may appear calm, friendly, or even desperate to assist the PCs. Each carries the taint of Inferno however, and extended time in any individual's company ultimately leads to a crime of some kind, whether it's as simple as the denizen stealing a character's wallet, or as convoluted as poisoning a couple of bottles of beer and leaving them farther up the road for the PCs to discover.

As the scenario proceeds, the Novaville residents subconsciously work together to drive the group towards the Monarch Apartment Complex. The tower block is illuminated on select floors, but otherwise only stands out due to its height and blends in to the general malaise of the area. The PCs will encounter at least three scenes outside Monarch before the cult drives them towards the Inferno gateway.

Once inside the Monarch Apartment Complex, escape nears impossibility. All of Novaville's residents gather outside the high-rise, circling the building and engaging in violent orgies as the characters ascend in search of their McGuffin. The building interior poses a host of escalating threats, requiring each character make physical sacrifices before ascending. Spiritual sacrifices are savoured too, but these do not come until the characters pass into Inferno at the 24th Floor.

Escalation Steps

Step One: The scenario commences with combat between the characters and Novaville savages. The savages' intent is to lure a group into Novaville. They do not attack to kill as much as humiliate and cause pain. Their objective is to capture something so important, the group will have no choice but to follow them to Novaville, where the cultists aim to lose them in the labyrinthine alley. The opening scene, ***Ambush***, frames Step One.

Step Two: Arriving in Novaville, the threat escalates through paranoia and isolation. Though the city is visible from within Novaville, lights twinkling in the dark distance, it might as well be the moon. Nothing that occurs in Novaville will summon people from outside it. Nobody is willing to make that journey. Mobile phone signals die as the characters cross the bridge, and though the district initially seems empty, movement out of in the PCs'

peripheries, and "coincidental" mishaps such as a car tire bursting, a ball bouncing into the road, and light flashes in windows up ahead causes unease for the characters. The first scene they will likely encounter once in Novaville will either be ***Breakdown*** or ***Casualty***, either of which should up the ante.

Step Three: Plunging deeper into Novaville, the savages no longer pull their punches, as the test begins to see whether the interlopers deserve the glory of Inferno and the Lore of Madness. If the characters remain in their vehicle, it receives attacks from above and at street level during ***Besieged***, forcing them into the outside world. Supposedly sane residents offer the group brief respite in ***Sanctuary***, until it transpires even they harbour malevolent intent. ***Advice*** presents a scene where the cultists highlight the group's destination. ***Conjuring*** presents the first view into the other worlds, as the PCs discover a macabre scene of sacrifice, the cultists summoning a Creature of Madness into Novaville.

Step Four: The Monarch Apartment Complex presents a sandbox of a different style, as ascent is the only option, but the floors the party visits are up to them. Each presents an escalating vista of horror and increasingly dire experiences. No party can survive a stop off at each of the thirty floors. In ***Orgy*** the cult beyond the high-rise copulate in fierce revelry, preventing escape. Within the tower block, threats keep the party on the move, while static opportunities for sacrifice gift the characters an awakening, at the cost of their physical completeness.

Step Five: The 24th Floor of the Monarch Apartment Complex is in a better state than any below. Despite appearances, the 24th is the opening to Inferno. It acts as a threshold, beyond which the following floors leading up to the penthouse present Inferno's true servants. On these floors, cultists attempt to snatch characters for ritual sacrifice, and the party receives the invitation to participate in the cult's hellish activities. The cultists on these levels freely practice the Lore of Madness, and steadily drive the characters into Inferno's waiting arms in ***Becoming***. If they withstand them and retrieve their McGuffin, the players may feel their characters will be allowed free. Inferno is not an ordered plane in which the denizens follow the rules of good conduct, however. If the characters overpower or resist the cultists, they will be harried all the way from Novaville, likely dying during the escape attempt. A great chase ensues; the conclusion of which is open to the GM.

CENTRAL SCENES

Ambush

The evening is cold, the rain heavy and relentless. Worse than the weather in this uncaring city are the thugs facing you right now. They seemed to appear from nowhere, each of them resembling vagrants covered in sores, stinking like something unwashed for years. Their introduction came as the one with the thickest beard struck your left leg with an iron pipe, and the sallow woman held a wrench across your throat. Before you could react, they were already grabbing your [McGuffin]. *Half a dozen of these bastards, depraved looks in their eyes, made all the more horrifying by the rainfall they ignore as it runs down their faces.*

The man with scars all over his cheeks and forehead beckons you to try him as his short companion bustles your [McGuffin] *into their van.*

The scenario commences as per the descriptive scene, altered accordingly to match the group's nature and reason for being in their location. At this time the ***cultists*** confronting them attempt to humiliate and hurt the group, their chief intent being to steal something valuable from the group – whether a person, something of material worth, or simple pride – and lead the party back to Novaville like lambs to a slaughter.

The cultists do not fear firearms or lethality from the characters, despite only being armed with blunt objects and switchblades. If anything, the PCs' willingness to use deadly force may speak to why the cult is targeting them. If a cultist is killed during the fight, their companions abandon the deceased. Covering up the killing is a problem for the PCs.

The GM should emphasise the attackers' sickly appearances, and their surprising strength despite this. Their eye sockets are deep recesses, their faces mottled, and their hair and beards tangled and thick with mould. Their clothes barely hang together, bound at the seams with brown masking type and silver duct tape. The GM should also focus on the somehow dizzying smells and sounds emerging from the grunting cultists. The sensory manipulations the cultists practice are a simple magic, though they make the PCs' hearts beat faster, mouths go dry, and adrenaline pump.

The characters stand a good chance of incapacitating at least one of the cultists, though their nature will not be clear at this time. The other cultists speed off in their stolen van. Respond with the following to these potential character choices:

- **"We don't really care about being attacked..."** – Emphatically state the importance of what the savages stole. If the players don't take the hint, the savages' van actually breaks down within the characters' sight, forcing the cultists to hijack passing vehicles with their quarry. Whatever it takes to keep the PCs on their tail.
- **"Let's call the cops!"** – The operator encourages the character to trail the attackers until the police arrive, due to their response being stretched by the rash of crime throughout the city. The cultists cross the old bridge into Novaville, where the signal dies. If the PCs advise the operator that their attackers have headed in that direction, there is silence before the operator calmly informs them that the police cannot operate in Novaville at this time, and complaints should be directed at the city council. The cops are not coming.
- **"Interrogate that bastard who attacked us."** – The cultist's eyes roll wildly in his head as if loose in their sockets. Soon, he fixes on the group and starts a hacking laugh. He explains their attackers are headed to Novaville, and the McGuffin will never be seen again. In the case that the characters' pride was the victim, the cultist makes a more cutting threat, explaining that no one dares entering Novaville, and due to the PCs' cowardice, they won't either. His insulting words should compel the characters to journey to Novaville.
- **"Let's enlist the boss/our friends/stop for a chat."** – It is incumbent on the GM to emphasise the short time frame the characters have before they lose their quarry. If they're criminals, the boss tells them they're dead if they don't return what's his. Friends and family act with incredulity if asked for assistance, but promise to get there as soon as they can. This puts their lives at risk in ***Backup*** below.

Ultimately, the characters must identify the gang heads into Novaville. If the players have not already been made aware of the failed district, now would be a good time for the GM to introduce them to some of the tales surrounding the city's embarrassing secret.

Bridge

You know where this bridge leads, though it's not a part of the city you've visited before. Nobody goes to Novaville. The place is a dump. Even the criminals avoid it. There's nothing to steal, nobody to shake down, and no house habitable enough to appeal even to the lowest vagrant. Everyone affords Novaville a wide berth. The news reported disturbing geological trends beneath the area some years back, with ten buildings collapsing before recovery teams could stabilise them. There were also reports of gas leaks, contaminated water, and flash floods hitting buildings near the river. In short, the area was abandoned and nobody saw fit to reclaim it in these times of economic hardship. The van you were pursuing disappears over the obstruction-littered bridge and into the district-that-never-was, beckoning you to enter a ghost town within eyeshot of civilisation.

This scene is the calm before the storm. If the characters are driving, they must navigate roadblocks, barriers, and holes in the tarmac on their way into Novaville. With every swerve, it's as if the distance between here and home grows by a mile. There are no gaping cavities waiting to pull the characters' vehicle into the river, though it's possible they may get stuck on a toppled traffic obstacle or collapsed piece of fencing. Most of this equipment is nearly a decade old, though parts could be salvaged to make rusty, jagged weapons, if the PCs are that way inclined.

Describe the approach of shadowy Novaville in the near distance, and the fade of lights behind the group. Their journey across the bridge sees their mobile signals drop and then disappear, along with the sound of traffic, and all signs of life. They are entering the unknown.

Novaville

Novaville. Despite the name, the new town is hardly the size of a village, barely a kilometre square. The ground in Novaville rises and dips unnaturally, as if the earth itself tried to shake the buildings off their foundations. The buildings themselves show the signs of dilapidation common to the abandoned sections of any urban jungle, though their degradation appears premature. Novaville was only evacuated within the last ten years, you're sure, but this place looks like it was bombed in the Blitz and abandoned to the elements for half a century. Once-rich structures hang tragically limp over roads and pavements, walls collapsed to the ground, rooves caved in, and windows smashed. You spy the spire of a church, the bells in which will never again toll. You pass a theatre, the doors to which are collapsed to the ground, papers, stalls, and seats discarded out into the road as if a great explosion blew the building inside out. A police precinct stands mostly intact, though no lights emanate from within. This place is a ghost town. The only signs of life come from the disappearing tail-lights of the van you pursued here.

Novaville should appear to the characters like a ghost town, though it's anything but. Novaville crawls with a cruel form of life. The savages who dwell here were once normal men, women, and children, who now exist in a twisted simulacrum of life. Some inhabitants know they serve Inferno and the roiling gate within the Monarch Apartment Complex, but most remain ignorant. They are insane because they are. Their mentality does not provide room for the possibility that there may be any other form of living.

As the PCs pass through Novaville, describe the flitting movement between buildings, the weird undulation of the ground, the occasional flash of light from building windows on opposite sides of the streets. The dense rainfall makes everything difficult to discern with accuracy. The characters may well interpret the flashes as signals between Novaville's inhabitants. Attempts to intercept the runners or confront the observers should not fail, but will be difficult. The Novaville inhabitants wish to avoid notice at this time. Any seized by the PCs will describe how Novaville is a utopia, where everyone knows their place. They deny all knowledge of the cultist attackers unless coerced, in which case they will point towards the Monarch Apartment Complex as the likely destination. They will also advise that entry is impossible until the cult allows it.

This scene provides the players an opportunity to explore a district torn apart by violence. It is a sandbox, but the GM should keep them focused on their reasons for coming here. The cultists pursued by the characters dump the van and split up across Novaville. This allows the introduction of various horrifying locations throughout Novaville, free for the GM to describe and fill with encounters. Note that as this is an early section of the scenario, the group should not yet be attacked at full-force or encounter anything outwardly supernatural.

- **The Queen Mary Theatre** – Novaville's theatre has been entirely emptied of seats, stands, and props, all of which are dumped outside in front. This detritus forms a thick arch surrounding its blasted open doors. The clear auditorium is a depressed pit, the stage caved in. Thick blood has pooled and congealed within the pit's centre. From the milky froth atop, it would appear some of the blood is fresh, though the stains surrounding the middle are old. Flies and maggots are thick here.
- **The Multi-Storey Carpark** – The six-storey carpark was supposed to service any visitors attending Nova Mall, but has now been repurposed as a meat factory. The meat is that of humans. Bodies are hung on long chain hooks on each storey, the different age groups hung on different floors. The bodies are air-dried. Being subjected to the elements leaves the carcasses rotten and in pieces, but Novaville savages don't seem to mind. Various butchers stalk the floors, testing the meat and engaging in conversation with any still-breathing bodies. The PCs may decide to unhook a carcass, only for it to react angrily. In their madness, these people choose to be eaten.
- **The Nova Mall** – Nova Mall was supposed to be an experimental structure of glass, iridescent bulbs, and automated servers. It collapsed as quickly as everything else in Novaville, though in certain parts of the glass worm (as the Novaville residents now call it), shrines dedicated to whirring robotic waiters and appliances still exist. The faithful scour Novaville for batteries to keep their gods alive, and believe the automatons tell them to steal, kill, and fornicate for their pleasure. The faithful are incredibly territorial,

but may assist the characters. They hold the Monarch Complex in low regard. The Nova Mall actually acts as a small portal into Metropolis, but not enough of one to affect the greater part of Novaville.

- **The Police Precinct** – Station 19 is an oddity in Novaville, as the building stands mostly intact, and has not been entirely gutted. A Novaville savage mans the front desk clad in the scraps of a police officer's uniform, and holds up anyone who attempts to gain entry. This maniac – Gil Bronson – was once a cop in Novaville, who refused to leave when the rest of the police were pulled out. He still holds the key to the arms locker, and defends the Precinct like his own private castle. He's somewhat saner than his peers, but is bigoted, violent, and does not believe in innocence. He automatically suspects characters of any minority background as an undesirable element, and will shoot first if he detects any suspicious movement from such individuals.
- **St. Peter's** – Novaville's church was assigned a priest, but never received a congregation. None of the district's inhabitants exhibited a single bone of religion, until Inferno exerted its influence. Father DiMartino fully embraced worship of the Lore of Madness, and regularly sends tithes and reports back to his superiors regarding the city's strong faith, along with bags of scrap. The Church is very concerned about DiMartino, but has yet to send a representative to investigate. Father DiMartino leads the Novaville savages' belief, though he's never stepped inside the Monarch Apartment Complex. He never sleeps, and performs constant baptisms of his congregation. DiMartino's baptisms consist of forcing savages' faces into liquid faeces until they start to drown, before pulling their heads up by the hair and making them drink from a chalice filled with polluted water. He earnestly believes human effluence is purified, his insanity manifesting as a copromania. He will eagerly attempt to give the same benediction to seized characters.
- **WyrdWood Restaurant** – Once a large family restaurant, the WyrdWood is now a place for savages to communally gather and eat whatever pooled foodstuffs they've been able to procure. It also doubles as a primitive gladiatorial arena, as the alphas fight for choice scraps, generally leaving nothing for their peers. Feeding time takes place throughout day and night. Alphas don't tend to remain alphas for long if they stay in the WyrdWood, as the families cheated out of food gang up on their stronger cousins and devour them. If the PCs come here, they'll be expected to donate food or become nourishment for the savages in attendance.
- **The Ding-Dong Inn** – A value hotel, now used for birthing, child rearing, and procreation, all under one revolting roof. The building steadily rots from damp rising through its foundations. The stench of afterbirth is thick here, and when mixed with the cloying mould from the walls, contributes to nausea for anyone not used to the odour. The mothers and midwives in the Ding-Dong act friendly towards visitors, as they're always on the lookout for more doctors. Failing that, they're always on the lookout for clothes for their patients, inventory to barter with the alphas, and meat to trade with the butchers. The children in the Ding-Dong are violent creatures. Not used to concealing their aggressiveness, and fully affected by the Inferno gateway, they lash out at any intruders with nails, teeth, and whatever rudimentary weapons they can get their hands on.

The PCs can visit many locations around Novaville. The overriding sense should be that this district has fallen to barbarism, though the reasons for doing so should not be clear. Residents can be charming, in the main, though they harbour psychotic intentions. If the PCs decide to visit multiple locations – and may do so, as the cultists they're tracking split up across Novaville – it should take at least three stops to discover the Monarch Apartment Complex is the district's chaos nexus.

Distance

It's only now that you notice the distance between your present location and the part of the city from which you travelled to Novaville. It seems farther away than it should. The lights from skyscrapers and offices still twinkle in the dark of night, but they seem dimmer and more intermittent than they should. The longer you stare, the farther away they appear to move, even though you are motionless. You almost feel like paying attention to your origins will make it more difficult to return.

A small scene to be placed at any appropriate point in Novaville sets the players up with the reality that the entire district is succumbing steadily to Inferno. Though the high-rise is Inferno's focus, the area draws all inhabitants into the plane whether they're aware of it or not.

Any attempts from characters to flee at this point should seem unusually hindered, at first by distance, and then by labyrinthine streets, obstacles in the road, roads leading to turns that are suddenly blocked off by a building that wasn't there before, and ultimately, a lack of access to the bridge.

If fleeing is truly what the players want for their characters, they can do so, though this should be at great physical and spiritual cost, as Novaville's inhabitants attempt to lynch the cowards and they lose whatever was taken from them.

Breakdown

Bang! You were attempting to be careful, but something springs into view out of the rain and pierces both front tires. Worse, whatever it is has lodged in the wheels, preventing your forward progress in this vehicle.

The Novaville savages lay traps across the roads throughout their small district. Stingers, potholes contained spikes, small explosives, and trenches are commonplace. If the characters are careless, they run into one of these hazards, though they should have the opportunity to avoid it.

The aftermath of the vehicle breaking down is either a gang of savages approaches the vehicle with hostile intentions, forcing the characters to fight or flee (perhaps to one of the locations named in the ***Novaville*** scene). If the GM prefers, a savage might approach with offer of assistance, which would take the group to ***Sanctuary***.

Casualty

You are being so careful driving, moving slowly despite what's at stake, not trusting the road or the rain. The one thing you can't control is the human element. From the corner of your eye you see a blur of motion, and SLAM, the front of your vehicle collides with someone attempting to run across the road.

The person who threw herself in front of the car is a distraction. She sacrifices herself – breaking her hip – so a gang of her friends can reach the stopped car and gut it of its worth. The savages do not stop to chat with or harass the characters, swiftly going to work on stripping the vehicle down completely. They split up throughout Novaville with their prizes, and do not attempt to claim the casualty in the road.

If the PCs attempt to nurse the woman, they find her name is Edie. She's as addled as the other Novaville inhabitants, but will tell the characters where to find safety when the hungry ones come calling. She suggests the Nova Mall if the characters carry any electronic devices, which they can offer to the automotive gods as tribute, or the Police Precinct, if the group promises to behave.

Besieged

For a time, it seems remaining in the vehicle is the safest option. You stay dry, and out of reach the bizarre residents of a place you thought abandoned. It's only now you peer through the torrential rain and see the crowd pouring down the road and out of alleys towards your car, holding picks, planks, hammers, pieces of rock, and lumps of metal. They skulk towards your vehicle like curious creatures at a zoo, but it's clear what they intend to do to you if they catch you.

The characters are on the run again. This should be the first time the Novaville inhabitants' overwhelming madness and aggression should become clear to the players. This many ***cultists*** in close proximity seems to make the rain warp into spirals, the ground shudder, and lights blink weird colours throughout the sky. The Lore of Madness affects the characters, potentially bewildering them for long enough so the pack can approach.

The PCs can attempt to fight off the cultists, but they are far too many. Their insanity prevents cowardice. None of the savages will flee just because the man beside them has fallen. However, a cultist may retreat if a friend falls and she can procure something from his body. Characters may play to the capricious attitudes these servants of Inferno display.

If the characters are foolish enough to stand their ground unarmed, the cultists do not feel them worthy of the Monarch Apartment Complex. They will instead take the group the Multi-Storey Carpark for hanging, or the Queen Mary Theatre for ritual sacrifice as the audience watches.

Sanctuary

Every one of the Novaville inhabitants has appeared mentally unhinged, except for this figure in a window hastily beckoning you towards her building before ducking beneath her window frame in case someone sees. The small apartment building looks to have been fire gutted some time ago. The ash still sticks to the walls, despite the incessant rain. The woman – a thin, pasty individual with clumps missing from her hair – ushers you into her flat before closing the door. "Thank God," she says, as she hangs a heavy cloth over the broken window. "You're the first sane people I've seen in years."

Pam is one of many spiders in Novaville. The spiders lure prey into their web, and feed on them at leisure, spiritually as well as physically. Despite her ill appearance, she betrays none of the tell-tale signs of mental imbalance so prevalent in Novaville. In fact, she appears reassuringly panicked and upset by her situation. This is all a lie to get her guests to let their guard down.

Pam assures the group that once night passes, she will assist them in looking for whatever it is they lost. She promises that no crimes take place in Novaville at night, and that they should spend the time resting. She shows them her bedroom – a strangely comfortable room, despite the silverfish skittering about and damp cushions – and suggests they get some sleep.

She attempts to feed them cups of tea from a pot she boils over a fire made from burning carpet remnants. The tea is poisoned with a heavy sedative. If the characters take her up on her kind offer, one of them wakes to find her cutting off the lower half of his numb leg, the blood gushing out despite the rubber hoses she uses for binding. He is unable to scream at first, and can only moan mildly. If he attempts to make too much noise, she positions a knife over the neck of another PC, and gives the choice of continuing to emit noise or losing a friend.

If the characters are aggressive with Pam, she plays the role of victim, offering anything in her power to give. The one thing she won't do is name the Monarch Apartment Complex. That is, unless a male is prepared to give her a child. Like many spiders, Pam wants nothing more than to spawn, and the arrival of healthy males sets off her maternal instinct for the first time in years.

Advice

The savage, who until now has given an air of psychopathic aggression, calms and grins at you. He has no teeth. "You've done well to survive, you know? If you want your quarry, you'll find it in the Monarch Apartment Complex penthouse. Getting to the top will require much sacrifice. More than you'll be prepared to give."

At a critical point, the characters discover the Monarch Apartment Complex is their fated destination. If they approach the Complex at a premature point in the scenario, the number of ***cultists*** surrounding it make access near-impossible, unless the PCs are prepared to dress as the savages. Even then, they need to act with lethal aggression to blend in completely. No savages push past one another without lashing out with a knife or pipe.

The cultist who conveys Monarch's location abruptly screams and burns in a pyre of black flames originating in his stomach. The Death Angel Thaumiel wants the characters, but has no time for treacherous cultists. His cabal of high priests, who dwell throughout the apartment complex, mete out punishment to other cultists who fail the being's wishes.

Conjuring

You see the Monarch Apartment Complex clearly for the first time, as the rain briefly abates. Lights dot the 30-storey high building, which appears to lean precariously towards you. It takes you some time to realise the building curves forwards like a bent finger, though it resembles more the brutalist architecture of the 1970s than anything modernist. At one point, this complex might have been an innovation in building. Now it's as ruined as any other part of this district, though it's difficult to ascertain the full damage on a building so tall. Just staring gives you vertigo, and you struggle to keep your footing. It's as if the buildings surrounding the Monarch contort and writhe, and the savages on the street flit in and out of view, as if existing one moment, and not the next.

A gathering of these Novaville denizens appears to be clad in veils of different colours. They burn red incense and carry candles of different colours, burning despite the rain. The group members walk in a circle and howl intermittently as they jerk and twitch violently. A formless lump of clay between them starts to grow and writhe into existence, eyes and lips opening along the length of its tall, broad body; phalluses dangling from mouths before being slurped up and replaced with fingers attempting to pry from every suckering orifice. This creature of madness roils from within the summoning circle in your general direction.

The characters' first view of the Monarch Apartment Complex may also be their first introduction to magic, as the Inferno ***cultists*** summon a ***Creature of Madness***. While they do this to stop the characters, this is a regular habit of Novaville's residents. The Death Angel Thaumiel wants Novaville to descend into the kind of bedlam he prefers to rule. Creatures of Madness roll around the district constantly, driving the more lucid residents into greater depths of insanity. The Creature of Madness will attempt to drive the characters into fits of insanity, and unless suitably distracted by bright lights, riddles, or singing, it will attempt to devour anyone who resists.

If the PCs approach the building before the summoning (it's a seven-hour ritual started earlier that day), the great number of cultists surrounding the Monarch act with hostility against the perceived ritual disruptors. They approach with bared fists and light clubs, wielding daggers and sharpened pieces of scrap metal.

Once the Creature of Madness departs, or is destroyed, the cultists part to allow the characters entry to the building foyer.

Orgy

As the last of you steps over the threshold into this pulsating edifice of a building, you catch movement out the corner of your eye. The cultists beyond the front doors are disrobing. Dozens appear, and then dozens more, all converging on the building. None enter or pay you any notice. Instead, they aggressively handle one another and commence a brutal orgy, routinely swapping partners and breaking into fights until arousal sets in again.

If the PCs attempt to leave the building, the ***cultists*** try to ensnare them in the orgy. Ultimately, this will not go well for them. If they decide to play along, they find physical engagement with the cultists spreads the district's madness like a disease. Any characters foolish enough to travel this path become psychotic.

Monarch

The high-rise stretches dizzyingly above you. Despite years of decay, the spiral stair leading to the top floor stands intact, and the lights above the lifts intermittently flicker to and from life. Standing this low down feels oppressive, and claustrophobic. You are aware of the sheer weight of concrete, glass, and metal above you, and how one seismic shift could result in your absolute destruction. It becomes difficult to breathe, and you force yourself to stare at the floor. Looking up in this place seems to contribute to the madness.

The floor plan ahead of you details the once-opulent building, bedecked with nearly 1,000 apartments, leisure facilities, and an entire floor dedicated to a swimming pool, bank, shops, and hairdressers – even a driving range. If you lived somewhere like this, there would hardly be a reason to leave. A low thrum throughout the building breaks your wonderment and brings you to your knees. This entire structure induces nausea.

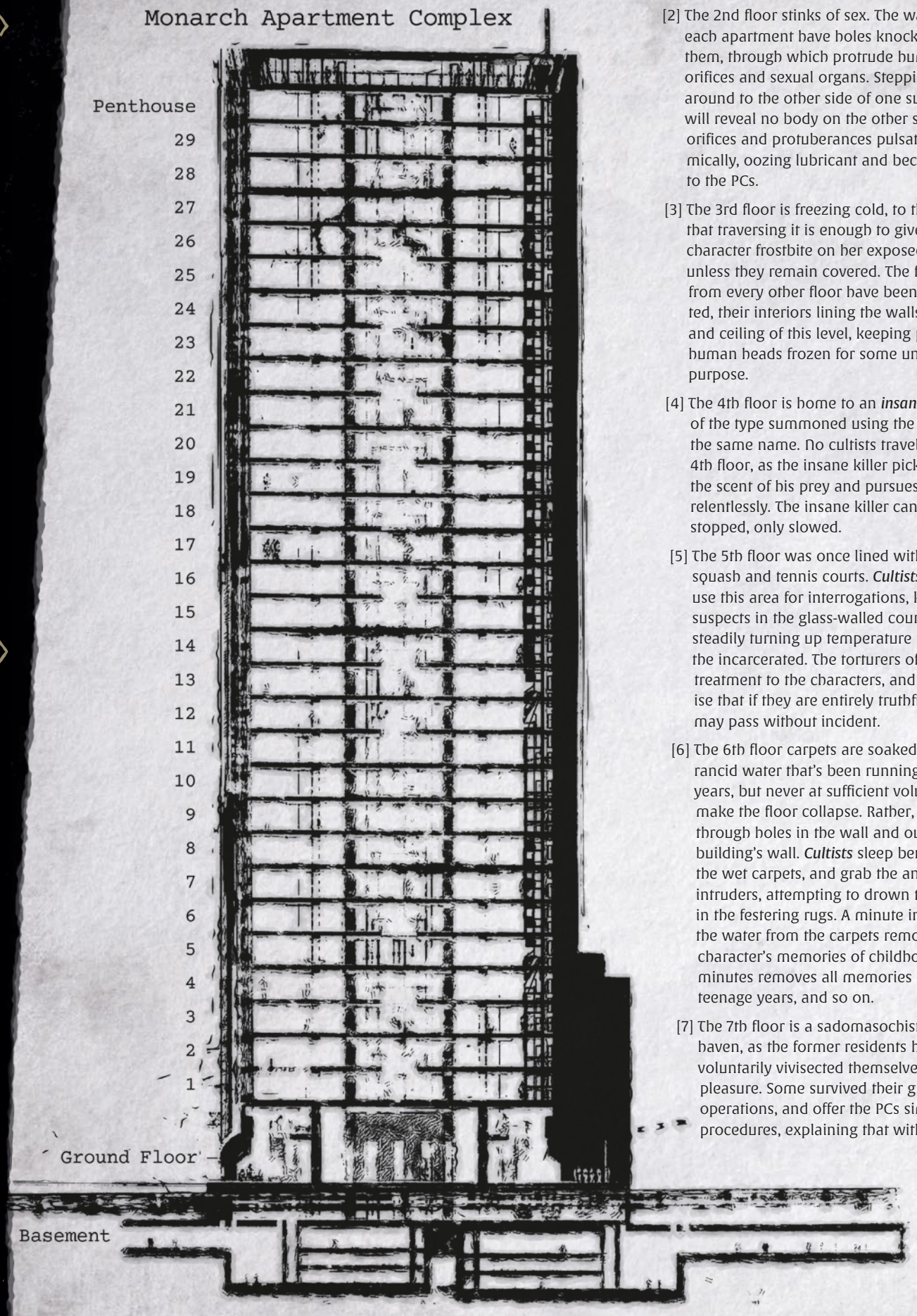
The Monarch Apartment Complex houses the best of Novaville, both in terms of preserved architecture and facilities, and the most lucid denizens. Lucidity does not imply rationality, however. The ***cultists*** who dwell in the Monarch are those who have visited Inferno, encountered an aspect of Thaumiel, and returned; now possessed by malevolent creatures or merely enlightened as to the Death Angel's existence. These lucid psychopaths wish to spread their madness across the city via capable vessels, and act as high priests. Monarch demands it. As Novaville embraces misrule, Monarch finds it easy to exert power in the name of Thaumiel. Few can reach the penthouse and true enlightenment, however.

The many floors of the building can be accessed from the stairs and the lifts. The lifts are unreliable, and will only transport individuals to the penthouse once each traveller has sacrificed something to the building. A sacrifice in wider Novaville does not count – the loss must occur within the Monarch itself. Therefore, the stairs are the less costly route on the face of it, but each floor poses dangers. Murderous cultists, packs of serial killers, warped machines, Creatures of Madness, environmental horrors, and traps designed to cause as much pain as a human might endure dot the floors.

The ascent to the summit is extremely arduous, and characters may die en route. However, if all the PCs die, they will find themselves back in the lobby. Now, however, they are trapped in Inferno. The Monarch Complex exists outside Time and Space, a black void outside leading to nothing and no one. The characters may reemerge alive, into reality, but must make the Sisyphean journey again and again to do so.

For those attempting the ascent, the following list chronicles the potential encounters on each of the twenty-nine floors prior to the penthouse. Not all need be experienced, but any the GM wishes to use should be embellished as appropriate:

[1] On the 1st floor, ***cultists*** in cages too small for their bodies beg for release. Their ***jailer***, a man in a full rubber suit, will release a cultist if one of the characters agrees to get in a cage with him for one hour, and become subject to his unusual pleasures.



[2] The 2nd floor stinks of sex. The walls to each apartment have holes knocked into them, through which protrude human orifices and sexual organs. Stepping around to the other side of one such wall will reveal no body on the other side. The orifices and protuberances pulsate rhythmically, oozing lubricant and beckoning to the PCs.

[3] The 3rd floor is freezing cold, to the point that traversing it is enough to give a character frostbite on her exposed digits unless they remain covered. The freezers from every other floor have been gutted, their interiors lining the walls, floor and ceiling of this level, keeping piles of human heads frozen for some unknown purpose.

[4] The 4th floor is home to an ***insane killer***, of the type summoned using the spell of the same name. No cultists travel to the 4th floor, as the insane killer picks up the scent of his prey and pursues them relentlessly. The insane killer cannot be stopped, only slowed.

[5] The 5th floor was once lined with squash and tennis courts. ***Cultists*** now use this area for interrogations, keeping suspects in the glass-walled courts while steadily turning up temperature to bake the incarcerated. The torturers offer the treatment to the characters, and promise that if they are entirely truthful, they may pass without incident.

[6] The 6th floor carpets are soaked in rancid water that's been running for years, but never at sufficient volume to make the floor collapse. Rather, it pours through holes in the wall and out the building's wall. ***Cultists*** sleep beneath the wet carpets, and grab the ankles of intruders, attempting to drown them in the festering rugs. A minute inhaling the water from the carpets removes a character's memories of childhood. Two minutes removes all memories of her teenage years, and so on.

[7] The 7th floor is a sadomasochistic haven, as the former residents here voluntarily vivisected themselves for pleasure. Some survived their grisly operations, and offer the PCs similar procedures, explaining that with an

open abdomen, forearm, or inner thigh, they may pass by freely.

[8] The 8th floor is now a crèche for the cultists' favoured children, who all sit attentively, watching the ***cultists*** perform a puppet show using deceased children no longer favored by the cult. Transit requires the characters assume the role of puppet masters, and tell an amusing stories with the rotting bodies.

[9] The 9th floor appears normal at first appearance, dotted with immaculate seeming apartments, until ***Creatures of Madness*** burst from the doors and harass the PCs around the building with threats of madness or consumption.

[10] The supermarket on the 10th floor is home to empty shelves and several tins of dog food that the building's resident opted not to eat, choosing to eat their dogs instead. The 10th floor houses several checkout staff, despite the lack of stock. Each poses riddles to anyone who wishes to pass by the floor. This trick would be easily overcome, except each checkout assistant speaks a gibberish language roughly comparable to Latin. If any characters understand the languages, they might solve the riddle. If they fail, the checkout assistants rise from their stations armed with carving knives and tin openers, intent on opening up the PCs.

[11] The 11th floor is bedecked in occult paraphernalia. Incense burns, the acrid scent of charred skin fills the floor, and a ***cultist*** resembling a New Age guru dances through apartments, constantly appearing in the group's periphery. As the characters attempt to make their way across the floor, his booming voice makes an offer: If one of them is prepared to burn the flesh from their hands, they shall be allowed to pass safely.

[12] The 12th floor has been converted to a labyrinth of narrow, unlit corridors, lined with exposed razor blades. Before entering the maze, a crude signs advertises that the character who attaches a part of his intestines to a hook below the sign and leads his party through will ensure his companions come to no harm.

[13] The 13th floor was once the building's bank. A single ***cultist***, still dressed formally despite her surroundings, asks the characters if they would make a deposit. Specifically, she requires a pound of flesh from at least one character. If they refuse, she deigns them overdrawn, and incants a spell that causes rapid flesh mutation and multiplication on her target, before disappearing. The vaults then empty a shower of fetid flesh.

[14] The 14th floor apartments are dizzying and hypnotic. The peeling wallpaper scrawled with sigils and pentagrams causes any PCs attempting to make their way through to relive their worst nightmares, before taking them to empty windows on the same floor. It takes all the willpower they have to not jump.

[15] The 15th floor is dominated by a swimming pool crawling with frothy pollution. The water is a foul brown-grey colour, and unidentifiable chunks of meat bob on its surface. The floor has subsided, and the only way beyond the 15th floor is by wading or swimming through the water. Doing so painfully melts clothes onto skin; however, if the swim is performed nude, no ill effects occur.

[16] The 16th floor flashes with strobe lights, as if the apartments were locked in some kind of rave. No music plays except for a rising and sinking hum of sickening monotone. The longer the PCs remain on this vacant floor, the worse their eyesight becomes. This floor is treacherous to navigate, as doors are papered over. The way out will only reveal itself after one of the characters loses sight in both eyes.

[17] The 17th floor looks like an after-party just took place. Coffee tables covered in wine bottles, ashtrays filled with cigarettes, and small trays with lines of cocaine on them dot the entire floor, as 1970s music plays on a vintage record player. Any characters who interact with the artefacts on this floor gains forty years in age.

[18] As the doors open onto the 18th floor, the groans and grunts of sex fill the air, along the intoxicating odour of cheap perfume. Bodies rut on the floor from wall to wall, forcing the characters to climb over them or through them. The ***cultists*** indulging in this revelry wish to spread their activities to any intruders. At least one PC must submit to a sexual act if the rest are to pass unmolested.

[19] The former restaurant floor, the 19th floor remains weirdly intact. ***Cultists*** dine richly on unidentifiable meals. They do not accost travellers, strangely, but do toast them. If the PCs engage with any of the normal-seeming diners, they find the restaurant serving dried or marinated long pig organs (depending on preference.) Engaging with any of the diners is accepting an invitation to eat, and refusal results in the characters being hunted throughout the building by outraged cultists.

[20] The 20th floor once housed leisure facilities, but is now dedicated to memories. The cultists have pinned up old photos of their families in the squash courts and gymnasium, along with clippings from magazines. A dizzying mist floats throughout this floor. When the PCs make contact with it, countless internal voices tell the characters that if they put a photo on the wall, they may pass. Doing so completely removes the photographed people from reality, along with memory of them.

[21] The luxurious 21st floor is now used as a garbage pile for all the building's refuse. The wide staircase landing and elevator shaft invite those from upper floors to just throw their rubbish down. If the PCs attempt to navigate the trash, they find the refuse withers and putrefies anything touching it for more than a few minutes. The only safe away around the trash heap is via the balcony, which stretches around the entire floor. The balcony is very precarious now, however, and the building's madness compels those walking the outside to step into the air.

[22] The 22nd floor houses several discarded battery packs, while sparks spit from broken devices latched to the walls. A slowed down voice speaks on repeat, stating "the gods beyond require a sacrifice from your number; name your sacrifice." The PCs may proceed without naming anyone, but if they do, the namer is ensnared by a sudden flurry of electrical cables and burned to a crisp. Thaumiel enjoys sinners.

[23] The 23rd floor buzzes with bugs, as the building's drainage long ago backed up and evacuated here, coating the walls and floor. Bodies remain stuck, drowned in coagulated raw sewage. Trudging through the filth opens up sores on the travellers' skin, infecting them rapidly. While the PCs may not discover their diseases until days later; they are infected with viruses and bacteria both mundane and supernatural, which take a toll on both their physical and spiritual wellbeing.

[24] The 24th floor looks out of place in this building, as all working equipment from other apartments has been stacked here in ordered piles, making a floor filled with ritually erected pillars of toasters, televisions, games consoles, and microwaves. This floor conveys no ill treatment and demands no sacrifice. It is just an oddity.

[25] The 25th floor has recently been refurbished. Somehow, a new carpet has been laid down. The carpet covers around a dozen gaping holes, except those pits do not lead to the relatively safe 24th floor. Anyone unlucky enough to fall into a hole is wreathed in carpet and transported directly into the writhing maw of a massive Creature of Madness (***The Thing Beneath the Floor***) infesting the entire floor.

[26] From the 26th floor up, a bitter smell of blood, dried waste, and sulphur fills the air. The level is the communal living area for all "enlightened" ***cultists***. Many sleep here, and if awoken, attempt to seize the PCs for participation in a sacrificial ritual. The Madness cultists do not seek to slaughter the living, but wish to destroy the sane mind.

[27] The stench on the 27th floor is worse than the preceding floor. The vents belch acrid, toxic fumes, and the ***cultists*** on this floor all wear makeshift masks. The walls on this level are festooned with maps of the city and the country, with marks notating where the cult has spread. If the cultists on this floor detect the characters don't match their numbers, they will attempt to seize the characters and force their faces to the poisonous, corroding gas emanating from the air ducts.

[28] The gas from the 27th floor dissipates here, and is replaced with the rank stench of death. The air is thick with the sound of incessant buzzing. The characters must wade through clouds of flies and bluebottles, as they step over, on, and through bodies ritually sacrificed on the floor above and dumped here. Chanting can be heard from above.

[29] The bloodletting floor is where aspirant cultists who fail the tests of Madness come to die. The 29th floor houses pedestals in each apartment, where ***cultists*** are alternately fucked, tortured, or murdered over the plinths, in all manner of angles and methods. Blood fills large bowls at the bottoms of these plinths, from which ***Creatures of Madness*** lap the spillages. Chanting from above is even louder. Cultists seize any characters spotted here, declaring them failures to the cult. A sacrifice attempt follows.

[30] The penthouse is the home of the building's owners – high priests, Thaumiel's honour guard, adherents to Inferno, and – of course – Monarch himself. They dress in expensive suits, smart dresses, and drink expensive whiskey instead of blood. The characters' quarry is in the roof garden adjacent to the penthouse, overlooking Novaville. Except, Monarch and his party will not allow characters to pass without a test.

Becoming

The crystal doors to the penthouse swing open. Before you is the first clean, sweet smelling room you've encountered since arriving in Novaville. This is the most ostentatious luxury suite you've ever seen. The carpet is plush and soft, a chandelier hangs from the ceiling, and a string quartet plays a soft tune, filling the air with beauty. Surrounding the room are art pieces and beautiful humans, posed as if sculptures. Some of the art pieces appear to be originals, liberated from some museum. The walls move like flames, and give off a comfortable warmth absent from the rest of this building.

The penthouse cultists look positively urbane compared to what you've just endured. They seem to converse, but in a low warbling moan that could be a form of chant. One – a man in a pinstripe suit – stops his chanting to raise a smoking pipe to his lips, taking a puff before continuing his contribution to the incantation. They each seem so relaxed, sat in their chairs, looking at one another lovingly.

Suddenly, the chanting stops. The Pinstripe Man asks you what it is you've endured to come this far into Hell.

If each of the characters has lost something on the journey to the penthouse, the pinstriped cultist – Monarch – nods and slowly applauds, his peers joining in. He then makes an offer. He can undo all the insanity they've endured, and introduce them to an enlightened form of Madness; the type that the penthouse cultists share right now. What's more, if they accept this gift, Inferno will reverse all **Harm** suffered during the PCs' summit.

Of course, there's a price. If the characters accept the offer after their gruelling ordeal, it's possible the players have forgotten their original reason for climbing the building. The cultists remind them. Whatever they sought will be sacrificed to glorious Inferno, as the characters become Enlightened.

If the characters made their journey to the summit without each enduring a loss, ***the Pinstripe Man*** flicks his wrist, and they appear on a floor determined by the GM. Should they attempt the same trick again, the cultists reveal their true forms as ***razides***, and attempt to throw the characters from the building. Only Monarch does not shift forms. A fall from the summit is the only way to truly die in the Monarch Apartment Complex.

The Pinstripe Man

The man in black pinstripe sits languidly in a lounge chair, pipe in one hand, cocktail glass in the other. There's something about him that stands out. Given your recent ordeal, you can assume this little group of seemingly urbane residents are high priests, or devotees on a higher plane than their peers on lower floors. He seems to be something more, however. The Pinstripe Man offers a smile too wide for his face, showing all his teeth as he places his cocktail class down, and then runs his free hand through his greasy, slicked back hair. "Thaumiel respects power, and you have all come far. You've all seen what true power is. Power is watching everyone around you fall into hell while you sit atop the wreckage. Power is knowing you are better than the rest. You may call me Monarch. I am the architect of this building. Now tell me you want a taste of this wonderful power."

This optional scene gives more focus to the building's architect, Thaumiel's magician, and the PCs' route to power, should they seek it.

The Pinstriped Man is indeed the building's architect, although Monarch is actually a pseudonym. This high priest of Thaumiel is cordial, even when ordering the torture and death of new arrivals. The other high priests place him on a pedestal, as they believe him when he says he has seen Thaumiel and lived to tell everyone about the Death Angel's glory. The power Monarch possesses back up his claims. It is he who ushered the apartment complex into Inferno, and it is he who let the building's corruption seep into the surrounding district.

Monarch will command his fellow high priests to action before using spells to attack anyone approaching him. He is an Enlightened magician. If nearly defeated, Monarch attempts to jump from the building and access Inferno fully. The characters' actions may prevent this. If they are successful, Monarch believes Thaumiel abandoned him and loses all rationality, becoming a crazed priest just like his fellows.

Endings

The characters' actions lead to multiple possible endings:

Escape

The characters may turn tail and flee the building without retrieving their McGuffin. This is, in a sense, the easiest route. If they take the lift, they hear the sound of the cable squealing and fraying above them for a few seconds, giving some the chance to jump from the lift before it plunges to the ground floor. This leaves them at the ***cultists'*** mercies. Should they take the stairs, they must encounter that they met on the way up on the way down. The Pinstripe Man, Monarch, commands every cultist to hunt the group down, until they have entertained Novaville's residents to the best of their ability.

Heroic characters may decide to save their McGuffin before attempting an escape. Such an attempt requires opening the door to the roof garden, which in fact opens a door to Inferno in its rawest state. Bodies burn or languish on spikes as ***razides*** torture their victims for orgasmic pleasure. Souls swirl in vortices of acid, while chains pull spirits to shreds, reassembling them before pulverising them and starting the process again. At the heart of this realm, within sight of the PCs, is the reason they came here. By taking a step forward into Inferno, they may retrieve their McGuffin.

The first to step forward and grab the McGuffin immediately feels himself falling, as in reality he's stepped over the edge of the building. The other PCs may grab him if they act quickly enough, and still have the limbs and eyesight to do so after their ordeal. If the McGuffin and character is saved, the summit's high priests are furious. Their skins split to reveal the razides lurking within, which do everything in their power to prevent the PCs' escape. Only ***the Pinstripe Man*** does not change, allowing the razides to do battle, while he incants spells. Monarch has never been possessed. He's a rare human who witnessed a Death Angel and survived.

If the characters defeat two or more of the razides, the others back away. Monarch slowly applauds the group, though when their guards drop he will attempt a destructive spell before disappearing. This is not his only development. The Monarch Apartment Complex reverts to mundanity, all of its inhabitants disappearing as it becomes merely a dilapidated building. All seems safe for the characters' escape, until they encounter the thriving masses of cultists still at play outside...

Death

If the characters all die during their attempts to reach the summit, they reappear in the building's lobby. There is no escape from the Monarch this time, as vacuum surrounds it. However, another ascent to the summit bears the same trials and tribulations as before, but with one main difference. Any limbs lost, memories erased, violations endured, or similar wounds inflicted, are still borne by the characters.

Each time they die, they must retry, sacrificing even greater parts of themselves. Through this method, the razides on the summit feel confident the characters will agree to join the cult, with all ailments and memories of such removed.

People cannot die in the Monarch Apartment Complex. They can only be reborn over and over, until they become a permanent fixture or fitting in the building.

The Cult

The characters may opt to join the cult and recover from their grievous losses. Doing so guarantees the sacrifice of their McGuffin, and their infection with the Lore of Madness. The razides celebrate the new cultists, and deliver them to the ground floor so the Novaville savages may abase themselves in worship. The PCs are then sent back to the city, from where a new madness will spread.

But this need not be the end of the characters. The personal sacrifice they make can be undone, if they respond to Metropolis' overtures. The lictors come calling as the insanity sets in across the city, explaining they're the only ones who can stop the madness by destroying the Monarch Apartment Complex. If they do so, they'll regain all ailments, but the McGuffin will be returned (or a Metropolis version of it, whether person, item, or feeling.)

The characters may not feel like abandoning their new family, of course.

Dominance

The characters may reach the summit and decide that the razides' offer is not for them, attacking them outright before listening to any deal, or bargaining for souls. The razides honestly do not expect such aggression in these fine surroundings, allowing the characters to get the drop on them.

If the PCs are successful in destroying the razides, or driving them back to Inferno via the garden gate, Monarch transfers the building to their ownership before magically transporting himself to another high-rise in another city. A voice in their heads, belonging to an abstraction of the Death Angel Thaumiel, offers them complete power to remold Novaville how they see fit. All they need do is serve.

Or they could simply leave with their McGuffin, ignore Thaumiel's offer, and attempt to fit back into normal life.

Each character is now Enlightened, and each can see denizens of Inferno wherever they go. They now serve Inferno, willingly or not.

Normal life is a thing of the past.

NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

Cultists

The cultists are a varied group of people, but they are all fanatically enthralled by the Monarch's power and twisted by Thaumiel's will. Vary their weaponry and behavior as you see fit and where they appear during the story.

Home: Elysium.

Creature type: Human.

Combat [2], **Influence** [1], **Magic** [–].

Combat [Novice]

- Attack with fanatic ferocity.
- Grab hold of someone and drag them away.

Influence [Weak]

- Disclose something about the Monarch and the different floors.

Attacks

The cultists are fanatics and will not break under violent threats. Several attacks are described below so you can create variation and distinction for the different cultists.

Unarmed: Punch/kick [1] [Distance: arm]; Grapple and hold [–] [Distance: arm, victim must ***Act Under Pressure*** to break free]; Charge [1] [Distance: room, victim knocked prone]; Drag away [1] [Distance: arm, victim gets dragged away into another part of the building].

Light weapon (knife, club, broken bottle, and similar weapons): Attack [2] [Distance: arm].

Heavy weapon (heavy wrench, fire axe, heavy iron pipe): Attack [3] [Distance: arm].

Wounds & Harm Moves

Wounds: ○○ ☠

- Wounded, but fights on.
- Dying, but can be saved.
- Death.

The Jailer (1st floor)

Use the ***Cultist*** template, but with the following changes.

Wounds & Harm Moves

Wounds: ○○○ ☠

- Moans with pleasure.
- Rubber suit rips open and blood gushes out.
- Gets an erection.
- Dies while ejaculating.

Insane Killer (4th floor)

Use the ***Cultist*** template, but with the following changes.

Attacks

Chainsaw: Bury the saw deep [3] [Distance: arm]; Messy cuts [2] [Distance: arm, may hit up to 2 targets].

Wounds & Harm Moves

Wounds: ○○○○ ☠

- Ignores the pain.
- Blood gushes forth.
- Staggers back, looking for an opening to escape.
- Dies, but awakens within minutes with full health. This continues happening until the body is completely destroyed or thrown off the building.

Formally Dressed Cultist (13th floor)

Use the ***Cultist*** template, but with the following changes.

Attacks

Magic: Mutate flesh [–] [Distance: room, ***Keep it Together*** to resist the spell. On **(–9)**, the victim's flesh and skin starts to swell and mutate. It rips through their clothes, expanding like fetid dough. This counts as a stabilized **Critical Wound**].

Creature of Madness (9th and 29th floor)

These twisted beings are spawned out of madness. They take the shape of people who the characters have some sort of connection to, but horribly mutated. Their eyes are locked open in wild stares, their limbs twisted, and teeth sharpened. Suddenly, they'll change form and shape into something or someone completely different.

Home: The Monarch (Elysium and Inferno).

Creature type: Creature of Madness.

Combat [1], **Influence** [–], **Magic** [2].

Combat [Weak]

- Claw and bite.

Magic [Novice]

- Read thoughts.
- Break mind.

Attacks

The Creatures of Madness tries reading their victims' minds, and then break them by pulling out traumas from their pasts. Sometimes, they lash out in attacks of pure hatred, screaming and attacking with sharp claws and teeth.

Unarmed: Claw and bite [1].

Magic: Read thoughts [–] [Distance: room, target must ***Keep it Together*** or truthfully answer 2 questions]; Break mind [–] [Distance: room, target must ***Keep it Together*** or reduce **Stability (–2)**].

Wounds & Harm Moves

Wounds: ○○○○ ☠

- A bleeding wound.
- Tries to flee, only to appear later.
- Changes shape to someone the person cares for or fears.
- Death.

The Thing Beneath the Floor (25th floor)

Falling into a hole on 25th floor takes the character directly into the writhing maw of a massive Creature of Madness infesting the entire floor. The character suffers **3 Harm** each time until they manage to climb out. Victim must ***Act Under Pressure*** to climb out.

Razides (Penthouse)

Creature type: Razide serving the Death Angel, Thaumiel.

Abilities

- *Monstrous form:* Those who see the creature's true form must ***Keep it Together*** to not panic.
- *Gigantic:* Cannot be grappled or *knocked over* in close combat. Melee attacks the razides make, which connect, always cause the target to be *knocked over*.
- *Natural weapons:* The creature has weapons embedded in his body, either implanted or natural.
- *Body of metal and machinery:* All **Harm** taken is reduced by **–1**.

Combat [5], **Influence** [–], **Magic** [2].

Combat [Powerful]

- Attack two opponents at once.
- Impale on claws [***Act Under Pressure*** to get away].
- Rip someone apart [**+2 Harm**].
- Destroy opponent's weapon.

Magic [Novice]

- See through the Illusion.
- Inflict pain [***Keep it Together*** to break free].

Attacks

The razide fights like a raging animal, trying to rip and slash his opponents to shreds.

Claws: Slash two opponents [2] [Distance: arm]; Impale [2] [Distance: arm, ***Act Under Pressure*** to get loose]. Rip apart [4] [Distance: arm]; Destroy weapon [–] [Distance: arm, target's weapon is shredded to pieces].

Wounds & Harm Moves

Wounds: ○○○○○○○ ☠

- The attack reflects off the creature's metal hide.
- Turns his focus on the most recent attacker and ignores the others until she's defeated.
- A tube bursts open, splashing a red-black, slippery fluid over the floor (***Act Under Pressure*** to move around).
- The attack penetrates one of the razides's eyes (*+1 on next roll*).
- One of the razide's arms is broken, shot off, or severed (can't attack two opponents).
- A big wriggling larvae is exposed in razides's chest (***Act Under Pressure*** –2 to hit, **+2 Harm**).
- The razide dies with an inhuman scream.

The Pinstripe Man

Home: The Monarch (Elysium and Inferno).

Creature type: Human Madness magician in service of the Death Angel, Thaumiel.

Abilities

- *Magic:* Lore of Madness, Lore of Death

Combat [1], **Influence** [3], **Magic** [5].

Combat [Weak]

- Well aimed shot.

Influence [Considerable]

- Reveal something about the Truth.
- Leader of the cultists.
- Command the Razides.

Magic [Exceptional]

- Master (IV) in the Lore of Madness.
- Adept (III) in the Lore of Death.
- Full control of Space and Time within the Monarch.
- Open gate to Inferno.
- Awaken a body that has died inside the Monarch.

Attacks

The Pinstripe Man trusts his Razides to do the fighting. He stands back and allows them to deal with the conflict.

Unarmed: Punch [1] [Distance: arm].

Automatic pistol (handgun): Aimed shot [2] [Distance: room].

Wounds & Harm Moves

Wounds: ○○○ ☠

- Screams in anger as his suit is ruined.
- Bleeding wound.
- Dying, and tries to make a deal.
- Death.

Tarotica

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Taroticum and Other Tales

Taroticum and Other Tales contains seven stand-alone scenarios for *KULT: Divinity Lost*. They are set in different times and locations and explore different parts of the Kult mythos. The scenarios are all designed to be quick and easy to pick up and play.

Taroticum

Taroticum is a scenario that revolves around a deck of Tarot cards that has the power to manipulate the Illusion. It is set in London in 1892 and in 1992, in Inferno, and close to Achlys where time has ceased to exist. Explore the madmen of London, the power of the Tarotica and the secrets that dwell in Sandburn Mental Asylum.

Oakwood Heights

November 2016. A gray and rainy Detroit. We follow a group of people from the DA's office and and the local Police Force partaking in a crime scene reconstruction. Soon we learn that everyone has a hidden agenda as the story unfolds. Here we encounter the gruesome answers to why the accused Franklin Mills murdered the family at South Waring Street and what happened inside the wreckage of the rusty ship at the pier at Zug Island where the ritual murders took place. And what happened to the boy?

La Cena

Miami 1973. The Cruz family is preparing a seven course dinner for their eldest son who is returning from Cuba with the last Freedom Flight. The city trembles in the summer heat and so are the tensions and hidden frustration in the Cruz family. What will remain of the family and why is the returning son behaving so strangely?

The Summit

The Monarch, a skyscraper existing in Elysium as well as in Inferno. A borderland of struggle and violence. Each floor is filled with gruesome scenes and madness and in the top floor the Architect of this mad construction awaits.

Island of the Dead

On the 12th of June 2013, flight DY13001 leaves Bangkok, Thailand. After just over an hour it crashes into the stormy sea. A few survivors drift ashore on a remote island. They have to adapt and survive in the strange jungle and try to get away before the island will devour them.

Laraine Estate

Set in the southern states of the US, in the late summer of 2018, a famous youtuber and urban explorer goes missing while breaking into the Laraine Estate, an old mansion with a long history. Deep beneath the old mansion something lurks, and drives people into lust and perversions.

The Atrocity Exhibition

At an exclusive midnight showing at the Cecil Torne Art Centre in the autumn of 2017, the complete works of Guy Vaquelines entire *Triumph De La Mort* collection will be displayed. What no ones knows is that the paintings are infused with magic and bringing them together like this will have unexpected consequences.

◇

Taroticum and Other Tales is meant for an Adult audience.

You need *KULT: Divinity Lost* to play *Taroticum and Other Tales*.

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