



CALL of CTHULHU®

# MANSIONS OF MADNESS

## VOLUME I: BEHIND CLOSED DOORS

STUART BOON, SHAWN DE'WOLFE, GAVIN INGLIS,  
CHRISTOPHER LACKEY, MARK MORRISON, AND FRIENDS



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This supplement is best used with the *Call of Cthulhu Starter Set* or the *Call of Cthulhu* (7th Edition) roleplaying game and, optionally, with the *Pulp Cthulhu* sourcebook, available separately.

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### Clear Credit

*Mister Corbitt* was written by Shawn DeWolfe and updated by Lynne Hardy. *The Crack'd and Crook'd Manse* was written by Mark Morrison and updated by Lynne Hardy. *The Code* was written by Christopher Lackey with Lynne Hardy. *The Nineteenth Hole* was written by Stuart Boon. *The House of Memphis* was written by Gavin Inglis with Lynne Hardy and Mike Mason. Maps for *Mister Corbitt* and *The Crack'd and Crook'd Manse* were originally created by Carol Triplett-Smith and recreated and expanded for this edition by Miska Fredman. Cover art is a reinterpretation of the original cover, both illustrated by Lee Gibbons. Original 1990 edition editorial undertaken by William Dunn and Keith Herber.

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# INTRODUCTION

This updated edition of *Mansions of Madness* is designed as a follow-on collection of adventures from both *Doors to Darkness* and *Gateways to Terror*, Chaosium Inc.'s books of introductory scenarios for new Keepers and players, and can be used with both the *Call of Cthulhu Starter Set* and the *Call of Cthulhu: Keeper Rulebook*. Optionally, these scenarios can also be enjoyed with the *Pulp Cthulhu* sourcebook for groups wishing to take a more action-orientated approach to their investigations. The scenarios in this book are a great next step for novice gaming groups or for those looking for short, entertaining adventures that can be run over one to three sessions of play.

The scenarios are presented in chronological order, allowing them to be linked together in a loose, episodic mini-campaign of their own, or can be dropped into existing campaigns as sidetracks or intervals. Advice is provided in each scenario on how to shift the action to different locations and time periods to better fit in with a particular group's ongoing investigations into the Cthulhu Mythos. Suggestions for follow-on adventures based on the investigators' actions are also included, should the Keeper and their players want to further develop the themes and storylines they've created together.

As this is a collection of intermediate-level scenarios, there is less Keeper guidance provided than in *Gateways to Terror*, although there is still advice on how to handle some of the trickier elements found in each story. Hopefully, the skills learned so far playing with friends will have prepared you, the Keeper, and your players, for this next step. If you are an experienced Keeper, we know that you will find much to enjoy in this collection, whether it be revisiting old favorites or exploring new and terrifying vistas.

Six pre-generated investigators for use with the scenarios in *Mansions of Madness Vol. 1* can be downloaded from [chaosium.com](http://chaosium.com). Advice for creating bespoke investigators for each adventure can be found in their respective **Involving the Investigators** sections, as can suggestions for useful skills for pre-existing player characters.



Opposite: *Mansions of Madness* original cover art  
Left: Investigating the unknown

## INTRODUCTION

### A BIT OF HISTORY

The original *Mansions of Madness* was published 30 years ago in July 1990 for *Call of Cthulhu*'s 4th edition and was billed as, "Five Adventures in Dark and Deserted Places." Those five adventures were: *Mister Corbitt* by Michael (now Shawn) DeWolfe; *The Plantation* by Wesley Martin; *The Crack'd and Crook'd Manse* by Mark Morrison; *The Sanitorium* by Keith Herber (then the game's line editor); and *Mansion of Madness* by Fred Behrendt. Lee Gibbons provided the evocative cover of a poor investigator being swallowed up by who alone knows what in front of a brightly lit house—so close and yet so far from safety, or was he?—while Janet Aulisio, Sam Inabinet, and Carol Triplett-Smith provided the interior artwork and maps.

The collection returned in May 2007 for the 6th edition under line editor Lynn Willis. Lee Gibbons' cover was now a most disturbing shade of green, and the "Five Frightening Adventures" had become "Six Classic Explorations of the Unknown, the Deserted, and the Insane," accompanied as they were by *The Old Damned House* by Penny Love and Liam Routt. And, joining the roster of artists and cartographers

were David Lee Ingersoll, David Conyers, and Lydia Ortiz, all helping to bring chills and thrills to new and old fans of *Call of Cthulhu* alike.

When Mike Mason, the line's current Creative Director, decided to bring the collection back for another encore, this time for the game's 7th edition, he wanted to shake things up a little. He commissioned Lee Gibbons to create a new cover, only now the hideous creature from the garden (or its offspring?) has moved inside the mansion where it has another luckless investigator in its grasp. Two of the original scenarios (perennial favorites *Mister Corbitt* and *The Crack'd and Crook'd Manse*) would be joined by three new adventures, written especially for the new edition: *The Code* by Chris Lackey, *The House of Memphis* by Gavin Inglis, and *The Nineteenth Hole* by Stuart Boon. All of the maps, handouts, and illustrations would be new or updated, for which we have Miska Fredman, Doruk Golcu, Matthew Mooney, and M. Wayne Miller to thank. Like the originals, all three retain the theme of something not quite right happening behind closed doors, and we hope you agree that they are worthy companion pieces to their forebears.



Investigating the attic

### SPENDING LUCK

If you own the *Call of Cthulhu: Keeper Rulebook*, then you may already be familiar with the optional **Spending Luck** rules (page 99). If you own the *Call of Cthulhu Starter Set* instead, you probably won't be, but this rule is something we recommend using when running the scenarios herein it can be very helpful when it comes to dealing with unfortunate dice rolls and keeping the story moving. While at some point you might want to move up from the *Starter Set* to the *Keeper Rulebook* so you can take full advantage of these and the other advanced and optional rules, we've provided a brief summary of the spending Luck rule for you below to get you going.

Under the standard Luck rules, you, as Keeper, can call for a Luck roll to see if the investigators' actions are subject to the whims of fate; for example, did they remember to pack that all-important flashlight before leaving the house this morning, or not? Using the optional rule, the players can spend their investigators' Luck points to adjust dice rolls to their advantage. Most commonly, they will want to spend Luck points to change a failure into a success, but they can also use Luck points to adjust their degree of success as well (from a Regular to a Hard success, or from a Hard to an Extreme success), which can make all the difference when it comes to beating their opponent in an opposed roll.

To alter a skill roll, the player "burns" Luck points, spending the amount necessary to turn a failure into a success (or an increased level of success) on a one-for-one basis. For example, if you have Jump 30% but rolled 45 (a failure), you could spend 15 Luck points to adjust the roll to 30 ( $45 - 15 = 30$ , making it a success). That's a lot of Luck to spend for one roll, but it might mean the difference between an investigator taking a dangerous amount of falling damage and only severely bruising their pride. A player can't burn Luck on every roll, though: pushed rolls, Sanity rolls, and (of course) Luck rolls are all exempt. The only limit to how much Luck a player can spend is the amount of Luck currently held by their investigator.

Knowing when and how much Luck to burn is a careful balancing act, as standard Luck rolls are made using an investigator's current Luck value, not their starting one, so spending freely and often early in a session could have serious consequences later on. Sometimes in a game, who a monster attacks first is determined by which investigator has the lowest Luck score, or a group Luck roll (based on which investigator in the group has the lowest Luck score) might be called for to figure out if a weapon or piece of useful equipment is near at hand. Both are handy ways of helping players understand that spending Luck truly is a double-edged sword.

It's also possible to quite literally run out of Luck, so pacing Luck point usage could make all the difference between an investigator living long enough to fight another day or succumbing to the mind-numbing horrors of the Cthulhu Mythos. Thankfully, investigators can regain at least some of their Luck at the beginning of each new scenario. The Keeper should ask for a roll against the investigator's current Luck value: if the roll is failed, the investigator gains +1D10 points of Luck; though, if roll succeeds, their score stays as it is. Rolling to fail your Luck in this instance is just like rolling against skill experience in the Investigator Development Phase.

As already mentioned, Luck points cannot be used on every roll. As well as those listed above, Luck cannot be spent to overcome a fumbled roll or a weapon malfunction, on damage rolls or rolls to determine how much Sanity is lost.

If using the pre-generated investigators provided for *Mansions of Madness Vol. 1*, the players should roll their Luck values before the game begins. Have them roll 3D6 and multiply the result by 5, then circle the appropriate number in the Luck box on their investigator sheet. Now they're all ready to step across the threshold into terror!



# MISTER CORBITT

*In which the investigators get to know their neighbor and his family a little better than they would like.*

This scenario can be run over one to three sessions and is designed for play with one or more investigators. While written to take place during the early 1920s, the events could easily be moved to the modern era or another time, and can be relocated elsewhere in the US or another country.

## KEEPER INFORMATION

Bernard Corbitt has always seemed a quiet, inoffensive, and normal man. His only apparent oddity is a touch of absent-mindedness. He lives on a large, well-kept estate on Chestnut Street in a leafy suburb of Boston, MA, across the street from one of the investigators, with whom Corbitt possibly has a nodding relationship. He is one of the more respected and prominent businessmen in the area and his habits and mannerisms are known to most of his neighbors.

**Keeper note:** while this scenario is nominally set in Boston, Bernard Corbitt could easily live in the suburbs of any other sufficiently large town or city anywhere in the world, such as Arkham, Berlin, London, or wherever happens to be most appropriate for your current investigators or campaign.

Unbeknown to those living around him, Corbitt is a servant of Yog-Sothoth, and has been indefinitely insane since witnessing the terrible death of his father on a windy mountaintop in India some 14 years ago at the hands of Ramasekva, a multi-limbed manifestation of the All-In-One. The experience caused Corbitt to lose a large degree of his sanity and left him with a split personality and partial, somewhat selective, amnesia.

He shortly thereafter married a young girl and allowed Yog-Sothoth (who possessed Corbitt's form) to father twins upon his bride. When the children were born prematurely

seven months later, it caused the death of both his wife and the more normal of the twin boys. The surviving "son," a grotesque creature, has been kept for years in a secret basement room, fed and surgically modified by Corbitt to meet Yog-Sothoth's unfathomable demands. Growing at a progressively increasing rate, the creature will soon be ready to fulfill its destiny, to the pride of its foster father and the horror of the sane world.

## INVOLVING THE INVESTIGATORS

The scenario assumes the investigators are currently residing in a house in an expensive upper-middle class or better residential neighborhood. Across the street dwells the kindly widower, Mr. Corbitt.

The house could be the home of an investigator, which works best if played with one Keeper and one investigator, or the investigator has been called back to their family home to look after one of their aging parents after the other parent recently died. With the latter, Mr. Corbitt may very well be known to the investigator as a friendly neighbor and someone they have known for a number of years.

If there is more than one investigator, assume the house is owned or rented by a member of the group, and the others become involved through their colleague once the first investigator begins to notice the strange things happening across the street. Alternatively, one or more investigators could be staying in a friend's house during some downtime from investigating, or they may have recently rented a house while working out of town on an investigation (in this case, this scenario becomes a colorful but separate interlude during the main investigation). Another option is to have the group called in by another colleague or friend who has become suspicious of their neighbor Mr. Corbitt after seeing and/or hearing something.

As well as working as a sidetrack during a larger campaign, *Mister Corbitt* could also be used to kick start a new campaign, with this being the investigator(s) first encounter with the Cthulhu Mythos. Alternatively, it makes for a great one-shot adventure, with the investigators all being members of the same family living in the house opposite the Corbitt residence. The whole setup is designed to be flexible, so please adapt things to suit your game as necessary.

As noted above, consider introducing Mr. Corbitt before the scenario starts. Perhaps he's a friendly neighbor who looks after the house when the investigator is away "on business," or feeds their pet, and so forth. If it's the investigator's family home, they recall Mr. Corbitt and remember his many gifts of fruit and vegetables, and how well regarded he is in the community, giving to local charities like the Police Officers Benevolent Fund and the local hospital. Ingratiating Corbitt into the investigator's story, either through their personal history or as a friendly non-player character (NPC) they have come to know during breaks between adventures, really helps when running the scenario and makes things personal, more difficult, and ultimately more horrific. There's no time limit to this scenario, allowing it to be run as an on-going plot between other scenarios, with each visit back home building the mystery by degrees until the players realize something is going on and they must act.

Useful skills for investigators to have for this scenario include: Appraise, Credit Rating, Language (Sanskrit), Library Use, Natural World, Science (Botany), Science (Chemistry), Science (Pharmacy), social skills (such as Charm, Fast Talk, and Persuade), Spot Hidden, and Stealth.

### THE YOG-SOTHOTH CONNECTION

Fourteen years ago, Bernard Corbitt was called to India by his father, Theodore, an amateur student of the occult. The elder Corbitt had happened upon a remote mountain village in the Punjab that worshipped Yog-Sothoth in the form of a multi-legged, multi-armed demon called Ramasekva. Making use of certain hallucinogenic drugs manufactured by the cultists, the father had worshipped with the tribe and seen the god's avatar manifest.

Yog-Sothoth, after reaching out to read Corbitt's thoughts, commanded the man to bring his son before him, promising the elder Corbitt power beyond imagination and eternal life for both of them. Believing that he was doing something wonderful for his only child, Theodore Corbitt dispatched a telegram to America urging his son Bernard to join him immediately in India. On receiving the telegram, Bernard left medical school, never to return.

In India, Bernard followed his father into the mountains and there, after ingesting the villagers' drugs, was confronted by the Ramasekva manifestation of Yog-Sothoth. Theodore was destroyed and consumed by the god, who then reached out and touched the terrified young Corbitt's mind. Perhaps impressed by the young man's intelligence and force of will, the Outer God spared the youth to be his servant. Since that time, Corbitt, his mind now warped by the experience, has lived to serve Yog-Sothoth, whom he calls "*the Key and the Gate*." On his chest, he bears an ugly burn scar nearly two inches (5 cm) wide, a mark that resembles the outline of the multi-limbed Ramasekva—proof to any expert student of occultism that Corbitt was touched by the god.

Returning from the mountains, Corbitt explained his father's disappearance by telling the authorities the man had slipped and fallen into a deep ravine while the two were being pursued by bandits—Bernard's disheveled, haggard appearance went a long way toward convincing the magistrate that his tale was true. Upon his return to America, Corbitt quickly arranged to take over the family business. His mother, broken by the death of her husband, soon lapsed into early senility and was supported by Bernard in a New York nursing home until her death three years later. Since the demise of his mother, Corbitt has been the sole owner of the firm.

Less than a year after his experience in the Punjab, Corbitt met and married the young Lynn Meyers. Yog-Sothoth soon reached out to Corbitt's mind and demanded the right to father children upon the woman. Using his own supply of the drug, distilled from the hallucinogenic plants and fungi now cultivated in his greenhouse, Corbitt called forth his lord and master to possess him. Thus, in Corbitt's form did the avatar of the Outer God bed Corbitt's wife.

Mrs. Corbitt, unaware that her pregnancy was caused by something not human, put her severe and ongoing morning sickness down to her being a first-time mother-to-be. Corbitt was forced to hire a private nurse, Mona Dunlap, to help care for his wife. When Mrs. Corbitt went into premature labor, Corbitt was the only person in attendance at the birth, but Nurse Dunlap was attracted by the shrieks of the delivering woman. Opening the door to the room, she was unfortunate enough to witness the birth of the horrible second twin. Driven permanently insane by the sight of the thing, Dunlap was hospitalized in a near comatose state in the local public sanatorium, to eventually die there six years later.

Corbitt hurriedly hid the surviving twin in a specially prepared room in the basement, then notified the authorities of the death of his wife and infant son. The condition of the nurse he was unable to explain, theorizing the poor woman must have suffered an untimely stroke while attempting to deliver the child. He—as Corbitt was quick to explain to the police—was not present at the time of the birth and had

## MISTER CORBITT

only just returned home from his office to make the grisly discovery. The police, unable to see any reason for foul play, believed the story.

At the urging of Yog-Sothoth, Corbitt began preparing to equip the creature in his basement for life on this plane of existence. As it lacked limbs (as well as lungs and other organs), Corbitt acquired the necessary parts through the agency of an unscrupulous hospital orderly named Randolph Tomaszewski. Tomaszewski, bribed with cash and drugs supplied by Corbitt, saves certain desirable body parts from incineration and puts them with the regular hospital trash, which is eventually hauled away to the city dump. Corbitt makes twice-weekly trips to this dump, on Wednesday and Sunday evenings, and searches the fresh trash for any treasures sent his way by Tomaszewski.

In order to perfect the techniques needed to modify the child, it was necessary for Corbitt to spend many years experimenting with the organs and limbs sent his way. Using a combination of amateur modem surgery and arcane magic, he created a number of living and semi-living “experiments,” most of which can be found buried in his vegetable garden. Once sure of his procedures, Corbitt began by grafting lungs to the incomplete creature, with other organs added later.

The child calls itself “Man-Bagari,” and it is to be a grotesque parody of its multi-limbed father, Ramasekva. It is destined to become the Bridge, a necessary part of the Opening of the Way. After many experiments, Corbitt has recently begun attaching numerous arms and legs to the Child-Thing, with excellent success. Parts deemed unsuitable have been used in other experiments or fed to the ever-hungry Child-Thing, who eats only uncooked flesh. Parts that are totally unusable are buried, along with Corbitt’s many dead experiments, in the vegetable garden where they fertilize the ripe, red summer tomatoes the neighborhood so enjoys.

Corbitt presently finds the nearly matured Child-Thing’s growth to be increasing at a disturbing rate, necessitating more and more small limbs. Also, its appetite has become almost insatiable. Corbitt, a good foster father to the Child-Thing, has pressed Tomaszewski to provide him with more and more parts. Tonight, Corbitt will feed a partially decayed spleen to the growing creature and will add the near-perfectly preserved left arm of a young girl to the Child-Thing’s ever-growing collection of appendages...

## DRAMATIS PERSONAE

This section contains brief descriptions and roleplaying hooks for the key non-player characters (NPCs) in this scenario. Their profiles can be found in the **Non-Player Characters** section at the end of this scenario (page 13).

### **Bernard Corbitt,** *age 37, cultist and devoted foster father*

The investigator’s mild-mannered neighbor, who harbors a dark secret. He is very well regarded in the local community as a respectable businessman, a giver to charities, and an always obliging helping hand. Thus, Corbitt is on very good terms with the local police force, the hospital, and authority. To even suggest that Corbitt is a criminal would be considered muck-raking and scandalmongering.

- **Description:** despite being only 37, Corbitt looks much older—late middle-aged, in fact. He has thinning brown hair, neatly groomed, and is an attractive man with a kind face, although he usually looks somewhat distracted. He always dresses in a business suit, collar, and tie, as befits the head of an international import/export company.
- **Traits:** absent-minded, affable, yet cautious in his comings and goings.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** Corbitt’s mind retains little or no memory of day-to-day events, especially if they are Mythos related. Since becoming aware of this problem, Corbitt has kept a daily journal (**Front Room**, page 25; **Handout: Corbitt 4**). Even so, only if cured of his insanity will Corbitt be able to fully comprehend all of the unspeakable acts he has committed or allowed to happen over the last 14 years.



Bernard Corbitt

**Randolph Tomaszewski, age 29, hospital orderly**

Tomaszewski is a hospital orderly, as well as a deranged and deluded worshipper of Satan. He lives on the fourth floor of a downtown building, in a one-room apartment filled with the paraphernalia of his misguided beliefs. Corbitt supplies him with drugs and money in return for the discarded organs and limbs needed to feed and augment the Child-Thing.

- **Description:** a thin, weasel-faced man with a mop of unkempt hair and an angry scowl on his face. His eyes are somewhat glazed, as he is a habitual drug user.
- **Traits:** paranoid, sadistic, and masochistic.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** Tomaszewski uses the mild drugs supplied to him by Corbitt in fruitless attempts to “*contact the dark master*.” He has absolutely no idea what Corbitt is really using the various body parts for, and believes the organs are being fed to wild animals, so they can develop a taste for the flesh of children. He expects these beasts will then be possessed by his evil lord and go on a rampage.

**Man-Bagari, the Child-Thing**

The half-human and surgically enhanced spawn of Yog-Sothoth, the Child-Thing lurks in Corbitt’s basement, awaiting the day when it will join its true father and assume the role of the “Bridge.” A full description of the Child-Thing can be found in **The Creature’s Room** (page 27) while its profile can be found in the **Creatures and Monsters** section on page 38.



Randolph Tomaszewski

**START: THE PACKAGE**

The scenario begins on a Sunday evening in the home of the selected investigator. Either they, or possibly their guests (other investigators), are sitting around a dinner table or in the living room. One of them, looking out of the window, notices the neighbor, Mr. Corbitt, park his automobile in front of his house across the street. Unaware he is being observed, Corbitt exits the car and pops open the trunk, withdrawing from it two canvas-wrapped objects.

One of the objects is small and round, while the other is approximately the size and shape of a small baseball bat. Carrying these to the front door, Corbitt holds them both under one arm while struggling with the stubborn lock. The larger of the two packages slides loose and falls to the front porch, causing the canvas folds to fall open and allowing the watching investigator to catch a glimpse of something white and cylindrical lying on the step in the gloom. In the dim light, the investigator sees that there appear to be the hand and fingers of a small child at one end of the object! This sight provokes a **Sanity** roll (0/1D3 Sanity point loss.)

Glancing around quickly to assure himself no one is watching, Corbitt quickly rewraps the item, then, after successfully unlocking the door, disappears into the house. A moment later, a light appears in a basement window, only to be quickly blunted by a hastily drawn shade.

**Keeper note:** this scene outside Corbitt’s house may or may not be enough to engage the players’ interest and drive them into investigating their neighbor. Similar scenes, repeated on Wednesdays and Sundays, and/or hearing strange gurgling noises occasionally coming from Corbitt’s basement (with a **Listen** roll) can provide more impetus. Likewise, an investigator being shocked to spy a woman’s face (see the Scampering Woman-Thing in the section **Corbitt’s Early Experiment**, page 25) at one of the basement windows while Corbitt is out may give rise to the notion that someone is trapped (kidnapped?) down there. If all else fails, the Keeper might like to go straight to the **Corbitt’s Trip** section, page 22), which should move things forward. Whatever the route taken, the investigators should be intrigued enough to want to look into Corbitt’s affairs closely, as their neighbor appears to be up to no good!

**INVESTIGATIONS**

Both Corbitt’s general routine and his official personal history are known by long-standing neighbors and various other townsfolk, giving the investigators plenty of opportunities to find out more information about his private and business life and what he might be doing bringing home dismembered body parts.

## MISTER CORBITT

### Corbitt's Routine

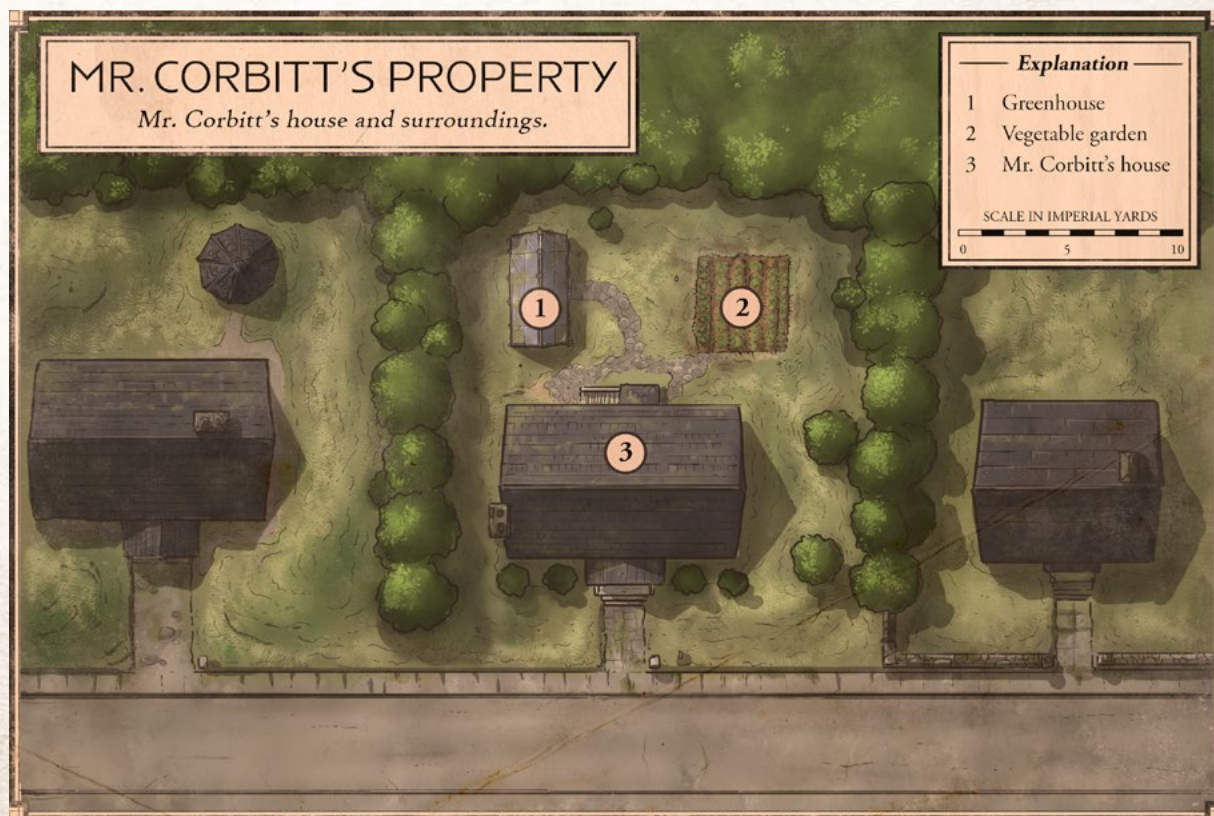
Asking around the neighborhood, the investigators may learn the following information. Years ago, Corbitt would often leave home for long periods of time, traveling out of the country to attend to his business; however, the last few years have seen him spending more and more time at home. He maintains regular hours, working five days a week in his downtown office. Corbitt's membership in the local businessmen's club sometimes keeps him out late, but other than that, he seems to have very little social life, not an unusual pattern for a widower nearing 40. During weekends he usually stays at home quietly, but he regularly goes out in the late afternoon on Sunday, usually returning home before dark.

If an investigator makes a successful **INT** roll, they realize that Corbitt's late-afternoon weekend excursions always take place on Sundays between the hours of 5:30 pm and 7–8 pm. Failing this, investigators will have to keep an eye on Corbitt's comings and goings in order to recognize the pattern. Today, the Sunday on which the adventure begins, is no different from those previous.

### WE CALL THE POLICE

In the opening stages of the scenario, some players may be tempted to call the police if their investigators think they saw severed limbs or a strange woman trapped in Corbitt's basement. If this is the case, have a patrol car stop by Corbitt's house. Watching investigators see two police officers invited inside by a smiling Corbitt. After some time, the officers can be seen leaving the house, clutching boxes overflowing with vegetables and fruit, laughing and joking with Corbitt as if they were the best of friends. They then depart, with Corbitt waving a cheering goodbye.

Clearly, Corbitt is on good terms with the police and was able to satisfy any questions the officers posed. The investigators will have to work harder and take a personal hand in things if they are to get to the bottom of the mystery surrounding their neighbor.



*Mr. Corbitt's Property map*

**Keeper note:** it is harder to realize that Corbitt also visits the dump on Wednesday evenings as well, as his late arrival home could be ascribed to him visiting his club after work. If the investigators don't stumble across these additional visits while tailing Corbitt, then his absence from the club on these nights can easily be checked out by a visit and a successful **Charm**, **Fast Talk**, or **Persuade** roll, although this course of action is likely to alert Corbitt to the investigators' inquiries (see **Confronting Corbitt**, page 21, for the possible ramifications).

**Neighborhood NPCs:** the Keeper is advised to improvise the characters from around the neighborhood. There's no real need to actually create fully profiled characters, as they are simply there to provide a few lines of dialogue information drawn from the preceding paragraphs. Refer to the nearby box, **A Helping Hand**, for three possible NPCs, but, to help with a few more, here's a few names the Keeper could use to ad-lib other local folk.

- Margaret and Philip Samson
- Sally and Roger Whitworth
- Gabby and Zeke Winston
- Thomas Hinkley
- Miriam Bosch

## Corbitt's Public History

Corbitt's personal history is also well-known. Born locally, Corbitt is the son of the late Theodore Corbitt who founded the small but very successful Corbitt Importers of America, now owned and operated by Bernard Corbitt. Bernard took over the business 14 years ago when the elder Corbitt was accidentally killed while the father and son were hiking in the mountains of India.

Formerly married, Corbitt is presently a widower and lives alone. His investigator neighbor knows that Corbitt's wife has been dead at least a dozen years.

Local people, including the investigators, all know Corbitt to be a kindly and gentle individual. At one time a medical student, Corbitt has often provided neighbors with small bits of medical assistance. Two years ago, his timely first aid was credited with saving the life of a youngster hit by a truck. He has been known to sometimes say that he regrets having left medical school to take over the family business, but he is quick also to say that he has no complaints about his life.

Corbitt is an avid gardener and the neighbors (possibly including the neighbor-investigator), are often recipients of fresh produce from his bountiful vegetable patch. In a greenhouse off the back of the house, Corbitt raises orchids and other exotic flora.

## Corbitt the Businessman

Those looking into Corbitt's business dealings can find out the following via searches in the local library (see **Local Newspaper Stories**, page 18), the local authority's business records, or by asking around.

Corbitt is regarded as a rich businessman running a successful import/export business from a warehouse near to downtown. The business, Corbitt Importers of America, was started by his father Theodore some 40 years ago, with Bernard Corbitt taking over after his father's death. Since that time, the business appears to have gone from strength to strength, and employs six full-time staff plus a handful of part-time employees that can be called upon as needed. Corbitt is a highly regarded member of the Men of Industry, a local businessmen's club that holds weekly gatherings in the downtown area.

## Digging Deeper

If the investigators decide to break into the warehouse of Corbitt Importers of America, it should be relatively easy as long as care is taken (**Stealth** and **Locksmith** rolls). Everyone goes home between 5 and 6 pm, and the surrounding area is quiet in the evenings. Should the investigators call attention to themselves, they may attract the single security guard paid to patrol the warehouse district or a passing patrol car and be forced to hide or make a swift exit—unless the incident has been called in, the security guard or police officer takes a cursory look around and then departs; otherwise, Corbitt is called and asked to come to the warehouse to check the premises with a couple of officers to make sure nothing untoward has taken place. No office plan is provided, as it's a simple affair (warehouse and a couple of small offices) and should be improvised by the Keeper as necessary.

**Keeper note:** if Corbitt knows that his office has been broken into, yet nothing of real value has been taken, his suspicions may fall on the investigators if they have already shown themselves to taking "an interest" in his affairs.

If able to take a look at the business' books, a successful **Accounting** roll or **Hard INT** roll shows that on the surface the business is doing well, yet if the **Accounting** roll is a **Hard** or **Extreme** success (or an **Extreme** for the **INT** roll), it can be seen that a downward trend is occurring, with less profits being generated. Of particular interest is a monthly payment made to a R. Tomaszewski, paid in petty cash (signed out to Corbitt personally) for "medical services."

If checking the crates in the warehouse, most of the items here are quite mundane and innocent, although a successful **Spot Hidden** roll notes a couple of small wooden boxes carrying labels from the Indus Valley region of India.

## A HELPING HAND

If the investigators are struggling to uncover evidence—say, if they're new to the area and aren't familiar with Corbitt's life story—or if the Keeper wishes to ratchet up the tension—either by providing an additional thorn in the investigators' sides or as a handy victim for the Child-Thing to underline the danger it poses—then old Miss Hart and her live-in companion Mrs. Wallace, along with the paper boy Bobby Lynskey, can be used to help move the action along. Brief descriptions for each are provided, while their profiles can be found in the **Characters and Monsters** section, starting on page 37.

### Miss Harriet Hart, age 73, local spinster

Miss Hart's family has lived in and around the neighborhood since the colonial days, so she can quote chapter and verse on pretty much every "old" family in the area. Some of the local children are convinced she's actually a witch because she seems to know everyone's business, even though she rarely leaves the house. Her presence is usually signaled by a twitch of her lace curtains. Never married, she lives in the former Hart family home with her live-in companion, cook, and cleaner, Mrs. Rebecca Wallace.

- **Description:** diminutive, ramrod straight, and rail thin, Miss Hart dresses in immaculate, but very old-fashioned, clothing. Her thin skin is china-white and mottled with veins and liver spots, while her fine white hair is piled on top of her head in as outdated a style as her clothing.
- **Traits:** nosy and parsimonious.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** little gets past Miss Hart, and she loves a bargain—the cheaper, the better. With her encyclopedic knowledge of her neighbors' comings and goings, and her determination to get the gossip on every newcomer, Miss Hart is a veritable font of local knowledge and useful information. She has a soft spot for Mr. Corbitt, thanks to his year-round gifts of fruit, vegetables, and flowers.

### Mrs. Rebecca Wallace, age 54, live-in companion

Mrs. Wallace is a widow whose husband, Walter, died during the Spanish influenza epidemic after the Great War. As her children were all grown up and she had no other means of support, she took a position with a wealthy spinster as

a live-in housekeeper-cum-companion. Given Miss Hart's notoriously stingy nature, neighbors often wonder just what the relationship between her and Mrs. Wallace really is, as no one can imagine the former willingly paying for someone to do her cooking and cleaning for her, let alone allowing them to live in the Hart family home.

- **Description:** plain and practical, Mrs. Wallace can usually be found wearing an apron of some sort while attending to her household chores. Her round face is often ruddy through exertion, and her dark hair refuses to remain confined to whatever hairstyle she's chosen for the day.
- **Traits:** level-headed, practical, and patient.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** Mrs. Wallace acts as Miss Hart's eyes and ears outside the house, as well as being an exceptional cook. She, too, has a soft spot for Mr. Corbitt, though in a motherly way, even though there's only a 17-year difference in their ages.

### Bobby Lynskey, age 12, local paper boy

Young Bobby, accompanied by his pet mongrel, Basil, delivers the neighborhood's newspapers on his bicycle twice a day: first thing in the morning and just before dinner in the evening. The Lynskeys don't live in the neighborhood—they're nowhere near wealthy enough for that—but it's something Bobby aspires to. He intends to train as a doctor in honor of the man who saved his life when he was hit by a truck two years ago: Bernard Corbitt.

- **Description:** small for his age, with red hair and freckles.
- **Traits:** Bobby used to be quite the scamp, but his close shave with death two years ago brought on a change in his personality. Now he is quiet and watchful, with a tendency to blurt out things he's seen or heard on his paper route (as such, he can provide or amplify information about Corbitt).
- **Roleplaying hooks:** thanks to his paper route, Bobby is an accepted fixture on Chestnut Street—so much so that people tend to ignore his presence. He knows everyone's subscriptions and whether people are likely to be home or not. Basil the dog could easily be used as a tool to get Bobby into trouble, and hopefully bring the investigators to his rescue, if required.

## Handout: Corbitt 1

### LOCAL BUSINESSMAN KILLED IN ACCIDENT

It was learned today that Theodore Corbitt, owner of Corbitt Importers of America, is dead, victim of a tragic accident while vacationing in India. Corbitt, while in the company of his son, Bernard, died in a fall while the two were traveling through the high mountains of the Punjab.

According to authorities, the two men were on a hiking trip when they were set upon by a group of bandits known to frequent the area. While being pursued down the mountainside, the elder Corbitt apparently lost his footing and fell to his death. His son managed to escape, eventually making it to safety. The elder Corbitt's body has not yet been located and authorities fear that it may be lost, possibly consumed by the wild dogs that roam the mountain.

Theodore Corbitt is survived by his wife, Elaine, and one son, Bernard. At this time, it is not known if Bernard Corbitt will take over management of the family business.

*(Dated 14 years ago)*

Written in chalk over these labels are the words, "Attn. B. Corbitt." Breaking these crates open reveals they contain loose tealeaves (Corbitt's preferred blend), some carefully wrapped botanical specimens (Indian orchids), and a small clay statuette of a demon-like figure possessing multiple arms and legs.

**Keeper note:** a successful **Occult** roll suggest that the statuette may be one of the Indian Asura or Danavas, malevolent demons or demi-gods often depicted with multiple limbs or heads, although a Hard or better success suggest that while this may be the case, it doesn't seem quite right. A successful **Cthulhu Mythos** roll identifies the statuette either as the Small Crawler, an aspect of the Crawling Chaos, Nyarlathotep, or possibly an avatar of Yog-Sothoth known as Ramasekva (the latter being correct).

### Local Newspaper Stories

If the investigators check the back issues of the local newspaper, either at the newspaper's offices or at the local library, a successful Library Use roll (or a social skill roll, like Charm or Persuade, to get a staff member to help them) uncovers several stories of interest (Handouts: Corbitt 1-3). In the case of Handout: Corbitt 3, the investigators must also know of Randolph Tomaszewski's existence in order to notice the article.

## Handout: Corbitt 2

### OBITUARIES

CORBITT, Lynn Anne Meyers, aged 22. Died in childbirth, in her home. A graduate of the Pierpoint school, Mrs. Corbitt was married to local businessman, Bernard Corbitt, two years ago. Funeral services for both mother and child will be held Saturday afternoon.

Mrs. Corbitt is survived by her parents, Edward and Shirley Meyers, and her husband, Bernard Corbitt, president of Corbitt Importers of America.

### Nurse Hospitalized After Accident In Patient's Home

Professional nurse, Miss Mona Dunlap, was admitted to Central Sanitarium yesterday following an accident that took place in a patient's home. Her condition was diagnosed as serious.

Miss Dunlap, hired by Mr. and Mrs. Bernard Corbitt to help with Mrs. Corbitt's confinement, apparently suffered a stroke while attempting to deliver the Corbitts' baby unassisted. Mr. Corbitt returned from his office Wednesday afternoon to find Nurse Dunlap unconscious and his wife and infant son dead due to complications arising from the birth. Doctors at the sanitarium say the woman has yet to regain consciousness and it may be some time before the full extent of her injuries are known.

*(Both articles dated 12 years ago)*

## THE SANITARIUM

If the investigators learn of the existence of the nurse, Mona Dunlap (**Handout: Corbitt 2**), and track her down to the local sanitarium, they are told that the woman died six years ago without ever regaining consciousness.

The attending physician still works at the facility and if the investigators can make a successful social skill roll—such as **Charm**, **Fast Talk**, or **Persuade**—the doctor is willing to talk with them. If any of the investigators are medical professionals, then they can speak to the doctor without needing to make a roll. The doctor tells them little about the woman's case the investigators don't already know, but can reveal that, just moments before her death, she regained consciousness. Her last words were, *"It was awful! It didn't have any arms or legs or hardly a face! It should have died! It should have died along with the other one!"*

## THE HOSPITAL CONNECTION

Yog-Sothoth directed Corbitt to seek out someone who could procure the necessary limbs and organs for his foster child: a deranged hospital orderly, Randolph Tomaszewski, who was willing to select and save certain items Corbitt required. Tomaszewski was the ideal candidate, thanks to his unpopular assignment of cleaning up operating rooms and disposing of the waste generated during surgical procedures.

Contemporary medical practice calls for removed body parts to be first wrapped in canvas (to keep anyone from seeing what they are) then disposed of in the hospital incinerator. Occasionally, noteworthy specimens are saved for hospital and medical school experiments. Instead of following normal procedure, Tomaszewski simply puts some of the organs in with the unburnable waste and lets them be hauled away to the city dump. The dump site itself is mainly unsupervised and located in an uninhabited area.

When dealing with Tomaszewski, Corbitt is in his near-possessed state and most of the time remembers almost nothing of his relationship with the orderly. Traveling to the hospital during his lunch hour, Corbitt usually takes Tomaszewski groceries, vegetables from his garden, and hallucinogens from his greenhouse. All of these, Tomaszewski greatly appreciates—as well as the cash Corbitt brings him each month.

If the investigators question Corbitt about his trips to the hospital, he always seems confused and forgetful—unless he is confronted with hard evidence of his dealings with Tomaszewski; after all, Corbitt's in perfect health and in no need of a visit to a doctor!

## Tracking Down Tomaszewski

If the investigators are tailing Corbitt, he leads them to the hospital as he goes about his daily routine, even if he is aware that he is being observed. The creature in his basement is growing at too prodigious a rate for him to break off relations with Tomaszewski just yet. The investigators' presence merely confirms they are becoming a danger to him and his bizarre foster child and must be dealt with, sooner rather than later (**Confronting Corbitt**, page 21).

If Corbitt is not yet aware of the investigators' interest but somehow spots he is being tailed by them (a failed **Stealth** roll), he realizes he must act to protect his secret. If, instead, the investigators observed Corbitt at the city dump and worked out what he was collecting (**Garbage Hunts**, page 20), then they may be able to trace the packages back to the hospital without following him there—anyone with medical training would know that the organs and limbs weren't being disposed of correctly (as they should have been incinerated at the medical facility they came from). Inquiries at the local hospital, coupled with a successful social skill roll, should lead them to Tomaszewski.

If the clue route to Tomaszewski is floundering, the Keeper may optionally draw attention to the hospital orderly by having him forget to place Corbitt's packages in the unburnable waste pile for collection one day. Thus, to ensure his supply of drugs and money, Tomaszewski personally

*Handout: Corbitt 3*

## LOCAL MAN ARRESTED IN ANIMAL SLAYINGS

Police today announced that a suspect has been arrested in connection with the recent rash of pet kidnappings in the southwest part of town.

Although released later for lack of evidence, Randolph Tomaszewski is considered the prime suspect in the recent disappearances of nearly a dozen dogs and cats from the homes and yards of the neighborhood surrounding Central Hospital.

Tomaszewski is employed at the hospital as an orderly.

It will be remembered that many of the missing pets have been discovered later in parks, usually mutilated or partially eaten. Public outcry over the atrocities has been strong and police hope that they have uncovered a lead that will eventually allow them to close this case.

*(3 months ago)*



takes two packages containing body parts to the dump after work. This being a Wednesday, the Keeper could have Corbitt arrive at the dump as usual, only to be surprised by Tomaszewski's presence. The two quickly drop the parcels in the back of Corbitt's car and then go their separate ways. With the investigators watching, this scene firmly establishes the connection between the pair.

### *Confronting Tomaszewski*

If the investigators are able to track Tomaszewski down and confront him, he panics, attacking the nearest investigator and then attempting to run for it. Such an encounter will most likely take place in the hospital or his home—and several floors up. Tomaszewski panics and uses the nearest window to attempt an escape, only to fall screaming to his death. A search of his body, his apartment, or his locker at the hospital turns up samples of Corbitt's drugs, as well as ritualistic paraphernalia (an idol of Baphomet, black candles, a dagger, and so on)—a successful **Occult** roll confirms such items are used by those with satanic beliefs.

## GARBAGE HUNTS

If the investigators follow their neighbor on one of his twice-weekly excursions to the garbage dump, Corbitt leads them straight to it, even if the investigators have already done something to arouse his suspicion. Following him there and observing him carries the likely chance that Corbitt notices the investigators' interest (unless they take great care to remain unseen at all times) and merely confirms that the investigators are a potential threat to Yog-Sothoth's schemes. Thus, Corbitt begins laying plans to distract or mislead his pursuers (**Confronting Corbitt**, page 21).

At the dump, birds circle the closed-up place, and the investigators see Corbitt slip through a hole in the chain-link fence. Those attempting to follow him into the dump must make a successful **Stealth** roll; a failed roll indicates that Corbitt has spotted his pursuers; however, he ignores the investigators' presence, pretending he has not seen anything; but, he now suspects he is being watched and, as already mentioned, begins plotting how to deal with this new nuisance.

Once inside the fence, Corbitt makes his way to one or two specific piles of junk and then extracts several canvas-wrapped objects. He opens each and either discards the object (if the part is too mutilated or decayed), or keeps it (if it seems whole and useful). When he has one or two packages, he sneaks back out. A successful **Spot Hidden** roll identifies that the packages contain human body parts and/or organs, provoking a **Sanity** roll (0/1D2 loss); investigators watching from beyond the fence must make a Hard **Spot Hidden** roll to draw the same conclusion.



## CONFRONTING CORBITT

The investigators can choose to confront Corbitt about his behavior at any time during the scenario. If they do, Corbitt does not reveal his magic abilities unless he is in fear of his life or is sure there will be no surviving witnesses, preferring instead to deal with the matter as quietly and discreetly as possible—unless given no other choice. Yog-Sothoth takes little interest in the situation, and if the Outer God senses that the investigators are interfering with his plans, it relies on Corbitt to deal with the investigators rather than taking any direct action.

Corbitt is likely to regard any threat to his pampered Child-Thing not only as meddling with his plans but also as an attack on his “family.” He is loyal to Yog-Sothoth and solicitous of the thing’s welfare, and does whatever is necessary to preserve the creature’s life. He refrains from using more force or violence than is necessary—he actually is a gentle (but twisted) man—remember that, so far, he has neither wounded nor killed anyone, though he certainly has accepted several killings by Yog-Sothoth without question. One obvious tactic for Corbitt is simply moving to another quiet residential neighborhood in another town.

Corbitt’s experiments with exotic hallucinogens have brought him a knowledge of obscure plant-derived toxins and psychoactive compounds which can be used as indirect attacks against meddlers (like the investigators). Some of these substances must be ingested, so Corbitt injects these into food or uses them to lace a drink. Others are airborne, and Corbitt might apply these to a dusty rug that he beats when an investigator walks by.

### Corbitt’s Drugs

Corbitt’s compounds cause victims to experience intense hallucinations. If his suspicions are raised in any way—for example, by getting spotted following him or by questioning him about suspicious aspects of his daily routine—he attempts to intoxicate one or more investigators with a hallucinogen that mimics the symptoms of insanity.

If exposed, an investigator must attempt an Extreme **CON** roll; if this is failed, the investigator suffers from illusions of horrifying monsters, cataclysms, and so on (see **Corbitt’s Trip**, page 22). The effects last for 2D4 hours and force a **Sanity** roll (0/1D3 loss). Corbitt’s poisons are unusual and subtle, so current forensic science struggles to detect their presence, although a successful Hard **Science (Pharmacy)** or Extreme **Science (Chemistry)** roll may detect their presence in food or drink.

### Other Means

Corbitt could call the police on the investigators; while this option is riskier for him, it is a possibility. If this ensues, the police give a stern warning not to trouble Corbitt anymore, but won’t take further action unless an investigator then commits an obvious crime. Of course, the police are unlikely to believe or want to waste their time hearing about an investigator’s “tales” of missing body parts or monsters.

More drastically, if all reasonable avenues fail, Corbitt turns to murder. If more than one investigator is on his tail, he attempts to separate them first and then use either poison or magic to kill. If the investigators have waited until the Child-Thing is near maturity, Corbitt may simply release his creature on them, knowing the time for it to leave is drawing near anyway. This event might be accomplished by inviting the investigators to his house to hear his “confession,” and then tricking them into the basement.

As a last resort, Corbitt calls directly upon Yog-Sothoth to destroy the investigators. The All-in-One, should it condescend to respond, attacks the investigators with bolts of silvery-fluid energy. The Keeper is warned against bringing such an awesome being as Yog-Sothoth directly into the adventure without proper ritual and need, as such an encounter will have grand and unpleasant consequences for the neighborhood! Yog-Sothoth’s profile can be found on page 330 of the *Call of Cthulhu: Keeper Rulebook*, if required.



If the investigators choose to confront Corbitt at the dump, he quails at their approach. He does not willingly reveal the contents of his packages and fumblingly claims they are tree branches bearing certain types of fungi he has been searching for. If the investigators are able to take the packages by force, Corbitt uses the commotion to try to escape to his automobile and drive speedily home. Note that he reveals his magical abilities only if faced with death or immediate incarceration—using the spell Dread Curse of Azathoth as necessary.

One of Corbitt's packages contains a human liver and the other the mangled leg of a ten-year-old boy, which when fully revealed provoke a **Sanity** roll (1/ID4+1 loss).

**Keeper note:** if, instead, the investigators visit Corbitt and question him about his comings and goings to the dump, he discloses only that he has been gathering samples for his studies. He explains that it is the best place to collect certain mold specimens important in his research into special plant fertilizers. He even goes so far as to offer the investigators a tour of his greenhouse should they express any interest in what he describes as “*the gentle science of botany*” (**The Greenhouse**, page 22).

## CORBITT'S TRIP

If Corbitt's actions fail to arouse the investigators' interest, then, one day, he comes to the neighboring investigator's home and knocks on the door. When the investigator appears, Corbitt explains he is going on a week-long business trip to New York and asks if the investigator would mind keeping an eye on his place and collecting his mail while he's away. In return, Corbitt offers the investigator a basket of fruit and vegetables freshly picked from his garden as a token of his appreciation. The gift is benign and delicious—at least, such previous gifts from the genial Corbitt have proven to be so.

If the investigator asks what type of business trip, Corbitt replies, “*Oh, don't you remember? I'm in the importing business—Corbitt Importers of America. I have to make arrangements with the Customs Department regarding the quarantine of a special shipment I'm expecting soon.*”

If the investigators have had past dealings with Corbitt, he asks, “*Anything you want? Anything I can hunt up for you? I expect to be in contact with some associates just returned from the Far East.*” If the investigators make a request, Corbitt says he'll try his best. Assuming the investigator agrees, Corbitt gives his thanks and departs.

If Corbitt suspects the investigators have been watching him, the gift he offers is laced with a hallucinogen. If examining the fruit and if a successful **Spot Hidden** roll is made, small needle

holes in the bottom of the fruit can be seen, which may give pause to their consumption and thus avoids ingestion of the drug. If the fruit is consumed, a successful **Extreme CON** roll is required to avoid suffering the drug's effects, which include hallucinations of monsters, fits of screaming, profuse sweating, and loss of control of basic bodily functions, all for 2D4 hours. The upsetting experience calls for a **Sanity** roll (0/1D3 loss). And, if the neighbors (or police) have any question about an investigator's current state of mind, then seeing them running down the street in soiled clothing, screaming at the top of their lungs about horrible monsters chasing them, ought to convince them the investigator is in need of a nice long rest.

## CORBITT'S HOUSE

The following sections describe the yard and interior of Corbitt's house. Remember, this is an expensive and respectable neighborhood, and if the investigators are spotted breaking and entering by a neighbor or a passing motorist, it is likely that the police will be called, requiring the investigators to come up with a plausible excuse and/or a successful **Charm**, **Fast Talk**, or **Persuade** roll to avoid being hauled into the local stationhouse, questioned, and confined to a night in the cells before being released with a warning.

### HOUSE EXTERIOR

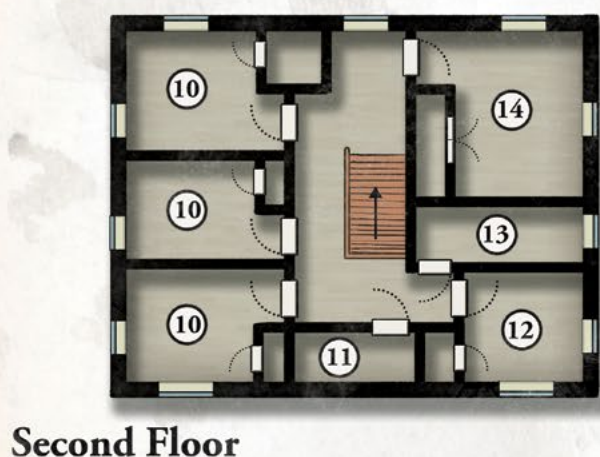
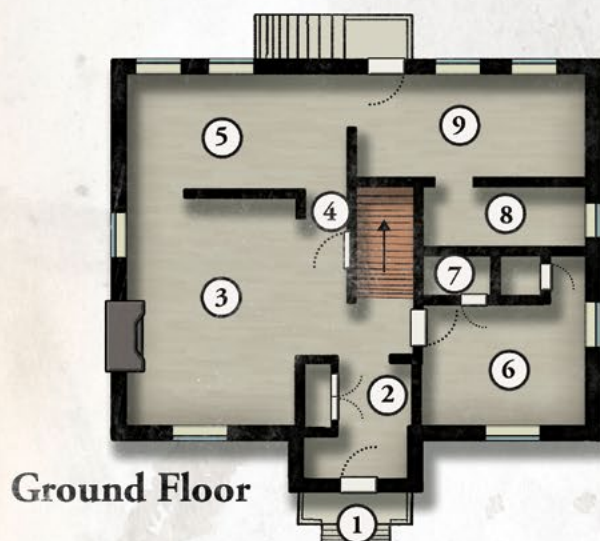
#### The Greenhouse

In the back of Corbitt's extensive grounds is his greenhouse. Here, he raises a number of dangerous and exotic plants and fungi, along with a few harmless orchids. If Corbitt is giving a tour, he allows the investigators only a few minutes—absolutely no more than 15—in the greenhouse, explaining that the plants are very delicate and sensitive to the slightest change in their environment. If the investigators enter on their own, they can, of course, spend as much time as they like exploring the greenhouse. A successful **Science (Botany)** or **Natural World** roll reveals the following information.

- **Regular success:** many of the plants and fungi are unusual specimens found only in the remotest parts of Asia, Africa, and South America.
- **Hard success:** aside from Corbitt's orchids, most of the plants contain powerful narcotic chemicals or toxins, and the collection includes such things as coca and cannabis bushes, foxglove, and deadly nightshade. There are even a few fly agaric mushrooms hidden among the beds.
- **Extreme success:** two of the plants show no resemblance to any earthly species and are of unimaginable origin.

# MR. CORBITT'S HOUSE

*A plan of Mr. Corbitt's house.*



## *Explanation*

- |    |                 |
|----|-----------------|
| 1  | Porch           |
| 2  | Cloak room      |
| 3  | Front room      |
| 4  | Basement door   |
| 5  | Dining room     |
| 6  | Guest room      |
| 7  | Bath            |
| 8  | Pantry          |
| 9  | Kitchen         |
| 10 | Empty bedroom   |
| 11 | Linen           |
| 12 | Nursery         |
| 13 | Bath            |
| 14 | Master bedroom  |
| 15 | Laboratory      |
| 16 | Utilities       |
| 17 | Laundry         |
| 18 | Workroom        |
| 19 | Room for "baby" |



Stairs

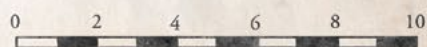
*All arrows point upstairs*



Secret door



Fireplace



SCALE IN IMPERIAL YARDS

## CHAPTER I

### *The Orange Vine*

One of the dangerous alien growths in the greenhouse is a vine sporting large orange and blue leaves. If one of these waxy, bitter-tasting leaves is thoroughly chewed, the chemicals it contains stimulate the pineal gland, allowing a character to see objects outside of this reality. This shift in vision and perception can happen at random at the most inopportune moment (as desired, the Keeper may call for a **POW** roll, which if successful negates the effect) or be brought on with concentration (a successful **POW** roll enables the effect) any time within three hours after ingesting the chemicals.

Such delving into another reality last 1D20+10 minutes and reveal a dark, rock-strewn landscape decorated with crystalline growths and occasionally lit by flashes of rose-colored lightning, provoking a **Sanity** roll (0/1D4 loss). An investigator can “explore” this new world, moving about simply by exerting their will. Anyone who explores for at least 15 minutes increases their Cthulhu Mythos skill by 2 percentiles. Unfortunately, such exploration risks the investigator being seen by the creatures who inhabit this “outside” world. Should the investigator fail a **Luck** roll while exploring, they are noticed by one of this world’s denizens. The first intimation an investigator has of this is the sight of a scuttling, spider-like form advancing across the landscape directly toward them,

which soon reveals itself to be seven feet (2.1 m) tall, emaciated, and hungering for human blood—the sight of this horror calls for a **Sanity** roll (1/1D8 loss). The spider-like thing attacks without hesitation, and unless the investigator can escape this alien dimension (with a successful **POW** roll), they will have to defend against the ravenous creature’s advances (see **Dimensional Being**, page 38).

Investigators who did not chew the orange and blue leaves are unable to see the monster and can only watch helplessly as their companion’s clothing and flesh are torn away by a seemingly invisible force, while large quantities of the victim’s spurting blood are sucked away into nothingness. Seeing this event prompts a **Sanity** roll (1/1D6 loss).

### *The Purple Flower*

The second alien plant in the greenhouse has spiky blue-green leaves and a large, fleshy, white and purple flower. Sensing mobile lifeforms by their vital energies, the plant attempts to kill the lifeform and turn it into fertilizer for itself.

After an investigator has been in the greenhouse for more than 15 minutes, the plant turns silently toward them (a successful **Spot Hidden** roll to notice). If the investigator remains unaware of the menacing growth, it attacks by emitting a cold, cloudy gas that does not immediately kill the



character but rather sets in motion a rapid decomposition of the victim's flesh.

If an investigator inhales the gas before managing to flee the greenhouse, a **CON** roll is required to avoid the horrific consequences of exposure. A kindly Keeper may first allow an observant investigator a **Spot Hidden** roll to note the strange gas coming from the plant—and possibly, the fact that the gas is causing other plants nearby to turn brown and wither), or a **Dodge** roll to rapidly clear the greenhouse, which perhaps grants a bonus die to the **CON** roll.

If unable to escape or failing the **CON** roll, within 60 seconds, the investigator begins to rot, suffering 1D3 damage every round thereafter. The victim suffers an intolerable amount of pain as their flesh blackens and splits open like rotting fruit. Allow one further **CON** roll on the following round to stop this process accelerating: if successful, the investigator suffers another 1D3 damage but no more; if failed, the process continues until there is nothing left but a brown mush along with whatever metal objects the investigator may have been carrying at the time. Investigators witnessing this high-speed decay should make a **Sanity** roll (1/1D6 loss). A very kindly Keeper may allow a **First Aid** or **Medicine** roll, both at Extreme difficulty, to save the affected investigator.

### The Vegetable Garden

Should the investigators hit on the idea of digging up Corbitt's large vegetable patch, they are quickly rewarded with the discovery of the grisly remains of the madman's many experiments. Rotting ribcages, decaying heads, and, most frightening, the grafted atrocities created by the insane Corbitt can all be found here. The sight of headless corpses with legs where arms should be, a human trunk with six human feet growing from the ribs, numerous limbs, and other indefinable lumps of mud-coated human anatomy requires the diggers to make a **Sanity** roll (1/1D4+1 loss).

## HOUSE INTERIOR

Eventually, the investigators should get around to peeking inside the house. At the very least, they will have to visit it in order to collect the absent importer's mail (if incorporating Corbitt's Trip, page 22). When nearing the house, ask for a **Listen** roll to detect the crash of breaking glass and the rattle of furniture coming from the front basement window to the left of the front door; if the roll is failed, the sounds become obvious once the investigators reach the front door. If they look through the window into the basement workroom, they see something vaguely man-like flash into view for a split-second before jumping into the shadows. To all appearances, it seems as though a burglary is afoot. If the investigators think to call the police, the Keeper may suggest they may not

get there in time to apprehend the thief before they make their getaway, or simply have the police say they will send someone over but that it won't be for at least a few hours due to other current commitments—and then, ramp up the noise and commotion coming from the basement to entice the investigators inside.

### Corbitt's Early Experiment

Corbitt practiced for years so as to perfect his strange surgical/magical arts. Some of his experiments died and others eventually had to be killed; however, Corbitt kept one that he found particularly amusing, allowing it to run around the house as an odd and macabre "pet."

This creature is a thing made from discarded human parts. It consists of a woman's head with two arms sprouting from where there would normally be ears and a single human leg attached to the neck. The thing is near mindless, its brains replaced by a rudimentary digestive system. While Corbitt is at work or away, the experiment is allowed the run of the basement workroom (room 18 on the house plan), hopping and scampering about, and behaving for all the world like a housebound cat (see **Scampering Woman-Thing**, page 38, for its profile.)

The basement windows are shut but not locked; a successful **STR** roll opens any of them. If the investigators enter via one of the basement workroom windows, they descend into the room to find the terrified creature, which keeps its distance, scurrying back and forth, until it leaps up at the open window and attempts to escape. Should the investigators instead enter the house through the front door, they can hear something banging on a basement door. (Perhaps the burglar?) Even if they do not dare to go down and see what is making the noise, the creature breaks through the basement door in 1D6 rounds, scurrying up to the ground floor, bashing open doors as it goes. On meeting the investigators, the thing is terrified of these "intruders" and proceeds to flee to the home's upper floors, leading the investigators on a merry chase. If cornered, the thing hisses and spits in a threatening way, its semi-human face twisted with fear, although it only strikes out if it first attacked.

### Ground Floor

The only room of special interest on the ground floor is the front room, which contains several important items. Otherwise, the rest of the ground floor rooms contain typical furniture and nothing out of the ordinary.

#### Front Room (3)

This room is used by Corbitt as his study. Above a desk is a single shelf of books—the four most interesting ones are an Arabic copy of the Quran, a copy of *Twenty Experiments in the Occult* by the charlatan Dr. Arthur Turnley (no spells or skill

improvement), a well-worn copy of *True Magick* by Theophilus Wenn (*Call of Cthulhu: Keeper Rulebook*, page 234), and a large, crudely-fashioned book bound in cobra skin, called *The Key and the Gate*, written in Sanskrit (a successful **Language (Sanskrit)** roll to translate; see box **The Key and the Gate**, nearby, for further details). In addition, there are 14 leather-bound annual journals dating back to the time of Corbitt's first encounter with Yog-Sothoth, complete up to the current year, and describing Bernard Corbitt's life since India. It takes ten minutes to leaf through a single volume; in-depth reading makes for boring fare and takes half an hour per journal.

Some journals do, however, contain useful information (**Handout: Corbitt 4**). Journal One is from 14 years ago and Journal Fourteen is for the present year. Entries not listed are very mundane, with statements like, "*Nothing occurred today,*" or "*Purchased new suit on my afternoon off.*" There is nothing noteworthy in Journals Two through Twelve, which cover three trips to the East, acquisitions of unusual orchids and other botanical curiosities, meetings with several old friends, work matters, and various accounts of mundane purchases and the like. "Experiments" are occasionally mentioned, but Corbitt does not elaborate.

**Keeper note:** while the text above says there's nothing noteworthy in the journals other than the snippets shown in **Handout: Corbitt 4 (pages 1 to 7)**, the Keeper may wish to include seeds for future scenarios, whether pertaining to the other scenarios in this collection or adventures of their own devising.

**Keeper note II:** if Corbitt has reason to suspect that the investigators are plotting against him, he includes his thoughts in his current journal. If he knows the investigators have followed him to the dump or to the hospital, or broken into his home, he leaves an entry that reads: "*I am being followed. If I cannot find a way to deal with them myself, in the next ceremony with Ramasekva, I will be forced to ask for their destruction.*" Another entry mentions the possibility of sending "*Tomaszewski at the hospital*" to deal with the investigators.

A black loose-leaf binder next to the journals holds Corbitt's notes regarding his botanical experiments. These complicated scribbles, somewhat soiled and faded, can be comprehended with a successful **Science (Botany or Biology)** or Hard **Natural World** roll. They tell of Corbitt's experiments with drugs derived from the plants and fungi growing in his greenhouse. Investigators learn that Corbitt uses fly agaric mushrooms, along with extracts from several other of his plants, to produce the drug he calls "Soma," a necessary ingredient in the calling of Ramasekva. Using this drug to elevate his state of mind, Corbitt believes he can successfully

contact Ramasekva (Yog-Sothoth). In addition, the reader can learn about the two alien species of plants kept by Corbitt (**The Greenhouse**, page 22) and, perhaps, allow them to avoid their respective dangers. The plants' true origins are obscure, but Corbitt claims the seeds were gifts from Ramasekva.

The potent Soma drug can be correctly compounded by an investigator with a successful **Science (Pharmacy)** roll or a Hard **Science (Chemistry or Biology)** roll, given a bit of time and the right equipment. A supply of Soma is hidden in a carved Indian box under a sofa in this room (detected with a successful **Spot Hidden** roll). The drug can be identified as a hallucinogenic by a competent analyst with a successful **Science (Pharmacy)** or a Hard **Science (Chemistry)** roll. If a dose is ingested, it costs the user 1D4 Sanity points from the cosmic visions it reveals, which last for 1D10 minutes per dose; while under the drug's influence, the Keeper may impose a penalty die should the investigator need to attempt a skill roll.



## THE KEY AND THE GATE

*Sanskrit, author unknown, date unknown*

Describes Yog-Sothoth and its manifestation in the form of the multi-limbed demon Ramasekva, who splits worlds apart and devours the survivors.

- **Sanity Loss:** 1D6
- **Cthulhu Mythos:** +1/+4 percentiles
- **Mythos Rating:** 15
- **Study:** 14 weeks
- **Spells:** Call Ramasekva (Yog-Sothoth)

### Spell: Call Ramasekva

- **Cost:** 1+ magic points per person; 1D10 Sanity points (caster only)
- **Casting time:** 1–100 minutes

Casting this peculiar version of the Call Yog-Sothoth spell (*Call of Cthulhu: Keeper Rulebook*, page 249) does not involve building a stone tower but does require the use of the "Soma" drug Corbitt manufactures, the recipe for which can be found in his botanical notes (**Front Room**, page 25). A limited quantity of the drug can also be found in the same room. The necessary equipment and ingredients to make more can be found in the **Laboratory** (page 27).



## MISTER CORBITT

Four expensive dictionaries sit in a drawer: Ancient Greek to English, Sanskrit to English, Chinese to English, and Russian to English. Using the Sanskrit to English dictionary to assist with translating *The Key and the Gate* (see box nearby) awards the investigator a bonus die to a **Language (Sanskrit)** roll. The other drawers contain envelopes, paper, pens, ink bottles, and a supply of paper clips and elastic bands.

### Second Floor

#### *Master Bedroom (14)*

This is Bernard Corbitt's room; it is relatively well kept, the closet only a third full of clothing. A framed photograph of Corbitt's late wife has a prominent place atop the nightstand next to Corbitt's bed. There is nothing of particular importance here (unless the investigators enter at night while Corbitt is asleep).

#### *Nursery (12)*

This room was intended for Corbitt's child; it now sits empty but for a dusty crib. Nothing out of the ordinary can be found here.

#### *Empty Bedrooms (10)*

Spare bedrooms used by previous generations of Corbitts. They sit unfurnished and empty.

### Basement

#### *Laboratory (15)*

One end of the lab is filled with various chemicals stored in jars, along with numerous beakers, retorts, balances, and mortars and pestles. Several dried plant specimens litter the table. On the other side of the room can be found Corbitt's surgery. Scalpels, catgut, needles, rib spreaders, clamps, and other fearsome-looking surgical implements are all stored in a large metal cabinet.

When nearing this cabinet, the faint sound of an electric compressor can be heard; anyone standing next to the cabinet notices that the lowest drawer gives off a faint draft of cold air. If opened, the investigators discover a host of refrigerated human nerves, tendons, and blood vessels, all carefully stored for what looks like future use, provoking a **Sanity** roll (0/1D3 loss).

In another part of the lab are bottles of glucose and saline solutions. The place is slightly confusing as it seems to serve a surgeon, a chemical manufacturer, and a plant breeder. The investigators may wonder at the cost of all this equipment; a successful **Appraise** roll reveals it must be worth several thousand dollars—more than most people are able to spend on their hobby.

#### *"Baby's" Room (19)*

The closet in the south of the laboratory is empty, but those opening this door immediately notice a fetid, unidentifiable smell that pervades the enclosed space. Anyone who investigates and makes a successful **Spot Hidden** roll sees the back wall is a false panel that can be easily removed. If this panel is disturbed, the investigators hear a faint, plaintive gurgling from the other side.

If the investigators fail to notice the hidden panel, further attention can be drawn by having the creature behind it make child-like cooing or giggling sounds, which might be heard with a successful **Listen** roll elsewhere in the basement area, but are obvious to those near to or in the closet.

If the panel is opened and a light shone into the void behind it, the investigators see the "child." The horror stumbles out of the room, making its way toward the investigators, calling for a **Sanity** roll (1/1D10 loss). Thinking they are his father come to add more limbs and organs, the as-yet undeveloped Child-Thing reaches for the investigators with its multiple little arms, whimpering for food.

The creature's body looks like a huge, dense sac of mucus with the consistency of an overcooked pudding. An interior skeleton can be seen poking through the body from time to time, while three great vents, closed by wrinkly lips, rhythmically aspirate the monster with puffing, wheezing sounds. Ten human legs, all children's, though of various colors and sizes, rim the lower part of the body, providing it with locomotion, while the 15 chubby little arms encircling the upper side of its body writhe about, grasping at nothing. Otherwise, the thing is quite featureless except for a wet circular mouth located on the creature's underside that gurgles and coos softly, in a way that resembles the sounds a human baby makes. The creature frequently stops to squat and scour the floor with wet sucking noises, searching for food.

The thing's waste products are passed out of its digestive system via a sphincter opening atop the center of its body, much like that of a sea urchin. A near-continuous stream of foul-smelling brown goo issues from this hole.

#### *The Child-Thing's Tactics*

If freed from its hidden room, the whimpering Child-Thing follows the intruders about the basement, looking for food. If the panel is closed up, the Child-Thing jumps up and knocks it loose, allowing it to crawl through into basement area. If fed—and the creature will only accept raw flesh—it proves somewhat tractable, if clumsy; however, at its current stage of development, it requires regular feedings, and if denied food for more than 24 hours, it turns vicious and attacks any investigator that comes near it, hoping to feed on their remains.

If the Child-Thing sees an open door, it attempts to escape the house, running down the street with great curiosity and

## JOURNAL #1

September 10

Another embarrassing memory lapse today. This journal should help me deal with the problem.

September 13

I have had Mother sign the last of the legal papers that transfer ownership of Corbitt Importers of America from her to myself. She seems to be doing well in the new nursing home and I hope they can give her the treatment and attention she needs. I'm afraid her condition continues to decline rapidly. The death of Father seems to have unhinged her mind. If she knew my role in his death, although I don't in the least feel responsible, I'm sure it would kill her. She would never understand the power of my new lord, Ramasekua. Could she have but experienced those moments on the mountain when HE appeared in all his terrible magnificence! He spoke with me and left his mark upon my breast. Then he took hold of my father and the two became one with each other. Before devouring him, Ramasekua tore my father's head from his shoulders...

October 29

Have met a charming young woman at a social gathering, her name is Lynn Meyers. I have arranged to take her to the pictures next week. My lord, I think, would approve of her.

December 12

Spent thirty hours in ceremony, have located Ramasekva. He wants a bridge to the world and needs my help. I have agreed. My studies have shown that Ramasekva is an obscure Asura, an East Indian demon. The Asura are said to be older gods, the ones who ruled before the coming of Shiva. Certain things spoken of in Wenn's book lead me to believe there may be a link to a being called Yog-Sothoth.

JOURNAL #2

January 10

I found myself wanting to make Lynn my wife and have sealed the thought by proposing to her. She accepted, and we have set the date of marriage for March 9 of this year. Ramasekua assures me the time is right.

March 13

Have returned from our honeymoon. Lynn and I have decided to keep the family place as it is excellent for raising children. In May, all being well, Lynn will accompany me on my trip to Ceylon for a new herbal tea supply. This may be my last trip out of the country for a while. A man who plans a family must be willing to settle down a bit.

April 1

Had to send Lynn to visit her mother while I cast the ceremony. I don't believe she is ready to understand yet. Ramasekua has told me he wants a union of flesh. He demands the union be made with my wife. I am to await thirteen days, cast another, easier ceremony, and then wait. Ramasekua is to inhabit my body!

April 14

Cast the ceremony in the morning and Ramasekua came. I/he visited Lynn for several hours. She seems to suspect nothing.

July 19

Have told my wife to remain in bed throughout the day, as she has taken ill from her pregnancy. I took the day to contact Ramasekua. I am to deliver the child myself, at home. My master has directed me to raise this child as if it were my own.

November 21

Horror of horrors! My life is ashes. Poor Lynn went into labor today and in the course of giving birth to the child she expired, despite all I did to save her. Nurse Dunlap blundered into the room at the wrong moment, and when she saw the child, took leave of her senses. In trying to take care of her I may have neglected Lynn at a critical moment. At any rate, she is gone, and I blame only myself. A second child, a boy, was born dead, and I have turned both bodies over to the funeral home. The child of Ramasekua I have hidden in the basement. The thing is limbless and appears to have trouble breathing. I don't think it can live for long.

November 25

The funeral of Lynn and the child was held. Her parents were heart-broken and felt pity for me. I later consoled them and promised to stay in touch.

November 26

The ceremony of Ramasekua brought him forth to explain the child. He said the thing would live and that I am to spend the next ten years preparing for a time when it would need me. When the time comes, I am to equip it for life on Earth. It will be given limbs and lungs. I am not to contact Ramasekua until ten years and a day have elapsed.

December 14

I have found someone to help me, a man named Randolph Tomaszewski. He works at the local hospital and assures me that he can supply me with the parts necessary to the experiments I need to conduct over the next few years. He is an unsavory type, but I need his help. I have agreed to supply him with a small amount of the drugs he desires and he, in return, will try to fill my needs. Perhaps through association with myself, he will find a way to better himself. He seems a particularly irreligious and bitter man. Next week I will make my first trip to the dump and see what my confederate has been able to find for me. The experiments should prove a challenge, but I have every confidence that I can learn, especially with my lord Ramasekua's guidance.

## JOURNAL #13

November 25

The child grows large, and the time has come. Entered the ceremony with Ramasekua. He told me that when Spring has arrived that I am to search out fresh limbs and organs to be added to the creature—the time of experimenting is over. As the thing is still a child, I will use only the limbs and organs of children. My experiments show that the more youthful parts adapt much better than older ones. Any parts that are unusable I am directed to feed to the child. Ramasekua wants it to develop a taste for such things and says that it is now the time for growing.

## JOURNAL #14

March 19

Tomaszewski says I am asking too much of him and claims that he is having difficulty supplying me with parts. The needs of the child increase all the time and I have boosted again the strength of the drug I give the man, hoping that it will entice him to be more cooperative. I fear however that the drug simply exacerbates his derangement.

I must admit to feeling guilt—aiding and abetting his false beliefs somehow seems wrong. However, to try and tell him the truth would, I'm afraid, serve only to further unhinge his mind. I will continue the pretense of believing in his "Master." I value the services Tomaszewski renders too much to risk further damage to his grasp on reality.

Most of the child's organs are now in place and a few limbs have been attached. The grafts heal nicely. My years of experimenting are paying off.

March 28

I swear the child is growing ever more quickly. Unfortunately, this means I must have further dealings with Tomaszewski. However, the child's progress is a wonderful thing to behold, although it definitely needs more limbs as its size increases.

April 8

Back to the rubbish dump again. The child's rate of development is, if anything, even more prodigious than before. I wonder how much longer we will need to sustain its growing hunger and need for further augmentation?

April 11

Another growth spurt, requiring yet more surgery and sustenance for the child. Its attempts to walk afterwards truly put one in mind of a determined, if somewhat clumsy, toddler.

April 19

It cannot be long now. At least, I hope it won't be. I love the child as if it were my own, and I have no doubt our Lord Ramasekva will be pleased with his "son," but I fear how much longer I can continue to convince our supplier to cooperate. There is only so much I can do to increase the narcotic properties of his favored method of mind-expansion before it becomes toxic, and I still have need of his services, however odious they, and he, may be.

May 14

Another day, another visit to our friend for more supplies. I am, I believe, justifiably proud of my work on the child, and I don't doubt his father will be, too, when the time comes.

May 25

Tomaszewski is growing fractious again and demands ever more compensation for his efforts. I look forward to the day I no longer have to pander to his misbeliefs, though, to be fair, he has never failed to provide for us when asked. I also fear that my trips to the dump may draw attention before too long. Still, the child is positively thriving, and is a magnificent thing to behold.

enthusiasm, grabbing at things and trying to evade any pursuers. It does recognize its foster father, Mr. Corbitt, and will obey his commands, as long as they are simple and clearly stated.

If the investigators try to keep the thing alive and happy, either while Corbitt is away or if Corbitt should be killed, then they find it requires at least three pounds (1.4 kg) of raw meat per day to keep its appetite satisfied. These demands increase by 10% per week, its growth rate accelerating in a like manner. If the investigators are crazed enough to nurture the monster as it grows, they each lose 1 Sanity point per week of such folly. They soon notice disturbing changes taking place—the creature's immature arms and legs grow larger and stronger, its size increases, and it begins to talk to them.

**Keeper note:** while the Child-Thing wants feeding every day, Corbitt cannot always be there to do so. Sometimes, the creature goes without food for a day or two while Corbitt is away. Otherwise, when gone for longer journeys, Corbitt leaves out a massive pile of unwholesome food—the Child-Thing tends to pick at this and then eventually gobbles everything up, filling it to bursting, and leaving it sated for some time (it then tends to sleep for an extended period). Of course, on Corbitt's return, the creature is famished—Corbitt has learned to make sure he throws in more food before venturing near his “child” when he returns home from such trips.

## CONCLUSION

There are various ways to resolve this scenario and a number of things that can happen to the investigators. The currently immature form of the Child-Thing is not hard to kill, nor is the cautious and confused Mr. Corbitt likely to present much of a problem to truly ruthless investigators. This adventure does, however, present a roleplaying challenge in that Corbitt is a neighbor, not a stranger, and thus might retain some right to being treated fairly and humanely. As previously noted, until the events of the scenario, he's not actually murdered anyone, although his other actions have been criminal and despicable.

If Corbitt is unsuspecting of the investigators, but they have come to know of the monster, they have the choice of destroying it or leaving it be. If the Child-Thing is destroyed, Corbitt's remaining shreds of sanity dissolve, leaving the man in a near-hopeless condition. The investigators may turn him over to the authorities, but if they realize that Corbitt's mental state keeps him from taking responsibility for the things that have happened, they may choose to try and help him get his life back together, turning him from the dark path he was on to a more enlightened one. After all, if he can be saved, then there could really be hope for everyone.

Should the investigators allow the Scampering Woman-Thing or the Child-Thing to escape, they eventually hear stories of horrific sightings and, where the Child-Thing is concerned, people disappearing. Strangely burned and shriveled corpses begin to turn up. These stories go on for two weeks, and are broadcast across radio stations and printed in the newspapers, much to the distress of the investigators who let this happen.

Note that the investigator who is Corbitt's neighbor may also need to be reminded that there might be some questions to answer if they and their friends simply blow up Corbitt's house with dynamite or blast it with long-range gunfire. As a result, and to avoid tricky questions from the authorities, they may want to devise a subtler plan for getting rid of the creature, once they've uncovered its existence.

If the investigators choose to not deal with the monster themselves and instead notify the authorities, two police officers (given a plausible reason) arrive and enter the house. When they find the creatures, one police officer faints while the other runs screaming from the basement, and in the commotion the Scampering Woman-Thing escapes. The police then contact the United States Bureau of Investigation (renamed the FBI in 1935) who, after arriving on the scene, find and kill the creatures, confiscate Corbitt's books, notes, and medical supplies, and order the house burned down. The government then tracks down Corbitt (if he still lives) and arrests him on some obscure charge. He is not seen or heard from again. A statement is issued claiming the house was infected with a contagious disease requiring immediate and drastic control. It was decided that burning the property was the most expedient method of dealing with this threat to public well-being. Hint to the investigators that certain shadowy people within the government may be aware of the Mythos threat and practice a policy of misinformation to avoid creating a panic among the public.

Should one or more investigators go indefinitely or permanently insane during the course of the scenario, the Keeper may choose to corrupt the Important People section of their backstories by inserting a clause about how they now regard the Child-Thing as an infant baby that they must care for (much in the same way that Corbitt thinks of the creature). Thus, they may become willing accomplices to Corbitt or heirs to his legacy if he dies.

If the investigators decide to do nothing, then, in only a year's time from the beginning of this adventure, the creature reaches maturity and names itself Man-Bagari. Any affection the thing may have felt for its keeper(s) is long gone, and both Corbitt and the investigators are viewed as potential food should they attempt to thwart its efforts to rejoin its father and fulfill its role as the Bridge for the Opening of the Way.

## REWARDS

Suggested Sanity point awards (and penalties) for this scenario include:

- Destroying the Scampering Woman-Thing: +1D4 Sanity points.
- Destroying the Child-Thing: +1D10 Sanity points.
- Understanding the Child-Thing's link to Yog-Sothoth and its role in the eventual Opening of the Way before destroying it: +2D6 Sanity points.
- Successfully rehabilitating Corbitt: +1D4 Sanity points.
- Hearing stories of the creature's rampages having let it escape: -1D10+1 Sanity points.
- Allowing the police and the federal government to take over the case, and allowing others to suffer the consequences of the investigators' inaction: -1D6+1 Sanity points.

## Options for Continuing the Horror

If this scenario is used as a sidetrack during an ongoing campaign, then it works perfectly well as an enclosed and stand-alone adventure, as the events can be wrapped up neatly as described above. Alternatively, as mentioned in **Involving the Investigators** (page 43), this scenario could also be the first in a series that leads new investigators ever

deeper into the danger and mystery of the Cthulhu Mythos. If the Keeper is using *Mister Corbitt* as the start of a new campaign, then it can be expanded in several ways, some of which are discussed below.

If the investigators permitted the Child-Thing to escape, then tracking it down and dealing with it could form the basis of another scenario of the Keeper's own design. In this case, the trail of bodies left by the Child-Thing as it feeds eventually leads to its new hideout, but do the investigators want to kill it or capture it for further study? Or has someone else heard of the creature and want to trap it and use it for their own dark purposes? And, if Corbitt is still alive and free, it stands to reason that he'll be searching for his "son," too, although he could have a variety of reasons to do so (depending on what's happened so far); for instance, the investigators may find themselves in a race against their neighbor as to who reaches the Child-Thing first. But, if the investigators have subsequently helped Corbitt to realize what he's done, it's possible that he may call on them to assist him in recovering and/or destroying the creature before it causes any more harm.

Should Corbitt, as a result of the investigators' poking around, decide to flee to a new town or city with his grotesque charge, then the scenario could be expanded into



*The Corbitt House*

## MISTER CORBITT

a nationwide manhunt for their former neighbor. Perhaps some clue left in Corbitt's abandoned basement points them to his new hiding place, or the investigators hear of a rash of macabre thefts from mortuaries and funeral homes across the country as Corbitt continues to surgically enhance the rapidly growing Child-Thing. Perhaps people go missing and bodies begin turning up with limbs missing, as the affair turns very dark and dangerous. The chase may move to more exotic climes—after all, Corbitt is the head of an international import company with business links all over the world. It may even involve a return to where Corbitt first encountered his lord and master Ramasekva in India: the mountains of the Punjab.

## CHARACTERS AND MONSTERS

### NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

**Bernard Corbitt,**  
*age 37, cultist and devoted foster father*

STR 50 CON 60 SIZ 60 DEX 65 INT 85  
APP 75 POW 95 EDU 75 SAN 22 HP 12  
DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 8 MP: 19

#### Combat

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

#### Skills

Anthropology 70%, Concoct Untraceable Poison 75%, Cthulhu Mythos 31%, Drive Auto 55%, Fast Talk 55%, First Aid 80%, History 70%, Language (Chinese) 55%, Language (English) 75%, Language (French) 60%, Language (Punjabi) 30%, Language (Sanskrit) 40%, Language (Spanish) 35%, Occult 45%, Spot Hidden 80%, Science (Astronomy) 90%, Science (Botany) 97%, Science (Chemistry) 80%, Science (Geology) 45%, Science (Pharmacy) 85%, Science (Zoology) 60%, Unorthodox Surgery 87%.

**Spells:** Call Ramasekva (Call Yog-Sothoth), Contact Ramasekva (Contact Yog-Sothoth), Dread Curse of Azathoth.

**Randolph Tomaszewski, age 29, hospital orderly**

STR 70 CON 75 SIZ 70 DEX 65 INT 55  
APP 40 POW 50 EDU 40 SAN 50 HP 14  
DB: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 8 MP: 10

#### Combat

Brawl 50% (25/10), damage 1D3+1D4  
or switchblade 1D4+1D4  
Dodge 40% (20/8)

#### Skills

Language (English) 50%, Occult 65%, Stealth 40%.

**Miss Harriet Hart, age 73, local spinster**

STR 50 CON 60 SIZ 45 DEX 75 INT 75  
APP 80 POW 65 EDU 60 SAN 65 HP 10  
DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 5 MP: 13

#### Combat

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

#### Skills

Accounting 75%, Appraise 70%, Intimidate 65%, Language (English) 60%, Listen 60%, Psychology 60%, Spot Hidden 75%.

**Mrs. Rebecca Wallace, age 54, live-in companion**

STR 80 CON 50 SIZ 60 DEX 55 INT 70  
APP 50 POW 60 EDU 60 SAN 60 HP 11  
DB: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 6 MP: 12

#### Combat

Brawl 35% (17/7), damage 1D3+1D4  
Dodge 30% (15/6)

#### Skills

Accounting 45%, Art/Craft (Cooking) 75%, Art/Craft (Housekeeping) 65%, First Aid 50%, Language (English) 60%, Listen 60%, Persuade 45%, Psychology 45%, Spot Hidden 65%.

**Bobby Lynskey, age 12, local paper boy**

STR 40 CON 50 SIZ 40 DEX 55 INT 60  
APP 60 POW 45 EDU 40 SAN 45 HP 9  
DB: -1 Build: -1 Move: 8 MP: 13

#### Combat

Brawl 40% (20/8), damage 1D3-1  
Dodge 50% (25/10)

#### Skills

Listen 55%, Language (English) 40%, Ride (Bicycle) 60%, Spot Hidden 60%, Stealth 50%, Throw 70%.

## CREATURES AND MONSTERS

**Dimensional Being, *thing from another reality***

STR 90 CON 80 SIZ 95 DEX 80 INT 35  
 APP — POW 50 EDU — SAN — HP 17  
 DB: +1D6 Build: 2 Move: 10 MP: 10

**Combat****Attacks per round:** 2 (claws)

Attacks with its front claws, tearing and rending its victims while feasting on their blood.

Fighting 65% (32/13), damage 1D8+1D6  
 Dodge 40% (20/8)

**Sanity Loss:** 1/1D8 Sanity points to encounter a dimensional being; 1/1D6 Sanity loss to see the process of a dimensional being feeding, if the viewer hasn't consumed orange vine leaf (**The Orange Vine**, page 24).

**Scampering Woman-Thing, *early Corbitt experiment***

STR 45 CON 45 SIZ 25 DEX 45 INT 25  
 APP — POW 25 EDU — SAN — HP 7  
 DB: -1 Build: -1 Move: 9 MP: 5

**Combat****Attacks per round:** 1(biting, scratching)

The creature charges if scared and trapped—make an opposed roll of the creature's STR versus its target's DEX. If the creature is successful, the investigator falls and suffers 1D3-1 damage (minimum 1). With the scampering-thing kicking and charging at them, it requires a successful Hard DEX roll to get to their feet or 1D3 rounds, whichever comes first. In the meantime, the creature inflicts 1 damage per round while the investigator is on the floor.

Charge 30% (15/6), damage special  
 (see description)  
 Dodge 25% (12/5)

**Sanity Loss:** 1/1D6 Sanity points to see the scampering woman-thing.

## MAN-BAGARI

**The Child-Thing, *immature form***

STR 80 CON 250 SIZ 120 DEX 45 INT 40  
 APP — POW 110 EDU — SAN — HP 37  
 DB: +1D6 Build: 2 Move: 9 MP: 22

**Combat****Attacks per round:** 3 (fist and/or bite) or 1 (grapple)

Able to make up to three fist and/or bite attacks per round, which can be against three separate targets, or one grapple attack.

**Grapple (mnvr):** at the expense of foregoing all of its fist attacks, the Child-Thing attempts to grab a target and pull the victim toward its mouth. If successful, on the following round the Child-Thing uses its suck attack (1D8 damage per round the victim is held). Victims can attempt to break free via an opposed STR roll; if colleagues deal 10 damage to the monster in a single round, it drops whoever it is currently holding.

Fighting 50% (22/10), damage 1D6  
 Grapple (mnvr) 50% (25/10), held then bite/suck  
 (see above)  
 Dodge 20% (10/4)

**Skills**

Sense Food 90%.

**Armor:** none.

**Spells:** none (yet); however, if the investigators take too long killing the hapless creature, it may (at the Keeper's discretion) get a chance to call upon its father for help in its hour of need (see Man-Bagari's spells, following).

**Sanity Loss:** 1/1D10 Sanity points to encounter the Child-Thing.

## MISTER CORBITT

### Man-Bagari, mature form

STR 250 CON 500 SIZ 250 DEX 90 INT 80  
APP — POW 220 EDU — SAN — HP 75  
DB: +8D6 Build: 9 Move: 9 MP: 44

### Special Abilities

**Leap:** it cannot fly but is capable of jumping up to 200 feet (60 m) in a single bound.

**Return to Father:** can leave this plane of existence at will. The creature serves as a son of Yog-Sothoth and herald for the eventual Opening of the Way and the coming of the Outer God.

### Combat

**Attacks per round:** 1 (grapple or drain)

First uses its grapple maneuver to grab hold, before burning and draining energy from the victim on subsequent rounds with its drain attack.

**Grapple (mnvr):** grabs a target and clutches them tightly. On the following round, Man-Bagari may begin to automatically drain the victim. The victim cannot break free and must rely on colleagues to help, either by lending their STR to the victim's in an opposed STR roll (assuming they are trying to pull the victim free) or by attacking Man-Bagari (if reduced to half hit points or if suffering from some sort of spell, the monster releases whoever it is holding).

**Drain:** leeches 1D4+2 points of CON per round, converting these points into hit points for itself (1 hit point for every 10 points of CON drained); at zero CON the victim is dead. For each point of CON lost, the victim also loses 1 point of APP. While surviving investigators can regain 1D10 points of CON per week (to their normal maximum), any APP loss is permanent.

Grapple (mnvr)	75% (35/15), held then able to drain (see above)
Drain	automatic if held, 1D4+2 CON per round (see above)
Dodge	45% (22/9)

**Armor:** 10-point tough, leathery skin.

**Spells:** can summon Yog-Sothoth by calling the Outer God's name (in a thunderous voice) and expending 10 magic points.

**Sanity Loss:** 1D3/1D20 Sanity points to encounter Man-Bagari.



# THE CRACK'D AND CROOK'D MANSE

*In which the investigators explore a usual house, only to find a distinctly unusual resident.*

Nominally set in February 1925, this scenario can be run over one to two sessions with one or more investigators. While it can be adapted to suit the Keeper's current campaign, the 1925 setting ties in chronologically with previous events in 1865 and 1895, as covered in the text. The scenario takes place in Gamwell, a fictitious Massachusetts town, which lies west of Boston, approximately halfway between Boston and Albany. As the solution to this adventure doesn't rely on obscure skills or special arcane knowledge, the scenario is suited for both beginning and experienced players alike.

*The Crack'd and Crook'd Manse* was originally used as a tournament scenario at Phantasticon 1984 in Melbourne, Australia, and was then published in *Multiverse* (issue 3, 1984) before being revised and updated for its appearance in Chaosium's original edition of *Mansions of Madness*.

## KEEPER INFORMATION

### *The Fitzgerald Manse: 60 Years Ago*

Johnny came marching home, hurrah, marching home from the war. He'd been out there protecting the family honor. His brother Billy didn't come marching home though. Confederate grapeshot hit him in the guts at Bull Run and that was the end of him. Not that Johnny got off scot-free. He copped a bullet in the head at Appomattox: didn't bring him down but it sure messed him up. Most folks reckon that's why he came home, cleaned his rifle, shot his family and then himself. Hurrah.

### *The Fitzgerald Manse: 30 Years Ago*

It crouched in the dark, comforted by the nearness of that which it cradled in its arms. Murmuring happily, it traced a finger along the blade still slick. Absent-mindedly, it put its finger in its mouth and licked. Spat. Made sightless by the darkened room, it paused to listen, head cocked to one side like an animal. No

sounds. They had gone at last. It chuckled. It did not think they would find it, not in here.

It could still remember the gasps when they discovered its handiwork in the kitchen. And the dining room. And the bedroom. On the walls. And over the furniture. And on the ceiling. It chuckled again. Serves them right, trying to trick it with that woman, and those children—little brats. How they squealed! Another chuckle, a hollow sound in its parched throat.

Time to go. It stood up, stretched, listened again. Nothing. It felt for the panel, searching for the crack. It should be here, just here. Where was it? Where was the gap? The false wall behind the fireplace, it should be here... Gone! They'd taken it away! No! It was trapped, no food, no water, no light, no no no no! It swung the weapon, splinters flew. Trapped, no no no no! It wildly swung the axe again. The handle was slick with brains. It flew off into the darkness. Must get out... must use hands... no no no no... after all they had done to it, now this... must... dig... out...

Oblivious to the splinters driving in under its fingernails, it howled as it scabbled at the walls. But there was no one left to hear it now...

### *The Fitzgerald Manse: One Month Ago*

The man flung the bedroom door open and rushed in, his dressing gown flapping crazily, his slippers slapping on the wooden floors. Hurriedly, he knelt down and emptied his pockets, the shotgun cartridges tumbling out onto the hearth. Quickly, he started scooping them out. The solution was finally within his grasp. For the first time in months, he was truly happy; soon he would be free. He whistled as he worked at emptying the shells, sitting on the bricks of the cold fireplace. He was so engrossed he did not hear the soft gurgling behind him until it was too late.

### *The Fitzgerald Manse: Today*

The house is now dark and quiet, except for the occasional creak and twinge as the plaster loosens and drifts to the floor. For the moment, no people live there. The house is dark and quiet. And waiting...

Opposite: *The Spawn of Shub-Niggurath*



### TIME AND PLACE

This scenario currently takes place in February 1925, roughly 80 or so miles (130 km) outside of Boston, MA. As desired, the Keeper could move it—in time or place—to better suit their campaign, with a little adjustment. If shifting the adventure in time, the Keeper could either alter the dates of the Fitzgerald and Curwen disasters to create a fixed repeat longer or shorter than the current 30 years or, if playing in a modern-day setting, could insert additional tragedies of their own creation to maintain the pattern of a catastrophe affecting the house's residents every three decades. No reason is given in this scenario as to why the manse is cursed in such a way, if indeed it really is—perhaps it's all just a rather unfortunate coincidence. But, then again...

The house's whereabouts can also be shifted to anywhere that fits the Keeper's current campaign location. As long as it remains relatively isolated and a short drive from the nearest town, there is nothing specifically tying the Fitzgerald Manse to Massachusetts. It could also be moved outside of the US with a little effort—there are plenty of other wars taking place around the world in 1865 that Johnny Fitzgerald could have been injured in, for example.



### THE CORNTHWAITE MYSTERY

Outside of Gamwell stands the Fitzgerald Manse. Two previous tragedies stain its history; the third is currently in progress.

#### What the Locals Know

The house was built in 1805. The original owners and builders were the wealthy Fitzgerald family; their time there finished abruptly in 1865 when young John Fitzgerald, returning home from the Civil War bitter and psychopathic, killed everyone in a fit of rage, and then committed suicide.

The place was purchased by the Ainsfield family in 1866, who lived there until 1894 when mounting debts forced them to sell out and move. The next owner was Arthur Curwen, who moved in that year with his young family. Curwen had moved to the countryside from New York after making his fortune there, with the intention of bringing his children up in an idyllic rural setting. Unfortunately, Curwen adjusted badly to the loneliness and quietness of the place after the

bustle of the city, and in 1895 he became first irritable, then paranoid, then schizophrenic, and finally psychotic. He murdered his family and successfully evaded pursuit, and was never seen again.

The house then stood vacant for three years, until in 1898 when an elderly couple, the Franklins, bought it. Martha Franklin died in 1911; her husband Henry outlasted her by seven years, dying in 1918.

Arthur Cornthwaite, a brilliant and wealthy archaeologist, purchased the place in 1919. Here, he spent many a happy hour researching for what he planned to be his greatest expedition: to discover the final secrets of a lost civilization of South America.

**Keeper note:** after the murder of his family, Curwen concealed himself in a “monk’s hole” (a hidden room) on the second floor of the house. He was unable to get out again, and his remains still mold there in the darkness.

#### What the Locals Don't Know: The Disastrous Expedition

After extensive preparations, Arthur Cornthwaite departed for the jungles of South America in 1923, fully sane and expectant of great revelations. His expedition traveled deep into the jungle and set to work searching for the huge stone structure that was the lost civilization's temple. The team was constantly harassed by the present-day inhabitants of the area, who were far from happy to see these meddling interlopers in their ancestral lands.

Undaunted, Cornthwaite pressed his team on until they reached their goal. Covered in creepers, ancient, dark, and forgotten, the domed temple he sought still stood, eerily silent. Inside, great carvings told the history of the missing civilization, a people who worshipped the earth with passion and fervor. According to the carvings, they had raised this temple to the Earth Mother, and their efforts to entice their god to manifest herself and live among them were detailed in the glyphs. They were—as far as Cornthwaite could tell—successful, but there their story abruptly ended.

Instead of the closing chapters of the tribe's tale, all Cornthwaite found, ringing the building, were their last, hastily-made inscriptions: sigils of unknown meaning—although clearly a warning of some sort, left for whichever fools might accidentally stumble into that terrible place.

#### The Secret of the Lost People

Millennia before the first Europeans arrived on the continent an impressive culture of great magical force grew and flourished in its deep jungles. On a dark day, the proud shamans of this culture attempted to summon the forces of primal nature, in the form of their naive vision of the Earth

## THE CRACK'D AND CROOK'D MANSE

Mother. Sadly, this resulted in their calling up the Dark Mother, Shub-Niggurath, to the horror of all.

Many died or went mad, but the mightiest shamans managed to temporarily seal the foul goddess into the bottom of the great temple with potent magical warding. Then, the people fled, dispersing into the jungle, never to return.

Unable to pursue, the Black Goat of the Woods eventually dematerialized and departed, leaving behind her foul spoor and waste. This obscene by-product gradually developed its own sentience, growing in the darkness down through the centuries and feeding on the local life. Thus, the entire area was avoided by the terrified descendants of the accursed peoples who had first called down this horror.

### Cornthwaite's Fate

Cornthwaite's expedition paid the carvings' warnings no more heed than one would any other quaint local legend, and ventured deeper into the bowels of the temple where they encountered the spawn of Shub-Niggurath, an unearthly mass of gelid consistency and enormous size, a huge pulsing pool of corpulent organic horror. Strange mouths and weird eyelike organs formed and dissolved amid its squirming bulk.

Some of the expedition were caught by it. Some gladly threw themselves into it, preferring death rather than acknowledge the existence of such a thing in a rational world. Some escaped only to be killed in ambushes laid for them by the local population, desperate to keep the terrible secret away and unknown to the rest of the world.

One team member reached civilization: Arthur Cornthwaite. He left the horror far behind him, locked his exploring gear away in a chest in the attic, and vowed never again to travel south of Mexico. In time, the memory receded, though the fear he experienced in the jungle never truly left him.

The explorer may have returned safely, but he had sown the seeds of his own doom. Inadvertently, he'd carried the nightmarish thing's spores back with him from the temple in his clothing. In the sheltering darkness of the attic, the spores woke, grew stronger, joined, and expanded until a tiny monster crawled into the walls to search for food.

Soon meat and other foodstuffs went missing from the kitchen. As the thing grew, insects, rats, and mice became its first kills, before it graduated onto small animals on or near the property. Its size increased rapidly, along with its slow and patient hunger. Soon, a local pet or two went missing. Then, the gardener took a nap under a shady tree and was never seen again. The creature had fed on its first human and found it to be far more... satisfying... than its previous fare. After that, it stealthily hunted people, striking at night or from ambush.

Having at first believed that the gardener and the servants' mysterious disappearances had some normal cause, the

archeologist quickly realized otherwise when he noticed the strange cracks and areas of moisture and mold appearing all over the house. But the warnings came too late: by New Year's Day, 1925, Cornthwaite was the only one left in the house. His failure to protect his people drove him to despair. He dared not leave the house, even briefly, for fear that the creature would escape in the meantime. He dared not enlist outside aid for fear that more would die because of his actions. So, instead, he resolved to stay and fight to the end.

He and the thing played a game of cat and mouse, until purely by accident Cornthwaite discovered its weakness: an aversion to salt. Before he could exploit this, the wily creature ambushed him, snatching him through the fireplace in his bedroom into its slimy coils.

All has been still for some time now. The thing, well fed, has grown huge. It lives in the cellar and the wall cavities of the Fitzgerald Manse, shifting its noisome bulk around to search for nourishment. The old house is rotting with damp, cracking and listing, gradually being worked asunder by the horror which lurks within.

But the creature must feed. The supply of bugs, rats, field mice, and other small creatures in the area of the house has been used up or has wisely fled. Already the thing has begun venturing further afield when hunger gets the better of its cautious nature (recently it has taken a drowsy horse from a nearby field). It still hopes that food will again appear in its lair.

Enter the investigators.

### INVOLVING THE INVESTIGATORS

The scenario begins with one or more of the investigators receiving a letter from the Dodge brothers, attorneys-at-law in the small town of Gamwell, having been referred to them by a mutual friend. The identity of this mutual friend is left to the Keeper to devise, based on just who the investigator(s) turn out to be. But why are the Dodes contacting these investigators in particular?

Perhaps one of the investigators is a private detective, renowned for their ability to track down missing persons—the letter from Walter Dodge (**Handout: Crack'd 1**) is provided if this is the case. Perhaps, instead, they are Arthur Cornthwaite's distant relatives or possibly academic colleagues or acquaintances, who have traveled to Gamwell after losing contact with the unhappy archaeologist, there to be roped into finding him by the concerned Dodes. Or, perhaps, they were seeking Cornthwaite out because they're planning a South American expedition of their own and he's an acknowledged expert on the matter. Given Cornthwaite's wealth and profession, the investigators may even be passed his name as someone who might fund or be recruited to join

said expedition. Alternatively, it could be that one or more of the investigators is a reporter, convinced they can smell a good story in the wealthy bachelor's apparent disappearance. Or could the name of Cornthwaite have turned up during their previous researches as someone they wish to speak to about an on-going case? Could the investigators be the relatives of the missing domestic staff, come to confront Cornthwaite about their vanished family members?

Tailor **Handout: Crack'd 1** as required to fit your game, or have the Dodge brothers contact the investigator(s) on their arrival in Gamwell—word travels quickly around the place, so the investigators could be approached while they perhaps stay in the Haggarty boarding house on the night of their arrival. If distant relations of Cornthwaite or his household staff, the investigators will be directed to the Dodge bothers once they start asking questions in town.

The *Crack'd and Crook'd Manse* can be used with established investigators as a sidetrack during an ongoing campaign, or it could be used to launch an entirely new group of investigators as the first episode of a fresh series of adventures. Then again, it also works well as a one-shot scenario.

If creating investigators tailored to this scenario, then the following are useful skills for them to have: Accounting, Anthropology, Archaeology, Climb, Credit Rating, Jump, Law, Listen, Locksmith, Natural World, Psychology, Science (Biology or Zoology), Spot Hidden, Track, and one or more social skills (Charm, Fast Talk, or Persuade).

## DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Descriptions and roleplaying hooks for the main non-player characters (NPCs) encountered in this scenario are listed below (their profiles can be found at the end of the scenario, see **Non-Player Characters**, pages 64–65).

### Reginald, Walter, and Herbert Dodge, ages 57, 59, and 60, attorneys

The Dodge brothers inherited Gamwell's sole legal practice from their late father, who had an altogether more get-up-and-go attitude than his three sons put together.

- **Description:** little gray men in washed out, gray suits. All have receding hairlines, in different stages of advancement. One (Walter) has a mustache, the other two are clean-shaven.
- **Traits:** respectable, timid, and pedantic sticklers for detail.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** most likely as the investigators' employers, the Dodge brothers are responsible for bringing the investigators to Gamwell. Even if they did not send the recruitment letter (**Handout: Crack'd 1**), they are a font of information regarding Cornthwaite and his estate, providing the investigators can convince them of the legitimacy of their inquiries.



The Dodge Brothers

Hank and Edith Haggarty

## THE CRACK'D AND CROOK'D MANSE

### **Hank and Edith Haggarty,** *ages 56 and 46, boarding house proprietors*

The owners of Gamwell's sole boarding house, the Haggartys run a clean, affordable, and comfortable establishment in the heart of town. Their rates are very reasonable.

- **Description:** Hank is a middle-aged man of Irish descent, with thinning brown hair shot through with gray, and a twinkle in his eye. He dresses in a collar and tie, unless performing maintenance on the boarding house. Edith is a thin-faced individual with glasses, who usually wears pretty collared blouses and sensible skirts. Her dark hair is cut into a rough bob, although the style doesn't entirely suit her. There is no sign of gray in her hair and she has relatively few wrinkles compared to her husband.
- **Traits:** friendly, garrulous, and somewhat nosy. They don't stand for any impropriety on their property.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** a great source of local information, including people, history, picnic sites, and so on.

### **Stan Artemis, age 47, newspaper editor**

The editor and typesetter of the *Gamwell Gazette*.

- **Description:** chubby and clean-shaven white man in a bright red and green checked suit. A Panama hat covers

his thick chestnut hair. He usually has a beaming smile on his face, and radiates extreme confidence.

- **Traits:** a nauseatingly friendly, gregarious gossip.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** will gladly chat while trying to wheedle what tidbits he can out of the investigators for next week's edition.

### **Joe Virelli, age 28, reporter**

The *Gamwell Gazette's* trainee reporter and photographer. Technically, he's the only official reporter the paper has, but Stan Artemis, his boss, also writes for the paper when the mood takes him.

- **Description:** tall, attractive, and lanky man in his late twenties. Of mixed Italian/African-American heritage, he wears a slightly shabby suit and is rarely seen without his trusty, somewhat beaten up camera. His wavy dark hair is cropped short. He has a keen look on his face and usually has a pencil tucked behind one ear.
- **Traits:** eager and easy talker.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** like his boss, can provide local knowledge once he catches up with the investigators at the house (**House Calls**, page 54). He also makes for a very good first victim for the spawn of Shub-Niggurath.



Stan Artemis



Joe Virelli

## CHAPTER 2

### **William Whitford, age 61, county sheriff**

Sheriff Whitford is the man in charge in Gamwell. A lean, old conservative, some of the spark went out of him in 1895 when he found the murdered Curwen children. He does his job, but not in an overly friendly fashion. Folks respect him though.

- **Description:** good looking, solidly built white male. He wears a collar and tie, and a dark jacket with his sheriff's badge attached to the left lapel. His dark hair, heavily shot through with gray, is cut short and oiled in place. He is clean shaven and always seems to have a distinctly grumpy look on his face. His dark eyes are piercing and miss very little.
- **Traits:** suspicious and aloof.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** Whitford doesn't like anything to do with the Fitzgerald Manse, so he didn't like Cornthwaite, and he really doesn't like the investigators. He resents their intrusion into his jurisdiction and warns them to stay within the law. He has a lot of power to make life difficult for them.

### **Susan Arwell, age 32, librarian**

The librarian at Gamwell's small and bizarrely stocked library.

- **Description:** an African-American woman, smartly but conservatively dressed, as befits her occupation. Her hair has been smoothed and relaxed into a neat, if slightly old-fashioned, chignon, which sits at the nape of her neck on the right-hand side.
- **Traits:** helpful and diplomatic, but slightly embarrassed by the library's shortcomings.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** like the Haggartys, Mrs. Arwell is a useful font of local knowledge in spite of the lack of supporting reference material. She can also help the investigators hunt down relevant information, should they be struggling to find it themselves.

### **Spawn of the Dark Mother, hideous offspring**

The repulsive progeny of the Dark Goat of the Woods, transported to the Fitzgerald Manse by the unwitting Arthur Cornthwaite. A full description of the creature and its tactics can be found in **The Spawn** box (page 57), while its profile is located in the **Creatures and Monsters** section at the end of this scenario (page 66).



William Whitford

Susan Arwell

## THE CRACK'D AND CROOK'D MANSE

### START: AN UNEXPECTED LETTER

Out of the blue, one cold day in early February 1925, a letter arrives for the investigators (**Handout: Crack'd 1**). It is from an attorney, and included with the letter is an interesting newspaper clipping (**Handout: Crack'd 2**). Research into the Dodge brothers yields no information of note: the firm is tiny but respectable, while research into the missing Cornthwaite's background reveals that the man was respected in his field, and highly successful, but had an obsession for lost civilizations that made him something of a recluse, particularly in the last couple of years. Should the investigators be based in New York, or traveling through it on their way to Gamwell, then checking Cornthwaite's usual haunts in the city turns up no trace of him.

**Keeper note:** see **Involving the Investigators**, page 43, for alternative ways to start the scenario.

### INITIAL RESEARCH

If able to undertake some initial research before arrival in Gamwell, the investigators are unable to uncover much about the missing Cornthwaite. A successful **Library Use** roll employed while in a decent public library or major newspaper morgue uncovers the odd clipping, detailing the following facts. Of course, if any of the investigators are related to Cornthwaite, this information is already known to them.

- Arthur Cornthwaite is an archaeologist.
- He is independently wealthy, having inherited a fortune following the deaths of both his parents.
- In 1923, Cornthwaite led a major expedition in South America, which suffered tragic loss of life and left Cornthwaite as the sole survivor.

### GAMWELL

Gamwell is out of the way—a place you might stop to buy an ice-cream or a “tonic” (soda) on your way to somewhere else, but that’s about all. Large properties sprawl across the surrounding landscape in a pleasing rustic vista. The town is small and primarily exists to serve the needs of the gentlemen farmers who own most of the land for miles around. Town services include a boarding house, a town hall, a police station, a fire station, an attorney’s office, a newspaper office, a town library, and several shops (from a general store to a cattle feed and farm supplies). No map of the town is provided, it being a very simple and straightforward affair.

### HAGGARTY BOARDING HOUSE

This neat and scrubbed building is run by a friendly couple, Hank and Edith Haggarty. It is a clean place: no chewing tobacco, no alcohol, no smoking, no unmarried couples, and no nonsense. The investigators can get rooms here, but any nocturnal comings and goings will soon see them asked to leave. The Haggartys know Mr. Cornthwaite as a thoughtful and generous gentleman, who has been slightly ill for a time, “*Something he contracted in South America, he said, that he can’t seem to shake off.*”

Hank and Edith, of course, know the history of the Fitzgerald place, but don’t relish talking about it. A successful social skill roll, such as **Charm**, **Fast Talk**, or **Persuade**, can be used to appeal to their usually garrulous nature—refer to and paraphrase the information provided in **What the Locals Know** section (page 42), which provides a summary of the locals’ knowledge of the Manse.

### DODGE BROTHERS’ OFFICE

Reginald, Walter, and Herbert Dodge, three respectable gentlemen, are Cornthwaite’s representatives. They want the investigators to look into Cornthwaite’s disappearance—that way, if anything is unseemly, they can safely wash their hands of the matter and sell the old mansion for a handsome profit. They are anxious to find the missing archaeologist, although they’re so pathetic they haven’t actually set foot inside the house, just stood out front calling “*Anybody home?*”

The Dodge brothers have two goals for the investigation: first, to establish Cornthwaite’s current location, or satisfactory evidence of his death; second, to keep damage to Cornthwaite’s valuable estate and property at a minimum. Pulling apart the mansion or digging up the grounds extensively in order to find a body is absolutely a last resort, as far as they’re concerned and something that should not be done without their express permission. It is essential that the investigators meet both these goals in order to be paid.

The Dodes keep Cornthwaite’s books, accounts, and will for him. Ethics prevent them from disclosing the contents of the will, but the investigators are free to inspect the ledgers, which detail his income and his outgoing expenditure, both in running his property and organizing his trips abroad.

Looking at income, a successful **Accounting** roll confirms that Cornthwaite is indeed a wealthy man, and likely to remain so, with many sound investments to bolster up his already healthy financial reserves. Under outgoings, the same roll reveals that his last major expedition was to South America in 1923. Entries record the hiring of men and the transport of equipment to South America, but a successful **INT** roll (or a **Hard** success on the previous **Accounting** roll)

# DODGE BROTHERS

Attorneys-at-Law  
14 Main Street, Gamwell  
January 30th, 1925

Dear —,

I have been referred to you by a mutual friend. As his attorney, I am very interested in locating the missing Mr. Arthur Cornthwaite and our associate mentioned your name as being one skilled in locating missing people, particularly those of Mr. Cornthwaite's persuasion. Thus, I have taken the liberty of contacting you.

I am a partner of an established legal firm in Gamwell. Mr. Arthur Cornthwaite is one of our clients, and as his attorneys we hold certain documents in trust for him. It would appear that Mr. Cornthwaite has departed without notifying us of his movements.

This leaves us in a quandary as to how to manage his estate in his absence without his authority on such matters. We would like you to locate Mr. Cornthwaite and obtain from him his wishes in respect of this matter, or better still request that he contact us. If it should, heaven forbid, transpire that Mr. Cornthwaite is no longer with us, then we will need some evidence of same to proceed with his wishes as outlined in his Last Will and Testament. Hopefully this in an unnecessary contingency, but one which we must nevertheless consider in the light of Mr. Cornthwaite's mysterious departure.

I hope that you are free to give this matter your immediate attention, and would like to extend an invitation to you to attend an interview at our offices as soon as is convenient, to discuss both the details of the situation and your professional fees.

Anticipating a prompt reply,

Yours faithfully,

*Walter Dodge*

Encl: article from Gamwell Gazette

## THE CRACK'D AND CROOK'D MANSE

notes that passage was booked for only one person on the return voyage.

The ledger for domestic expenses does not include household staff. If asked about this, the Dodges explain that Cornthwaite liked to manage the estate's staff himself, and they simply made available a payroll that Cornthwaite then distributed. He invariably hired people from out of town.

Another interesting fact found in the ledgers, spotted with either another successful Accounting or Spot Hidden roll, is the very last entry: on January 7th 1925, Cornthwaite requested that a dump truck full of salt be delivered to his property. The order was not filled—the Dodges were still lining it up when Cornthwaite disappeared, and point to this request as a sign that their client had become unbalanced, requesting that the investigators keep this latter information secret.

**Keeper note:** if the investigators, later in the scenario, ask for the instruction to be carried out and can convince a Dodge brother with a successful **Charm**, **Fast Talk**, or **Persuade** roll, the salt will be grudgingly provided.

The investigators may ask Walter Dodge about the last meeting with Cornthwaite, but he can't add much more than was written in the newspaper (**Handout: Crack'd 2**). Cornthwaite seemed tense and stressed, and Walter was too polite to ask why.

*Handout: Crack'd 2*

### *Gamwell Gazette* GAMWELL MILLIONAIRE ABSENT

January 17th, 1925

Gamwell's most prosperous son, Arthur Cornthwaite, will not be seen at church over the next few weeks. Mr. Cornthwaite has apparently left the area for a time, possibly for a vacation, or in relation to his studies.

Some mystery surrounds Mr. Cornthwaite's departure, as it came without notice. However, an inspection of his mansion and grounds by Sheriff Whitford has revealed no cause for alarm. The last person to speak to Mr. Cornthwaite was his attorney, Mr. Walter Dodge, on the 7th of this month. At that time, he gave no indication of his imminent departure, but according to Mr. Dodge, he did seem quite preoccupied, no doubt with his travel plans.

We all know well that besides being a Gamwell landowner, Mr. Cornthwaite is also a millionaire, a scholar, a philanthropist, and an explorer. He may well be off laying the groundwork for some future exciting expedition, or perhaps just relaxing for a time in New York. Gamwell citizens will no doubt remember fondly Mr. Cornthwaite's numerous generous donations to local charities and to the town library and join with us in wishing him a safe and happy journey.

Once they've finished talking to the Dodge brothers, the investigators are given two keys to the Fitzgerald Manse: one for the front door, and one for the back. The Dodges inform them that they are welcome to sleep out there, should they desire. In the meantime, accommodation has been arranged for them (and paid for) in the local boarding house (**The Boarding House**, page 47), until they are ready to move out to the mansion. While in residence at the Fitzgerald Manse, they remind the investigators that they should take care not to cause any damage to the house, which is in poor repair but still valuable.

The Dodges are willing to pay the investigators \$100 to locate Mr. Cornthwaite, with a \$100 bonus if they have the answer within the week. A successful **Charm** or **Persuade** roll may be used to drive them up in price by up to another \$100, depending on the level of success (\$10 more for a Regular success, \$50 for a Hard success, and \$100 for an Extreme success).

## THE GAMWELL GAZETTE

The office of Gamwell's weekly (*"Gamwell Gazette: established 1847"*) is small and cluttered. Two people work at the *Gazette*: Stan Artemis, who sets the type and puts the newspaper together, and Joe Virelli, who does the reporting and photography. Joe is out of the office gathering material when the investigators first call round.

The investigators are welcome to look through back issues of the paper, which are kept in ratty cardboard boxes in a back room of the newspaper's offices. Searching through, the investigators find constant references to Cornthwaite, stretching back to his arrival in 1919; opening fetes, attending tea parties, donating to the church, winning at bridge nights, giving books to the library, and so on. If they look back further, though, with reference to the Fitzgerald estate, a successful **Library Use** roll uncovers a clipping from 1895 (**Handout: Crack'd 3**).

## GRAVEYARD

Some odd compulsion might lead the investigators out to Gamwell's cemetery. All of the house's previous owners are buried here, so the investigators can walk among the headstones of Elma Fitzgerald (1865), Albert Fitzgerald (1865), Simon Fitzgerald (1865), Grace Fitzgerald (1865), Gloria Curwen (1895), Harold, Sarah, and Susan Curwen (1895), Martha Franklin (1911), and Henry Franklin (1918). Fresh flowers are laid on the children's grave the year-round. Murderer John Fitzgerald is here too, but in an unmarked grave that can be pointed out by Arthur Grimstock, the caretaker and gardener.

## SHERIFF'S OFFICE

The sheriff is typing up a report when the investigators enter his office. He is gruff and resentful in discussing Cornthwaite, but a successful social skill or **Credit Rating** roll gets him to open up. He's had a quick look around the house, but the fellow obviously isn't there, and there's no indication of violent kidnap or foul play. The man had fired all his servants one by one in the weeks preceding (all out-of-towners, Whitford sneers); he was obviously planning to take off for a while. He has the money to do such a thing, and he hardly needs to ask his lawyers' permission. The whole business is ridiculous.

A successful **Psychology** roll reveals Whitford's distaste for the Fitzgerald Manse. If the investigators carry on and ask him about the Curwens, his lips stretch into a thin line, and he mutters that he hopes Arthur Curwen is still alive somewhere, because he's looking forward to shooting him down like the dog that he is. Something wild in Whitford's eyes suggests to the investigators that it might be time to go.

Whitford is preoccupied during the whole interview. At some point, probably when the investigators run out of things to ask him or just as they are leaving, he asks them where they were last night, and whether they have witnesses. If pressed, with a successful social skill roll, such as **Persuade**, he says that a local farmer, Seb Watkins, lost a horse last night. It was a valuable animal. Whitford knows it was taken

some time in the night, as there was a particularly heavy dew on Watkins' property this morning, lasting well past midday, and any tracks would have been easily seen in it. Watkins and his dogs heard nothing. If the investigators think to ask, they learn that Watkins' property adjoins the Fitzgerald grounds.

**Keeper note:** the creature took the horse. The "heavy dew" was its moisture trail.

## TOWN HALL

A wooden edifice where council meetings are held, and where local records are kept. A successful **Law** or **Credit Rating** roll (or failing those, a good social skill roll) is required to convince the dusty little clerk, Nigel Tellings, of their worth, but once the investigators have negotiated with him, they may have access to any useful legal documents that are kept here.

These include birth and death certificates, as well as the title deed for the Fitzgerald Manse. The latter rests on a high shelf, tied with a fading red ribbon, and is home to a large but harmless furry spider, which crawls out to check out any disturbance—down the arm of the investigator who reaches for it! Keepers may call for a **Sanity** roll (0/1 loss) if the investigator happens to suffer from arachnophobia, but otherwise don't ask for such a roll. The deed records the house's original owners and builders, the Fitzgeralds, in 1805, and the subsequent transfers: Ainsfield 1866, Curwen 1894, Franklin 1898, and Cornthwaite 1919. There is no plan of the house.

## TOWN LIBRARY

A small but crammed wooden building. The librarian is Mrs. Susan Arwell. There's not much in the way of books about Gamwell, although she modestly admits she had thought of writing one about the town and its sometime sordid history.

The library has a scattering of books of all types, but a disproportionate amount are about anthropology and archaeology. Mrs. Arwell explains that these were given to the library by Mr. Cornthwaite, and represent only a fraction of the books he has donated over the years; the rest are in storage, with no room to put them. Oddly enough, he came in and borrowed one of them in November; it's now overdue, but she didn't really consider it diplomatic to mention it to him. The book is *The Missing People: The Tribe That The Jungle Swallowed*, by Thomas Pratt. A successful **Anthropology** roll reveals that Pratt is considered by most to be on the fringe of accepted science.

Searching through Cornthwaite's old books doesn't turn up anything in particular, although there are some penciled

*Handout: Crack'd 3*

*Gamwell Gazette*

### GAMWELL FAMILY SLAIN IN TERRIBLE ATTACK

Mother and Three Children Killed  
Police Seek Missing Father

May 17th, 1895

A tragedy of awful proportions unfolded today in Gamwell when Mrs. Gloria Curwen and her three children (Harold 5, Sarah 3, and Susan 2) were found brutally murdered on their estate north of Gamwell, the well-known Fitzgerald Manse.

Deputy Whitford of the Gamwell County Sheriff's Office made the grisly discovery while making a routine inspection. "I've never seen anything like it," the brave but shaken deputy told this reporter, "They were all dead." The family had indeed been brutally and cowardly slain, struck down by repeated blows from an axe. Not even little Susan was spared from this hideous fate.

No murder weapon has been discovered, and Mr. Arthur Curwen, the children's father, is presently missing. He is wanted by the police for questioning, although fears are also held for his safety.

## THE CRACK'D AND CROOK'D MANSE

notes in the margins of many of them, which infer that he was involved in a complicated search for a "great dome" described in South American legends.

If the investigators quiz Mrs. Arwell about the history of the Fitzgerald Manse, she responds well to flattery, especially if her proposed book is mentioned (a successful **Charm** or **Persuade** roll). Spending a moment digging out her copious notes about the town, she locates an old newspaper clipping about the 1865 Fitzgerald murders (**Handout: Crack'd 4**). In addition, as required, she can also produce a clipping regarding the Curwen murders of 1895 (**Handout: Crack'd 3**). She is a font of local knowledge, able to answer questions—refer to **What the Locals Know**, page 42, as necessary.

## THE FITZGERALD ESTATE

Assuming they have followed the leads in town, there's nothing much more the investigators can learn without actually going out to the Fitzgerald Manse. The house is situated ten miles (16 km) outside of Gamwell, in a peaceful but isolated district. The house is surrounded by a tangled garden, which in turn is bordered by a high stone wall topped with iron spikes. The property covers 20 acres (8 hectares). As the investigators drive toward the house, black and gray clouds scud across the sky, and a chill wind picks up. Refer to the nearby plan of the estate; numbers in parentheses refer to points on the plan.

## NEIGHBORING ESTATES

Several other large mansions are the Fitzgerald Manse's nearest neighbors. Venturing around these neighboring properties, the investigators find the other households to be somewhat distant and unwilling to talk in any great detail about the Fitzgerald Manse, a place most consider to have a bad history. It's soon pretty clear that these locals keep clear of the property and see no reason why someone of sound mind would want to live there. Despite such musings, most consider Arthur Cornthwaite to be an upstanding and pleasant fellow, although somewhat changed when he last returned from his travels, keeping to himself and hardly ever seen. Most say he looked kind of ill when they last saw him.

More pressing to these folks is the disappearance of a horse belonging to Seb Watkins, one of the less wealthy estate owners, who property borders the Fitzgerald grounds to the west. If speaking to Seb Watkins, a grim-faced and weathered old timer, he confirms that one of his horses went missing (yesterday, if this is the first day of the investigators' visit to Gamwell). He suspects theft, so secretly wonders

if the investigators are double bluffing him and have come to survey his other animals for another theft. Thus, he is courteous but gives short shrift. If the investigators are able to gain his trust (perhaps by recovering the bones of the missing horse, see following Keeper note), he might prove to be an ally of sorts, able to supply aid to the injured, put in a good word with the sheriff, and so on.

**Keeper note:** if the investigators spend a morning or afternoon searching the many acres of ground between the Fitzgerald Manse and Watkins' estate, a successful **Spot Hidden** roll locates several large bones, oddly crushed. A successful **Science (Biology or Zoology)** or **Natural World** roll identifies these as coming from a horse.

## THE GROUNDS

The iron gate (1) providing access to the driveway is padlocked—the Dodge brothers neglected to give the investigators the key. The padlock can be picked with either a successful **Locksmith** or Hard **Mechanical Repair** roll, or the chain may be broken with a Hard **STR** roll. Failing that, they'll have to park their vehicle outside the property and move in on foot after a **Climb** roll over the gate or the spike-topped stone wall (2). Alternatively, the investigators can drive back into town and get the key.

*Handout: Crack'd 4*

### TRAGEDY BEFALLS FITZGERALD HOME

*August 15th, 1865*

Horrific news has driven anguish through Gamwell this week with the tragic slaying of Mr. Albert Fitzgerald and his entire family. While convalescing from an injury sustained at the Battle of Appomattox, Virginia, John Fitzgerald is believed to have shot his father, his mother, Elma, and his younger siblings, Simon and Grace, in a fit of mania before turning his weapon upon himself. Readers may remember, William, the Fitzgerald's eldest son, having played a role in the second battle of Bull Run in 1862, suffering a wound and subsequently dying of his injuries. Notice of funeral arrangements to be announced.

*Gamwell Gazette*

## CHAPTER 2

A wide driveway (3) leads toward the house, while other ill-defined paths lead off into the rambling garden. The house is just visible ahead through the riot of plant life. A successful **Spot Hidden** roll glimpses the roof of a shed (6) through the trees to the right of the drive.

### The Ornamental Garden (5)

The estate includes an extensive garden, with stone benches, planters, and even a fountain. Trees include several exotic varieties, such as willows and cherry plums. Untended for months, the garden has become a wild expanse of runaway foliage, overgrown and somewhat threatening. For a paranoid investigator, a successful **Cthulhu Mythos** roll might, upon seeing the exuberant growth, bring to mind the unholy influence of the Black Goat of the Woods. It's a dark place—dank, green, and dripping.

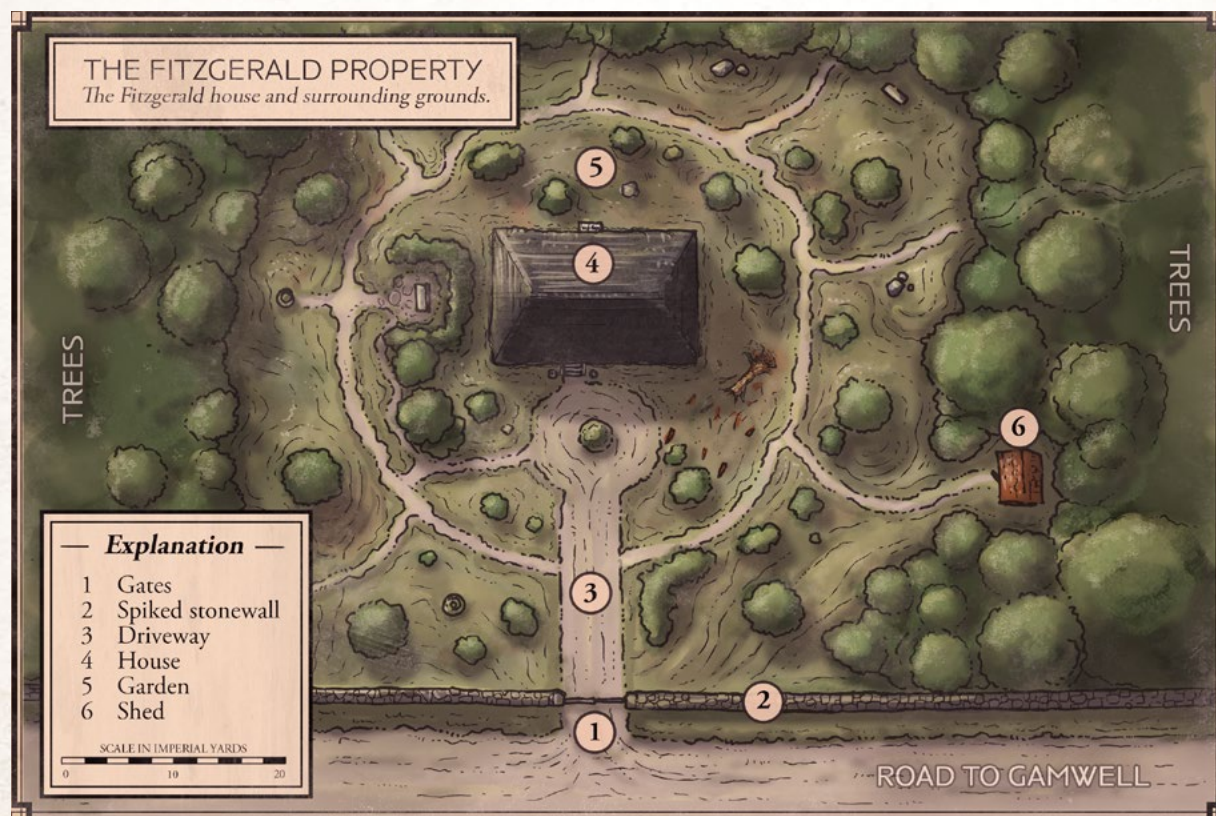
#### Searching the Garden

Anything could be concealed in here, so the investigators may wish to mount a search of the garden. If they do, several strange occurrences transpire while they wander around—some possibilities follow.

- Someone is tripped up by a tree root, which they swear was not in the way when they put their foot down.
- Someone is struck in the head by an overhanging branch, for which there seemed to be enough clearance.
- At one spot, a huge fungi-encrusted and hollow log has fallen across the path in a particularly damp area, over which they'll need to clamber or jump (and probably get their clothes filthy, especially if they fail their **Jump** roll).
- In another area, there is a huge and slippery mud patch, for which a successful **DEX** roll is needed to avoid sprawling full length.

A successful **Science (Botany or Biology)** or **Natural World** roll suggests all to be quite natural here, except for a certain number of plants rarely encountered outside the tropics (see also **Wood Cellar**, page 61). A successful **Listen** or **INT** roll detects a total absence of bird and animal life, unusual for such circumstances.

**Keeper note:** the garden is essentially harmless, but you should make it out to be as menacing and mysterious as possible. At the very least, use it to get the investigators good and muddy so they have a reason to use the faucets in the house (**Kitchen**, page 58, and **Bathroom**, page 61).



## THE CRACK'D AND CROOK'D MANSE

### The Sinister Shed (6)

The windowless garden shed is small and wooden; its green paint is peeling, and the door is slightly ajar. There is something sinister, almost evil, about the look of the little building hidden among the trees, but nothing the investigators can quite put their fingers on.

Inside, the shed is dark, and a carpet of leaves and detritus cover the floor. There are lots of tools: rakes, a wheelbarrow, shovels, some hedge-clippers, a pick, a saw, and so on—many of these have fallen to the floor. All are disused and a little dirty, and some are a little rusty. A successful **Spot Hidden** discerns an empty rack that looks like it was once home to an axe, but it is nowhere to be found.

If an investigator wanders inside without an adequate light source, ask for a **DEX** roll to determine if they bump into various tools, knocking more to the floor with an unnervingly loud clatter. If the roll is fumbled, then they receive a minor injury of some sort—for example, a cut to the shin from a shovel, a slash to the cheek from a rake, or a stubbed toe on a lawn roller—for 1 damage, as well as colliding with even more things as they panic and flail about. In either event, in the poor light, with the wind whistling through the shed and rustling the dead leaves, it seems almost as if the implements are moving with a murderous life of their own. Anyone who succeeds with a **Sanity** roll at this point realizes it's just their imagination playing tricks on them; however, if they fail the roll, they lose 1 point of Sanity and feel an overwhelming urge to flee the shed.

### HOUSE EXTERIOR (4)

The house itself is silent, shuttered, and brooding. Cobwebbed by ivy, masked by trees, and caressed by the wind. It is large and apparently well-constructed, with high ceilings and thick, substantial windows, walls, and doors. From the outside, a suspicious (or imaginative) observer notes that the entire edifice presents a strange, slightly skewed (or tilted) appearance. The foundations seem solid enough when viewed closely, but the house itself is oddly crooked.

The house has two stories, with doors front and back. The front door waits atop a short flight of steps. The door is carved oak, the fine brass knocker cold to the touch, and opens into the hall. The back door is less assuming, and also leads into the same hallway. The windows are potential points of entry, although they are currently shuttered. The only other way inside is down: a pair of wooden hatches at the rear of the property give access to the wood cellar (**The Cellars**, page 61)—a successful **Track** roll discerns old tire marks near this area (trucks would pull up to unload wood and coal). One of the hatches has a hole in it, through which protrude a few odd-looking vines (**Wood Cellar**, page 61).

## THE FITZGERALD MANSE

The mansion appears to be in a state of bad and worsening disrepair. Entering the house, the investigators see that large cracks have appeared in the walls, and are slowly widening with time. With all the shutters closed, the house is dark and dingy throughout. There is also a slight but noticeable moldy, wet smell.

Water damage is visible in many rooms (although the roof seems to leak very little when it rains later that night). Loose plaster—sometimes in chunks, sometimes in drifts—covers the floor at the base of the walls. The wallpaper sags throughout the house, the curtain rails do not run parallel to the floor, while pictures hang at odd angles—it's a renovator's nightmare. Descriptions of the rooms can be found in **The House**, page 55.

Judging by the evidence, Cornthwaite left suddenly (or is still here), for his personal effects are much in evidence. See the individual room entries for more information.

When the investigators first enter, the downstairs floors do not creak, but the upstairs floors do—loudly. A successful combined **Listen** and **INT** roll notes this peculiar point.

**Keeper note:** the reason the floorboards don't creak is due to the creature lurking beneath those of the lower story, preventing them from making a noise.

### THINGS THAT GO BUMP

Ideally, the manse should be the investigators' home while they conduct their search. It's best if the investigators sleep here, so encourage them to move their stuff in. If necessary, and especially if they have successfully offended anyone in town, they can be turfed out of the boarding house, forcing them to sleep at the manse.

Depending on what the time is when they get to the house, they may be tired and hungry, particularly if they've come straight from Gamwell and their meeting with the Dodge brothers, or if they've spent most of the day so far searching the grounds. They may also possibly be quite dirty, depending on what they got up to in the garden. And, you know, it looks like rain is on the way—it probably won't be a very pleasant drive back into town at this time of day during a storm. Besides which, if they're on site, they might be able to clear up the mystery of Cornthwaite's disappearance that much more quickly and get out of this moldering pile once and for all.

Logistically speaking, if the investigators insist on living in town at the Haggartys, then the creature has less chance of catching them off guard and may prefer to make more depredations in the neighboring estates. If the investigators



camp in the garden, then the Keeper's job is easier: the thing can sneak quietly across the lawns and surround one or more of them at the climax of the adventure (**Conclusion**, page 62). Of course, the Haggartys might get fed up with the investigators trailing muck and goodness knows what else into their property at all hours of the day and night, and they may find themselves with little option but to camp out at the manse after their unfortunate eviction.

Depending on their experiences so far, the investigators may also be somewhat nervous. Encourage this feeling and build up the atmosphere while the investigators explore Cornthwaite's seemingly abandoned home. Make the house menacing, with odd creaks and groans as the building settles and shifts with the creature's movements. Remember that the investigators don't know where Cornthwaite is, or why he's vanished. For all they know, the house may be haunted or cursed—a good bet, based on its turbulent history. Could it even be sentient? It certainly feels like they're being watched...

**Keeper note:** some suggestions for spooks and false starts are given in the room descriptions in the section titled **The House**, page 55).

## HOUSE CALLS

The investigators receive several visitors during their exploration of the house. Just when these unexpected guests arrive is left to the Keeper. Use the following NPC visits to distract, enhance, and scare.

### Sheriff Whitford

Gamwell's sheriff stops by to make sure that these outsiders aren't misbehaving. He enters the house unannounced (climbing over the gate if necessary), with gun drawn. He hates and loathes this building, but assuming he has already met the investigators, he has become pathologically convinced that they're up to no good. If he has yet to meet them, he comes anyway to check out these outsiders. He sneaks up, hoping to catch the investigators in some nefarious act—if the investigators fail a combined **Listen** and **Spot Hidden** roll, then his sudden appearance makes them jump (no Sanity loss, but an involuntary scream instead). After exchanging words, and if he's satisfied that no property damage or theft is taking place, he slinks away, muttering dire warnings. If not, he insists the investigators leave at once, although a successful **Charm**, **Persuade**, or **Fast Talk** roll may convince him otherwise.

## THE CRACK'D AND CROOK'D MANSE

### Joe Virelli

The *Gamewell Gazette's* lanky reporter drops by unannounced. Stan Artemis has sent him out here to see what's going down. Virelli's not too happy about this as the place gives him the creeps. He has a look around the garden first and finds a rusted axe in the bushes—thinking it may be important, he picks it up.

**Keeper note:** the axe is not important; one of the previous gardeners just left it there.

Eventually, Joe comes creaking up the steps (detected by a successful **Listen** roll by those within the house) and nervously pounds on the door, hard enough to rattle its frame and shake some plaster loose. Assuming an investigator opens the door, a sudden gust of wind blows the door wide open—standing outside is a large figure with an axe! What do they do? Any sudden violent attack is greeted with great dismay by Virelli, who falls off the steps in surprise. Apart from a small graze, Virelli is fine (assuming the investigators don't act in haste and hurt him), and wants to know what they have found inside. He would like nothing more than to assist in searching the house, providing him suitable material for a story. His further involvement in the events is essentially up to the players, should they wish to keep him around. If so, he makes an ideal first victim to show how the monster works.

### The Ghost

One final visitor doesn't come into the house, but is perhaps rather glimpsed through a window (**Spot Hidden** roll), walking in the garden: a figure walking stiffly, wearing a blue uniform, and carrying a rifle. It walks around the side of the house and out of sight. It will not be seen again. If the investigators search the area, a successful **Track** roll reveals no sign of anyone's passing. It's very puzzling, as the investigator knows for a fact that there should be tracks here, but there are none to be found!

**Keeper note:** Johnny Fitzgerald, cold and lonely in his unmarked grave, still comes marching home. His apparition is somehow caused by the presence of the spawn of Shub-Niggurath, its foul and otherworldly energies provoking the manifestation of the dead. Perhaps, other "spirits" come calling too?



## DETOURS TO SOUTH AMERICA

It is possible that the investigators may consider leaving the house immediately and retracing Cornthwaite's tracks in central South America—and away from the scenario as written. One solution to this divergence from the adventure is the fact that the Dodge brothers will not accept it, "*Surely you do not intend to gallivant off to a foreign land and be paid for it?*" one of them mutters angrily when informed. "*Leave the job and you're fired!*"

No form of social skill roll can convince the attorneys that a trip to South America is necessary. If the investigators are willing to lose the job—fine. The sheriff makes sure that they are evicted from the house immediately (he never did trust them). The creature hunts further afield for its food, growing slowly but steadily with each passing meal. Perhaps years will go by before it is finally discovered.

Of course, heading off to South America once the horror in the house has been dealt with is a real possibility, if the investigators guess the connection. More on this option is considered in **Options for Continuing the Horror** on page 64.



## THE HOUSE

The following room descriptions have been kept to the minimum, and include details only where things in the room either add color or relate to the plot; the Keeper can add their own additional details where needed to fill the place out, if required. Refer to **The Fitzgerald Mansion** house plan on page 59; numbers in parentheses in the following text correspond to this plan.

The mansion's doors, both interior and exterior, are solid and built with top quality heavy locks. Decorations and furnishings are extensive and also of a very high quality, if a little damp and moldy.

The investigators will, no doubt, be looking for a hidden body. Although the manse is large, the walls are too thin to hide the body of an adult behind, unless, of course, it had been dismembered; however, an intact corpse can eventually be found in the **Monk's Hole** (19) (see page 61), although this is not Cornthwaite's.

Other than the monk's hole, the only rooms of special interest are the **Master Bedroom** (13) where Cornthwaite was grabbed, and the creature's preferred home, the **General Cellar** (22), which is large and contains few objects.

Opposite: Joe Virelli arrives at the mansion

## First (Ground) Floor

### Library (1)

Contains books on exploration, archaeology, history, anthropology, and more. There are many gaps on the shelves, though, and a successful **INT** or **Library Use** roll indicates that there are no books whatsoever about the South American continent here. Mold and moisture are noticeable among the books, although few have been made unreadable. Water damage is present on the walls and ceiling.

**Keeper note:** Cornthwaite either threw out or gave away his books on South America after his return from his ill-fated last expedition. Several of these can be found in the **Town Library** (page 50), where the investigators may have already seen them.

A successful **Spot Hidden** roll reveals an oddly bulging knothole in the wooden paneling. The investigators can slip this out with a successful **DEX** roll: inside is a tubular hollow into which a yellowed piece of paper is stuffed. The paper is covered on both sides with closely-packed scrawl. It has aged badly, and is almost illegible, except for the signature, "A.C." A successful **Psychology** roll while reading the paper detects a severe emotional imbalance in its author.

**Keeper note:** the paranoid ravings on the yellow paper were the work of Arthur Curwen, written shortly before he murdered his entire family (**The Cornthwaite Mystery**, page 42). The investigators may initially mistake this for something written by Arthur Cornthwaite, given that the two share the same initials. If the investigators have seen a sample of Cornthwaite's handwriting at the **Town Library** (page 50), a successful **Spot Hidden** roll identifies the differences between the two; otherwise, a successful **INT** roll realizes that the paper is too old to date from Cornthwaite's tenure at the house.

### Study (2)

Lying open on the roll-top desk is a book, *The Missing People: The Tribe That The Jungle Swallowed*, by Thomas Pratt. If the investigators have been to see Mrs. Arwell (**The Town Library**, page 50), then they are aware that Cornthwaite donated this book after he returned from South America, then checked it out again a few months ago. The book is in poor condition: the binding is cracked, it is covered in odd stains, and some pages are loose (Cornthwaite read it a little feverishly). It can be skimmed in an hour or so with a successful **Language (English)** roll; failure indicates imperfect comprehension. Alternatively, it can be read



## THE CRACK'D AND CROOK'D MANSE



### THE SPAWN

The investigators are being stalked, very, very slowly. The predator is patient and oddly cunning; it knows its trap—the house—well; it knows how to hide from its prey, waiting for the right moment. It is an alien abhorrence, part slime mold, part fungal growth, part slug, and an abomination not of this earth. Grown from the spores of the larger version of itself in South America, it has festered in the bowels of the Fitzgerald Manse and has adapted well to its environment. By nature, the spawn is clever but timid. Its intelligence is alien, and its only understandable goal is to feed and grow.

It is enormous and bloated. At its center float the bodies of its most recent prey, horribly liquescent and slowly digesting, their bones crushed and dissolved into slime, or excreted. It has no nucleus or outer wall. Its mass is clammy and wet, and it leaves traces of moisture wherever it goes—explaining the mysterious water damage found throughout the house. Less obvious is a translucent slime trail that dries quickly and is not easily noticed (requiring an Extreme **Spot Hidden** roll to detect).

#### Evidence and Observations

The spawn's movements affect the house: plaster is loosened; slime trails and patches of moisture accumulate; doors that were once operable now jam shut, while doors previously stuck fast swing freely; and occasionally, its passing knocks something over (a successful **Listen** roll permits an investigator to notice the distant crash). Anyone in a room in close proximity to the monster senses that the walls and ceiling very gradually swell and shudder; this is a subtle, almost hallucinatory experience, triggering a **Sanity** roll (0/1 Sanity loss).

#### The Spawn's Tactics

The creature moves slowly, and knows its food can be quick, dangerous, and loud, but always tires eventually. Sooner or later its food's guard relaxes, and that's when it's ready for the kill.

During the investigators' explorations, the creature is sizing them up and is extremely cautious. There may be many small aural manifestations of it, but no clear sightings of the main mass of the creature. Should they spot a small portion of its bulk through a crack in the walls or in a room, the investigators see only an odd film of moisture or, at best, what appears to be an unmoving puddle of slime, not a monster.

The investigators may suspect the house of hiding some evil, but the Keeper should hint at a ghostly presence pervading the house, not at a physical threat. Instead, they might suggest

that the various peculiarities of the house itself are caused by settling—age, rotting wood, mold, and water in the foundations are causing these things, rather than a monster.

If they actually uncover part of the creature, the investigators will undoubtedly take samples and perhaps burn or eradicate the area exposed. At first, the cunning creature accepts such indignities and remains unmoving as long as its surface is exposed to light. It can lose much of itself without harm. Analysis of the material removed indicates a plant growth of a kind not easily identified by science. A successful **Science (Biology or Chemistry)** or **Hard Natural World** roll indicates that the material is similar to fungus, but in many ways it is, in fact, far closer to a slime mold.

Once the investigators begin looking for moisture and slime in the house, they find traces everywhere. But the beast initially retracts its body and pseudopods as fast as it can whenever aggressively approached. If the investigators realize where its main body may be and chop down a door it is lurking behind (e.g., the **General Cellar**, page 62), or suddenly punch through a wall it is currently sliding behind, then it will respond by attacking. If the investigators have not prepared for this, and don't know its vulnerability (see **Bathroom**, page 61), they may be killed—with any luck while separated from each other. Ordinary weapons are of little use against the spawn. Ideally, the investigator's body will be dragged through the chimney or even down an outside wall, so that it will seem as though they have vanished. Note that the creature's method of killing does not leave much blood.

It may be necessary for the Keeper to remind the investigators of the mansion's value: though cracked and sagging, the Dodge brothers still believe it can be repaired and sold for a good price, so the removal of walls or other major "surgery" is not acceptable.

The moment of realization—that the moist areas and masses of slime seen in the house are actually the trail and pseudopod of a gigantic creature—requires each investigator to make a **Sanity** roll (1/1D4 loss).

More details on the creature can be found in the **Creatures and Monsters** section, page 61.

**Keeper note:** when deploying the spawn, make the most of the mystery. Let creaking walls and spreading dampness puzzle the investigators until the thing strikes. It is up to you to decide when and where the slime attacks, shifting the scenario from brooding unease to gushing horror.

## CHAPTER 2

thoroughly and carefully in three hours, no roll required. A summary of the contents can be provided once read (**Handout: Crack'd 5**).

### *Storeroom (3)*

Filled with junk, boxes, barrels, crates, and so on. A large area of mold and moisture can be seen in the center of the floor. This patch of floor is weak, and gives way under any inquisitive investigator of **SIZ** 60 or greater, dumping them suddenly into the **Coal Cellar** (page 62). If they fail a **Jump** roll, they suffer 1D6 damage from the fall; if they succeed, the damage is halved. Any light they were carrying is also extinguished, leaving the investigator sprawled in total darkness, possibly imagining that something terrible is moving closer, its "jaws" slavering with anticipation.

### *The Hall (4)*

As the investigators step through the door, a huge wet chunk of plaster shivers off and pops to the floor in front of them. The whole ceiling is moist and dark.

### *Cloakroom (5)*

There is a huge dark figure with an axe in here! Oh, no—it's just the curious shadow cast by an overcoat.

### *Empty Room (6)*

A large area, devoid of furnishings, with a polished wooden floor. In happier times, it was the manse's dance floor. Water damage is visible on the floor edges.

### *Kitchen (7)*

On the shelf above the stove, there is a series of four metal canisters labeled flour, sugar, tea, and coffee. It is obvious from a gap in the line that one is missing (the salt; perhaps a successful **INT** roll deduces the missing canister). During the day, the door to the cellar from the kitchen will not budge, as it is shored up by the creature behind it (**General Cellar**, page 62); otherwise, the door can be broken down with a Hard **STR** roll. A successful **Spot Hidden** roll detects a line of white crystals (salt) along the base of this door. The faucets on the kitchen sink don't work—the pipes are blocked (**Bedroom**, page 60).

### *Dining Room (8)*

There is a silver service laid out: a table for one. There are thin slivers of broken glass on the floor here, the remnants of a peppershaker. There is no sign of the matching saltshaker. The walls are cracked and moist.

### *Pantry (9)*

A terrible rotting meaty smell comes from in here (from food decaying in the icebox).

### *Laundry (10)*

Empty disused tubs with odd sediments. If an investigator opens the linen closet, they suddenly showered with towels and bedding (a successful **Dodge** roll avoids becoming entangled in the household linen). Again, the faucets here don't work either. Water damage is present on the ceiling.

### *Parlor (11)*

Comfy chairs wait patiently for absent guests.

## Upstairs

### *Balcony*

A weak handrail here might cause trouble to anyone leaning on it (a failed **Luck** roll could mean a nasty fall, with the unlucky investigator suffering 1D6 falling damage. A successful **Jump** roll halves the damage.

### *Den (12)*

A double-barreled shotgun (12-gauge) hangs above the mantelpiece in here, although no cartridges can be found. A successful **Spot Hidden** roll notices a crumpled piece of paper in the fire grate (**Handout: Crack'd 6**).

### *Handout: Crack'd 5*

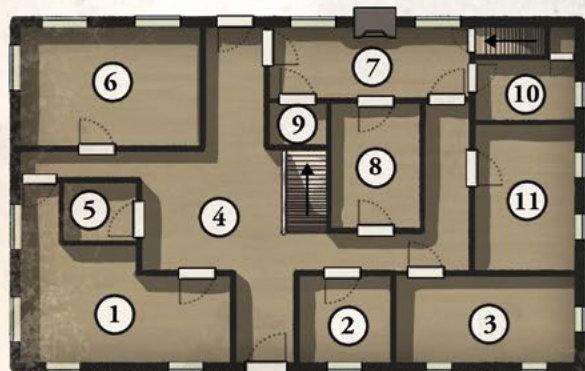
#### THE MISSING PEOPLE: THE TRIBE THAT THE JUNGLE SWALLOWED

*English, by Thomas Pratt, 1913,  
Oxford, England*

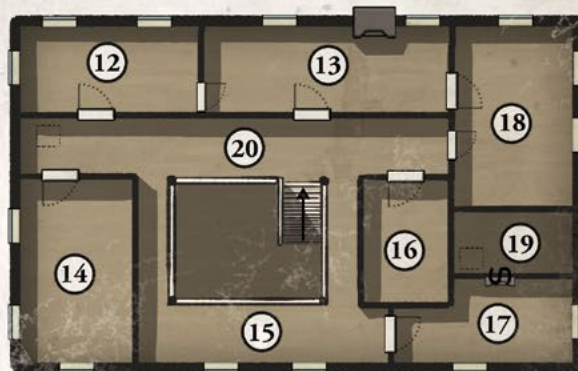
**S u m m a r y :** This book concerns a South American tribe in ancient times, whose existence is testified to by various ruins, but of whose demise nothing is known. The book is based on legends of the tribe and archaeological discoveries. Pratt makes note of the tribe's religious fervor, and conjectures that they may have been wiped out in civil holy war. He mentions, in particular, a "great dome," depicted in carvings and art. He believes that this was an actual stone structure, that it probably still stands, and may well house the last secrets of the missing people.

# THE FITZGERALD MANSION

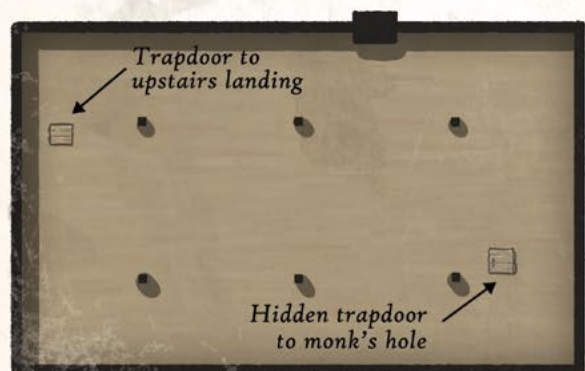
*A plan of the Fitzgerald mansion.*



FIRST FLOOR



SECOND FLOOR

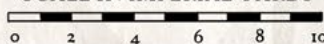


ATTIC



CELLARS

SCALE IN IMPERIAL YARDS



## Explanation

1	Library	9	Pantry	17	Guest bedroom
2	Study	10	Laundry	18	Bathroom
3	Storeroom	11	Parlor	19	Monk's hole
4	Hall	12	Den	20	Upstairs landing
5	Cloakroom	13	Master bedroom	21	Wood cellar
6	Empty room	14	Trophy room	22	General cellar
7	Kitchen	15	Lounge	23	Coal cellar
8	Dining room	16	Bedroom		



Secret door



Fireplace



Stairs

All arrows point upstairs

## CHAPTER 2

### Master Bedroom (13)

This expensively-furnished room contains much in the way of clothing and personal effects. Several valuable objects, such as a gold-plated cigar case and a diamond tiepin, could be lifted by an unscrupulous investigator; with a successful **Appraise** roll, these items are worth \$80 and \$50 respectively.

The ceiling of this room is moist, and water occasionally drips from its center. A successful **Spot Hidden** roll notices a line of white crystals (salt) along the bottom of the doors, and across the windowsills—all the points of entry (a successful **INT** roll). Bar one, of course—the fireplace.

The fireplace also shows moisture around its edges. Scattered near the fireplace are nine partially disassembled shotgun cartridges; the powder and shot have been poured out, and separated into neat little piles. Directly in front of the fireplace is a pair of fluffy blue men's slippers. A successful **Spot Hidden** around the fireplace reveals a translucent stain; if a Hard or better success, the missing crystal saltshaker from the dining room (8) can be found under the hearth rug. If searching around the bed, the missing salt canister from the kitchen (7) may be found (empty) under the bed.

### Handout: Crack'd 6

To whom it may concern,  
I am writing this statement in the event  
of my joining my staff and my expe-  
dition members in death. I, Arthur  
Cornthwaite, being of sound mind and  
body.  
No time for formality or legalisms. It is  
the thing I must tell you of. What is  
sanity, when faced with this?  
I thought I had fled from it in that  
foul green place, that accursed temple,  
yet somehow it has followed me here. I  
know the signs, there can be no  
mistake. It is with me. It is a thing so  
clever, so terrible that  
MELODRAMA! What's the point! Notes  
to myself in an empty house! Whoever  
reads this knows, or will know, of it,  
but what you must also know is that it  
has a weakness so simple, so

### Trophy Room (14)

This room is locked at present—a successful **Locksmith** or Hard **STR** roll rectifies the problem. Inside, gathering dust, is loot from tombs the world over: pots, vases, statuettes, carvings, musical instruments, idols, and more. Some seem to leer and snicker at the investigators. One or two may fall off the shelves for no readily apparent reason. Some have already been smashed into unrecognizable fragments. All stare with painted outrage, flat eyes hostile to the men who removed them from their ancestral homes.

**Keeper note:** whip up the sense that a curse could be emanating from one of these relics—perhaps something Cornthwaite dug up and brought home, but should have left in the ground. A successful **Anthropology** or **Archaeology** roll identifies most of the items as South American, many of them funerary artifacts.

### Lounge (15)

Huge windows would afford a wide view out over the garden, if they weren't tightly shuttered at present. Some moisture is visible at the edges of the walls.

### Bedroom (16)

Tiny black handprints dot the floor in here. A successful **Track** roll shows them to lead under the bed, while a successful **Listen** roll discerns furtive scratching noises coming from under there. Beneath the bed is a horrific black beast, two feet (60 cm) long, with red-rimmed eyes and humanlike hands—the sight of this “thing” looking back at the investigator triggers a **Sanity** roll (0/1 loss). If the **Sanity** roll is successful, the investigators realize this is a raccoon that must have fallen down the chimney and crept under the bed. If the investigators don't rescue it or provide it with a means of escape, it will be eaten by the creature sooner rather than later.

### Guest Bedroom (17)

The back of the fireplace is false, and can be pushed in to reveal the monk's hole (19). The hidden room's presence can be deduced quickly by a competent architect or builder, or by anyone with a successful Hard **Spot Hidden** roll. Indeed, careful study and measurement of the rooms of the house detect an apparent “hidden space” (no roll required).

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### *Bathroom (18)*

The investigators will probably be pleased to see this large, luxurious bathroom if they have been out rolling in the garden, but will be disappointed when no water comes from the faucets. If looking in the mirror, an investigator notices writing across their face, traced in the dust on the polished glass. Someone (Cornthwaite) has scrawled a hastily written message: "NaCl," which anyone with five or more points in **Science (Biology or Chemistry)** automatically knows is the formula for salt; otherwise, a successful **Know** roll reveals the same information.

**Keeper note:** if resident in the basement, the creature is blocking the pipes. It may well issue forth from the faucets on the washbasin and the bath, from the plugholes, and/or from the toilet—preferably after the players have an idea of what their investigators are up against.

### *Monk's Hole (19)*

Curled up in here are the pitiful remains of Arthur Curwen. The corpse has no toes, nor fingers on the left hand. An old axe lies in the corner, while dents in the wall signify his desperate attempts to get out. The grisly scene prompts a **Sanity** roll (0/1D4 loss). The fireplace door is sprung in such a way that once you're in, it is impossible to get out the same way. This realization—trapped in the dark with a corpse and the same fate awaiting you—may, at the Keeper's discretion, also trigger a **Sanity** roll (1/1D4 loss).

The actual means of exit are via a trapdoor in the ceiling, leading up to the attic. Curwen starved unaware of this, the way to freedom just above his head. This hidden exit can be found from inside the monk's hole with a successful **Luck** roll if the investigator has no source of light in there with them, or a successful **Spot Hidden** roll if they do. Otherwise, calling for help may be their only option—hopefully another investigator makes their **Listen** roll to hear their trapped colleague!

### *The Attic*

This open space contains lots of junk, from each of the families who have lived here. There are old chests, a rocking horse, a broken mirror, a locked wardrobe, a tailor's dummy, odd bits of furniture, and so on. There is a small wet area near the south wall, but no significant water damage, structurally speaking.

Interestingly, one trunk has been absolutely flattened outwards, burst as if an explosion had taken place in its interior. Inside are the remains of jungle clothing: a pith helmet, a compass, a .45 revolver, and a machete. A successful **Spot Hidden** roll shows that one pocket of the trousers has been violently split open. Furthermore, everything in the



### SALT?

With the various clues concerning salt littered around the property, the investigators may wish to consider any connections the mineral has to folklore and superstition. A successful **Occult** roll reminds the investigators that salt has long been used in magical rituals, often as an agent of purification, and the act of throwing salt over one's shoulder is commonly thought to bring good luck or keep evil at bay. Additionally, salt is sometimes used to detect witches, who cannot stand to eat the stuff, and that in some ancient cultures salt was given as an offering to the gods. A **Hard** success recalls these details as well as the notion that salt repels demons and ghosts, and was used to sanctify places and so ward against entry by the spirits of the dead.



trunk seems a little bit shiny and reflective under torchlight, yet the items are dry to the touch. If the investigators turn the flattened trunk over, the stickers and labels identify it as belonging to Arthur Cornthwaite, and show that it's been to South America and back again several times.

**Keeper note:** the reflective coating is the remnants of the creature's slime trail; it traveled to America hidden in Cornthwaite's pants, which he subsequently locked away in this trunk. The revolver is operational, and a good clean with some oil would make it appear brand new. Unfortunately there are no bullets to be found in the attic.

There is a trapdoor in the attic floor (a successful **Spot Hidden** roll to see if without a light source), covered with dust and weakened with age. If anyone steps on it without realizing it's there, they crash through the floor, taking 1D6 damage (unless they succeed at a **Jump** roll, which halves it to 1D3 damage) and plummeting into the dead embrace of Arthur Curwen in the hidden room (19) below. Encountering the corpse in this manner forces a **Sanity** roll (1/1D6 loss).

### *The Cellars*

#### *Wood Cellar (21)*

Access is gained from the outside via the wooden hatches at the rear of the property (**House Exterior**, page 53). Inside is a great mound of wood and sawdust on which unusual

vines and creepers grow. A successful **Science (Botany or Biology)** or Hard **Natural World** roll reveals these to be South American in origin, and furthermore that they should not be growing in this climate, let alone thriving.

The door leading into the general cellar (22) is locked and cannot be opened. This whole area looks damp, with extensive water damage.

### **General Cellar (22)**

The door to this cellar from the kitchen (7) is locked, and worse, is normally held shut by the creature. If the spawn is not present, then it can be broken open with a successful **STR** roll.

Normally this room is filled with the huge, bloated mass of the alien horror. Assuming it's home, its noxiousness fills the place from wall to wall, a sickening soup of translucent gel in which swirl the liquefying, boneless bodies of its victims: rats, birds, and other animals, the raccoon from upstairs (if not freed), the horse, the servants, and the late Arthur Cornthwaite, partly clad in his dressing gown, the look of surprise still discernible on his half-dissolved features. Such a ghastly sight calls for a **Sanity** roll (1D4/2D10 loss).

When in residence, the cellar door cannot be opened unless the thing wills it—its mass shores up the door and holds it fast. The door is also locked. Determined investigators can take the door off its hinges or chop through it in several rounds, although a successful **INT** roll reminds them that the Dodge brothers were anxious to avoid any further damage to the property.

If the investigators assault the door at the beginning of the adventure, the cautious creature retreats into the walls and foundations immediately, leaving intriguing but inconclusive evidence of its presence behind. In the room are oddly crushed bales of old magazines, severely rusted tools, and several formerly valuable pieces of antique furniture, now cracked and waterlogged. There is water damage everywhere. The creature's translucent trail coats the walls, and the bones of previous victims may be found in the corners. Remnants of the creature's slime can be found with a successful **Track** or **Spot Hidden** roll. The entire floor of the cellar has cracked and sagged, obviously due to water damage. An excavation into the foundations of the mansion might be possible, taking 1D3 hours for a thorough check. If all of the investigators engage in such activity, the beast is driven outside or into the upper reaches of the house; it prefers not to deal with multiple targets at any one time—at least, not at this moment.

If called out to look in the cellar, the sheriff is impressed by the strange nature of the damage found in the cellar, and the bones are certainly evidence of foul play. But, as far as he's concerned, the murderer has obviously escaped—be that Cornthwaite or some other lunatic.

Later in the adventure, when it is less cautious, the creature can choose to create an air bubble around the door, making it easy to open, and wait, poised to flow forwards onto the investigator opening the door. Once it has its food, it closes the door again. The best thing for the investigators to do, once they've opened the door and looked in long enough to see the creature, is to quickly slam the door shut, before the monster oozes toward them. They can achieve this with a successful **DEX** roll—provided they haven't triggered a bout of madness due to **Sanity** loss (1D4/2D10 points) from realizing the monster is before them!

### **Coal Cellar (23)**

If the spawn is in residence in the general cellar (22), then the only way an investigator can gain entry is if they fall through the weakened floor above (**Storeroom**, page 58).

The cellar is, as might be expected, full of coal. The door leading out into the general cellar is locked and will not budge—the lock appears to be seized with rust, requiring a successful Hard **STR** roll to break. There is noticeable water damage throughout the coal cellar (along with a possible pile of debris from the collapsed ceiling above).

## CONCLUSION

One suggested outcome is detailed below, which might work if the investigators play into the Keeper's hands. If not, it should still give the Keeper some ideas as to how to resolve the scenario.

The investigators will, most likely, search the upper floor after the ground floor—a natural progression. There, they should find more evidence of the lurking horror, and learn about its peculiar weakness: salt. When all the pieces are in place, a single investigator is quietly ambushed by one of the creature's pseudopods (see **Creatures and Monsters**, page 66) and, possibly then “mysteriously” disappears, just like Cornthwaite. Joe Virelli is an ideal first victim: *“The last time I saw him, he was sitting near the fireplace, writing down notes. I haven't seen him since. You?”*

However, if the investigators are vigilant and keep a careful watch, and the thing fails several ambush attempts, it becomes too ravenous for further caution. It suddenly oozes out from cracks in the walls, the fireplaces, water pipes, vents, and so on, often in several places simultaneously. It is probably too much for the investigators to handle, unless they've prepared a major salt attack—either by insisting that the Dodge brothers fulfill Cornthwaite's previously bizarre final order (**The Dodge Brothers' Office**, page 47) or by returning to Gamwell and buying up all the salt they can find, which undoubtedly raises Sheriff Whitford's suspicions as to exactly what these crackpots are up to now.

## THE CRACK'D AND CROOK'D MANSE

Remember that the creature can have simultaneous access to the grounds and to every room of the house. There really isn't anywhere the investigators can hide once it decides to make a full-scale attack. The investigators may decide to flee rather than fight. If they are upstairs and attempt to head down to escape, the scene is set for a truly horrible experience. Expecting downwards movement, the creature has flowed up from the cellar and now fills the entire ground floor of the house to a height of 4–6 feet (1.2–1.8 m). Investigators failing both their **Sanity** roll and a **DEX** roll tumble helplessly down the staircase in shock. Splash!

The only feasible way out under these circumstances is through the upstairs windows, after smashing open the shutters. If the investigators try to climb down slowly and carefully, the spawn squeezes out through the ground floor windows and flows up the walls to meet them—the only way down now is to jump. If the investigators make a successful **Climb** roll, then they managed to get closer to the ground before the creature appeared; a successful **Jump** roll now halves falling damage to 1D3 (1D6 if the Jump roll is unsuccessful). If they fail the Climb roll, they fall the full distance, taking 2D6 damage unless they succeed at their Jump roll (1D6 damage instead if they do). Anyone smart enough to aim to land in a bush (a **DEX** roll), suffers reduced damage (1D3/1D2 or 1D6/1D3).

The spawn pursues anyone attempting to make a break for it across the garden—but, slime molds are pretty slow, so unless the investigators are severely hampered in some way—say, by carrying a fallen comrade—then it is unlikely the creature will catch them. Naturally, no one believes the tale the survivors tell in town, and the cellar will be empty when they and the police return.

If the investigators want to finish the thing off, they'll need to return very quietly and wait, hopefully with lots and lots of salt close at hand. Eventually, the thing will relax its vigilance and become dormant in the cellar again, there to digest any victims it has taken.

The best plan at this point is to suddenly back a dump truck of salt up to the wood cellar doors, blast the door between the wood cellar and the general cellar open, and dump the lot in. Even so, there may be a bit of fight left in the spawn, at the Keeper's discretion.

Should the investigators rain stinging salt down on the creature during their climatic final confrontation, then it thrashes and rages in boiling agony (see **Salt Damage Table**, page 67, for further details). As the titan shakes and surges, huge fissures are rent in the walls, roof tiles fly off, boards are showered outwards, shutters flap and bash wildly, furniture is slung through windows, glass shatters, and timbers crack



*The house consumed*

and list. Anyone in the area suffers 1D8 damage from flying debris, although this is halved with a successful **Dodge** roll.

If the monster is fatally injured, in its death throes it hurls rubble hundreds of feet into the air—wicked Keepers might have this burying any vehicles or slow-moving investigators—before the house and the creature finally collapse inwards as a spray of salt, steam, and smoke blossoms outward.

Under these circumstances, the investigators are unlikely to get the promised fee. Not only have they apparently blown up the mansion, but they also can't realistically return to the lawyers and tell them that their client was eaten by a South American fungoid monster. The Dodge brothers will, of course, attempt to prosecute the investigators with the full weight of the law for their inexcusable vandalism. Sheriff Whitford keeps out of it as much as he can, as he's secretly happy to see the place laid low. With a shrewd **Law**, **Fast Talk**, or **Persuade** roll, the investigators might be able to provide a feasible explanation—perhaps faulty gas pipes blew the place up?

By hook or by crook, the surviving investigators hopefully leave it all behind them. But some things never end. Down in South America, under the forgotten ruins, the original creature still lurks. And, that spring in Gamwell, the bees find a strange new “pollen” in the wreckage of the crack'd and crook'd manse...

### REWARDS

Suggested Sanity point awards (and penalties) for this scenario include:

- For defeating the creature: +1D20 Sanity points.
- For fleeing the house without dealing with the spawn: -1D6 Sanity points.
- For leading Joe Virelli to his doom: -1D4 Sanity points.
- For rescuing the raccoon: +1 Sanity point.

### Options for Continuing the Horror

Depending on the investigators' actions, there could be several ways in which the Keeper could extend the horror caused by the spawn of Shub-Niggurath.

If they fled from the manse without destroying the creature, then perhaps the investigators return at a later date ready for a more even fight, having carried out further research and figured out its weaknesses. They may or may not be welcomed by Gamwell's inhabitants, particularly the sheriff and the Dodge brothers, based on their prior behavior and whatever state they left the house in. Then again, perhaps the townsfolk are relieved to see them if the spawn is traveling further abroad to find its meals.

If they did destroy the creature, it's possible that the investigators' actions come to the attention of a cult of Shub-Niggurath worshippers, who might either attempt to track them down and punish them for their blasphemy in destroying one of the goddess' progeny, or travel to the Fitzgerald Manse to hunt for any vestiges of the spawn that might have been overlooked—that odd “pollen,” for instance. The first the investigators know of this is when a horribly familiar series of events begins to play out at a different location. Did they really fail to kill the thing the first time around? Will they go and finish the job now that it appears to have moved somewhere else?

In the same vein, there is also the option that the investigators become unwitting carriers of the creature's spores, just as Arthur Cornthwaite was. They may have destroyed one incarnation of the creature down there in Gamwell, but they've just managed to transport a tiny, vital piece of it with them to wherever their journeys lead them next. And so, the cycle begins again...

On a far grander scale, having read *The Missing People* and seen Cornthwaite's ledgers, the investigators can be in little doubt as to the origins of the monster they faced in Gamwell. Are they content to live out their lives knowing that somewhere in the jungles of South America, another creature of the same ilk lies in wait for the unwary? Or will they organize their own expedition to deal with the source of the problem once and for all?

## CHARACTERS AND MONSTERS

### NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

**Reginald, Walter, and Harold Dodge,**  
*ages 57, 59, and 60, attorneys*

<b>STR</b> 50	<b>CON</b> 55	<b>SIZ</b> 55	<b>DEX</b> 45	<b>INT</b> 85
<b>APP</b> 50	<b>POW</b> 55	<b>EDU</b> 80	<b>SAN</b> 55	<b>HP</b> 11
<b>DB:</b> 0	<b>Build:</b> 0	<b>Move:</b> 5	<b>MP:</b> 11	

#### Combat

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

#### Skills

Appraise 45%, Fast Talk 55%, Law 75%, Library Use 60%, Listen 50%, Persuade 65%, Psychology 45%.

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### **Hank Haggarty,** *age 56, boarding house proprietor*

STR 70   CON 55   SIZ 60   DEX 60   INT 65  
APP 65   POW 40   EDU 60   SAN 40   HP 11  
DB: +1D4   Build: 1   Move: 6   MP: 8

#### **Combat**

Brawl                      45% (22/9), damage 1D3+1D4  
Dodge                     30% (15/6)

#### **Skills**

Accounting 55%, Art/Craft (Woodwork) 60%, Electrical Repair 35%, History (Local) 75%, Mechanical Repair 45%, Listen 65%, Persuade 45%.

### **Edith Haggarty,** *age 46, boarding house proprietor*

STR 55   CON 65   SIZ 60   DEX 60   INT 85  
APP 45   POW 70   EDU 60   SAN 70   HP 12  
DB: 0   Build: 0   Move: 7   MP: 14

#### **Combat**

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

#### **Skills**

Art/Craft (Cooking) 65%, Art/Craft (Housekeeping) 70%, History (Local) 75%, Listen 60%, Persuade 50%, Spot Hidden 65%.

### **Stan Artemis, age 47, newspaper editor**

STR 60   CON 70   SIZ 75   DEX 55   INT 80  
APP 50   POW 65   EDU 70   SAN 65   HP 14  
DB: +1D4   Build: 1   Move: 6   MP: 13

#### **Combat**

Brawl                      40% (20/8), damage 1D3+1D4  
Dodge                     30% (15/6)

#### **Skills**

Art/Craft (Typesetting) 70%, Art/Craft (Writing) 50%, Fast Talk 60%, Listen 65%, Psychology 65%.

### **Joe Virelli, age 28, reporter**

STR 60   CON 75   SIZ 85   DEX 70   INT 90  
APP 80   POW 75   EDU 70   SAN 75   HP 16  
DB: +1D4   Build: 1   Move: 7   MP: 15

#### **Combat**

Brawl                      55% (22/11), damage 1D3+1D4  
Ax                          40% (20/8), damage 1D8+2+1D4  
Dodge                     40% (20/8)

#### **Skills**

Art/Craft (Photography) 45%, Art/Craft (Writing) 50%, Charm 50%, History 45%, Listen 65%, Natural World 45%, Spot Hidden 55%.

### **William Whitford, age 61, county sheriff**

STR 70   CON 60   SIZ 75   DEX 55   INT 65  
APP 70   POW 45   EDU 60   SAN 45   HP 13  
DB: +1D4   Build: 1   Move: 4   MP: 9

#### **Combat**

Brawl                      70% (35/14), damage 1D3+1D4  
.45 Revolver            50% (25/10), damage 1D10+2  
Dodge                     40% (20/8)

#### **Skills**

Intimidate 60%, Law 55%, Listen 60%, Psychology 55%, Spot Hidden 70%, Stealth 55%.

### **Susan Arwell, age 32, librarian**

STR 60   CON 75   SIZ 60   DEX 75   INT 75  
APP 65   POW 70   EDU 70   SAN 70   HP 13  
DB: 0   Build: 0   Move: 8   MP: 14

#### **Combat**

Brawl                      35% (17/7), damage 1D3  
Dodge                     45% (22/9)

#### **Skills**

Anthropology 50%, First Aid 45%, History (Local) 75%, Library Use 70%, Natural World 45%, Persuade 45%.

## CREATURES AND MONSTERS

### Spawn of Shub-Niggurath

*A nightmare pool of abhorrent corruption, a bubbling morass of translucent greenish gel in which swirl air pockets, sickly pus-like matter, and the bobbing, decomposing, boneless cadavers of its recent prey. Ghastly pink mouths and bloated black eye-like organs slowly form and dissolve out of the amorphous mass of the creature. Its eyes see the world in an inhuman way but have some small ability to recognize hidden prey or traps.*

The creature moves slowly but insidiously. It may remain utterly motionless for hours, even days, as needed to stalk its prey. It is cunning, not rash. The beast once preyed primarily on small creatures like insects or rats, in which the amount of salt in the corpse was too small to affect it. Large animals like pets, horses, or humans are bad for its digestion but have proved extraordinarily nourishing, as one can tell by its enormous size. The creature takes weeks to digest such prey, and retreats to a safe place once it has gained even a single such victim for its “larder.”

#### Habits and Behavior

When dormant, the creature follows the pull of gravity and pools in the manse’s main cellar, filling it entirely, with smaller pseudopods infesting the ground floor, but in moving, it can stretch itself out, covering an enormous area. It can monitor the entire house if need be, or thinly cover many acres of ground. It prefers not to move outside the manse, but of late this has been necessary and may be again if the investigators decide not to sleep in the property.

The thing usually leaves the basement only at night, oozing slowly and silently up through the house and across the grounds. In this manner, it surrounded and caught its last meal: the horse (*Neighboring Estates*, page 51).

It prefers to stay out of rooms and instead lurks in the cavities between them. By quietly seeping into the gaps in the walls, sliding along under the rafters, flooding itself under the floorboards, and pouring itself into the plumbing, it can access—and, if necessary, fill—any room in the house.

The creature attacks its victims with powerful pseudopods, allowing it to grab prey even in the middle of a room. It can form hideous mouth-like organs—mouths that are strangely similar to those of the dark young of Shub-Niggurath. If an investigator should see a mouth, a successful *Cthulhu Mythos* roll reveals this odd resemblance—the only real clue to the creature’s origin. The mouths are simply for display: boneless and soft, like the rest of the monster, they deal no significant damage.

Two forms of the creature are provided: the main body and an individual pseudopod. Pseudopods are used when the creature is trying to get at victims in the house, while the main body statistics apply when the investigators finally

come face-to-slime with the spawn’s entire mass, most likely during the scenario’s climax.

### Pseudopod, noisome alien tentacle

*A flexing, dripping, snaking coil of moist, darkly translucent gel, forming and reforming with loathsome plasticity.*

STR 90    CON 100    SIZ 40    DEX 15    INT —  
APP —    POW 55    EDU —    SAN —    HP 14\*  
DB: +1D4    Build: 1    Move: 8    MP: 11

*\*Subtract damage given to a pseudopod from the main body’s hit points as well.*

#### Combat

**Attacks per round:** 1 (per pseudopod)

To attack, the spawn initially uses its quick-moving pseudopods to locate warm, resting prey. The only warning to the sitter or sleeper is a soft gurgling as the creature slurps itself through cracks in the floor or wall (a successful Listen roll avoids a surprise attack). It first flows its pseudopods over a victim, grappling with them should the victim be active rather than asleep. It then uses its engulf attack to suffocate and crush the victim from the inside out. Once its victim is dead, if it can, the full creature draws itself along to the corpse’s location and completely engulfs it, whereupon it proceeds to slowly digest its meal over the next few days or weeks (depending on the size of its victim). Short-term external contact with the creature is not harmful—its digestive acids aren’t unusually powerful.

**Grapple (mnvr):** grabs the target with its pseudopod in order to restrain them. If successful, on the subsequent round, the pseudopod then engulfs the hapless victim unless they can break free with an opposed STR roll, or if their companions can inflict 7 damage to the creature in one round, or if enough salt is poured onto the pseudopod.

**Pseudopod Engulf (mnvr):** in the first round of being engulfed, the victim must make a successful CON roll to hold their breath as the pseudopod squirms all over their face and probes into their ears, eyes, nose, and mouth. On subsequent rounds, the CON roll becomes Hard, and then Extreme. As soon as a CON roll is failed, the victim weakens or relaxes for a moment, and the thing pulses down the throat and into the body, into which it violently and powerfully expands (much like a root’s expansion, vastly accelerated), crushing internal organs and bones, eventually leaving nothing but an oozing sack of skin and flesh ready to be absorbed. Bones too strong to crush are excreted later in the digestive process. The expansion causes 1D6+1D4 damage per round. Death occurs at zero hit points (ignore the major wound rule). Victims can break free by regurgitating the pseudopod with a successful opposed STR roll. The creature can

## THE CRACK'D AND CROOK'D MANSE

also be forced to withdraw if the victim's companions inflict a major wound on it, or pour salt on the pseudopod.

Grapple (mnvr) 50% (25/5), held, then engulf  
(see above)  
Pseudopod Engulf (mnvr) automatic, damage 1D6+1D4  
(see above)  
Dodge 15% (7/3)

### **Skills**

Sense Light/Warmth 50%, Sense Movement 50%.

**Armor:** mundane weapons (inc. bullets) deal minimum damage. Fire deals damage (a medium-sized torch inflicts 1D6, while a flamethrower inflicts 1D10). Highly susceptible to salt, see **Salt Damage Table** (nearby).

**Sanity Loss:** 0/1D6 Sanity points to encounter one of the spawn's pseudopods; 0/1D6 Sanity points to witness a victim being killed by a pseudopod.

### **Main Body, quivering alien entity**

STR 550 CON 350 SIZ 550 DEX 10 INT 65  
APP — POW 75 EDU — SAN — HP 90  
DB: +13D6 Build: 14 Move: 3\* MP: 15

*\*When moving outside, the creature may flatten itself out to a remarkable extent; from a distance, it might appear to be only a pool of water. Maximum height without an enclosed area to fill is about 4 feet.*

### **Combat**

**Attacks per round:** 1D6 (per round; maximum 10)

If the entire spawn is encountered, it attacks with its pseudopods (1D6 per round, to a maximum number of 10 at any one time), attempting to grab, restrain, and engulf. All damage inflicted by the creature is as per its individual pseudopods (see above), which may be extruded to a maximum length of 10 yards/meters during combat. Damage inflicted by those fighting against individual pseudopods should be taken off both the pseudopod and the creature's main body totals. If encountering a single victim, or a sleeping one, the spawn may instead attempt to completely engulf them with its gelatinous main body.

**Main Body Engulf (mnvr):** unless the target succeeds at a Dodge roll, they become encased in the spawn's main body. As per an individual pseudopod attack, the victim must make a successful CON roll to hold their breath or they begin to suffocate. This roll becomes Hard on the following round, and then Extreme on subsequent rounds. As soon as a CON roll is failed, the victim suffers 1D6+1D4 damage as the creature invades every orifice, suffocating them to death. Enzymes slowly go to work in breaking the corpse down and extracting the harmful salt.

Pseudopod grapple (mnvr) 50% (25/5), held, then engulf  
(see **Pseudopod** attack above)  
Pseudopod engulf (mnvr) automatic, damage 1D6+1D4 per  
round (see **Pseudopod** attack above)  
Main body engulf (mnvr) 75% (32/15), damage 1D6+1D4  
(see above)

### **Skills**

Sense Light/Warmth 95%, Sense Movement 80%, Spot  
Hidden 30%.

**Armor:** mundane weapons (inc. bullets) deal minimum damage. The creature dislikes light and avoids fire if possible. Fire deals damage if brought into direct contact with the creature, but most fires are quickly extinguished by the creature's moistness—a medium-sized torch inflicts 1D6 damage for 1D3 rounds before it is damped out; if somehow lured into a blazing room, the monster would suffer 3D6 damage per round for 1D6+2 rounds. (Remember that setting a massive fire inside an old but valuable mansion is not the ideal solution here—at least, not if the investigators want to get paid.) The creature is susceptible to salt and fears it. A line of salt may deter its movement; see the **Salt Damage Table** for the damage different quantities of salt can inflict on both it and its pseudopods. Slinging salt at the thing from a distance requires a successful Throw roll; otherwise, the spawn only takes half rolled damage. Of course, a truckload of salt cannot fail to hit, as long as its delivery is set up effectively.

**Sanity Loss:** 1D4/2D10 to encounter the full-sized spawn of Shub-Niggurath.



### SALT DAMAGE TABLE

Quantity	Damage
Pinch	1 point
Handful	1D4 points
Saltshaker	1D8 points
12-gauge shotgun loaded with salt cartridges	2D6 points
Shovelful	3D6 points
Bucketful	6D6 points
Truckload	Lethal within minutes





## THE CODE

*In which the investigators are invited to a very unusual house party.*

This scenario is for one or more investigators and can be played over one to two sessions. It is nominally set in the year 1925, at a property just outside of Hampton, NY. If desired, both the time and location can be adjusted to suit your current campaign.

## KEEPER INFORMATION

Dr. Kenneth Connolly has invented a time machine. While at Miskatonic University, he began to combine his understanding of physics with some metaphysical studies that had piqued his interest. Excited by the possibilities, he took early retirement to pursue his research at his family's mansion, Wellington Manor, just outside the small town of Hampton in Washington County, upstate New York.

Last year, while undertaking additional research in Chicago, Connolly met a woman who introduced herself as Elizabeth "Lizzie" Rolland, who claimed to be an arcane scholar with some insight into the metaphysical nature of the universe. She just so happened to also be a very attractive blonde. Pretty quickly, the two fell into a passionate romantic relationship. With her help, Connolly had a break-through and was able to take the next step towards realizing his proposed time machine. Together, they went back to his mansion to focus on building a functioning prototype.

What Connolly didn't know was that Elizabeth Rolland was really Eve Pierce, a minor sorceress and con artist. Pierce could see that Connolly was onto something and knew that if she had access to a time machine, she would become one of the most powerful people in the world.

After a few months of slow but steady work, Pierce had an unexpected visitor at Wellington Manor: Clint Davis, her former partner-in-crime, as well as an ex-lover. Having tracked her down, believing she was on a high-stakes grift, Davis wanted in on the action. Pierce was not in a position

to blow her cover, so she introduced Davis as her brother, David. She then spun a suitable sob story about how "David" was down on his luck, and convinced Connolly to allow him to stay with them until he got back on his feet. Being in love, Connolly agreed, although he made her promise to keep the true nature of their work secret from her "brother." This worked for Pierce as she didn't want to cut Davis in on the power of time travel.

Eventually, though, Connolly became suspicious. Not only did he notice Davis poking around the house, but he also overheard several hushed arguments between his lover and her so-called brother, although the exact nature of their heated exchanges eluded him. Concerned that all was not as it seemed, Connolly added a coded activation system to the time machine—or "time suit" as he'd come to think of it—to keep others from using it, then gave Pierce a bogus code to allay her suspicions.

As a result of his rummaging around, Davis began to understand the nature of Connolly and Pierce's work and, consequently, wanted the machine for himself. He broke into the locked lab one night and managed to piece together how the device worked. The next morning, Connolly noticed that things were out of place and started to suspect "David" might be up to no good. Determined to have an insurance policy in place in case the worst happened, Connolly wrote to an old acquaintance (**Handout: Code 1**; see also **Involving the Investigators**, page 70).

Worried that Davis' nosing around might cause problems, Pierce had already begun to keep a closer eye than usual on her current lover, especially after he gave her a security code for the suit. As a result, she knew that Connolly had sent a letter, but not to whom. Figuring the jig might almost be up, she began formulating an exit strategy.

Finally, the day came to test the time suit, and Connolly successfully jumped ten minutes into the future. Davis, spying on the test, saw the device in action. While Connolly and

Pierce rejoiced at their achievement, Davis made his move; he pulled a gun on Connolly and calmly shot the horrified academic dead. Pierce was furious, even more so when she discovered that she didn't know the real code to operate the machine. Worse still, she also didn't have the technical savvy to change the suit's design or to build a new one. Still fuming at her ex-partner's rash actions, Pierce helped Davis bury Connolly in a shallow grave deep in the woods a mile or so from the mansion, then set about coming up with a plan to rectify the situation.

Pierce suspected that the letter Connolly had sent might contain the code—after all, it would be just like him to build in additional safety precautions (as he himself described them in his letter). Speculating that it must be someone Connolly trusted, she concluded that the recipient was probably one of Connolly's students or close associates. So, she looked through his notes and address book and identified the most likely candidates—which just so happens to include one or more of the investigators (**Involving the Investigators**, below).

Pierce then sent out telegrams claiming to be from Connolly to those she had selected, inviting them to come to the house for an unveiling of his latest project (**Handout: Code 2**). Pierce's plan is to get the assistance she needs (the code or a way to circumvent it), and then kill Davis and whoever else gets in her way.

But, since the first test of the time suit, the mansion has been experiencing strange phenomena. Pierce and Davis have both seen glimpses of other people around the mansion and have been experiencing many incidents of déjà vu. Pierce suspects that their time is limited, in more ways than one.

### INVOLVING THE INVESTIGATORS

The scenario works best if the investigators have already probed into the Cthulhu Mythos together on at least one previous occasion. Under these circumstances, *The Code* could be slotted into an ongoing campaign as an entertaining sidetrack. Alternatively, a new group of investigators could be created specifically for this adventure, with the premise that they all know one another and perhaps have some scientific background or leaning. This scenario could then act as the investigators' entry into a terrifying world beyond their current understanding, as well as the basis for a new campaign of the Keeper's design.

Ideally, as well as the investigators all being friends or associates with one another, they will also be known to Dr. Connolly in some way, and be aware that Dr. Connolly was a professor at Miskatonic University until his early retirement

five years ago. Perhaps they were among his students or his colleagues at the venerable Arkham institution. Or perhaps they crossed paths with him early in his retirement while he was formulating his theories and designs, rendering him sufficiently useful assistance that they became friends, albeit at a distance. Both options give players plenty of latitude when it comes to potential occupations and how they might know the late Dr. Connolly.

If desired, the non-player characters (NPCs) of Dr. Seamus Quinn and Diana Carlson could actually be used as investigators, especially if there are just one or two players. Using these characters provides a ready-made background and association with Dr. Connolly. If used this in manner, the Keeper should grant an additional pool of 100 skill points to allocate to whatever skills the player(s) wishes for those characters. A particularly kind Keeper might also grant 30 points to adjust characteristic values as well. Note that the scenario assumes these two characters are NPCs, so adjust the text as necessary if they are being used as player investigators.

If the investigators know Connolly from their days at Miskatonic, then they haven't had any real contact with him since his retirement party, apart from the occasional birthday or Christmas card. During the party, he alluded to an interesting personal project he was going to devote himself to researching once he returned home to Wellington Manor, but they've heard nothing more since. If the investigators instead know him from after his retirement, then they may well be aware of the direction his research was taking without necessarily knowing the specifics, depending on how they assisted him in the first place.

In terms of useful skills for investigators to have during this scenario, it would be helpful if at least one person had a high Science (Physics) skill, though this is not essential. Other handy skills include: Electrical Repair, Listen, Mechanical Repair, Occult, Psychology, Spot Hidden, and Stealth.

### Keeper Note: Establishing Relationships with Connolly

If your group is interested, then you may wish to engage in a few brief flashback scenes before play fully begins—one per investigator—to establish how everyone knows Dr. Connolly. Allow each player the time to tell a brief story involving their investigator and the good doctor: for example, a personal anecdote that suggests the nature of their relationship, one that may also build in additional details regarding both their personalities.

If this improvisational style is not to your group's liking, then simply have them give an explanation of their relationship to Connolly (mentor, friend, lover, etc.), without going into further detail.

## DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Descriptions and roleplaying hooks for the non-player characters (NPCs) encountered in this scenario are listed below, while their profiles are given at the end of the scenario (**Non-Player Characters**, page 98). Statistics for all of the creatures the investigators encounter can be found in the **Creatures and Monsters** section, starting on page 99.

### Eve Pierce, age 33, con-artist and sorcerer

*Also known as Elizabeth "Lizzie" Rolland and Claire Whitley.*

Pierce's parents died in a house fire when she was eight-years-old. She spent most of her childhood in an orphanage but escaped when she was 13 and lived on the streets. There, she did what she had to for money, mostly working small cons and dabbling in a bit of petty larceny. As she got older, her targets got bigger, until one of her marks turned out to be the leader of a small cult. A whole new world opened up to her as a result, and she began to study the occult. She was well aware that the cult's leader was running his own long con, but to a distinctly sinister end. Not wishing to get embroiled in his machinations, she fled to Chicago, where she continued her occult studies and, later, met Clint Davis. She worked with him for a few years, but they parted ways after she refused to share her occult secrets. A year later she met Dr. Kenneth Connolly.

Through her "occult" studies, Pierce has lost her mind from some contact with Yog-Sothoth. Granted, she attained a deeper understanding of the cosmos as a result, but at a great cost.

- **Description:** attractive and slim, with dark black hair, hazel brown eyes, and a beautiful smile.
- **Traits:** a good listener, inquisitive, and deceitful. She cares for no one but herself but always tries to appear empathetic to people.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** Pierce has several goals she wishes to achieve, including identifying which investigator has the missing code. As long as the investigators are useful to her, she'll play nicely with them, spending time to determine how best to exploit each of them. Once she knows who has the code, she tries to get it through social means—lying any way that the Keeper thinks will get her that information. If the target investigator is a womanizer, or has an APP of 75 or more, she attempts to seduce them. If they express concern about the temporal fluctuations, she'll claim she wants the code to shut them down. She always plays on emotions, usually to great effect. If she's caught doing anything wrong, she'll deny it if she thinks it will work; however, if she knows the jig's up, she confesses and pleads for help, *"I'm sorry. I*

*don't know why I'm doing this. Something is in my head. I should have never read those books. I need help! Please..."* Her "damsel in distress" gambit has gotten her out of most binds. If Pierce can't get the code by persuasion, she'll move on to threats and intimidation. And, make no mistake—when she has what she wants, she will be quite happy to kill everyone present to make good her getaway.

### Clint Davis, age 36, con-artist

*Also known as David Rolland and William Fetter.*

Davis was the only son of a single, alcoholic father, a situation that forced him to grow up very fast. As his father was in and out of jobs, Davis had to get money any way he could. Stealing and scams brought in enough cash for him to take care of his dad and himself. When he was 13, his father died of liver failure and Davis was on his own.

When the scenario starts, Davis has been living at the house for quite some time, so his knowledge of the mansion is extensive.

- **Description:** tall and broad-shouldered, with rugged good looks. He has hazel eyes and very closely-shaved, light brown hair.
- **Traits:** a man-of-few-words, brawny, and calculating.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** a brutal fighter who kills without remorse if it suits his purpose—including Pierce, if she betrays him. He



Eve Pierce

shows no mercy unless it somehow benefits him. He actually has strong feelings for Pierce, but fears that, in the end, he was just another one of her marks. If he thought for one second she had actual feelings for him, he would forgive her for all her past transgressions. He intends to help her find the code in hope that she will come back to him; but, deep down, he suspects she'll leave him once she gets the chance, so he plans on not letting her get the opportunity.

## **Dr. Seamus Quinn, age 57, physics professor**

Originally from Scotland, Quinn moved to the US to take up a position at Harvard University. He is well respected and liked among his students and colleagues, despite his occasionally pompous nature. He met Kenneth Connolly at a conference years ago, and the two became fast friends. They often talked "shop" and shared a long and complex correspondence. Quinn knows about Connolly's time travel theories, but always saw them more as fancy than possible fact. Quinn is married with two grown children and several grandchildren.

- **Description:** a middle-aged man, with graying hair and beard. He has piercing blue eyes and is dressed in a simple tweed suit.
- **Traits:** intelligent, curious, and a tendency to be pompous, particularly where his pet projects are concerned.



Clint Davis

- **Roleplaying hooks:** as baffled as everyone else as to why they've been asked to Wellington Manor. Quinn wants to find out whether his old friend's research has actually paid dividends. He's also concerned for his friend's safety and wishes to discover his whereabouts. With a family and young grandchildren to go home to, Quinn has multiple reasons to try and escape whatever Pierce and Davis have planned for him, although he will avoid physical conflict if at all possible.

## **Diana Carlson, age 28, physics teacher**

Carlson is a graduate of Miskatonic University and was a student of Connolly's. She and Connolly built a strong friendship and the two remained in contact through semi-regular correspondence. Carlson is now a high school science teacher at an all-girls school in Massachusetts. She is currently engaged to Robert Lewis, a physics teacher at the next-door all-boys school.

- **Description:** a petite, plain-looking, redhead who has her hair in a long braid. She wears small spectacles and is often mistaken for a strict librarian rather than a physics teacher.
- **Traits:** smart, thoughtful, clever, willful, and surprisingly brave—though her common sense always wins out over her curiosity.



Dr. Seamus Quinn

- **Roleplaying hooks:** Connolly's disappearance bothers Carlson, as does his invitation. She is curious to find out what he's up to and where he is, so she can get back to organizing her upcoming wedding.

**Dr. Kenneth Connolly,**  
*age 54, would-be time traveler*

Connolly always had a brilliant mind and took a great liking to the sciences at an early age. He comes from a wealthy family, though his parents were of average means. As a result, he applied for, and was granted, a full scholarship at Miskatonic University and went on to thrive in the world of academia. He was awarded his Ph.D. in physics by Miskatonic, and eventually received tenure there. Always fascinated by the idea of time travel, he often secretly worked on his theories instead of marking term papers. He was wise enough never to publish his "temporal work" as he knew it didn't have the scientific "legs" it needed to withstand the rigorous scrutiny of his peers. He also dipped his toes into some metaphysical research while at Miskatonic, with the encouragement of some of his more liberally-minded fellow colleagues.

A few years ago, the last of his extended family died and left him with a sizable inheritance, prompting his

early retirement so that he could continue his somewhat speculative work without further distraction. Traveling around the world, he met Elizabeth "Lizzie" Rolland (aka Eve Pierce) in Chicago and found someone who believed in his efforts. His current whereabouts are—officially, at least—unknown.

- **Description:** average height and build, with dark brown eyes and dark brown hair greying at the temples.
- **Traits:** known to be a friendly and intelligent man—a passionate, mad scientist type, if you will. But, he is a good man and would never willingly harm anyone unless to protect someone he cares about. He is, unfortunately for him, deeply in love with "Lizzie Rolland."
- **Roleplaying hooks:** all of the investigators' interactions with Connolly are likely to take place during the various time anomalies affecting the manor house (**A Moving Shape**, page 79, and **Help from the Past**, page 81), unless also using the flashback mechanism described in **Building Relationships with Connolly** (page 70). If the investigators fail to convince him as to Lizzie's duplicity, Connolly attempts to be with the woman he loves, if given the opportunity.



Diana Carlson



Dr. Kenneth Connolly

## START: THE LETTER

A few weeks ago, the investigator to whom Connolly was closest received a letter from their old colleague/friend (**Handout: Code 1**). The letter has no return address but is postmarked from New York State.

If the Keeper used flashback scenes to build personal links between their investigators and the deceased time traveler (**Establishing Relationships with Connolly**, page 70), then just who receives the letter may be obvious. If not, then the players may wish to discuss who was closest to Connolly; alternatively, the Keeper can decide. There's also the possibility that the ex-physics professor mailed copies of the letter to more than one person if there is no single obvious candidate.

Then, on Monday, March 30th, 1925, each investigator receives a telegram from Dr. Connolly—in reality, Eve Pierce (**Keeper Information**, page 69)—inviting them to his home (**Handout: Code 2**). Thankfully, “Connolly” has at least given them a week to make the appropriate travel arrangements. Perhaps, the investigators contact one another and discuss their old friend, maybe even making traveling arrangements together. Whoever received the initial letter from Connolly (**Handout: Code 1**) may wish to bring it to

their friends' attention, although they may also wish to keep the exact nature of its contents to themselves—for now, at least. The investigators may engage in speculation on the nature of Connolly's discovery, and whether or not it's tied to the private research he mentioned all those years ago.

## HAMPTON

The only way to Wellington Manor is through the small town of Hampton, New York. Hampton is in the middle of a heavily forested region. Lush and green, the area suffers from frequent showers. The town has a post office and a general store, but not much else. The investigators may stop in and pick up supplies on their way to Wellington Manor, as well as asking for directions. Clem Saunders, the store owner, is an aged and affable man, who is quite happy to tell them anything they want to know.

**Keeper note:** Saunders is a genuinely nice, friendly old soul who talks a lot, just not about anything too important. Try to avoid giving the investigators too many clues too early in the game—although it may be tempting, it's important not to offer the investigators any information unless they

*Handout: Code 1*

*March 14, 1925*

*My dear friend,*

*I hope this letter finds you well. I know we haven't spoken in quite some time, but my research has led me to some strange discoveries. I'm sending you this letter as a safety precaution. I'm not sure when, or even if, this letter will reach you, but I must ask a very bizarre favor of you. I need you to memorize this code:*

*F194-7L-507L*

*Once you have memorized it, burn this letter. I cannot have this falling into the wrong hands. Mention to no one that you know it. I'm sorry for not explaining more, but the less you know the better. Please do not forget this code—it could be a matter of life and death. Hopefully, you'll never have to use it.*

*Yours,*

*Dr. Kenneth Connolly*

*P.S. Don't trust Elizabeth or her brother.*

## THE CODE

ask Saunders directly for it. Besides which, Saunders really doesn't know anything about the goings-on at the manor house over the last few months.

If asked about the people living at the manor, Saunders tells the investigators he saw David Rolland (Clint Davis) a few days ago, when he came in for supplies. He knows David is

### KEEPER NOTE: A DAY IN THE LIFE

*Call of Cthulhu* is all about the weird and the extraordinary. One way to show this is by presenting contrast in the investigators' lives. If your players engaged in the flashback scenes (**Establishing Relationships with Connolly**, page 70) and enjoyed them, then before they receive **Handout: Code 2**, you may wish to play out a series of "day in the life" scenes involving their investigators. These should be short, with some minor conflict that has no bearing on the story as a whole.

The point of such scenes is to give a starting point for the story that is firmly grounded in the real world. They should involve the investigators' professional or personal lives and give a sense of their normal world. For example, if one of the characters is a librarian, perhaps you might create a scene where a student comes to check out a book, only to find they owe fines on an overdue previous loan. If the investigator is a beat cop, maybe they catch some young kids shoplifting. How they handle these scenes not only gives valuable insight into their characters, but it also helps set a tone for the rest of the game.

#### *Handout: Code 2*

Form No. 6B.

## TRANSATLANTIC TELEGRAPH SERVICE

—WORLD-WIDE TELEGRAM SERVICE COMPANY—



D.W. CARLYLE, PRESIDENT

#### CLASS OF SERVICE

This is a full-rate Telegram or Cablegram unless its deferred character indicated by a suitable symbol above or preceding the address.

This company TRANSMITS and RECEIVES messages subject to the terms and conditions on the back of this blank.

MARCH 30, 1925

I HAVE DONE IT STOP I HAVE MADE THE GREATEST SCIENTIFIC DISCOVERY OF  
ALL TIME STOP I NEED YOUR HELP PLEASE COME FRIDAY APRIL 3 5PM TO  
WELLINGTON MANOR HAMPTON NY 12852 STOP IT IS OF THE UTMOST  
IMPORTANCE STOP

KENNETH CONNOLLY

Elizabeth's brother and that he's staying at Wellington Manor. Saunders hasn't seen Elizabeth in weeks and Connolly even longer. Clem likes David and thinks he's a nice, funny guy.

If asked about the manor itself, Saunders knows it's been there a long time, since before he was born, but not much else. In terms of directions, the manor is about a 45-minute drive from town, "*Just go up the north road about 8 miles and take the dirt road on your right. That'll lead up to the manor house,*" he says.

As the investigators are about to leave, Saunders adds something along the lines of, "*Must be a party going on up there. You're the third person to ask me about it today.*" If pressed, he says an older man came in about an hour ago and a young lady not more than 20 minutes back. He can describe them (see **Dr. Seamus Quinn** and **Diana Carlson's** description in the **Dramatis Personae** section, page 72), but he didn't catch their names—obviously, don't use this last part if these characters are now investigators being used by the players.

is a Georgian-style structure that looks as if it hasn't seen much upkeep over the last few decades. A pick-up truck and three cars are parked outside (Davis' truck; Connolly, Quinn, and Carlson's cars)—the truck and one car if the players are using Quinn and Carlson as investigators.

When the investigators arrive, they are greeted at the door by a shaven-headed Clint Davis, dressed in work clothes. He introduces himself as William Fetter, Dr. Connolly's servant and groundskeeper. "William" then escorts them to their rooms and asks them to wait in the drawing room with the other guests as soon as they've freshened up.

On entering the drawing room, the investigators see three people waiting: an older, mustachioed man (Seamus Quinn); a young bespectacled woman (Diana Carlson); and an attractive, dark-haired woman (Eve Pierce, in disguise). If they thought to ask Clem Saunders for descriptions of the others who asked for directions, then the investigators recognize Quinn and Carlson, but not the second woman; the aged store owner never mentioned her.

## WELLINGTON MANOR

Wellington Manor is tucked into the deep woods of Washington County. It takes almost 20 minutes to get from the main road to the run-down mansion. The house

**Keeper note:** Pierce and Davis' plan is to get the investigators to solve their problem for them. Davis poses as the hired help "William Fetter" while Pierce pretends to be "Claire Whitley," one of the people summoned by telegram. Davis shaved his hair and mustache and Pierce died her hair black,



just to obfuscate any descriptions Connolly might have included in his letter. The pair intend to let the guests see the time suit and Connolly's notes, in the hope that they can put the pieces together. Pierce doesn't know if any of them can actually help her, but she's out of options. When she gets what she needs, she plans on killing everyone, including Davis. But, for now, she plays the part of a confused ex-student who was summoned with the rest of them.

As the social niceties begin, William brings in food and drinks for the assembled guests, then excuses himself, explaining that he is going to inform Dr. Connolly that everyone has now arrived. Dr. Quinn introduces himself as a professor at Harvard, while Miss Carlson adds that she was formerly a physics grad student at Miskatonic University and is now a schoolteacher. Pierce introduces herself as Claire Whitley, a grad student from the University of Chicago, whose areas of expertise are anthropology and the occult. They all appear to be just as confused as the investigators (although only Quinn and Carlson are truly in the same

boat). Investigators who succeed at a Hard **Psychology** roll suspect that perhaps Claire Whitley is not being entirely truthful, but about what, they can't be sure—see the **Liar, Liar** box, nearby, for further details on how to handle Psychology rolls aimed at Pierce and Davis.)

If the investigator with the code mentions that they recently received a letter from Connolly, this makes them the focus of Pierce's attention. She uses all of her feminine wiles to seduce or befriend the investigator. If they are so foolish as to drop the code right off the bat, the scenario proceeds immediately to **The Clean Up** (page 96); otherwise, it unfolds as described in the following sections.

While the characters are waiting for Connolly to appear, one of the investigators (the one with the highest Listen skill) automatically hears someone walking down the hall, but no one arrives at the room. If they get up and look, there is no one in the hallway. Once they rejoin the others, they hear the steps again. Still, no one is there—this is the first temporal anomaly.

After all the necessary introductions are complete, William walks in looking very concerned. He claims he can't find Dr. Connolly anywhere, despite having looked all over for him. The last time he saw Dr. Connolly, he says, was in the library, where he asks everyone to join him now to see if they can hunt down any trace of the missing man.

**Keeper note:** plans of the house's grounds can be found on page 76, while an internal floorplan is on page 80.

### LIAR, LIAR

Pierce and Davis are professional con artists. As such, they are very good at lying and should be played as utterly convincing. By all means, permit investigators to make Hard **Psychology** rolls to determine their motives, but don't reveal the difficulty. If they are successful, they sense some deception but gain nothing specific. The best way to throw off suspicion is to have Pierce and Davis admit to something that is also untrue, but somewhat embarrassing—hence their reluctance to share it.

*Example: an investigator asks Davis if he knows where Connolly is and succeeds at a Hard Psychology roll. The investigator knows Davis is covering up something, but no specifics. If they press him, Davis could confess to not paying attention as he was having a drink in the morning, suggesting that "William" is an alcoholic. The investigators think they got the truth out of him, but the secret of the murder is safe!*

Of course, if passing a Psychology roll with an Extreme success, the Keeper may suggest that not everything about either Davis or Pierce is on the level, but just what this is, is at present difficult to fathom.

## TO THE LIBRARY

The library is one of the largest rooms in the house, with a high ceiling and walls filled with books. Strangely, the center of the room contains a jumble of machinery: a combination of machine-shop equipment and seemingly random electrical parts or devices. This room, whatever its original purpose, has obviously been converted into a workshop and laboratory. William allows the characters to explore the room unhindered, allegedly in hopes that they might find some clue as to Dr. Connolly's whereabouts.

### Worktable

The worktable is messy with mechanical parts and papers. The most curious device is some sort of backpack with cables attaching it to a helmet of some sort, odd-looking boots, and gloves. Another pair of gloves and boots are attached to a belt that also attaches to the same backpack device. A successful **Electrical** or **Mechanical Repair** roll reveals that the device has one power source—some kind of battery—in the backpack, though its exact nature is unknown, while the gloves and boots appear to work as an insulator. If the device is put on, then a second person can wear the additional belt, boots, and gloves

and attach themselves to the backpack as well. If powered up, the device hums with energy. A successful **Hard Science (Physics)** roll indicates that at least part of the device protects the wearer from a powerful electromagnetic field, seemingly generated by the backpack. If the investigators take the time to look over the nearby papers first, then the Science (Physics) roll becomes Regular. The notes themselves aren't specific but give clues to the device's nature. Examples include:

*"The modifications have enabled an oscillating frequency to compensate for temporal shift."*

*"The gravity dampener maintains the core polarity 99.9993%."*

*"Temporal plasma conduit running hot—need to re-calibrate the matter stream."*

*"Time-matter field capacitors are reducing the quantum degradation to almost .03%."*

The device also has a number of strange symbols worked into the design. A successful **Occult** roll (or a **Language (Greek or Latin)** roll) reveals Greek and Latin symbols for time and space. A successful **Cthulhu Mythos** roll reveals that this device is beyond anything humanity has ever developed, having similarities to devices referred to in the *Necronomicon* (or perhaps another tome the investigators have had access to), and is perhaps influenced by the Great Race of Yith. Although there is some information on the work here, there seems to be a lot missing. An investigator close to Connolly may remember he had a number of journals, in which he would chronicle his thoughts and work.

**Keeper note:** these fragmentary notes should clue the investigators to the fact that they are dealing with a time machine. Quinn and Carlson, however, will be skeptical of any such claim, hinting instead that Connolly might have lost his mind.

If the investigator with the code looks for a place to input it, there doesn't seem to be one; however, anyone looking closely at the device notices a cavity in one of the gloves that obviously held something, though precisely what is unclear. A successful **INT** roll on the part of the investigator with the code suggests that the missing part is, indeed, the code box.

**Keeper note:** Pierce has taken the code box and hidden it in the **Attic** (page 94). The plans and notes on the table show a schematic for the code box, so the investigators have an image of what they're looking for, if they manage to gain entry to Pierce's workspace in the attic.

If William is questioned further about Connolly's whereabouts, he informs the investigators that he saw the doctor that morning when he brought him his breakfast, pointing at the dirty dishes on a side table. If asked about Elizabeth and her brother, William claims they left the previous week after some disagreement. If the investigators spoke with Clem Saunders in town, they might catch the lie in this story; if not, permit them a **Hard Psychology** roll to spot the untruth (see also the **Liar, Liar** box, page 77, for further details on handling the results). If confronted, William insists that he hasn't seen them in two weeks and they haven't been to the house as far as he knows. If pressed, he grows sullen and feigns semi-outrage before storming off.



## THE TIME SUIT

The time suit is a complicated device, but very simple to use. The user must put on the backpack, helmet, gloves, and boots, and then enter the code. At that point, the user mentally "feels" their way backward or forward in time. In the suit, one can sense how much time has passed, but targeting a specific moment is an impossibility. Instead, time trips work in terms of general concepts: a day, a month, a year, a few years, a decade, a century, or a millennium. Exactly when a traveler arrives somewhere is up to the Keeper—if someone is traveling a year into the past, for example, they might over- or undershoot by a day or so, or only a few minutes, at the Keeper's discretion. The second belt, gloves, and boots allow the pilot to take someone with them. This person has no say on where or when they go. They are a passenger only.

It is theoretically possible to travel in space using the time suit as well, although this is somewhat trickier as the planets, the galaxy, and, indeed, the universe is constantly in motion. The mental processes to get over that hurdle take some practice, and are certainly not for the fainthearted. If the suit stays in any one time or place for too long (even powered down), it begins creating temporal anomalies.

Using the suit for the first time provokes a **Sanity** roll (1/1D10 loss), while the second use costs 0/1D6 Sanity points. Any additional jumps cause no further Sanity loss. Of course, until the investigators find the code box and reattach it (a successful **Electrical** or **Mechanical Repair** roll), the suit is going nowhere.



## EXPLORING THE MANSION

Pierce and Davis feel confident that they've gotten rid of any incriminating evidence that connects them to the personas of Elizabeth and David Rolland, so the investigators practically have free rein to search Wellington Manor for clues. The murderous duo will, however, try to keep the investigators focused on the task at hand.

By the time the investigators have become aware of Connolly's disappearance and had a chance to explore the library, darkness has fallen outside. The house has no electricity (except for a generator, which only powers the library), so any subsequent searches this evening requires lamps or flashlights. Did the investigators pack such items? A **Luck** roll might be used here, although unless the players can come up with a good reason why they'd bring a flashlight with them on the visit, the chances are pretty slim. As desired, the Keeper can have the investigators searching the house by candlelight (there's plenty in stock in a kitchen drawer) or have them find two flashlights in another kitchen drawer and a couple of lanterns hanging in the **Old Stables** (page 94).

**Keeper note:** once the investigators start to look around, Claire (Pierce) and William (Davis) do their best to guide them away from the **Attic** (page 94) and the **Old Stables** (page 94). If the group splits up, Davis follows whichever group Pierce is not a part of.

## TEMPORAL ANOMALIES

Whatever the time of day, as they search the rest of the building, the investigators begin to experience various temporal anomalies, side effects of Connolly's time-travel device. These are listed in order of intensity and may be presented in the order given, unless the Keeper feels a different order is more appropriate, based on the investigators' actions. These incidents can happen anywhere, unless stated otherwise. Clues to help the investigators figure out what's going on are presented in the **Locations** descriptions, starting on page 82. Each of the temporal anomalies carries a Sanity roll with suggested Sanity point loss.

### A Moving Shape

Have the investigators make a **Spot Hidden** roll. If they succeed, they see the shape of man and recognize it as Dr. Connolly. If they fail the roll, they just see a man walk from one room to the another. If they then follow him into the room, he is nowhere to be seen—vanished without a trace (0/1 Sanity loss).

## TIME TRAVEL

Time travel is a big part of this story, and it can get tricky. One particular problem with time travel is dealing with paradox. If you're not familiar with the sci-fi time travel genre, a temporal paradox is when a character does something in the past that would prevent that person from ever having time traveled in the first place. The classic example is, of course, going back in time and killing your father when he was a child. If you did, how could you have been born? And if you weren't born, then how did you kill your father? That is the paradox.

One way of dealing with this is just to have no paradox. If you go back in time and kill your father when he's a child, you've created a new timeline where you never existed. If you return to your "normal" time, you would enter a world that knows nothing of you. Your old timeline exists somewhere in the multiverse—you just no longer have access to it.

Another potentially tricky situation that can arise from going into the past is where you change things significantly, and, by doing so, you make it so that you didn't need to go back in time in the first place. You've done nothing to erase yourself, though, so, when you return to your current time, there just so happens to be another version of yourself who never time traveled. Now two versions of you exist in the current timeline. Which one is the "real" you?

Regardless, going back in time is very risky as you may accidentally affect something important by some small action—the so-called "butterfly effect." For example, you go back in time and meet your grandfather. You talk about nothing special, and he doesn't know you're from the future or that you're his grandchild. No problem, right? Well... your meeting caused him to be late for the bus, so he's late for a job interview. Missing the interview means he doesn't get the job. Unfortunately, that job is where he would have met your grandmother. Your grandparents don't meet, your father isn't born, and neither are you. Just a short five-minute talk about the weather has wiped you from the timeline.

From a roleplaying game standpoint, don't worry too much about paradoxes and the like. Going back in time should be interesting but not earth-shattering, unless the investigators intentionally try to drastically change things. Be flexible, and don't over think it. If you catch a mistake, blame it on some kind of temporal anomaly!

# WELLINGTON MANOR

*A plan of the Wellington manor.*

SCALE IN IMPERIAL YARDS



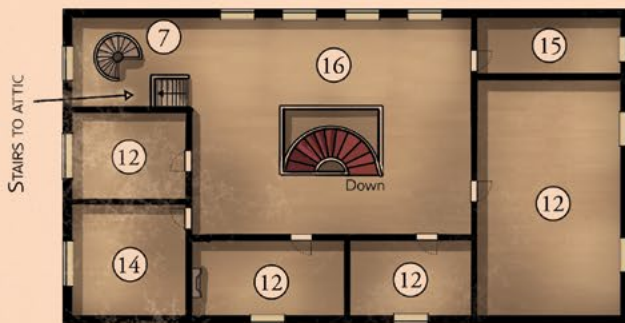
## FIRST FLOOR



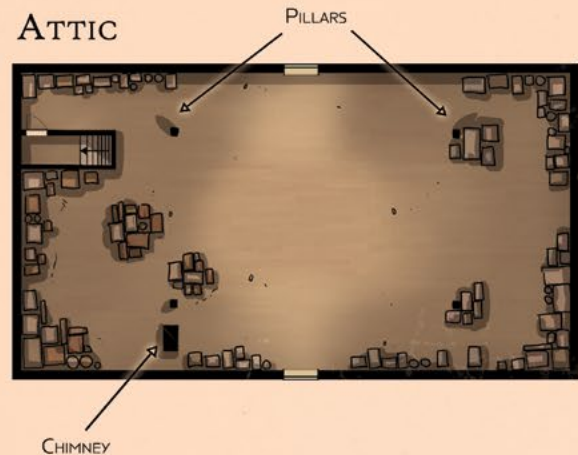
## SECOND FLOOR



## THIRD FLOOR



## ATTIC



### Explanation

- |                      |                   |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| 1 Foyer              | 9 Breakfast room  |
| 2 Cloak room         | 10 Kitchen        |
| 3 Servants' quarters | 11 Library        |
| 4 Sitting room       | 12 Bedroom        |
| 5 Servants' room     | 13 Master bedroom |
| 6 Laundry            | 14 Blue bedroom   |
| 7 Servants' stairs   | 15 Bathroom       |
| 8 Dining room        | 16 Sitting area   |



Stairs  
Arrow points up

## Right Place, Wrong Time

For use when the investigators inevitably split up. When one or more investigators walks into a supposedly empty room, have them run into another investigator they just left somewhere else in the house, only now looking somewhat disheveled and surprised. As they stare in amazement the “other” investigator cries out, “*My God! You’re alive! We have to get out of here!*” before running for the door out of the room; but, once past the threshold, they are... gone. The present version of this investigator has no knowledge of the event or what was talked about (0/1D6 Sanity loss for everyone involved).

## The Company of Wolves

On entering a hallway, the investigators find the area is cold—snow and leaves have collected in the corners and along the walls. Standing in the middle of the hall is a snarling, lone wolf. If the investigators move toward or try to attack it, the wolf runs away. If they pursue it down the hall, they find that it is not alone—there is a pack of wolves (one per investigator) ready to attack! Thankfully, wolves can’t use door handles. Before long, another temporal pulse sets things back to normal, though all injuries incurred remain until properly treated (0/1D6 Sanity loss).

**Keeper note:** this should not be a lethal encounter for the investigators, but it could make for a good chase scene, if you desire (see the chase rules in **Chapter 7** of the *Call of Cthulhu: Keeper Rulebook* for further details). Profiles for the wolves can be found on page 99.

## Who’s There?

When going into one of the rooms, the investigators find... themselves, only 10 minutes into the future. If the present investigators aren’t sneaking about, then their future selves know they’re coming. If they are being cautious (**Stealth** roll), then there is a chance they will hear talking in the room before entering (a **Listen** roll). The future investigators have no new information to share with their present selves. Hopefully, the investigators realize that continuing to hang out with themselves might lead to a right old temporal mess. If they don’t, let Claire (Pierce) or William (Davis) suggest they should leave (if either is with them). If they’ve managed to evade both Pierce and Davis by this point, then a successful **INT** roll reaches the same conclusion. And, if they still haven’t figured it out, then a temporal pulse rocks the room, knocking everyone to the floor. Once recovered, the present investigators realize that their future selves are gone (0/1D6 Sanity loss).

## The Madman

The investigators are attacked by a much older—and insane—version of Clint Davis. He is armed with an axe and out for blood. If Claire (Pierce) is with them, this older version of Davis immediately goes after her. If the investigators attack him, he fights to the death. If they run and can stay alive for five rounds (or however long is interesting), he pops back into his original timeline and disappears (0/1 Sanity loss).

## The Visitors

This scene can happen in a room or a hallway, as required. The investigators walk in on two tall creatures carrying strange devices. These are time travelers from the Earth’s future: the T’challix (**Creatures and Monsters**, page 99). They do not interfere with the investigators in any way. If approached, they merely turn and walk off. If pursued or attacked, they use their stun rods to fend off pursuers, and then time shift immediately.

The T’challix have detected the time distortions and are investigating. They have no interest in interfering, as it may destroy their future (0/1D6 Sanity loss for seeing the T’challix).

## Help from the Past

This encounter should take place in Connolly’s bedroom (13). When the investigators enter, the room is lit by sunlight and they see Connolly alive and dressing. With his back to them, he says, “*Lizzie, dear, let’s eat in the library...*” and then he turns around. He is clearly shocked to see the investigators. He recognizes them, of course, and addresses them all by name, wanting to know what they are all doing in his home. If Claire (Pierce) is with the investigators, she slips out while they are distracted; however, a successful **Extreme Spot Hidden** roll notices her departure. Pierce knows her game is up if Connolly sees her and addresses her as Elizabeth/Lizzie. By stepping out of the room and back into the hall, she returns to the current time.

If the investigators explain things in an even slightly reasonable manner, Connolly listens. At this point in his timeline, he has just moved back to the mansion with Elizabeth and they are starting their work on building the time machine. Any warnings the investigators try to give Connolly about Elizabeth, however, are treated with great skepticism. She’s helped him a great deal with his research and he’s in love with her (he’s also certain she’s in love with him).

**Keeper note:** this meeting with Connolly has the potential to create a time branch. For example, Elizabeth Rolland (Pierce) and Connolly never talked about their families, because Pierce didn’t know Clint Davis was on her trail, so bringing up “David Rolland” could have future

implications. If, when he goes back to his own time after this encounter, Connolly asks Elizabeth if she has a brother, she'll undoubtedly say "No." Thus, when Davis finally arrives, her story changes to David being her cousin. Anyone or anything not in the room with the investigators remembers the story differently as well, as they have all lived in this new timeline. **Handout: Code 5** (nearby) is written under the assumption that the investigators do spill the beans about David Rolland's existence.

Connolly tells the investigators all they want to know, but any warnings about building the time machine fall on deaf ears. Seeing them there proves to him that his theories are on the right track, and specific warnings about time flux are hand-waved away with promises of making changes to the device to protect from that particular side effect.

At this point, the investigators have an excellent opportunity to influence the present by making a request in the past. For example, if they are looking for something (say, Connolly's journal), they could request that he hide it (in his future) from Elizabeth and her brother, and tell them where that hiding place will be. If the investigators don't mention this idea, Connolly will. He suggests that under a floorboard in the southeast corner of the blue bedroom (14) would be a great hiding place. The investigators could then go to that location in the present and retrieve the book. If they don't get the journal's location from Connolly, it is in Pierce's suitcase in the **Old Stables** (page 94).

If the investigators bring up William Fetter, Connolly has no idea who they're talking about. He goes on to say that, with the sensitive nature of his work, he would never hire help.

If Connolly tries to leave the room with the investigators, he simply fades back to his time (1/1D6 Sanity loss).

**Keeper note:** **Handout: Code 3** (pages 1–2), **Handout: Code 4** (pages 1–4), and **Handout: Code 5** (pages 1–4) each provide differing versions of Connolly's journal. **Handout: Code 3** covers the entries made before the investigators' potential visit to the past. **Handout: Code 4** details what happens if the investigators don't meet Connolly during an anomaly—as already mentioned, this version of the journal is in Eve's suitcase in the **Old Stables** (page 94). **Handout: Code 5** replaces **Handout: Code 4** if the investigators tell Connolly all they know and try to help him (thus, use Code 5 instead of Code 4). It may be necessary to edit or amend this handout, depending on what information the investigators share. Connolly's journal also has detailed notes on how his machine works (see **Connolly's Journal**, nearby).

## LOCATIONS

Refer to the Wellington Manor house plan on page 80. Numbers in parentheses correspond to this map.

### First Floor

#### *Foyer (1)*

A once lavish foyer that leads into the rest of the house. A large staircase leads up to the second and third floors.

#### *Cloak Room (2)*

Dr. Connolly's various coats are here, as well as those (presumably) of the NPCs and investigators.

#### *Servants' Quarters (3)*

The servants' quarters, where William is staying, seem remarkably clean for a groundskeeper. A successful **Spot Hidden** roll reveals that the room has been thoroughly cleaned in the last few days. If there is further snooping into William's possessions, a successful **INT** roll points out a strange lack of personal items. The only objects in the room are clothes, a comb, and a bottle of whiskey. No photos, paintings, knick-knacks, or anything that would show that someone had been living in this room for years. If the rolls fail, still let the players know the room is remarkably clean in a somewhat obsessive way.

**Keeper note:** hopefully, one of the investigators will realize it's a little odd that William possesses a comb when he has a practically shaven head. This thought occurs to them automatically if they achieve a Hard success or better on their **INT** roll.

#### *Sitting Room (4)*

A comfortable room, with sitting chairs and sofas and a warm fireplace. Where the investigators were introduced to Dr. Quinn, Miss Carlson, and Eve Pierce in her disguise as Claire Whitley (**Wellington Manor**, page 76).

#### *Servants' Room (5)*

Like the servants' quarters, this lounge area is clean and tidy. William has not used this room, so there's nothing of interest.

#### *Laundry (6)*

This room has hanging clotheslines, a wash tub, and running water. There are no clothes in this room. There is also a toolbox, some old cans of paint, and an assortment of cleaning supplies.

**Keeper note:** depending on the timing, the old cans of paint contain the investigators' missing car parts (see **Leaving the Mansion**, page 94).

#### *Servants' Stairs (7)*

Provides access to the second and third floors.

## THE CODE

### *Dining Room (8)*

The dining room has a large table that seats ten comfortably. There is a large cabinet for dishes and cutlery.

### *Breakfast Room (9)*

The breakfast room looks out into the back garden and has a table that would comfortably seat six. During the day, this room is bright with sunlight.

### *Kitchen (10)*

The kitchen has a wood-burning stove and large pantry. The pantry is not particularly well-stocked, especially for someone expecting guests.

### *Library (11)*

See **To The Library** (page 77) for what clues can be found here. If the investigators met Connolly in the past as a result of a temporal anomaly, they now, on returning to this room, find some additional features as well. One thing that stands out is a new painting hanging on the wall. If the painting is removed, two bullet holes in the plasterwork can be found hidden behind it.

**Keeper note:** this a good location for temporal incidents, due to the close proximity of the time suit.

## CONNOLLY'S JOURNAL

*English, by Dr. Kenneth Connolly, 1920–1925*

Full of Connolly's thoughts and research on his theories of time and how one might travel through it, as well as hints and snippets concerning the Cthulhu Mythos, as shared with him by Eve Pierce. The journal also contains various day-to-day musings and comments on his progress toward constructing his time suit; however, having these notes alone does not grant the user the ability to create a time machine of their own. It does grant anyone who studies the journal fully +10 percentiles in Science (Physics) though, in addition to the other benefits listed below.

**Sanity Loss:** 1D4/2D4

**Cthulhu Mythos:** +1/+1 percentiles

**Mythos Rating:** 6

**Study:** average 4 weeks

**Spells:** none



May 5, 1924

Just moved into the old house with Elizabeth. Still have some unpacking to do, but it's great to be back. I had some wonderful summers here. I'm excited to start construction of the device with Elizabeth. She's truly brilliant. I love her so much.

May 15

Elizabeth has had some amazing insights into our work. She said that she gets them through a special ritual, a "meditation" she calls it, and she persuaded me to do it with her. And now, something has happened. I've seen something. No, I've seen many things. Elizabeth's occult studies—they've given me a new way of thinking. I don't know how to describe it. The beginning. I touched something. A mind? A being? A concept? I don't understand it. She called it Gog-Sothoth, though that is only one way of looking at it. I need time to think.

May 16

After a good night's sleep, it's clicked. I understand. We were going about this all wrong. I can't work fast enough.

May 30

I love Lizzie so. We were laughing so hard this afternoon. I'm so lucky to have her.

June 9

Our initial experiments have been an amazing success. I can't express my joy. I think we can do this.

June 19

Lizzie wants me to do the meditation again—she says it would help our work move quicker, but I can't. It just doesn't feel right. Frankly, I'm scared. We're working through snags. We're coming up with solutions. I just don't feel like I need to do it again. I wonder, how often she has done these meditations?

July 29

Major breakthrough. We've discovered the best way to temporally travel is through thought. Today I was able to "peer" into the past. It was when the house was being built, must have been 1830 or so. I saw workmen—it was so real. I should be able to move through space as well, but it's hard to get my mind around that. Lizzie suggested the meditation again, but I just can't bear the idea. We're making progress, we don't need it.

Oct 5

Things are moving slowly, but steadily.

Nov 12

We've had an unexpected visitor. Lizzie's brother, David, has come to stay. She's never mentioned him before. He's very charming, but a little strange. I guess Lizzie is too, in her own way.

Nov 15

David is going to be with us for a while. I don't like it. Our work can be quite dangerous and I don't want him getting hurt. But David seems to have no interest in what we're doing, and Lizzie says he prefers to keep his head in books. He doesn't strike me as the bookworm type, as big and fit as he is, but who am I to judge? I'm sure it will be fine.

Jan 3, 1925

Overheard a hushed argument between Lizzie and David. I don't know what it was about, but they seemed to be trying to keep it from me.

Jan 23

Fighting again. Still not sure what's going on. I feel like Elizabeth is hiding something from me. I'm starting to not trust her. I thought it a good idea to put security on the device, so I've installed a code input system. Alpha-numeric. Only I will know the true code. Something like this cannot fall into the wrong hands.

March 3

I want to trust Elizabeth wouldn't jeopardize our plans, but she trusts her brother. I don't. I'm starting to think she's siding with him. I don't know.

March 14

Caught David snooping around the library. He says he was looking for a book, but I don't—no, can't—trust him. There's just something I can't put my finger on. Wrote a letter to an old friend with the code—a safety measure. If this doesn't work out, if something goes wrong... I want someone to take what I've done and make something of it.

March 29

Today is the day I test the machine.

I'm going to do something minor,  
moving 10 minutes into the future.

I've noticed a few strange things,  
but it might just be lack of sleep.

Mostly strong episodes of déjà vu,  
but more disturbingly, shapes of  
people. I'm not sure if it's me or  
possible temporal feedback. Will  
investigate further.

July 22

I've had the most disturbing experience of my life. Some friends of mine appeared at the house. They are from the future and something is wrong. I should be worried, but mostly I'm excited. The device works! I told them where I'm going to keep this journal under the floorboards of the southeast corner of the blue guest room. I will hide this from Lizzie, but I'm sure they are wrong about her.

July 23

I've asked Lizzie if she has any siblings, and she said she's an only child. I wonder if my friends were mistaken.

July 25

Major breakthrough. We've discovered the best way to temporally travel is through thought. Today I was able to "peer" into the past. It was when the house was being built, must have been 1830 or so. I saw workmen—it was so real. I should be able to move through space as well, but it's hard to

get my mind around that. Lizzie suggested the meditation again, but I just can't bear the idea. We're making progress, we don't need it.

Oct 5

Things are moving slowly, but steadily.

Nov 12

We've had an unexpected visitor. Lizzie's cousin, David, has come to stay. She's never mentioned him before. He's very charming, but a little strange. I guess Lizzie is too, in her own way. My friends said to expect a brother, but a cousin? Is she lying to me?

Nov 15

David is going to be with us for a while. I don't like it. Our work can be quite dangerous and I don't want him getting hurt. This all seems a little too convenient. I'm starting to wonder if Lizzie is deceiving me for some reason.

Jan 3, 1925

Overheard a hushed argument between Lizzie and David. I don't know what it was about, but they seemed to be trying to keep it from me.

Jan 23

Fighting again. Still not sure what's going on. I feel like Elizabeth is hiding something from me. I'm starting to not trust her. I've thought it a good idea to put security on the device, so I've installed a code input system. Alpha-numeric. Only I will know the true code.

Something like this cannot fall into the wrong hands.

Feb 20

I purchased a handgun in town. I do not trust David. I know just having this gun might lead to drastic measures but, for now, it's solely for insurance.

March 14

Caught David snooping around the library. He says he was looking for a book, but I don't—no, can't—trust him. I don't think he's her cousin. He might have something on her—black-mail? I don't know. Wrote a letter to one of the old friends I saw in July. It contains the code—a safety measure. If I'm in danger or something goes wrong, I want someone to be able to fix things.

March 29

Today is the day I test the machine. It's a small step, moving 10 minutes into the future. I've noticed a few strange things, but it might just be lack of sleep. Mostly strong episodes of déjà vu, but more disturbingly, shapes of people. I'm not sure if it's me or possible temporal feedback. Will investigate further.

## CHAPTER 3

### Second and Third Floors

#### *Other Bedrooms (12, 14)*

There are four additional bedrooms on the second floor, and five on the third floor. All of the rooms have been cleaned and prepared for the visitors. The blue bedroom (14) may be of note if the investigators met Connolly during the **Help from the Past** anomaly (page 81), as it's probably where he has hidden his journal.

#### *Master Bedroom (13)*

This seems to be Connolly's bedroom. Within, the investigators find their friend's clothes, some books, and little else. With a successful **INT** roll, they notice that the room looks recently cleaned and somewhat sparse. As seen by the library—and from what they personally know of him—Connolly is a messy fellow, and this room doesn't seem to be in keeping with his "style." On a failed roll, the investigators still notice the room is very clean, but little else.

**Keeper note:** Pierce recently cleaned all of her things out of Connolly's room. Much of it she burned, but some of it is kept in a suitcase stashed in the **Old Stables** (page 94).

#### *Bathrooms (15)*

There is one bathroom on each floor. These indoor bathrooms were installed in the last 20 years and are in good shape. If the investigators succeed with a **Spot Hidden** roll in the second-floor bathroom, they notice tiny black drops on the floor that look like dye.

**Keeper note:** Pierce was perhaps not as careful as she should have been when cleaning up after her change of hair color. At the very least, this should suggest that someone in the house has dyed their hair fairly recently.

### Attic

The attic is one large room running the length of the house. There are a number of items in storage here, but, primarily, this is Pierce's space for practicing magic. Accessed by a door on the third-floor landing, Pierce keeps the attic locked with a hasp and an old padlock. Consequently, she does everything in her power, short of blowing her cover, to keep the investigators from going up there. If the investigators manage to shake Claire (Pierce) and William (Davis), then a successful **Locksmith** or **STR** roll gains entry (though any noise created by breaking down the door immediately attracts the felons' attention).

Pierce has hidden the code box in the attic, where it can be found with a successful **Spot Hidden** roll. Alternatively, if the investigators are able to take their time and carry out a thorough search, no roll is necessary.

As an added precaution, Pierce has summoned a temporal fractal entity (**Creatures and Monsters**, page 99) and bound it to this location. She can summon it to her at will, but, once summoned, it will obey one simple command and then leave. While in the attic, it does not move or react, unless attacked.

### Grounds

Refer to the Wellington Manor grounds plan on page 76. Numbers in parentheses below correspond to this map.

#### *Old Stables (4)*

The former stable is a decrepit old building, with rotting walls and holes in the roof. It contains some old farming equipment that no longer functions, as well as a couple of oil lanterns. With a successful **Spot Hidden** roll, the investigators notice an area that seems freshly disturbed. There, they can find Pierce's suitcase. Inside are clothes, birth certificates and IDs for several different personas (but no pictures), and her spell book (see **Eve's Spell Book** box, nearby).

**Keeper note:** remember, if the investigators don't encounter Connolly in his past (**Help from the Past**, page 81), his journal (**Handouts: Code 3 and 4**) will be found in Pierce's suitcase.

#### *The Fire Pit (5)*

Usually used to burn general household garbage and garden rubbish, the fire pit has been recently used. A successful **Spot Hidden** roll reveals heavily charred fragments of women's clothing (Pierce's old clothes from her time as Elizabeth).

#### *Connolly's Body (unmarked)*

Pierce helped Davis bury Connolly in a shallow grave deep in the woods a mile or so from the mansion. It's unlikely the investigators discover the corpse during the scenario, but this event could be an outside possibility. Finding the grave would require a Hard (or possibly Extreme) **Spot Hidden** roll to notice the disturbed earth in middle of the dark woods.

## LEAVING THE MANSION

If the investigators try to drive away, they find that their cars will not start. Davis (as soon as possible) slips away and disables the vehicles, hiding crucial parts in paint cans in the **Laundry** (page 82). A successful **Mechanical Repair** roll is necessary to discover that the vehicles have been sabotaged. Only Davis' truck works, but he doesn't let the investigators know he has the keys, claiming it is Connolly's vehicle and that the missing academic must have taken the keys with him.

If anyone tries to leave on foot, Davis follows and attempts to capture them. If he deems they are too much of a threat, or that they've outlived their usefulness, he may attempt to kill them. If more than one person tries to leave on foot, the action moves on to **The Clean Up** (page 96).



## EVE'S SPELL BOOK

*English, by Eve Pierce, early 20th century*

A well-thumbed notebook containing Pierce's collected esoteric and Cthulhu Mythos knowledge. The notes are mostly fragmentary and do not really read as a coherent whole. It makes mention of her time with a cult and how she ran away to Chicago to independently pursue her mystical studies. Soon after, Pierce talks about conducting a ceremony and finding Yog-Sothoth. Thereafter, the notes include weird sigils, strange phrases, and general gobbledygook. It's clear that her encounters with Yog-Sothoth dramatically altered her state of mind.

**Keeper note:** as desired, future plot hooks and seeds can be planted in the spell book. Who knows what persons Pierce has met over the years, what names, locations, or events might be mentioned?

**Sanity Loss:** 1D3/1D6+1

**Cthulhu Mythos:** +1/+2 percentiles

**Mythos Rating:** 9

**Study:** average 8 weeks

**Spells:** Contact the Master of Time (Contact Yog-Sothoth), Deflect Harm, Summon/Bind Temporal Fractal Entity, Warding. Other spells are at the Keeper's discretion.

### Contact the Master of Time (Contact Yog-Sothoth)

- **Cost:** 5 POW; 1D6 Sanity points
- **Casting time:** 5–10 (1D6+4) rounds

Unlike the more familiar version of the Contact Yog-Sothoth spell, the caster does not need to build a stone tower in an open area in order to cast it. Instead, they seat themselves as if they were about to perform meditation and use the spell's words as their "mantra." If successful (by making a Hard **POW** roll, using their newly decreased POW value), then they have a vision of time and space that gives insight into the workings of the universe. These visions of the past and future bestow +5% Cthulhu Mythos and should be somewhat cryptic, though useful, at the Keeper's discretion.

### Deflect Harm

- **Cost:** 1 magic point; 1 Sanity point
- **Casting time:** instantaneous

A defensive spell that negates various physical attacks upon the caster by invoking the secret names of the Outer Gods. The caster intones the awful names and holds out a hand toward the source of the attack. Until they drop their hand, the caster may deflect successive attacks by expending magic points equal to the rolled damage for each attack. If an attack would have missed, no magic points are expended. Upon dropping their hand, the spell ends. The spell may be recast.

The caster may deflect any number of attacks until they run out of magic points—the caster may choose to continue the spell by burning hit points; however, this may be counterproductive! They may choose which attacks to deflect and from which attacks to take damage but must choose before knowing what the actual damage will be. Lacking the points to fully stop a particular attack, the spell ends and the attack hits or misses as it would in ordinary circumstances.

### Summon/Bind Temporal Fractal Entity

- **Cost:** variable magic points; 1D4 Sanity points + (see description)
- **Casting time:** 5 minutes per magic point spent, binding takes 1 round.

To summon a temporal fractal entity, the caster must spend a variable number of magic points. For each point spent, the odds of success increase by 10% (for example, 4 magic points gives a 40% chance of success). The ritual requires 5 mirrors angled in a specific fashion, along with the performance of a ritual chant. If cast correctly, a single temporal fractal entity unfolds into the current time near the summoner. Sanity loss is 1D4 points, plus the cost for seeing the entity (1D10 in this case).

If the Keeper wishes, the entity is automatically bound after 1 round if the spell is successful. Alternatively, it may require an opposed POW roll versus the entity to determine if the creature is successfully bound. If the caster fails this roll, then they are attacked by the entity, which then returns to its home dimension. A successful binding forces the entity to perform one or two simple tasks, such as "wait till I call you," and "attack them." The entity may perform more tasks if an opposed POW roll is successful to maintain its binding, but, even then, the binding is limited to a period of 12 to 24 hours at the Keeper's discretion.

## THE CLEAN UP

Once Pierce gives the signal, Davis starts picking off the non-essential guests. He begins with the NPCs first (Quinn and Carlson) and then moves on to the investigators. If the investigators manage to kill Davis, or Pierce thinks she's in trouble, she summons the temporal fractal entity from the attic and orders the creature to kill everyone, excluding the person (or persons) with the code—assuming she doesn't already have it; if she does, then everyone is in danger. She will, if pushed, draw her pistol and start shooting, once she has taken cover. If she thinks she's losing, she'll run for it, taking Davis' truck (having lifted his keys earlier in the proceedings). She'll try to take the time suit as well, but will leave it if her life is at stake.

If at any point Pierce is discovered, and she's not ready for this part of her plan, she paints Connolly as a paranoid madman and claims that she only wants to stop the temporal anomalies. She weaves a tale that these anomalies will unravel space and time, destroying everything. That is a lie, as she has no idea what is causing them or how to stop them (see *Liar, Liar*, page 77).

## CONCLUSION

This story can play out in many, many different ways. During the height of the action, or if the investigators are at a loss as to what to do for the best, the anomalies begin increasing in number, leading to a (hopefully) dramatic climax. Some suggestions as to what these further anomalies might consist of are given below.

- Another temporal fractal entity appears. This one is unbound and attacks the first person it sees.
- More T'challix enter the mansion. This time, they try to take the time suit.
- Pierce from the future shows up to help the current Pierce.
- Investigators from the future show up to help their younger selves.
- Investigators from the future show up to help Pierce!
- Pierce from the future shows up to help the investigators.
- A predatory dinosaur smashes into the mansion (this may be more suitable for pulp games!).



*Fighting the T'challix*

**Keeper note:** the sky is the limit at this point and you can take it as far, or not, as fits your group's play style. Remember, if someone comes from the future, they may have created a new timeline just by them being there, so the future they come from might be altered. The point being, you can come up with anything that seems halfway plausible, as long as it's entertaining and doesn't completely derail the tone of your game up to this point (see **Time Travel**, page 79). If this scenario is going to be run as an "all bets are off" one-shot game, unconnected to a campaign, then a truly huge climax would be Yog-Sothoth manifesting, pulling the time suit, the house, and all within into itself and then disappearing to another dimension!

If, by the end of the scenario, the investigators acquire the functioning time suit, it's best to let them leave the campaign. Remember though, the suit can only take one pilot and one passenger, so if there are more than two investigators still alive, not everyone can go. However, if everyone else is dead, then escape via the time suit might be a great jumping-off point for a new campaign (see also **Options for Continuing the Horror**, page 97). Perhaps the time suit works a couple of times before it ceases to work again, or taking more than a couple of time jumps brings unseen and unfortunate side effects that make further use dangerous if not impossible.

**Keeper note:** things may get very complicated if you allow the investigators to travel back in time and fix the events that have just transpired. For example, they may want to go back and warn themselves about Pierce before they set off to Wellington Manor, or even warn Connolly before he meets Elizabeth. At this point, you're on your own. Just remember to think about the potential paradoxes and ramifications of such actions (**Time Travel**, page 79) and how you might handle them, then let the players have some fun. Make sure that everyone is involved in some way, though—it's no fun for half the group to be sitting around watching while the other half tinkers with time. Time travel is messy and best left to aliens—you have been warned!

If the suit is lost or destroyed, and Pierce and Davis are no longer a threat, then the investigators may wish to get help from the state police. If they do, the police eventually find Connolly's body and identify Pierce and Davis as the con artists they really are. As long as the investigators haven't done something really terrible in dealing with the two felons, they are under no real threat of arrest—but then, if they had, why would they want to call in the police? Unless they had a really good alibi already worked out, of course...

Wellington Manor, Connolly's notes, and all of his property are left to Miskatonic University in Connolly's will. Assuming, of course, that he stays dead.

## REWARDS

Suggested Sanity point awards (and penalties) for this scenario include:

- If the investigators destroy the time suit: +1D6 Sanity points.
- If the time suit is used by one or more of the investigators, removing it from Wellington Manor and stopping the time anomalies: +1D4 Sanity points.
- If Pierce, Davis, or the T'challix take the time suit: -1D6 Sanity points.
- If Pierce and Davis are unmasked by the investigators: +1 Sanity point.
- If the investigators banish or destroy a temporal fractal entity: +1D10 Sanity points (maximum).
- If the investigators kill a T'challix: +1D3 Sanity points (maximum).
- If the investigators somehow save Dr. Connolly: +1D6 Sanity points.
- If the investigators totally destroy their own timelines: -2D10 Sanity points.

## Options for Continuing the Horror

If the players are enjoying themselves and the Keeper wishes to continue the story, then there are several options. One of the most obvious is that the time anomalies have attracted the attention of one—or more—time sensitive or time traveling entities, such as the hounds of Tindalos (*Call of Cthulhu: Keeper Rulebook*, page 298). Whether the investigators use the time suit themselves is of no interest to a pursuing hound—it's enough for them to have interacted with a time anomaly at some point during the scenario. A hound might appear to further complicate matters at Wellington Manor, or it may not make itself known until another adventure involving these investigators, paving the way for a series of new scenarios following their attempts to escape the creature's attentions.

The Keeper could also look to an avatar of Yog-Sothoth itself: Tawil at'Umr, the Prolonged of Life (*Call of Cthulhu: Keeper Rulebook*, page 331), who is known to deal with those who wish to travel in time. It may well be from this aspect that Pierce and Connolly acquired their knowledge of how to complete the time suit in the first place, and its successful use may have attracted the Opener of the Way's attention.

And, if the avatar of a god is too high-powered an adversary, then perhaps cultists devoted to Tawil at'Umr, or other sorcerers keen to probe the mysteries of the universe, could track the investigators down to steal either the device or Connolly's notes so that they can build time machines of their own. Or, perhaps there's a break-in at Miskatonic University, where Connolly bequeathed his effects, and the Dean calls in the investigators to follow up on the case, given their personal relationship with the late academic.

# CHARACTERS AND MONSTERS

## NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

### Eve Pierce, age 33, con-artist and sorcerer

STR 50 CON 55 SIZ 40 DEX 65 INT 80  
APP 85 POW 60 EDU 80 SAN —\* HP 9  
DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 9 MP: 12

*\*Ignore Sanity costs for spells.*

#### Combat

Brawl 50% (25/10), damage 1D3,  
or knife 1D6  
.22 short-auto pistol 50% (25/10), damage 1D6  
Dodge 40% (20/8)

#### Skills

Accounting 30%, Art/Craft (Forgery) 40%, Charm 85%,  
Credit Rating 30%, Cthulhu Mythos 35%, Disguise 40%,  
Electrical Repair 20%, Fast Talk 70%, Law 20%, Library Use  
35%, Listen 40%, Locksmith 15%, Occult 70%, Persuade  
60%, Psychology 60%, Science (Physics) 30%, Sleight of  
Hand 35%, Stealth 40%, Spot Hidden 50%.

**Spells:** Contact the Master of Time (Contact Yog-Sothoth),  
Deflect Harm, Summon/Bind Temporal Fractal Entity,  
Warding.

### Clint Davis, age 36, con-artist

STR 70 CON 70 SIZ 70 DEX 60 INT 65  
APP 70 POW 55 EDU 70 SAN 55 HP 14  
DB: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 8 MP: 11

#### Combat

Brawl 60% (30/12), damage 1D3+1D4,  
or knife 1D4+1D4  
Axe 40% (20/8), damage 1D8+2+1D4  
.32 revolver 60% (30/12), damage 1D8  
Dodge 50% (25/10)

#### Skills

Accounting 15%, Art/Craft (Forgery) 50%, Charm 70%,  
Credit Rating 20%, Disguise 30%, Electrical Repair 30%,  
Intimidate 80%, Law 25%, Listen 50%, Locksmith 55%,  
Mechanical Repair 45%, Occult 15%, Persuade 70%,  
Psychology 50%, Sleight of Hand 35%, Stealth 45%, Spot  
Hidden 40%.

### Dr. Seamus Quinn, age 57, physics professor

STR 45 CON 45 SIZ 60 DEX 50 INT 80  
APP 55 POW 65 EDU 95 SAN 65 HP 10  
DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 5 MP: 13

#### Combat

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

#### Skills

Charm 30%, Credit Rating 45%, Electrical Repair 30%,  
History 25%, Language (German) 45%, Library Use  
60%, Listen 30%, Mechanical Repair 30%, Persuade 50%,  
Psychology 30%, Science (Astronomy) 30%, Science  
(Chemistry) 30%, Science (Mathematics) 75%, Science  
(Physics) 70%, Spot Hidden 35%.

### Diana Carlson, age 28, physics teacher

STR 40 CON 60 SIZ 40 DEX 65 INT 75  
APP 50 POW 70 EDU 85 SAN 70 HP 10  
DB: -1 Build: -1 Move: 8 MP: 13

#### Combat

Brawl 40% (20/8), damage 1D3-1  
Dodge 40% (20/8)

#### Skills

Credit Rating 30%, History 15%, Language (French) 55%,  
Library Use 65%, Listen 40%, Persuade 50%, Psychology  
40%, Science (Astronomy) 20%, Science (Chemistry) 40%,  
Science (Mathematics) 55%, Science (Physics) 65%, Spot  
Hidden 50%.

### Dr. Kenneth Connolly, age 54, would-be time traveler

STR 50 CON 55 SIZ 65 DEX 45 INT 90  
APP 60 POW 75 EDU 95 SAN 70 HP 12  
DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 5 MP: 15

#### Combat

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

#### Skills

Charm 25%, Credit Rating 65%, Cthulhu Mythos 5%  
Electrical Repair 60%, History 45%, Language (French) 55%,  
Language (German 45%), Language (Latin) 30%, Library  
Use 60%, Listen 30%, Mechanical Repair 50%, Occult 45%,  
Persuade 60%, Psychology 25%, Science (Astronomy) 50%,  
Science (Chemistry) 60%, Science (Mathematics) 90%,  
Science (Physics) 95%, Spot Hidden 25%.

## CREATURES AND MONSTERS

### Wolves

STR 70 CON 65 SIZ 50 DEX 70 INT —  
 APP — POW 50 EDU — SAN — HP 11  
 DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 12 MP: —

### Combat

Attacks per round: 1

Fighting 40% (20/8), damage 1D8  
 Dodge 40% (20/8)

### Skills

Jump 40%, Spot Hidden 60%, Stealth 40%, Track (by smell) 90%.

Armor: 1-point fur.

### T'challix, future denizens of Earth

The T'challix are a reptilian/insectoid race that will rule the Earth some 2.5 million years in the future. They are cold and calculating, but only somewhat more intelligent than humans. They have an immensely rigid social structure and aren't too imaginative, yet remain very curious.

T'challix are tall and strong. Basically humanoid, they have an extra pair of smaller arms beneath their primary ones, while their heads resemble something between a snake, a lobster, and a rhinoceros. They have a great understanding of both time and space, enabling them to develop rudimentary (yet limited) time travel technology.

char.	rolls	averages
STR	(3D6+6)×5	80–85
CON	(2D6+6)×5	65
SIZ	(3D6+6)×5	80–85
DEX	(2D6+6)×5	65
INT	(2D6+6)×5	65
POW	(2D6+6)×5	65

Average hit points: 16–17

Average Build: 1–2

Average Damage Bonus (DB): +1D4/+1D6

Move: 8

### Sample T'challixian

STR 85 CON 65 SIZ 85 DEX 65 INT 65  
 APP — POW 65 EDU — SAN 65 HP 17  
 DB: +1D6 Build: 2 Move: 8 MP: 13

### Combat

Attacks per round: 1

Not combative in nature and are usually unarmed, apart from their stun rods; however, they are strong and defend themselves if necessary.

**Stun Rod:** batons that release a calibrated electric shock that disrupts the nervous system. Stun rods do not cause any lasting damage. If the individual hit with a stun rod fails a CON roll, then they fall unconscious for 1D4 rounds.

Fighting 30% (15/6), damage 1D6+1D6  
 Stun Rods 50% (25/10), failed CON roll leads to unconsciousness for 1D4 rounds  
 Dodge 30% (15/5)

### Skills

Intimidate 40%, Listen 70%, Spot Hidden 50%.

Armor: 2-point hard scales and exoskeleton.

Sanity Loss: 0/1D6 sanity points to see a T'challixian.

### Temporal Fractal Entity, intelligence beyond time and space

Temporal fractal entities look like floating, shimmering, 3-foot (1 m) diameter globes comprised of glass or crystal, which constantly fold in and out of themselves in a fractal-like pattern. The speed of this folding and unfolding depends on the creature's mood—slower when calm; quicker when agitated. Visually, the temporal fractal entity is hard to comprehend as it exists within, through, and beyond time and space.

Little is known about these creatures. They are intelligent and communicate through some form of telepathy, but their wants and intentions are a complete mystery. They are generally out of sync with humans and cannot be perceived unless they allow themselves to be seen or interacted with. As a rule, they seem to have little to no interest in humanity.

char.	rolls	averages
STR	3D6×5	50–55
CON	5D6×5	85–90
SIZ	3D6×5	50–55
DEX	(3D6+3)×5	65–70
INT	5D6×5	85–90
POW	(2D6+6)×5	65

Average hit points: 13–14

Average Build: 0

Average Damage Bonus (DB): 0

Move: 10

## Sample Temporal Fractal Entity

STR 55   CON 90   SIZ 50   DEX 65   INT 90  
 APP —   POW 65   EDU —   SAN 65   HP 14  
 DB: 0   Build: 0   Move: 10   MP: 13

### Combat

#### Attacks per round: 1

Moves to catch a person in their inter-folding, shredding them at a molecular level. This is done only rarely, and judiciously, as killing the victim not only removes them as a threat but could, potentially, seriously disrupt the flow of time. As a result, unless they have no other option (e.g. if they are bound by a sorcerer and forced to attack), entities prefer to flee rather than engage in combat.

**Enfold (mnvr):** the temporal fractal entity folds itself around its target in order to restrain them. If successful, on the subsequent round, the entity begins to remove the victim from time and space (see **Temporal Wipe**, following) unless they can break free with an opposed STR roll, or if their companions can inflict 5 damage on the creature in one round.

**Temporal Wipe (mnvr):** once enveloped, the victim is wiped from all time and space. To all intents and purposes, they were never born. A victim can attempt to resist being wiped with a Hard POW roll; if successful, they can make

another attempt to break free with an opposed STR roll. Alternatively, a victim's colleagues can attempt to free them by inflicting 5 or more damage on the creature, forcing it to refold and release the person in its grip. The wiping process takes four rounds; each round the victim loses one-quarter of all their characteristics, until all are gone (and so are they). If the process is halted partway, the lost characteristics return fully in 1D10 rounds.

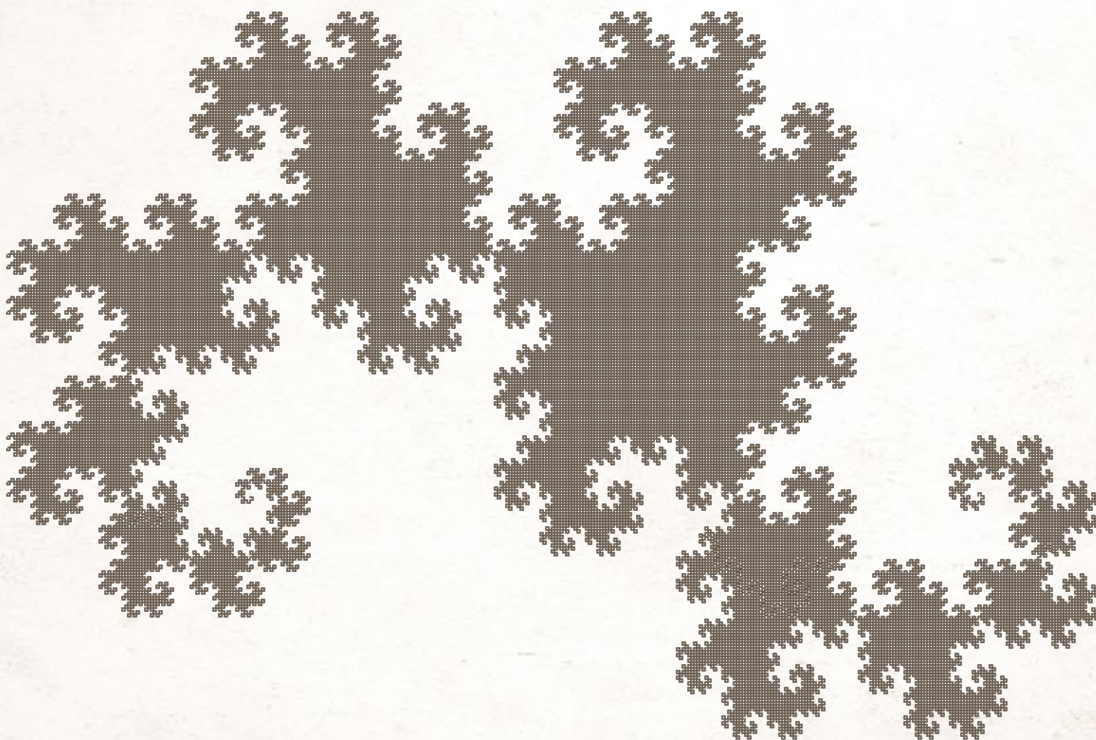
Enfold (mnvr)	60% (30/12), see above
Temporal Wipe (mnvr)	automatic, see above
Dodge	35% (17/7)

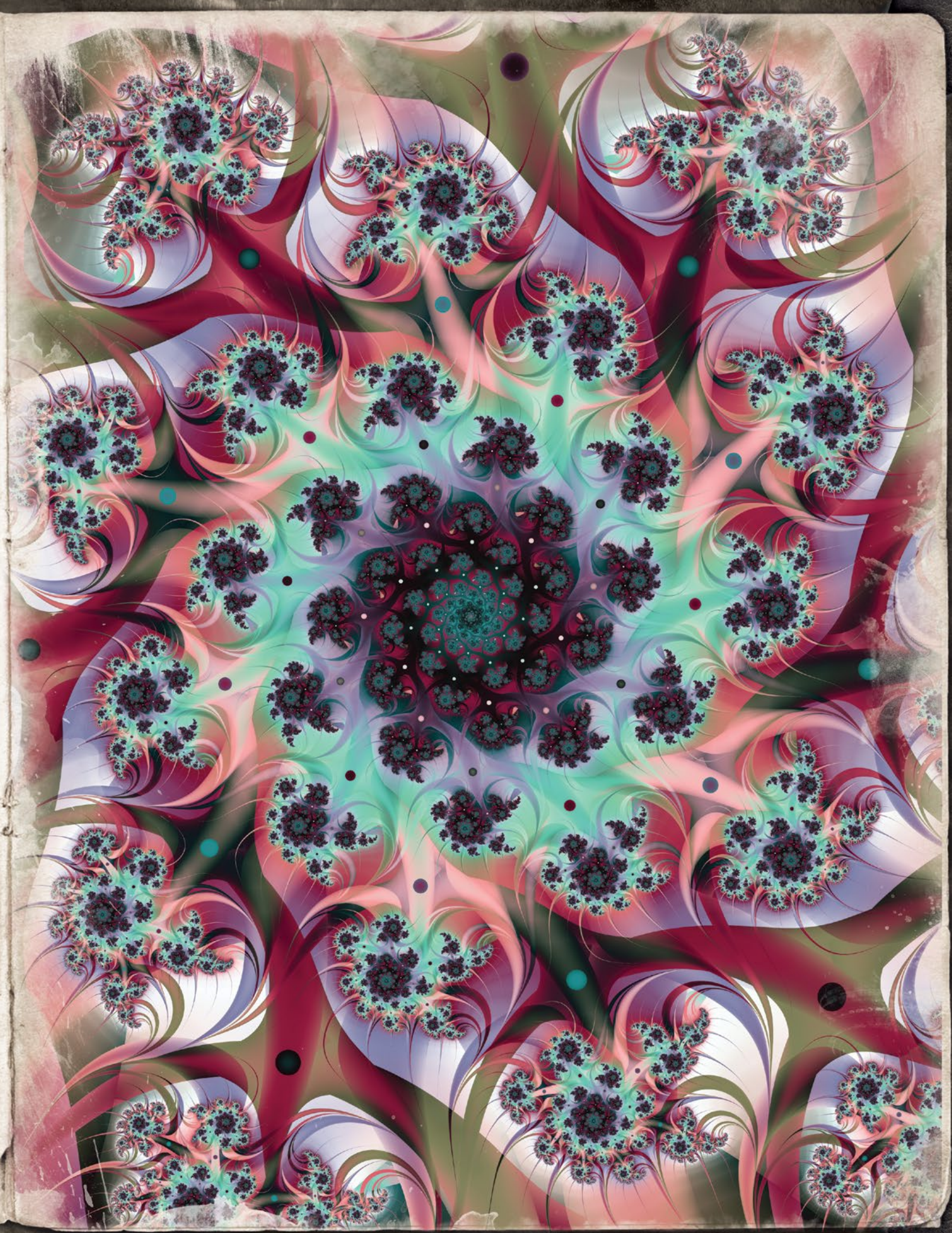
### Skills

Listen 70%, Spot Hidden 70%.

**Armor:** made of an unknown substance and are in constant temporal flux. Firearms deal only 1 damage, slashing melee weapons inflict only half damage, while blunt weapons inflict full damage. All weapons interfacing with a temporal fractal entity are destroyed through direct contact unless enchanted. Attacking an entity unarmed is extremely foolish and likely leads to the attacker being temporally wiped in self-defense.

**Sanity Loss:** 1/1D10 sanity points to see a temporal fractal entity; 1/1D6 Sanity points to see a victim temporally wiped.







# HOUSE OF MEMPHIS

*In which the investigators find themselves embroiled in a dangerous feud between rival magicians.*

This scenario is suitable for up to six players and can be run over the course of one to three sessions (possibly four, if you have very cautious players). As written, the events are set in Boston, Massachusetts, in 1927, but can be readily moved to any other major urban area, as long as there is the level of population necessary to support a decent-sized theater and magic community. It may also be moved to any time period of the Keeper's choosing, as stage magicians have been a popular form of entertainment since the mid-19th century.

## KEEPER INFORMATION

Boston magician Memphis the Great was one of the biggest names in conjuring, so young Harold Hawkings was proud to be accepted as his apprentice. Yet, over time, Hawkings became dissatisfied with the old man's teaching and coveted the deeper secrets Memphis would not reveal. Soon, they became professional rivals, and bitterly divided. Hawkings stole some of his former master's books and discovered the truth: Memphis was a worshiper of Yog-Sothoth, and his most amazing feats were drawn from the power of this Outer God. Temporarily insane, and using spells he only half-understood, Hawkings surprised Memphis at home and killed the older man. Except, he didn't do the job properly.

The essence of Memphis the Great now inhabits the structure of his house, resident in the eaves and cracks, just as Yog-Sothoth exists between planes. Furthermore, the late magician is coming back, inch by inch, possessing the guilt-ridden Harold Hawkings and tormenting him for his crimes.

## THE HISTORY OF MEMPHIS THE GREAT

Young Axel Schwartz learned his trade working restaurants and parties around Boston. A significant egotist, he hated the role of the hired entertainer, having to flatter his pay masters and wheedling for his fee at the end of the evening. He made a conscious decision to turn his back on safe day-to-day work and re-cast himself as an audacious and magnetic figure steeped in the imagery and mystique of Ancient Egypt. He courted press attention with mind-reading publicity stunts and borrowed heavily to finance a single, spectacular show in the old grand style. The show sold out, and the legend of Memphis the Great was born.

A few years of touring North America followed, during which Schwartz lived modestly, reinvesting his profits in ever more spectacular illusions. He married his beloved assistant, Marguerite, and they continued to live on the road until she became pregnant. Their daughter, Ingrid, was born after a long and difficult labor. Marguerite never took to motherhood and missed her life on the road so, when Ingrid was around 18 months of age, she packed her bags and ran away to join a former colleague's act, cutting all ties with Schwartz and their infant child.

Schwartz dealt with his shock and grief at Marguerite's desertion by throwing himself into his work and, as soon as it was possible, he went back on the road with his young daughter in tow. The irony of the situation was not lost on him, and his initial unspoken hope that his return to touring life would tempt Marguerite back into the family fold was sadly disappointed. The tours ranged far and wide, becoming more and more spectacular, with Memphis the Great performing for European royalty as well as accepting month-long residencies in major cities. Ingrid grew up on trains and ships with a father who seemed perpetually absent and obsessed with staying ahead of his rivals—and showing his former wife just what she was missing out on. During this

period, he took on a young Harold Hawkings as a protégé.

In 1919, during a tour of India, Memphis arrived in Bhutan to perform for the King. A week before the performance, he set out on an expedition to the Himalayan slopes with his latest assistant, Josephine Lynch. He hoped to locate a mystic who lived in a certain remote gorge, who reputedly possessed uncanny powers to bend reality. This was not Schwartz's first such expedition, but this time the man was no faker—he was a worshipper of Yog-Sothoth. Schwartz and Lynch stayed with the strange man for three weeks, studying with him, until he finally summoned Yog-Sothoth, intending to sacrifice his guests to the Outer God. Schwartz immediately understood they had been betrayed and struggled with the man, casting him from the summoning tower. Yog-Sothoth consumed its former disciple, and as Schwartz and Lynch stared into the shimmering, iridescent spheres that erupted from the gorge, their lives were forever changed.

The Memphis the Great who returned from that experience possessed a new vitality and a new hunger. His next illusions, drawn from the power of Yog-Sothoth, were truly astounding and fooled even veteran magicians. In person, Memphis' character began to unsettle rather than charm his admirers. He seemed to keep Hawkings around more as a toy than a student, and the teenage Ingrid grew to fear her father.

### Vanishing Act

As far as most are concerned, Memphis the Great suddenly and mysteriously disappeared a month and a half ago. His mansion has been lying empty ever since. A professional burglary team spotted this opportunity and broke into the house late one night. In the morning, their bodies were discovered by the caretaker. The police have completed their investigation, with the official conclusion being that the burglars quarreled over their loot, leading to a violent struggle that turned deadly.

Despite the official conclusion, lawyers for Memphis the Great suspect that more is going on than meets the eye. But, they have no way to contact their client, and they fear the worst.

## INVOLVING THE INVESTIGATORS

There are two straightforward routes to draw the investigators into the mystery of Memphis the Great's disappearance.

1. If the investigators have an established reputation as people who can get things done—preferably discreetly—or, if they have some other connection to Boston society, they can be approached directly by lawyers acting on behalf of the

Memphis estate. In this case, their first port of call will be **Palmer & Pickering, Attorneys-at-Law** (page 110).

2. If at least one investigator has criminal affiliations—such as a policeman, a private eye, or a professional criminal—they can be asked by underworld contacts to get to the bottom of the burglary deaths as the official verdict just doesn't ring true. If using this option, then their point of entry to the mystery is a meeting with Orson Vaughan at **The Speakeasy** (page 112).

This scenario is ideal for investigators with ties to the Boston area, either as a standalone adventure or as a change of pace or sidetrack scenario in an ongoing campaign—perhaps they stumble across Memphis' disappearance while engaged on a different inquiry altogether and can't resist getting involved, or perhaps Memphis' name comes up in connection with their current case (his name linked to other worshippers of Yog-Sothoth). It could also be used as the starting point for a new group of investigators, although the Keeper may wish to adjust the number and lethality of Hawkings' and Memphis' spells to give novice investigators more of a fighting chance during the finale (**The Conclusion**, page 133).

Useful skills for investigators to have for this scenario include: Archaeology, Art/Craft (Stage Magic), Charm, Fast Talk, History, Library Use, Listen, Locksmith, Mechanical Repair, Persuade, Psychology, Sleight of Hand, and Spot Hidden.

## DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Descriptions and roleplaying hooks for the main non-player characters (NPCs) encountered in this scenario are listed below, while their profiles are given at the end of the scenario, unless otherwise stated. Minor NPCs are detailed where they are encountered; their statistics can also be found in the **Non-Player Characters** section.

### Ingrid Schwartz, age 25, unlucky heiress

The daughter of Memphis the Great, Ingrid Schwartz had a theatrical childhood. Often on the road with her father, she has seen a lot of the world and possesses an excellent—if disjointed—education, thanks to a series of private tutors. She had a crush on Harold Hawkings in her teens, and his mentoring arrangement with Memphis afforded her plenty of time to get to know him. They have been engaged for six months, although no firm date has been set for the wedding.

In her heart, Schwartz knows that Hawkings had something to do with her father's disappearance. She was with Hawkings on the night Memphis vanished, six weeks

## AMERICAN MAGIC IN THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY

In 1908, after three decades as America's leading magician, Harry Kellar retired. A shrewd businessman known for his spectacular touring show of illusions, Kellar had an earnest, sincere style of presentation that appealed to audiences. What he lacked in delicate sleight of hand ability, he made up for with gimmicks and mechanical effects.

Kellar introduced Howard Thurston as his successor. A compelling character who had roots as a con man, and who had also trained for the ministry, Thurston became famous for card tricks and had great skill in card throwing, supposedly able to deliver a card directly to a spectator's seat from his position on stage. Thurston purchased Kellar's magical assets, and evolved the show into something faster, larger, and flashier, going so far as to invite spectators on stage during Kellar's trademark levitation—and thus expose the method.

The secrets behind tricks were a valuable commodity and often sold for large sums. Any touring magician who traded on a unique effect had to be on their guard to protect it. Locked shipping containers were broken into or members of the company bribed, although possibly the easiest method to obtain important information was simply for a rival to walk backstage and observe from the wings at a key moment.

Neither Kellar nor Thurston attained the immortality that Harry Houdini did—the young immigrant Erik Weisz chose his stage name in honor of the French magician Robert-Houdin. Houdini began his magic career with card tricks; however, it was with escape acts that he rose to become a household name. A fierce, driven man with a masterful grasp of marketing, Houdini challenged local police forces to shackle him, and performed many public stunts: escaping

from a straitjacket while hanging from a rope in public view, or handcuffed in a packing box lowered into a river. Not all his performances were escapes—in 1918 he made a full-grown elephant disappear from the stage of the New York Hippodrome.

Later in life, as president of the Society of American Magicians, Houdini was an important force for unifying magic clubs across the nation. He also became passionate about debunking spiritualists; his magic skills made him an ideal candidate to spot phony mediums and expose their trickery. As his activity in this area became known, he began to attend séances in disguise. For ten years after his death, Houdini's wife Bess held an annual séance, always hoping to hear a code they had prearranged. The tradition of a séance for Houdini continues to this day.

In February 1924, H. P. Lovecraft ghostwrote "Imprisoned with the Pharaohs," a short story set in Cairo, commissioned by *Weird Tales* and told from Houdini's perspective. The magician was so pleased with the final version that he commissioned Lovecraft to undertake further work, such as an article criticizing astrology and a book, *The Cancer of Superstition*. Lovecraft wrote an outline for the project, but it was never completed after Houdini's death in 1926.

### Suggested Further Reading

- *Carter Beats the Devil*, Glen David Gold. A novel portraying the life of a magician and contains great period flavor.
- *Hiding the Elephant*, Jim Steinmeyer. A comprehensive and entertaining history of magic's Golden Age.
- *The Secret Life of Houdini*, William Kalush. Fascinating biography exploring all facets of Houdini's life and career.

ago. They quarreled about his irritable, obsessive state of mind and she suggested he ought to visit a psychoanalyst, causing Hawkings to storm out. He was back within two hours—hardly long enough to commit murder and dispose of a body; besides, there was no blood on his hands. But, Schwartz knows something bad happened and is longing to confide in someone she can trust.

Schwartz was staying in Boston with family friends when Memphis witnessed the summoning of Yog-Sothoth

in Bhutan. Her fond memories of her early years with her father are tempered by unease at his later transformation. She moved into a mid-range downtown hotel two years ago, so she was not residing in the family home when Memphis disappeared. Since that night, she has begun to recognize the same worrying signs in Hawkings that overtook her father but is in utter denial of the situation.

While she loves Hawkings very much, her childhood instilled a healthy dose of personal confidence and common

sense. She will not do foolish things to defend her fiancé if the truth comes out, for, even after years of awkward relations, she is still loyal to her strange father.

- **Description:** brunette, with plain but sincere features; her clothing is simple but of superior quality.
- **Traits:** a sensible and courageous girl who always tries to do the right thing; she is currently caught among strange forces she does not comprehend.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** a resourceful woman and a seeker after truth. She will quickly decide whether she can trust the investigators based on their behavior, and, if so, does not hesitate to take them into her confidence. She will not immediately volunteer her suspicions about Harold Hawkins, but, in time, her desire to know the truth drives her to confess. And, while she is courageous, she is unlikely to accompany the investigators or involve herself in a physical struggle—she would certainly never visit a speakeasy. Schwartz recognizes something very dark in Josephine Lynch and avoids her company.

## Harold Hawkins, age 31, haunted magician

Hawkins felt his future was bright when he was taken on as an apprentice by Memphis in 1915. And, so it was for the first four years, as the older man refined his act and

romance blossomed with the man's daughter, Ingrid. But, the Memphis who came back from Bhutan in 1919 had changed. His effects were much stronger—darker—and the paltry knowledge that he shared was patronizing. Hawkins was puzzled, hurt, and then bitterly jealous. Eventually, when Memphis went on tour, Hawkins pocketed Ingrid Schwartz's key to the Memphis house and went in search of the knowledge he had been denied. What he eventually found shook his sanity. He stole some minor Mythos tomes and learned enough to be dangerous without gaining any great understanding. The older magician could have moved against him upon his return but, instead, he simply treated Hawkins with utter contempt.

On the night Memphis disappeared, Hawkins was with Schwartz. They quarreled about his state of mind and she suggested he ought to visit a professional. Hawkins stormed out and did just that. But, the professional he visited was none other than Memphis the Great, and the encounter turned lethal. The fury Hawkins invested in his last spell tore Memphis' body apart. Since then, Hawkins has been doubly haunted: by the memory of his terrible deed, and by the oppressive psychic presence of his former mentor.

The tormented magician is painfully conscious that his performances have not attained the success of Memphis the Great's shows. Worse, he knows in his heart that they are not



*Ingrid Schwartz*



*Harold Hawkins*

## HOUSE OF MEMPHIS

as accomplished or mysterious. Rather than adopt a character like his mentor, Hawkings trades on his looks, although he is beginning to understand that this approach may not suffice as he gets older. Due to a sense of growing paranoia, he has taken to carrying a small concealed handgun when out in public, although he never takes this on stage with him.

- **Description:** when coiffed, made-up and poised, Hawkings has the dreamy good looks of any Hollywood heartthrob. His stage persona is knowing and larger-than-life, with a twinkle in his eye. Out of the spotlight, he seems tired and his face tells a different story. His skin is blemished and his eyes sunken, due to insomnia and the malign influence of Memphis the Great.
- **Traits:** in public, Hawkings maintains a facade of normality. In reality, he is not sleeping well and is under tremendous pressure.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** Hawkings is a magician like any other and may be prevailed upon to teach the investigators some basic tricks (**Learning Magic**, page 119). He still has one of the books he stole from Memphis the Great, although he will not part with it willingly and is afraid of Ingrid Schwartz seeing it and recognizing it, so constantly moves it between his apartment and the theater where he performs (**The Wilbur Theater**, page 112). He finds the

book disturbing, yet feels the need to constantly reassure himself of its presence. His odd behavior regarding the book may give the investigators a clue to its importance.

### Joe Edwards, age 43, police inspector

A career detective who has worked his way up from the streets, Edwards knows the killings in the mansion are not the result of a quarrel between criminals. Despite his concerns, Edwards was instructed by his superiors to close the case quickly and quietly. Edwards has done as he was asked, but the case still bothers him.

- **Description:** a large man with a hard stare, he talks with a gentle voice; his features are careworn from all his years in the Boston Police Department. His face could be described as something only his mother could love, and his pale hair is starting to recede.
- **Traits:** patient and watchful; baffled by the murders at the Memphis mansion.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** if the investigators seem legit, Edwards attempts to help them on the quiet. He can direct them to the victims' known associates at **The Speakeasy** (page 112), and warns them to expect trouble there. He may also point the investigators to **Ace Emporium Magic Shop** (page 117) and/or **Nelson's Restaurant** (page 118) if they want to know



Joe Edwards



Reuben Levy

about the local community of magicians. If he can contribute something concrete in the field, he turns up with his trusty sawed-off 12-gauge. The involvement of supernatural forces will be a tough sell, but Edwards has been a cop for 20 years and has seen a lot of strange things.

## Reuben Levy, age 66, loveable magic retailer

The genial proprietor of **Ace Emporium Magic Shop** (page 117).

- **Description:** an older gentleman, his white hair and beard are neatly groomed, and there is a shine in his kindly eyes.
- **Traits:** genial, kind, and much loved by the local magic community.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** Levy is the investigators' gateway into the world of professional magic. He is happy to speak in general terms about the careers of both Memphis and Hawkings, and a small purchase of a beginner's book of magic or a few packs of cards secures his attention for a good half hour. He confirms that Hawkings was Memphis the Great's apprentice and that their relationship ceased about a year ago. As valued customers, he says nothing negative about either magician. He knows Josephine Lynch well, however, and may warn the investigators not to trust her. He can also point them in the direction of **Nelson's Restaurant** (page 118).

## Orson Vaughan, age 52, career criminal

A confirmed villain who has already served a couple of jail sentences for assault and robbery, Vaughan is nevertheless a businessman who never does anything without a reason. He has a hand in many illicit activities, from burglary to blackmail and extortion. He knows and respects Joe Edwards, and has an uneasy truce with the inspector. Edwards would love to shut Vaughan down but understands the value of keeping his adversary accessible and contained in the Clamp (**The Speakeasy**, page 112).

- **Description:** of average build, Vaughan is an African-American man with unfashionably cropped hair, a reserved but finely tailored suit, and an uncompromising aura of dominance.
- **Traits:** astute but intimidating and mean; it would be unwise to cross Mr. Vaughan.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** as Reuben Levy is the investigators' way into the world of magic, so Vaughan is their route into the city's seedy underbelly, should they need one. Through his contacts in the Boston Police Department, he knows much about the burglary deaths and, if the investigators impress him, he can offer them support, albeit of a highly dubious nature.



Orson Vaughan



Max Marvella

## HOUSE OF MEMPHIS

### Max Marvello, age 43, working magician

A professional magician with a dubious Italian persona—he's actually an Irish American who's worked hard on his suntan (with more success than on his accent). Underneath the big gestures and chummy manner is a serious man with concerns about the Hawkings-Memphis situation.

- **Description:** of average size and appearance, Marvello has dyed his hair black as part of his "Italian" persona. His green eyes are keen and miss little.
- **Traits:** a charming and talkative man who loves to solve puzzles, but who is obviously troubled by certain elements of the magical world.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** usually found at the weekly magic meeting at **Nelson's Restaurant** (page 118). If the investigators can impress Marvello sufficiently with their own prestidigitation and profess ties to either Harold Hawkings or Ingrid Schwartz (real or otherwise), then, as a practicing professional, he can give the investigators numerous insights into how both Hawkings and Memphis might have achieved their stage effects. Or not, as he is both baffled and deeply disturbed by what he views as Memphis' impossible illusions, and has no knowledge or understanding of the Mythos.

### Josephine Lynch, age 37, glamorous but violent assistant

Assistant to Memphis the Great, Lynch traveled with her employer and was there when he witnessed the summoning of Yog-Sothoth. The sight of the gleaming spheres drove her insane, giving her a fascination with mirrors and an incredible streak of narcissism. The only person she can bear to share the limelight with is Memphis himself.

Knowing how highly unlikely it would be for Memphis to leave town without informing her, Lynch visited his mansion and received a psychic communication from the dead magician explaining the situation—this link between Memphis and Lynch is a slow, awkward exchange of mental impressions rather than a clear dialogue. She partly understands what has happened, and hates Hawkings for what he's done, but she will not take any action that might damage her master's prospective new body.

Lynch drives Memphis' car: a Cadillac Type V-63 in Egyptian Blue. The custom hood ornament is a sun-crested falcon, supposedly modeled after a feature on Tutankhamun's chariot. She drives the Cadillac for her own purposes in her employer's absence.

If the investigators trail her home, they find her modest apartment in a poor part of town. She has converted one bedroom into an elaborate walk-in closet, as her extensive



Josephine Lynch



Memphis the Great (Axel Schwartz)

wardrobe (containing all her stage outfits, immaculate and ready to go) is particularly large. There are large mirrors in every room, even the kitchenette. Should the Keeper feel that Lynch is insufficiently threatening, add an illegal Thompson submachine gun (1D10+2 damage), which she keeps out of sight in the car.

- **Description:** a blond bombshell who looks not unlike Jean Harlow. She is obsessed with her physical appearance and always appears in public immaculately groomed and dressed.
- **Traits:** cool yet seemingly classy, any disruption to her carefully managed image causes her mask of gentility to slip and the rage within to appear. Lynch is utterly loyal to Memphis, having gone so far as to kill a rival magician who broke into a theater in New York to steal secrets from him—that particular incident remains an unexplained disappearance with no leads.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** Lynch is capable of murder without remorse. She carries a .32 automatic, a concealed dagger in a garter sheath, and if disarmed may resort to her surprisingly sharp hat pin. She is highly intelligent and will try multiple strategies to undermine and disrupt the investigators' actions, without exposing her hostile intent. She is also an expert at disguise. If exposed, she will attempt to shoot or stab her way out. She responds positively to any male investigator of sufficient APP and Credit Rating who seems attracted to her, and may spare them from death. There is no possibility of a meaningful relationship with her, though—the investigator's role is to adore and compliment her, and she will only keep them around as long as they feed her narcissism. Any disrespect toward her former/future employer, whom she idolizes, is met with a snappy retort about his achievements and a question about what the investigator has ever done to compare with them. Lynch is very reluctant to talk about the visit to Bhutan, partly because she fears letting slip about Memphis murdering the mystic, but also because her memories of the period are fragmented and incomplete.

### **Memphis the Great (Axel Schwartz), age 56, disembodied conjurer**

Memphis the Great is/was a celebrity magician, known across the United States and throughout the civilized world. A striking figure with a dramatic stage persona, he was also a shrewd businessman who made creative decisions with a firm eye on the financial bottom line.

Since the expedition to Bhutan in 1919, Memphis has been a worshiper of Yog-Sothoth, using the Outer God's gifts in restrained fashion to add impossible feats to his show. Around six weeks ago, he was surprised at home by Harold Hawkings, who used pilfered magic he barely understood to

assault his former mentor. Hawkings went too far and the magic ripped Memphis' body apart.

- **Description:** his public face was that of an imposing Egyptian pharaoh, with rich costuming, a black wig, and eyeliner (he was not overly concerned with historical accuracy). Now, of course, Memphis has no body to speak of, thanks to his confrontation with Hawkings.
- **Traits:** driven to excel at practically any cost, Memphis' determination and cruelty have recently reached new and unexpected heights.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** Memphis the Great's disembodied presence is resident in his house, learning how to manipulate the material world from the spaces between the planes. And, Memphis is growing in power—not only did he animate his former props to destroy three burglars who broke in, but now, with effort, he can even modify the structure of the house. As a result, Memphis is a formidable enemy and will do everything he can to thwart the investigators if they attempt to interfere in his plans. He has also been exerting a malign mental influence on Hawkings, to torture his young rival. Memphis does not wish to kill Hawkings, though. With his own body destroyed, he desires corporeal form, and where better to find it than in the person of his attractive, younger rival? If undisturbed, he eventually summons Hawkings to the house and possess his body permanently.

## START: ON WITH THE SHOW

Where the scenario starts depends on how the investigators become entangled with the affairs of Memphis the Great (**Involving the Investigators**, page 104). Once the investigators are involved and have gleaned what they can from their initial contacts, they have several additional opportunities to acquire further information, which may include the other alternative starting point (**The Speakeasy**, page 112). Both of these starts lead the investigators to **The Wilbur Theater** (page 112), where they witness an accident that provides the opportunity to speak with Harold Hawkings and Ingrid Schwartz. They can then direct their research as desired.

## PALMER & PICKERING, ATTORNEYS-AT-LAW

Palmer & Pickering is a prestigious legal firm with offices overlooking Boston Common, the oldest city park in the United States. Their office walls feature paintings of

## HOUSE OF MEMPHIS

formidable old partners and maps of Boston dating from the Revolutionary War.

George Pickering receives the investigators. He is a dapper gentleman in his 60s, with thick glasses and an unfashionable suit. He still possesses a keen, analytical stare, which he slowly applies to each investigator in turn as they are introduced (for Pickering's profile, see **Non-Player Characters**, page 140). Pickering has been Memphis' attorney since his career took off and is determined to protect his client's property and reputation in his absence.

Pickering realizes that something strange has happened in the Memphis mansion. He wants to understand it, but he also wants the situation kept very hush-hush. To this end, he has exerted some influence on the police department to conclude the investigation quickly and quietly. He is more skeptical of the investigators if Ingrid Schwartz has brought them in (**The Wilbur Theater**, page 112), but he will comply with her wishes.

### The Meeting

After he has satisfied himself as to the investigators' competence, Pickering brings them up to date with the facts. Memphis the Great disappeared about a month and a half ago, and his mansion has been lying empty ever since. Recently, the bodies of three burglars were discovered by house's caretaker. The police have completed their investigation, determining that the burglars must have quarreled over their loot, and then killed one another.

Pickering explains that he wants the truth concerning the break in and the murders of the burglars. To this end, has asked the person who discovered the crime scene, the caretaker, to the offices so the investigators may begin their work immediately. He calls for tea and coffee and brings in the caretaker, Caleb Madison.

Only a little younger than Pickering, Madison wears a cheap suit, while his hands reveal a life as a manual laborer. He presents well at first but, as the investigators question him, it becomes apparent that his nerves have been shattered by what he discovered at the mansion (for Madison's profile, see **Non-Player Characters**, page 140).

Madison's account of what happened is vague, although he does remember three dead men and a lot of blood. They had, apparently, stabbed and hanged each other. He lingers on details of their blood-soaked shirts and the bulging, staring eyes of the one who was hanged. The image that stays with him, though, is of a severed human hand lying on the floorboards, its fingers still twitching—the hand was real, but the twitching is imagined, added by a recent nightmare.

Madison believes there were four burglars and the surviving one ran off. He remembers being interviewed at the police station and that the officers seemed to

think that he himself had committed the murders. He does not remember who interviewed him but Pickering can supply Inspector Edwards as a contact (**The Police Station**, page 116).

If questioned about Memphis' domestic arrangements, Madison states there is a cook who comes in one or two days a week, as required; she does not live on the premises. Ingrid Schwartz used to cook when she lived at home, and Memphis likes to cook for himself when his schedule is light.

Once the interview concludes, Pickering thanks the caretaker and sees him out before returning to deal with the investigators. He gives them a key to Memphis' house and asks them to treat his client's property with respect during their inquiries. Before finishing up, Pickering asks if the investigators have seen Harold Hawkings magic show? If not, he offers them complimentary tickets for tonight's show (**The Wilbur Theater**, page 112), saying that Hawkings was once a protégé of Memphis, and that Memphis' daughter, Ingrid Schwarz, is engaged to the man.

### Questions?

The current location of Memphis the Great will surely come up in the conversation. Pickering has no idea where his client is, but he's not particularly worried. The magician has often disappeared without notice in pursuit of a rumored mystic or cardsharp. He has, however, been gone for six weeks now, and this is unusual. Pickering emphasizes that he does not want the investigators to locate Memphis; he wants them to get to the bottom of the weird aspects of the burglary and murders before his client returns, which he may do any day now, for all he knows.

If asking about Memphis' theatrical agent, he confirms that Mr. Hilliard Hannay of Hannay & Co., New York, works on behalf of his client. He adds that Memphis had no upcoming tours planned.

### Contacting Hannay & Co

If the investigators try to call the busy Mr. Hannay, they find getting hold of the man is difficult, and he does not make the time to take a call from them. A successful **Fast Talk** or **Charm** roll (or an enquiry from Pickering, if asked to do so) is enough to get some information from Hannay's secretary, Judith, confirming that Memphis has no upcoming tours planned, and although the agency would normally arrange any significant travel on his behalf, they have booked nothing for him in the last few months.

**Keeper note:** should this not be the opening scene for the adventure, Pickering only talks to the investigators with some form of evidence that they are working for Ingrid Schwarz. A successful **Credit Rating** or **Persuade** roll is

enough to obtain a short appointment with the attorney, but a long legal career compels him to keep his client's private information confidential.

## THE SPEAKEASY

Down a dark alley, not far from Scollay Square, is a door that looks like a generic fire exit. A surprising number of people rap on the door, which then opens to admit them. It is not an alley that one would walk down without a good reason—and this is wise, because many of the city's hoodlums go to this speakeasy to relax and can often be found hanging around outside.

Behind the door is an immense gentleman with a scarred face and a dirty suit. He admits only people he knows, along with their companions, although he is susceptible to a successful **Intimidate** roll or a hefty bribe. If this is the investigators' entry point into the scenario, he has been advised about their arrival by their contact, Mr. Orson Vaughan, and admits them with a nod.

Behind him, a tight and grubby staircase leads down to another door, behind which is one of Boston's less salubrious speakeasies, The Clamp. There are some crude booths along one wall, an unoccupied stage along another, and a bar with some of the roughest beer and spirits the investigators may ever have the misfortune to sample. Lighting is low. The barman is a slow-eyed silent face who has seen life and largely lost at it, but he is not easily intimidated. While regular patrons get the cheap booze, a few bottles of the good stuff are kept under the counter for Mr. Vaughan.

### Uninvited Guests?

If not guests of Mr. Vaughan, a lot depends upon how the investigators handle themselves. As unknown faces, they immediately attract attention. If they purchase the (overpriced) alcohol and take a seat, attention gradually shifts away from them, and they can observe the room and eventually work out Vaughan is in charge. If they don't drink, or are too obvious about their scrutiny, two heavies approach them with their otherwise barely-concealed guns drawn and drag them off to a back room for rough questioning. Unless they can use their social skills (particularly **Charm**, **Fast Talk**, or **Persuade**) to worm their way into an audience with Mr. Vaughan, they are likely to be relieved of any money about their person and ejected through that same generic fire exit door, with 1 point of bruising damage.

Any attempt to threaten or intimidate the room is likely to meet with failure unless it has the backing of Inspector Edwards and a squad of uniformed officers. Under such circumstances, the investigators find themselves facing twice their own number of generic thugs (see **Non-Player Characters**, page 139). Even with uniformed police

assistance, which Edwards is unlikely to offer without very good reason, the clientele will contrive to distract attention long enough to enable Vaughan to slip away.

### Guests of Mr. Vaughan

If the investigators are expected, a lackey shows them to Orson Vaughan's table. Vaughan has had a full report on the Memphis mansion killings through an informer inside the Boston Police Department (refer to the information provided in **The Police Station**, page 116). The dead men are three brothers, the Leary kids; known faces who showed appropriate respect by giving Vaughan a small cut to operate on his patch.

While not taking the deaths personally, Vaughan wants to understand what happened and whether he has to teach some upstart a lesson about respecting the criminal establishment. He has already visited the elderly Mrs. Leary to offer his condolences and financial support, and had her cry on his shoulder. Vaughan knew the Leary kids well and dismisses any suggestion that they killed each other. They were family, and they were professionals. If the investigators can provide him with any further information on what happened, he will be grateful and can offer the kinds of reward that only an influential criminal can.

If the investigators haven't seen Harold Hawkings' show already, Vaughan can give them theater tickets to **The Wilbur Theater** (following) so that they can "*see how these magic guys work*." He drops hints that he wouldn't be at all surprised if it turned out that one or more of them were involved in the Learys' deaths, as he's heard stories about how carefully they guard the secrets of their illusions. Vaughan can also give them Inspector Edwards name, if they aren't already aware of the investigating officer's identity (**The Police Station**, page 116).

**Keeper note:** Josephine Lynch is known here and tolerated for her looks, although mistrusted. Assuming this isn't the opening scene, if the investigators haven't come across her by the time they get to the speakeasy, now might be the perfect time to introduce Lynch, who is sipping drinks in a corner booth.

## THE WILBUR THEATER

Harold Hawkings is playing the Wilbur Theater on Tremont Street, a 1914 building in the colonial style. There is an excited buzz in the foyer as the crowds gather for this evening's performance, although anybody who bothers to check, notices that seats are still available at the rear of the orchestra pit and throughout the balcony. The investigators have excellent seats in row B. They have been given them by either George Pickering (**Palmer & Pickering, Attorneys-at-Law**, page 110) or Orson Vaughan (**The Speakeasy**, page 112) as a first step in their investigations.

## HOUSE OF MEMPHIS

An acrobatic troupe opens the proceedings. Against a plain red backcloth, they perform feats of juggling and balancing, escalating the difficulty by replacing their batons first with knives, then with flaming torches. The act climaxes with a dramatic leap to complete a three-tiered human pyramid.

After a short musical interlude, the curtains part to reveal Harold Hawkings, elegant in white tie and tails. Behind him, the stage is completely bare; even the building's brick walls are visible. Hawkings steps through the open curtains, which then close behind him, and with a brief wave of his hands, he begins a silent billiard ball manipulation routine. He holds the ball between two fingers, transferring it up and down his spread fingers, slowly at first and then with incredible speed. The ball defies gravity for a few seconds, rolling along the underside of his hand. It changes color. A second ball appears. The balls "jump" invisibly from hand to hand. A third ball appears, and then a fourth. Finally, Hawkings catches a top hat thrown from the wings, drops the four balls into it, casually turning it over and dropping it on his head. As he takes applause and steps back, the curtains part behind him. The entire stage is now draped in an exotic arrangement of colorful fabrics evoking an Arabian palace, with cabinets and couches arranged in an arc facing the audience. This effect is achieved through conventional theatrical stagecraft and painstaking rehearsal, but it is impressive, nonetheless.

Hawkings speaks for the first time, welcoming the audience to his humble abode. Obtaining a male and female volunteer from the audience he gives a brief tour, explaining that he got such and such an item from Shanghai, the next one from Morocco, and so on.

**Keeper note:** while Hawkings doesn't automatically pick an investigator to join him, there is no reason why he couldn't bring one or more of them up onto the stage. It's certainly one way of giving them a close look at Hawkings in his professional guise before everything goes wrong.

When Hawkings reaches for a low, deep box on wheels, he "notices" a vase has been knocked from its surface, and flowers trampled on the floor. Seemingly outraged, he calls for his maid, a worried-looking assistant in a domestic uniform, whom he berates loudly. As punishment, he opens the box and makes her lie in it before closing the lid. Her hands protrude from one end of the box, and Hawkings asks the male spectator to take hold of them; the woman's ankles protrude from the other end, and the magician asks the female spectator to grasp them firmly. Then he performs the "sawing a lady in half" illusion, splitting the cabinet in two. He peeks inside the separated ends, visibly blanches, and then moves the two parts so they are cleanly separated. Hawkings then relents, talking about how difficult it is to

find good staff and how sorry he is to part with them. He restores the box and produces the maid, unharmed and forgiven. As he thanks his volunteers, he gathers up the spilled flowers, folds them into nothing, and produces a fresh bunch for the female volunteer.

For a moment, as the volunteers leave the stage, an investigator succeeding with a Hard **Spot Hidden** roll notices that Hawkings appears to freeze. He seems disoriented for a second or two, but then recovers. Those who fail the roll merely think the magician was pausing for applause. If an investigator was chosen as a volunteer, then they only require a Regular success with the roll to notice Hawkings' discomfort.

The program continues with various illusions and some light comedy. The maid from the first trick returns as his assistant, this time dressed in a fashionable evening gown. Hawkings performs confidently but unremarkably until his penultimate trick.

Two intricately decorated and large upright wooden cabinets are now wheeled on stage. There is enough clearance underneath each box to show that no trapdoor could be used without the audience spotting it. Each has a door, positioned to face opposite wings of the stage. As each door is opened, a dim, eerie glow emanates from the cabinets' interiors. With a successful combined **Spot Hidden** and **Archeology** or



*One of the gate boxes*

**History** roll, an investigator spots Egyptian-style detailing on the cabinets' bodies, which have been painted black to disguise it. (These cabinets were stolen from Memphis the Great.)

Hawkings tells a story about the demands of being on long tours and how much he misses his family while abroad. He talks about doing a show every night and the extended travel time to return home from cultured European capitals and the bustling streets of Morocco and Cairo. He jokes about the tedious pastimes required during long sea voyages and the effect that air travel has on his digestion. Then, he explains he has invented a way to return home, instantly, to visit the family and pick up any small items he has forgotten. Hawkings pats one cabinet and walks to the edge of the stage, explaining that all he has to do is to leave one cabinet at home and take the other on tour.

"Then," he declares, "*I simply have to do this!*" Hawkings runs at one cabinet, leaps, and emerges from the other, with no visible means of traversing the space between. There is clearly not enough of a delay for any subterfuge such as running under the stage.

**Keeper note:** a successful **Cthulhu Mythos** roll identifies the cabinets as Gate boxes (*Call of Cthulhu: Keeper Rulebook*, page 256); using them costs 3 magic points and 1 Sanity point.

Moving to his final trick, Hawkings suffers another moment of disorientation. This time it is more obvious, noticeable with a Regular **Spot Hidden** roll by those in the audience. His long-suffering assistant returns to the stage for the climactic levitation. Hawkings talks about how hard she has to work to satisfy him and the demands of their intense tour schedule. When he asked her what she wanted for her birthday, she claimed she wanted to relax and get away from it all. So, he devised a little treat for her.

The assistant lies upon a table and slowly, with no covering or other such artifices, rises to float in the air above Hawkings' head (in truth, the effect is achieved with a fan of tiny wires). He demonstrates the "fact" that nothing is holding the table and the assistant in the air by passing a large hoop across his assistant's body (in truth, there is a sliding section in the hoop which creates a break so it can avoid the invisible support), then stands aside to take applause. As he does, a section of wires that have been rigged incorrectly break and the assistant slides out of the cradle and hits the ground, headfirst. It is a shocking moment and obviously not part of the act. Stagehands rush in from the wings to tend to the assistant and, before the curtain can close, the audience sees blood spilling from a nasty-looking head wound.

In a moment, the theater's manager comes out in front of the curtain and awkwardly announces (to a few gasps) that there has been a terrible accident and that the show is concluded

for the evening. Before he turns to leave, he asks if there is a doctor in the house, and would they come to the stage? (**The Injured Assistant**, following.) After a minute, the audience begins filing out, guided by anxious-looking usherettes. The manager's request should be a cue for any investigator with medical training to offer their assistance. Failing that, the confusion allows the investigators to slip backstage and do some snooping around without being challenged, for a short while at least (**Snooping Around**, page 115).

### The Injured Assistant

The assistant, Edith, has 9 hit points and has lost 4 points due to the fall. An attending investigator can hopefully confirm that she will be okay before she is taken away to a nearby hospital. Note that Edith is privy to all of Hawkings' stage secrets—apart from the Gate boxes, which she has been told never to touch.

### Meeting Harold Hawkings

Hawkings abandons the fallen girl and stumbles to his dressing room—he knows he has become erratic and must have rigged the illusion incorrectly. The root cause of the accident, however, is Memphis the Great's psychic pressure on his former protégé. The investigators, if they kept an eye on the magician or have slipped behind the scenes, can spot where he's going, and make Hawkings' acquaintance by offering a little kindness at this point. Once an ambulance arrives, Hawkings recovers enough to return to the stage and see to it that Edith is treated well.

If they haven't already met him, once the casualty has been dealt with, Hawkings makes a fuss of any investigator who helped, insisting that they and their friends join him backstage. Although still a charming host, it is obvious at close quarters that he is under a great strain. He fends off any questions about how his illusions are performed in a gentle and practiced manner and shows gracious interest in any weak card tricks the investigators might decide to show him.

Hawkings' dressing room contains a costume rack, dressing mirror, and a small locker. If put under pressure, he occasionally looks toward or touches the locker, as if for reassurance. A successful **Psychology** roll marks this behavior as telling—there is obviously something of importance to Hawkings stored within. Indeed, there is—his revolver and a copy of *Thaumaturgical Prodigies in the New-England Canaan* (see box, nearby).

At some point during their interview with Hawkings, Ingrid Schwartz barges into his dressing room. The startled illusionist introduces her as his fiancée and the daughter of another famous magician, Memphis the Great. Depending on who they've spoken to prior to this meeting, the investigators may already be aware of this fact.



## THAUMATURGICAL PRODIGIES IN THE NEW-ENGLAND CANAAN

*English, Rev. Ward Phillips, circa 1788*

Not from the original print run, this copy is, instead, an 1801 Boston second edition. Like Ward Phillips' personal copy, this, too, contains annotations in an unknown hand, suggesting that one of the owners may have had access to the original at some point in the book's history, or simply used it as a notebook for their own researches into the Mythos.

Should the investigators get hold of this book, they do not have time to commit either of its spells to memory before the scenario concludes (see **Chapter 9** in the *Call of Cthulhu: Keeper Rulebook* for further information on reading Mythos tomes and learning their spells). Hawkings hides it from Ingrid Schwartz in case she recognizes it as one of her father's books (she will, if she sees the monogrammed bookplate inside).


**Sanity Loss:** 1D6

**Cthulhu Mythos:** +1/+3 percentiles

**Mythos Rating:** 12

**Study:** 8 weeks

**Spells:** Contact Nyarlato (Contact Nyarlathotep), Contact Yogge Sothyoth (Contact Yog-Sothoth)



### Meeting Ingrid Schwartz

Although concerned for Hawkings' wellbeing, Schwartz is scrupulously polite and will not cause a scene in front of strangers. Assuming the investigators bring it up, she has heard about the burglary incident at Memphis' mansion, although not in vivid detail. She is unsettled at the thought of killings in her childhood home; nevertheless, she trusts Mr. Pickering to handle the situation.

**Keeper note:** if the investigators were previously unaware of Mr. Pickering, Schwartz has now opened up another potential avenue of investigation for them (**Palmer & Pickering, Attorneys-at-Law**, page 110). If the investigators have not been commissioned by the lawyer, and she is impressed by their manner, Ingrid may even introduce them to Palmer & Pickering as discreet third parties who could look into the matter.

A successful **Psychology** roll reveals there is friction between Schwartz and Hawkings—more than just the accident—and both are trying to avoid the subject. While persistence and kindness are key to extracting information from Schwartz, she won't discuss the matter in front of her fiancé but may well be convinced to at a later time and place.

If left alone with Hawkings, Schwartz demands to know what caused the accident. She urges him to seek medical help, a suggestion that he angrily resists. Those outside Hawkings' dressing room during this argument can hear Hawkings' angry remonstrations, but will need to succeed at a **Listen** roll to catch Schwartz's far quieter half of the altercation.

If the investigators remain in the dressing room, Hawkings eventually stalks from the dressing room to check on his equipment, providing the investigators with an opening to get to know Schwartz and gain her confidence. Unless the investigators royally make a hash of this opportunity, Schwartz gives them her card and asks them to contact her at her hotel to arrange a meeting, should they need her assistance. In this event, refer to Schwartz's write up in the **Dramatis Personae** (page 104), using this to relay pertinent information about her life and relationship with her father and with her fiancé. If the investigators gain her confidence and speak about finding out just what happened to the burglars, she may trust them enough to give them a set of keys to her father's home (**The Memphis House**, page 121). In addition, if they want to know more about magic in general or about the local network of magicians, Schwartz can point the investigators to **Nelson's Restaurant** (page 118). Most importantly, a good conversation with Schwartz has her admitting that her father changed after returning from Bhutan, so much so that she came to fear him and moved out of the family home as a result.

### Snooping Around

Once having accessed backstage, the investigators can move freely around it looking for clues, with one notable exception (see following). If they can enter Hawkings' dressing room when it is empty (**Meeting Harold Hawkings**) and break into the locker (a successful **Locksmith** or **STR** roll), the tome and gun are still there. If the investigators dither for too long, or don't realize the locker's significance and therefore don't break into it, as soon as Hawkings gets the chance, he slips both the book and his gun into his bag to take them home. Thus, if they are in the right place at the right time, the investigators may spot Hawkings skulking in and out of his own dressing room in a most suspicious manner.

While the investigators are unlikely to be challenged elsewhere backstage (unless they draw undue attention to themselves), attempting to examine Hawkings' apparatus is another matter entirely. After the show, two guard dogs

are tethered close by and their barks attract a security guard engaged to watch the theater at night—Hawkings' property, in particular. The investigators may be able to come up with a clever plan to deal with the dogs, while a successful **Hard Animal Handling** roll also does the trick.

**Keeper note:** the Gate boxes are normally kept padlocked; they can be broken into with a successful **Hard Locksmith** roll if the investigators can get past the dogs. Anyone entering one Gate box is immediately transported to the other, costing 3 magic points and 1 Sanity point.

## FURTHER INQUIRIES

While they may have gained some useful information regarding their current investigation, the characters still have a long way to go to unravel the mystery of exactly what happened to Memphis and the Leary brothers. There are several avenues they can now explore to help them fill in the gaps—some general, and some they may only become aware of through their earlier (or ongoing) inquiries.

Some basic history regarding Memphis' Bhutan trip and Hawkings' apprenticeship is available in the **Library** (page 116). Boston's magic community—if approached correctly at **Nelson's Restaurant** (page 118), most probably on a recommendation from the **Ace Emporium Magic Shop** (page 117)—can shed further light on the relationship between Hawkings and Memphis, and the latter's career in general. The Boston Police Department has closed the burglary/murder case, but Inspector Edwards can still assist (**The Police Station**, page 116), while the criminal underworld is sure that the truth has been overlooked (**The Speakeasy**, page 112).

At the center of the investigation lies **The Memphis House** (page 121). The investigators may be drawn here early in their inquiries, where they are likely to be harassed by small eerie occurrences, perpetrated by the disembodied spirit of Memphis the Great. As they draw close to the truth, Memphis may finally break back through into the real world, summoning Hawkings for a second showdown, intent on seizing the body of his former protégé (**Conclusion**, page 133). What happens in the end very much hinges on the investigators' actions. Can they banish Memphis and save Hawkings? Only time will tell.

## THE LIBRARY

Any library the investigators care to visit has a small number of publicly available volumes on magic. They vary from simple children's books to more in-depth texts on sleight of

hand and tricks for the drawing-room conjurer; these can be borrowed for detailed study (see **Learning Magic**, page 119, for why this might prove useful).

A search of newspaper archives yields general information about the career of both Memphis the Great and Harold Hawkings. Many society pieces mention glittering performances given by Memphis throughout Europe prior to the Great War, and latterly through Asia and the Americas. A lesser number mention Hawkings' appearances in major US cities. A successful **Library Use** roll, several hours of dedicated searching, or some assistance from a helpful librarian, obtains **Handouts: Memphis 1–3**.

## THE POLICE STATION

Either through talking to George Pickering (**Palmer & Pickering, Attorneys-at-Law**, page 110) or through any police or criminal contacts they may have, including Orson Vaughan (**The Speakeasy**, page 112), the investigators may have learned the identity of the officer in charge of the burglary/murder case and wish to speak with him.

Arriving at Inspector Edwards' station house, the investigators come face to face with the desk sergeant—a burned-out pension case with jowls and hooded eyes. He shows no surprise at whatever the investigators say; he's seen and heard it all. A **Credit Rating** in excess of 35, a successful **Charm** or **Persuade** roll, or a call from George Pickering is

*Handout: Memphis 1*

*Boston Globe*

### MEMPHIS THE GREAT MISSING

*May 12th 1919*

Boston magician Memphis the Great, famous for his elaborate stage illusions, has disappeared for real this time. Visiting the kingdom of Bhutan, he reportedly embarked on an expedition into the Himalayan Mountains, but has not returned. His party is five days overdue and he has missed his scheduled performance for King Ugyen Wangchuk. Bhutan is located on the border between India and China. King Wangchuk united the country following several civil wars and rebellions in 1882-1885 and was an instrumental figure in obtaining the Anglo-Tibetan convention of 1904.

## HOUSE OF MEMPHIS

necessary to get past the desk sergeant and gain an audience with the Edwards regarding the Memphis burglary.

Assuming the investigators manage to speak with Edwards, he discusses the case, revealing that it took place on the first floor, in the "prop room," near to the kitchen. He says the one burglar was impaled with five swords, some of which were actually stuck into the wall and proved very difficult to remove, while another was strung up by a rope and hanged by the neck; a small pot lay knocked over near his feet. The third was missing both feet and both hands. The "wrist chopper" stage prop nearby was drenched in blood and was clearly the implement involved in the mutilation.

A successful **Psychology** roll reveals that Edwards knows, or suspects, more than he is saying. A successful **Charm**, **Fast Talk**, or **Persuade** roll convinces him to open up. In his professional opinion, none of the three victims could have killed the other two in their wounded state, and no fourth person could have exited the scene without leaving footprints, given how much blood was spilled. Yet, despite his concerns, he was instructed by his superiors to close the case quickly and quietly. He believes this was to avoid any press sensation that might cause embarrassment to Memphis, and to improve the department's statistics. If pressed on this, Edwards thinks there may have been a payoff involved.

As mentioned in the **Dramatis Personae** (page 104), and if they haven't done so already, Edwards suggests the investigators talk to Orson Vaughan for more information on

the victims (**The Speakeasy**, page 112). If the investigators ask about the local community of magicians, he suggests they visit the **Ace Emporium Magic Shop** (page 117) or **Nelson's Restaurant** (page 118), where "magic folk" sometimes hang out.

### ACE EMPORIUM MAGIC SHOP

For those wishing to learn more about magic, or to try and learn more about either Memphis or Hawkings, the Boston directory lists the Ace Emporium, a compact but well-stocked magic shop in a cheaper part of downtown. The window features novelties and amusements for the general public, and these continue inside. Farther back are packs of playing cards, cup-and-ball sets, and various instructional manuals on conjuring for beginners.

Reuben Levy, the white-haired, genial proprietor, is delighted to demonstrate and recommend various products based on an individual's skill level. He will even steer a novice away from one of the trickier effects or books to something cheaper and more appropriate.

The shop has a back room almost as large as the public space. Bookcases and mysterious boxes are visible within, and if the investigators linger, another customer brushes past them and enters the back room with nothing but a nod to the proprietor. If asked about the back room, Levy says it's for "advanced magicians," and won't invite the investigators there

*Handout: Memphis 2*

### MEMPHIS ALIVE

*May 15th 1919*

Memphis the Great, reported lost in Bhutan, has been located alive and well. The renowned Boston conjurer, and his assistant Miss Josephine Lynch, were found by the King's men as they returned from the foothills of the Himalayas. Memphis and Miss Lynch had been menaced by brigands and were forced to flee into parts unknown. They were exhausted and hungry but otherwise unharmed. The King vowed that the bandits would be hunted down and brought to justice.

Memphis the Great promised to deliver his delayed performance for King Wangchuk as soon as he could obtain "a good meal, a full night's sleep and a clean shirt".

*Boston Globe*

*Handout: Memphis 3*

### Boston Daily Advertiser A MAGICAL MATCH

October 28th 1915

Young conjurer Harold Hawkings pulled something special out of his hat yesterday: an apprenticeship to Memphis the Great. The two will work together to develop a new show for Hawkings, who hopes to follow in his mentor's world-spanning footsteps.

"It's a dream come true for me," said Hawkings. "I always believed that those long nights spent practicing in front of the mirror in my room would pay off. I'm going to need a bigger room to practice in now!"

"Dark times are when people need magic more than ever," said Memphis the Great. "It's time I encouraged the next generation of performers, and I intend to start with Harold here. He's fooled me once or twice!" Hawkings has already gained a reputation for his skill in cigarette and coin manipulation. He will turn 20 next month.

unless one of them displays obvious close-up magic skills or, perhaps, succeeds at a Hard **Charm** or **Fast Talk** roll. Bolder investigators may return after dark to break in (assuming they mistakenly think “advanced” means Mythos magic). Should they succeed (either using **Locksmith** or **STR** to get through the door), they find only professional-level books and apparatus for conventional magicians; certainly, none of the Mythos tomes or artifacts they may have imagined. This could make for an entertaining brush with the Boston law, depending on how subtle the investigators are.

**Keeper note:** getting caught red-handed at the Ace Emporium by the police could provide the investigators with a roundabout route to meeting Joe Edwards (**The Police Station**, page 116), if they haven’t spoken to him already. Despite closing the Leary case, he’s still keeping an eye on anything magic related, and a break-in at a magic shop is sure to come to his attention, prompting a summons to his office.

Levy will only hook an investigator up with other local professionals for one of two reasons. First, if they seem to be genuinely interested in the art of magic, and/or display some existing ability or deep knowledge; this requires them to demonstrate a few tricks (a successful Hard **Sleight of Hand** roll or a combined Regular **Art/Craft (Stage Magic)** and **Sleight of Hand** roll) or if they can talk with authority about magic history (a successful Hard **Fast Talk** roll if they try to wing it). Second, he becomes cooperative if he understands they are working on behalf of Ingrid Schwartz. Levy has known Schwartz since Memphis brought her into the magic shop as a baby, and he can refuse her nothing; however, simply mentioning her name will not be enough to sway him, and he may insist on personally confirming Schwartz’s involvement before assisting the investigators further, depending on their behavior so far. If either condition is satisfied, Levy directs the investigators to the weekly magic get-together at **Nelson’s Restaurant** (below).

## NELSON’S RESTAURANT

The investigators are likely to have been referred to Nelson’s by Reuben Levy (**Ace Emporium Magic Shop**, page 117), although it is possible that Ingrid Schwartz (**The Wilbur Theater**, page 112) or Inspector Edwards (**The Police Station**, page 116) might have pointed them in the same direction. Nelson’s is a quiet, modestly priced downtown eatery where the eponymous owner, a balding, deferent character, serves tables himself on weeknights. Unless the investigators visit on a Friday or Saturday night, the front room rarely features more than two or three couples talking

in hushed tones. The real action, during the weekly magic gathering, is in the back room.

The magic gathering consists of a bunch of assorted oddballs and professionals, chattering and showing each other obscure card effects and coin manipulations, which are more prized for their technical difficulty than their entertainment value. Many, but not all, will buy a token dish at some point to keep Nelson happy.

If the investigators make directly for the back room, Nelson keeps an eye on them and ejects them at the first sign of irritation by his regulars. If they take a table in front and eat, it will be easier for them to slip away later and ask questions. Regardless of when they decide to make their move, if the investigators attempt to infiltrate the back room as a large group, the meeting becomes noticeably quiet; cards are slipped into pockets and conversation becomes muted until they leave. This is a place for trade secrets and not for public performance.

Single investigators, or a pair, will have more luck. They may feel awkward at first, but will soon be approached by some genial fellow. Reuben Levy’s name is enough to gain a seat and a sociable demonstration of some simple effects. Eventually, the investigator will be asked to show a little magic trick—the Keeper should ask for a combined **Art/Craft (Stage Magic)** and **Sleight of Hand** roll, or just a Hard **Sleight of Hand** roll if the investigator has no stage magic training. Interestingly, even a simple failure will be enough to keep the company happy, as it demonstrates there’s some aptitude there, however unpolished it may be at that moment. If the investigator fumbles, though, or fails a pushed roll, things may become awkward. The gathering is for insiders—and prospective insiders—only; those attempting to gain access under such false pretenses will be asked to leave.

### *Talking the Talk*

Any of the attendees can elaborate on the relationship between Hawkings and Memphis. The two were great friends for four years, even attending this very meeting together on occasion. But, after the Bhutan incident in 1919, their relationship was never quite the same, with Memphis increasingly distant. It is common knowledge that they had a public bust-up around a year ago, after which Hawkings began to bad-mouth his former mentor. In fact, in the last six weeks, Hawkings’ friends have seen a radical shift in his personality. If pushed on this point, the magicians say that the once sociable and charming Hawkings seems long gone, and this new Hawkings is bitter, moody, and erratic.

Assuming the investigators witnessed the accident at **The Wilbur Theater** (page 112), the magicians here have also heard about it and know the fault lies with incorrect rigging,

## LEARNING MAGIC

The art of magic can be broadly divided into three areas that share many principles: close-up magic, stage magic, and mentalism. Fundamental to the performance of these is the Art/Craft (Stage Magic) skill, which works in combination with other skills to cover these three main areas during play.

### Skill: Art/Craft (Stage Magic) (05%)

Magic is a performance, and it needs the smooth patter, the seemingly effortless rapport with the audience, and the skilled presentation of the trick to make it a truly satisfying experience. That is what Art/Craft (Stage Magic) provides: not only the ability to create and present theatrical illusions on a small or grand scale, but the knowledge of how to draw an audience in, whatever its size, and hold them spellbound until that final reveal.

For grand stage magic, that is feats and illusions performed on a theatrical stage, use Art/Craft (Stage Magic) to judge the success of the performance. This may be supported by the Art/Craft (Acting) skill, which if successfully rolled, grants a bonus die to the Art/Craft (Stage Magic) roll.

Most magicians, however, begin with something small: close-up magic—more intimate tricks, often with cards or coins, and in close proximity to the spectators. Close-up tricks are more suitable for an impromptu performance, and are considerably easier to practice. Many people know one or two card tricks learned in an idle moment; executing one would normally require a successful Sleight of Hand roll, although this is unlikely to impress a professional to any great degree; however, a successful combined Art/Craft (Stage Magic) and Sleight of Hand roll adds subtleties and presentation to those basic moves, creating a genuinely astounding performance worthy of professional recognition.

The final area, mentalism, takes a more direct, psychological approach, and tends to use minimal equipment—not much beyond paper and pen. It usually involves apparent displays of mindreading, precognition, mind control, hypnosis, clairvoyance, and feats of memory, among other things. To successfully perform feats of mentalism requires a successful combined Art/Craft (Stage Magic) and Psychology roll (the latter may be substituted with Fast Talk at the Keeper's discretion). Unlike the Hypnosis skill (*Call of Cthulhu: Keeper Rulebook*, page 65),

the form of stage hypnosis covered by this combined skill roll cannot be used to treat mental trauma or phobias/manias. Many mentalists may claim to possess extraordinary mental powers but they are not necessarily the same as those who study hypnotism, which is a distinct and separate skill.

In summary:

- **Grand-scale stage magic:** Art/Craft (Stage Magic) roll and, optionally, an Art/Craft (Acting) roll to grant a bonus die.
- **Close-up magic:** combined Art/Craft (Stage Magic) and Sleight of Hand roll.
- **Mentalism magic:** combined Art/Craft (Stage Magic) and Psychology roll.

### Acquiring the Skill in Play

If rolling up an investigator from scratch, the player can choose to spend occupational skill points to gain Art/Craft (Stage Magic) during character creation if their investigator is a professional magician (using the suggested Magician occupation template found in *Roleplaying a Magician*, page 120), or they can spend personal interest skill points if they are merely interested amateurs. Depending on their specialty, they may also wish to spend points in Art/Craft (Acting), Psychology, and/or Sleight of Hand.

If, on the other hand, this scenario is being played with existing investigators, then they may wish to acquire some magic skills to help smooth the course of their inquiries. Normally, it takes four months of training and study to achieve 1D10 points in a skill; however, for expediency's sake, in this case, a short period of intensive work should be enough to get them started.

One obvious option at the investigators' disposal is to learn from a book, either one borrowed from the **Library** (page 116) or purchased from **Ace Emporium Magic Shop** (page 117). After a few days' demanding study and practice with no distractions, they may gain +1D10 skill points in Art/Craft (Stage Magic). Recruiting an accomplished magician, such as Reuben Levy or one of the professionals at **Nelson's Restaurant** (page 118), as a teacher for the same length of time guarantees an automatic gain of 10+1D6 skill points—the benefit of being taught by true experts.

## ROLEPLAYING A MAGICIAN

One of the many contradictions of a career in magic is that it requires great finesse in handling people; yet to acquire the necessary manual skills requires many, many hours of reclusive, single-minded practice. Its superstars in any era appear to be confident, powerful individuals. Look to their childhoods and you will likely discover a shy, awkward teenager who feels naked without a pack of cards on their person.

A professional magician thinks from the audience's perspective, and crafts an entertainment to satisfy them. A less talented amateur may focus more on technique and, as a result, deliver a rather mechanical experience.

All magicians share a love of secrets. Whether it be a sly finger movement to produce a pasteboard miracle, a concealed compartment in some stage apparatus, or a psychological ruse to manipulate a spectator's behavior, any secret information has an irresistible appeal. Indeed, the tragedy of the art is that people are attracted to it because they seek something that cannot be explained, something extraordinary, and in the end, all the wonders have a simple explanation. Magicians are thus particularly susceptible to the lure of the Cthulhu Mythos.

Rival magicians make for an excellent story. In practice, as a group, they seek each other's company, to talk about their secrets, to workshop techniques, and to show off esoteric effects that friends and family have long tired of. Not everyone is a performer, though—there is an honorable tradition of reclusive magic creators who sell their inventions, and the right to use them, to more extroverted colleagues. Copycat products and the unattributed use of another professional's material are eternal bones of contention.

Women magicians, although in the minority to this day, do exist in the 1920s, where they were normally encountered as mind-readers or “second sight” acts. Likewise, so-called psychics, with their séances and ectoplasmic productions, were often women.

### Occupation: Magician

*The Keeper may permit player-character magicians. If so, then use the following occupation template as a starting point.*

The magician uses sleight of hand, psychology, and misdirection to deceive their audience in the name of entertainment. The profession ranges from street performers busking for small change to touring conjurers of global renown. Within the field there is a range of specialties, such as highly choreographed stage illusions, death-defying escapes, and mind-reading, along with card and coin manipulation. A captivating presence and engaging repartee can be as important as the tricks one performs.

- **Occupation skill points:**  $\text{EDU} \times 2 + \text{DEX} \times 2$
- **Credit rating:** 9–70
- **Suggested contacts:** Vaudeville, theater, news and media industries, street criminals.
- **Skills:** Art/Craft (Acting), Art/Craft (Stage Magic), Disguise, one interpersonal skill (Charm, Fast Talk, Intimidate, or Persuade), Psychology, Sleight of Hand, Spot Hidden, any one other skill as a personal or era specialty.

something Hawkings should have checked himself. No self-respecting “artist” would not check their own props! They say, with some disdain.

If the investigators ingratiate themselves and manage to give the impression they are representing either Ingrid Schwartz or Harold Hawkings, one magician takes them aside. He is Max Marvello (**Dramatis Personae**, page 109), who has seen Hawkings' Gate box effect and, as impressive as it seems, assumes it is simply achieved with a double: a second man who looks identical to Hawkings (the standard explanation for such illusions). Marvello says he also watched the Memphis act five or six times, and was very disturbed by

it. Memphis gained a reputation among magicians over the years by taking classic effects one step further; for example, he did the Zig-Zag Girl (see **Prop Room/The Crime Scene**, page 125) with the boxes slid just a little farther than everybody else, so there was an actual gap between them. And, his teleportation effect had him appear in four different places around the auditorium so rapidly that it could not ordinarily have been achieved without three doubles—Marvello purchased a seat close to every location and, having known Memphis for years, is sure there were no doubles involved. He's at a loss to know how Memphis performed these feats. This is the heart of Marvello's unease, which he

is happy to share with the investigators. He knows multiple methods for almost every popular magic effect, and when he does not, he can usually figure out the method on a second viewing. The greatest effects that Memphis performed—each and every one of them—Marvello confesses (without ever breaking eye contact), had no possible method. A successful **Psychology** roll reveals that he is deeply disturbed by the show he repeatedly watched.

**Keeper note:** Memphis, of course, used powers granted by his devotion to Yog-Sothoth to perform these seemingly impossible illusions.

## THE MEMPHIS HOUSE

If the investigators arrive here early in the scenario, that's fine but don't move toward the climax just yet—refer to the nearby box, **Investigating the House**. Otherwise, if other leads and clues have been exhausted, feel free to ramp things up.

### EXTERNAL OBSERVATIONS

The Schwartz residence is hidden behind pines and maples, on its own grounds, in an affluent suburb. It is an 1890s construction in the Shingle style. The back wall of the property faces a vacant lot and anybody who bothers to look can find three sets of footprints in the dirt there, leading from the wall toward the rear of the house. No footprints return. A quick circuit of the house exterior reveals no other clues except, potentially, a boarded-up window on the rear veranda (**Prop Room/The Crime Scene**, page 125).

Providing they have the keys from George Pickering (**Palmer & Pickering, Attorneys-at-Law**, page 110) or, if not engaged by the lawyer, a spare set from Ingrid Schwartz (**The Wilbur Theater**, page 112), gaining entry to the house is simple. If they don't have keys, a successful **Locksmith** or **STR** roll admits access to the property via one of the doors on the first floor. Alternatively, the investigators could always take a leaf out of the Leary brothers' book and smash a window before climbing in, although this could arouse a neighbor's suspicion if they fail a group **Stealth** or **Luck** roll, leading to a visit by the local beat policeman and some quick thinking to avoid arrest.

Regardless of how they gain entry, on crossing the threshold for the first time, the investigator with the lowest POW feels a moment of dizziness as the disembodied Memphis takes a look inside their head.

## FIRST FLOOR

Refer to the floorplan, nearby, of **The Memphis House**; numbers in parentheses below refer to that plan.

### Sitting Room (1)

This circular room is a very pleasant space with couches and a fireplace. The sheer area of window space makes it feel almost like sitting outside. The trees in the grounds are carefully arranged to offer a view of downtown Boston, scenic both by day and night. An internal window lets light through to the rotunda stair.

#### *Cheap Scare*

- A dark shape flits past the internal window, seemingly going up the stairs.

### Dining Room (2)

The dining room offers views of the grounds, with trees carefully planted to give the impression of a rural setting. There is another internal window above the fireplace, to the rotunda (3) stair.

The dining table seats ten. A close look reveals a few nicks and scrapes indicating it has seen use in the past. Prominent among the room's decoration is a replica of the Nefertiti bust discovered at Amarna; a small plaque indicates it was a gift from Kaiser Wilhelm II in 1913.

#### *Cheap Scare*

- As an investigator looks away from the bust of Nefertiti, they are left with the strong impression that it had human eyes; men's eyes, in fact. Upon examination, it clearly does not.

### Rotunda (3)

This airy circular space rises the height of the house to a skylight set in the roof. A spiral staircase runs around its perimeter. Between the first and second floor, portraits of the Schwartz family decorate the walls—there are images also of Memphis the Great with his daughter Ingrid, and one with him posing with a younger Harold Hawkings.

Between the second floor and the attic are advertising posters for Memphis the Great. These play on the Egyptian theme, and feature magnificent burial chambers, hieroglyphs, and obelisks, with pyramids looming in the background. There is often a female assistant in robes and a black wig, in a trance or levitating. The most recent poster (dated 1923), depicts Memphis with Josephine Lynch.

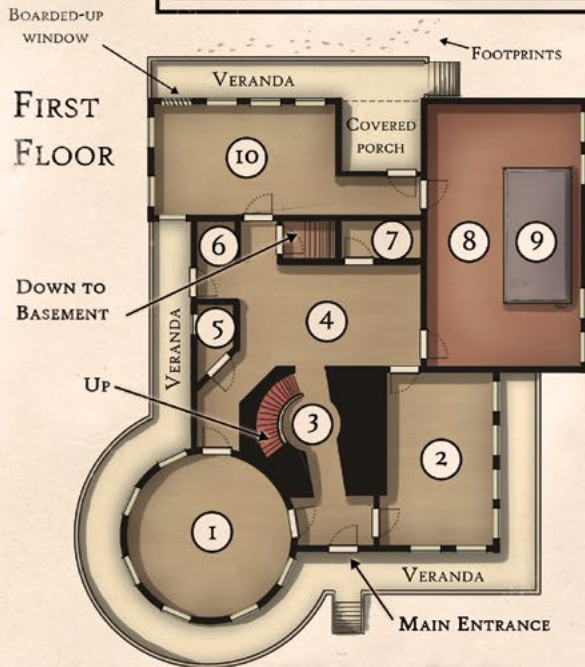
A small door is set into the stair wall just above the second floor. It is designed to fit in with the decor but does not require a roll to detect. The door provides access to storage space inside the sitting room's conical roof (**Storage Room**, page 126).

# THE MEMPHIS HOUSE

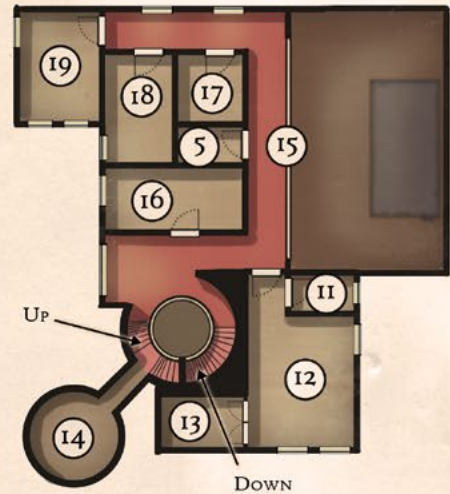
*A plan of the Schwartz residence.*

SCALE IN IMPERIAL YARDS

0 2 4 6 8 10



SECOND FLOOR



BASEMENT



ATTIC



## Explanation

- 1 Sitting room
- 2 Dining room
- 3 Rotunda
- 4 Kitchen
- 5 WC
- 6 Cloakroom
- 7 Pantry
- 8 Theater conversion
- 9 Stage
- 10 Prop room/ Crime scene
- 11 En-suite
- 12 Master bedroom
- 13 Walk-in wardrobe
- 14 Storage
- 15 Theater gallery
- 16 Guest bedroom
- 17 Bathroom
- 18 Ingrid's room
- 19 Workshop
- 20 Basement storage
- 21 Library



## INVESTIGATING THE HOUSE

The first time the investigators visit the Memphis mansion, allow them to study the crime scene and explore the house a little. Memphis is irritated by these snoopers in his home but understands they are not there to cause him harm (yet...). He, therefore, tries to discourage their presence by throwing some trivial spooky effects at them—see the **Cheap Scares** listed for each room for some suggestions. At the Keeper's discretion, a cheap scare may call for a **Sanity** roll (0/1 loss), but only apply this where suitable, i.e. where the player seems a little spooked, otherwise these small scares may seem heavy handed. Use a few of these, sparingly, to create atmosphere and plant the idea that there is something strange about this dwelling.

Once they've had an initial look around, try to find a reason to get the investigators out of the house and back to town. If they know Ingrid Schwartz, perhaps she calls round to fetch them and take them to a café, as she's met a helpful policeman who has new information and wants to relate it to them (this may be useful if they need an alternative link to Inspector Edwards, **The Police Station**, page 116), or she wants to come clean and tell them about her concerns regarding Hawkings. If they haven't already seen it, remind the investigators that they have tickets for the Harold Hawkings show that night, reminding them it is time to head for the theater. Perhaps, they want to know about a particular magic trick found in the house, and so need to make a visit to **Ace Emporium Magic Shop** (page 117). Finally, you may have Josephine Lynch drive up to the house (**More Possibilities**, below), who gets talking with the investigators and lures them away for a chat and a drink (**The Speakeasy**, page 112). But, don't sweat it. If they are adamant about sticking around the house let them, and dial up the tension accordingly.

As the investigation deepens and the climax approaches, the investigators should return to the house, particularly if they've learned of the fractious relationship between Hawkings and Memphis, and Schwartz's suspicions about her fiancé's behavior on the night her father vanished. Should they begin to actively work against the disembodied Memphis, or as the climax approaches, escalate the scares with the **Sanity-Blasting Horrors** found in several of the room descriptions.

The **Sanity** loss for each horror is listed at the end of its entry. Again, use these with care, or the investigators may be in no fit state to take part in the denouement.

Besides trying to frighten them, Memphis also attempts to drain magic points from the investigators while they are in the house. As appropriate, challenge one of them to an opposed **POW** roll; if they lose, have that investigator feel suddenly fatigued and drained of 1D3 magic points. You may or may not want to tell their player what has happened; if not, keep a tally of each investigator's current magic points in secret.

### More Possibilities

If the investigators are not working officially for the estate, Pickering may regard them as trespassers and turn up with the police if he becomes aware of the investigators' intention to visit the house. The police may turn up anyway, called by an anxious neighbor, depending on how suspiciously the investigators behave while on the property—after all, the residents are a little twitchy given what happened inside not that long ago.

During the early stages of their exploration, and particularly if they start opening a lot of drawers, remind the investigators that they are wandering around the private home of a celebrity whose current whereabouts are unknown; one who is likely to be displeased if he returns to find a mess.

If they haven't met her anywhere else, and she's learned of their investigation, then while they're poking around is a perfect opportunity to introduce Josephine Lynch, driving Memphis' car up to the house to see who is invading her employer's home. A successful **Listen** roll identifies the sound of a powerful car approaching; a Hard success or better suggests it may well be Memphis' missing Cadillac Type V-63. Anyone seeing the car may expect Memphis himself, although it soon becomes clear that the driver is a stunning blonde rather than an older man. Once inside the house, Lynch may feign initial outrage at their interference with her master's things, then begin to seduce or manipulate individual investigators in order to derail their investigation. See also **Keeping on Track** (page 133) for further ways of using Lynch to move the story on.





**Keeper note:** if the investigators learn of the Contact Yog-Sothoth spell (*Thaumaturgical Prodigies in the New England Canaan*, page 115), you may wish to encourage them to think that this vertical space is designed to be the tower required by the spell—assuming they have read the spell, a successful **Cthulhu Mythos** roll confirms that a “tower” is required for the summoning. Perhaps the peculiar alignment of circular rooms in an otherwise regular building is designed to allow Memphis to sacrifice all of Boston? None of this is true, of course—these are simply standard features in this style of house.

#### *Cheap Scares*

- A portrait or poster might detach from the wall and fall to the floor.
- If an investigator looks down the rotunda from the attic space, have it buckle and telescope like the dolly-zoom effect (as seen in *Vertigo*; Hitchcock, 1958).

#### *Sanity-Blasting Horror*

- From the same position, turn the rotunda floor into a portal through which an investigator sees an immense writhing and suppurating alien entity. As they look, the entity notices them and draws close with immense, lidless eyes before the portal closes (1/1D10 Sanity loss).

#### **Kitchen (4)**

As is common with this style of house, the kitchen is a central hub with a small table for informal meals. The room is largely unremarkable. With Memphis “away,” the cook, Mary-Anne Hope, has disposed of any food likely to spoil. Mary-Anne is used to the magician’s spontaneous disappearances, although she usually finds a note on the table informing her of his absence. She is not due back at the house for another day or so, but should the investigators track her down, they find her to be a large, philosophical lady who comes in weekly or as directed to maintain kitchen stocks and cater any formal meals. Memphis cooks his own food at irregular hours. Mary-Anne has heard about the break-in but not about the violence involved.

The kitchen also houses the door to the basement (20). If investigators thinking of going downstairs, they can locate a flashlight and a couple of small oil lanterns in one of the kitchen’s cupboards. Upon opening the door to the basement, permit them to make a **Listen** roll; with a success, they hear something moving (a Hard success suggests that there is more than one thing moving)—most likely, rats or mice (**Basement**, page 131).

#### *Cheap Scares*

- Have a sharp kitchen knife (normally in a drawer) appear on the worktop between visits to this room.

- Have the cellar door open while the investigators are out of the room (this might happen several times).

## W.C. (5), Cloakroom (6), Pantry (7)

Regular rooms with nothing of interest within.

## Theater Conversion (8, 9)

This room, occupying two stories, is not part of the original house design. Memphis sacrificed rooms on both the first and second floors in order to construct a small but usable theater within his home. A gallery (15) for the theater was created on the second floor at the same time by opening up one of the corridors. Heavy drapes line the theater's exterior walls; these can be closed to entirely block the windows. There is a proper theatrical stage occupying around 50 percent of the room's width; it is raised 3 feet (90 cm) off the ground with a slight incline toward the audience space. It has two working trapdoors, well-concealed (Hard **Spot Hidden** roll). There is also a simple curtain mechanism around the stage itself and some stage lighting rigged from the second-floor gallery.

The audience space has room for four or five rows of chairs; these are currently stacked to the side, against the wall. Behind the audience space, the real reason for this room is revealed: a massive mirror, as might be found in a dance studio, occupying the entire wall. Memphis can thus try out new illusions here and check the angles without assistance. Josephine Lynch loves this room, for obvious reasons.

Friends of the family, such as Mr. Pickering, may recall having visited this room for small festive talent shows and other such events—these terminated after the Bhutan visit of 1919.

## Cheap Scare

- Have a trapdoor suddenly open beneath any investigator who crosses the stage; a successful **Jump** roll spares them 1D2 damage as they fall into the space below.

## Sanity-Blasting Horror

- Torment any shy and retiring investigators if they are caught alone in here. The house lights turn off abruptly, the external curtains sweep closed; the investigator is blinded by spotlights and can hear an entire theater waiting to be entertained. If the investigator tries to walk off the stage, it extends indefinitely in every direction while the spotlights follow their path. Whatever they do, the unseen audience begins to vent its displeasure with jeers. After a period, the spotlights fade, allowing a brief glimpse of the audience: a twisted mob of deformed, toothy fiends. Finally, the whole stage jerks beneath the investigator, knocking them down. When they regain their footing, the room is normal again (0/1D6 Sanity loss).

## Prop Room/The Crime Scene (10)

If one of their earliest ports of call is the Memphis house, then on their first visit, the investigators can easily locate the crime scene from the outside thanks to the boarded-up window the thieves broke in through. Otherwise, they'll have to make their way through the house to find it.

**Keeper note:** if the investigators tarry, then Palmer & Pickering engage tradesmen to replace the window and cleaners to eliminate the blood, meaning that the investigators may have a harder time identifying where the incident took place, unless they've got on the good side of Inspector Edwards (**The Police Station**, page 116) and have been informed the location of the incident was in the "prop room," or been told the gory details by Orson Vaughan (**The Speakeasy**, page 112).

The murders happened in here—a storage and working area for Memphis the Great's stage apparatus. The room is filled with magic tricks and boxes containing more magic tricks. Various paraphernalia can be found, including lengths of velvet fabric, over-sized playing cards, coils of rope, bundles of silk handkerchiefs, and assorted magical apparatus. Of course, the bodies have been removed, but the blood may still be there, waiting to be cleaned up. Although not cluttered, the room contains many pieces of equipment, three of which were used in the incident.

- The first is a sword box, within which an assistant is placed and blades are then thrust through, with the "victim" emerging mysteriously unharmed. Five swords from this effect were used to skewer the first of the Leary brothers, several passing all the way through his torso to pin him to the wall. The holes are clearly visible in the plasterwork, soaked with blood.
- The second piece of equipment of note is a pot and rope used for the Indian Rope Trick. The second Leary brother was hanged by the rope, his feet kicking over the pot as he was dragged into the air. The rope was tied to the room's central chandelier.
- The third Leary brother met his end in a particularly grotesque way, with an item called a Wrist Chopper. This is a device with a hand-operated guillotine blade. In the stage act, this is shown to slice vegetables, and then a volunteer's wrist is locked in place. With much fanfare, the blade is dropped again, only for it to seemingly pass through the participant's wrist, leaving them unharmed, thanks to a hinged section of the blade which moves up out of the way. The remaining Leary brother was not so lucky, and the process was repeated again and again on his remaining extremities.

*Opposite: The sanity-blasting horror in the rotunda*

**Keeper note:** the police removed the swords, rope, and guillotine device during their investigation, but now, with the case closed, they have been returned to this room. Thus, all these items have been placed near the doorway from the kitchen. The police tags, noting them as evidence, have not been removed.

**Keeper note:** the animating force behind the murders was, of course, Memphis the Great. Overcome with rage at seeing these criminals break into his house and interfere with his professional equipment, he discovered he could still influence the house and its contents even in his disembodied state.

The Keeper should feel free to add any other magic equipment they like to the prop room. One item might be the Zig-Zag Girl—a stack of three boxes within which the assistant stands. The boxes are then slid horizontally apart, apparently disrupting the body within completely at two points. Invented by Robert Harbin in the 1960s, the trick is anachronistic but its theme of planar distortion is so appropriate that the Keeper might include it and hope none of the players are magic historians!

### *Cheap Scares*

- While the investigators are looking the other way, have the guillotine blade drop suddenly with an unnervingly loud click.
- Have the top coil of rope slip from a bundle and unravel across the floor like a snake, sliding just a couple of feet farther than seems natural.
- The first time the investigators examine the swords, have them in a canvas bag. The next time they see them, the bag has vanished or been cut to shreds.

## SECOND FLOOR

### Master Bedroom (11, 12, 13)

This is Axel Schwartz's bedroom (12), which has a private en-suite bathroom (11) and a walk-in wardrobe (13). The bedroom's restful decor is in stark contrast to all the pomp and ostentation of his persona as Memphis the Great. There is a plain, comfortable double bed, a bedside cabinet, and a sparsely filled walk-in wardrobe with a selection of unremarkable suits and shoes. Even the wallpaper is muted.

In a drawer of the bedside cabinet is Memphis' travel journal (see following), a battered pocket-size notebook bound in brown leather and embossed with a gold outline of an ibis hieroglyph (the Egyptian god Thoth). Resting on top of the notebook is a well-worn key, which unlocks the door to the **Workshop** on this floor.

**Keeper note:** Memphis does not produce weird phenomena in this room unless sorely pressed.

### *Travel Journal*

The book is about 80 percent full and dates back to early 1917, recording tours of Europe and North America. The journal has not been updated for six weeks. If the investigators do not make the obvious connection, a successful **INT** roll shows that Memphis takes this journal everywhere he goes. And, since he has not taken the journal, his current disappearance does not look planned. Indeed, it is unlikely he has gone on any journey by his own free will.

There is a distinct change in style around April to May 1919. Its earlier cool and observant travel writing, humorous and personal at times, melts into a more obscure, penetrating style, asking strange questions and using both cryptic abbreviations and bizarre words, e.g. Tawil at-Umr, the Opened Way, and the Daemon Sultan, to name but a few. A successful **Cthulhu Mythos** roll notes the names as concerning the Outer God, Yog-Sothoth and the mindless thing at the center of the universe known as Azathoth. The most interesting section covers the Bhutan episode, where the style changes (**Handout: Memphis 4**, pages 1-2), while there is also a revealing entry further on (**Handout: Memphis 5**).

### Storage Room, off Rotunda (14)

Accessed through the door in the rotunda's wall (3), this room contains mostly dusty archives and accounts ledgers, but there is one item that stands out: an intriguing hamper-sized cabinet decorated in an Asiatic style.

### *The Puzzle Box*

This is a richly carved cabinet the size of a small hamper. A successful **Archeology** or **Appraise** roll identifies its origin as 18th century Bhutan. From the external bangs and scrapes, it's certainly had some adventures. It seems like it should open, but there is no obvious lid. The opening mechanism is a puzzle, requiring a successful **Locksmith** or **Mechanical Repair** roll; if failed, a little needle shoots out and jabs the investigator with black lotus powder (*Call of Cthulhu: Keeper Rulebook*, page 268), although this is a mild dose causing the victim to suffer disturbing but less than revelatory hallucinations for 1D6 × 10 minutes before collapsing into unconsciousness for 1D4 hours. The needle only triggers once, and thereafter the cabinet can be safely opened (see **The Plane Orbs**, see page 130).

**Keeper note:** have fun with crafting the hallucinations for affected investigators. They may appear similar to the distortions in the fabric of the house that Memphis causes during the **Conclusion** (page 133), or could be based on

April 22nd, 1919

Finally, quiet. The monks seemed obsessed with their music rituals, if I can credit that discordant assembly of flutes, horns, bells, and drums with the term. Here on this track we hear only the wind and the cries of strange birds.

April 23rd, 1919

A herdsman tried to interest me in the legend of the migoi, and claimed to possess the skull of such a beast that he would be happy to show me. He had the eyes of a monte man I studied in New York last year. We declined his kind offer and wished him good health. He spat on the ground and muttered a curse as we left.

April 25th, 1919

Still cannot find a trace of this supposed mystic. The forest thinned out as we climbed, and I am certain we are in the right place, judging by the alignment of the mountains. There is no obvious animal life here, and the silence is eerie. If we find nothing tomorrow, we must turn back in order to fulfill our royal appointment.

April 26th, 1919

Darkness is coming on. We should have turned back today. But in the twilight, Josephine spotted what appears to be a man-made stone tower on an outcrop. If we investigate at first light and are disappointed, we can still make it back in time to perform for the king.

April 27th, 1919

This man is as rich a mystery as I have discovered in years. I cannot quite translate his name—it yields something like "Maker of Gates." It seems ironic since his cave dwelling has no protection except blankets. He seems to have no fear of wild beasts.

April 29th, 1919

He levitated my shoe today, completely impromptu. I saw it too. He let me pass my hand completely around it and pluck it from the air. The only possible explanation is that he has been feeding us hallucinogens.

May 4th, 1919

I think I see. But he is holding something back.

May 9th, 1919

Seems totally uninterested in J, despite her dedication to her studies.

May 10th, 1919

He will carry out the call tonight. We must all stand in the tower at the appointed time. His eyes have changed.

May 11th, 1919

The spheres! I see. I see. I see. I see. I see. I see. I see. I see. I see. I see.

May 12th, 1919

I looked for remains. There were none. I copied the symbols. We must have a story to explain our absence.

*Handout: Memphis 5*

Nov 16th, 1925

Philips states  $\gamma$ - $\Sigma$  is "coterminous with all time and space." If I can reliably open the way, no frontier would be forbidden. I could travel the very structures of the cosmos, as a spider might traverse the joists and eaves of a house.

previous Mythos experiences. If the investigators are failing to draw the correct conclusions to the situation, the Keeper may have the hallucinations reveal key plot points to help them along. Apply Sanity loss as appropriate.

### *The Plane Orbs*

Inside the puzzle box lies a velvet tray holding seven spheres the size of oranges. Their surfaces have a milky, shifting consistency. If they are brought near to something that resonates with the energies of Yog-Sothoth, they instead glow a rich purple. In close proximity to Harold Hawkings, the spheres take on a faint glow, while the presence of Memphis (as he manipulates the house) brings on a much stronger glow. They do not react to Josephine Lynch at all.

If one of the orbs is broken (hit hard or thrown onto a hard surface), a thin vapor escapes from the shards, leaving behind what appears to be an empty shell. Breaking an orb briefly disrupts the planes—this doesn't rob either Hawkings or Memphis of their spells but does reduce their effects, halving damage or an effect's duration at the Keeper's discretion. More importantly, a broken orb temporarily "locks" its immediate physical surroundings, pausing any of the effects caused by Memphis, which may prove useful if Memphis is distorting the architecture. For more, see **Confronting the Presence**, page 133. A broken orb's effects last 1D6 rounds. Breaking multiple orbs at the same time stacks the length of their effect (multiply 1D6 by the number of orbs broken).

### **Theater Gallery (15)**

Gallery for the theater (8) below, with some stacked wooden chairs.

### **Guest Bedroom (16)**

A sunny and comfortable room with a double bed, wardrobe, and desk of no particular character. The wardrobe is empty and the desk contains only writing paper and envelopes.

#### *Cheap Scares*

- Particularly if the group has played "*The Haunting*" from the *Call of Cthulhu Quick-Start* booklet, attract an investigator's attention to something in the garden. When they stand in front of the window, the bed jerks briefly toward them as if attempting to push them through the glass. This time, though, it stops short.
- An investigator alone in this room begins to feel hot and dry as a strange sensation develops: the feeling of desert wind on their face, the sound of whips cracking, and the noise of huge loads of stone being dragged across rough ground.

#### *Sanity-Blasting Horror*

- The same trick of forcing an investigator to witness a traumatic scene from their past can be played here, using the same wall from the other side (**Ingrid's Bedroom**, below). Alternatively, a scene from Ancient Egypt materializes before them, showing the mummification of a pharaoh (1/1D4 Sanity loss).

### **WC/Bathroom (5, 17)**

These are both unremarkable, but necessary, rooms.

#### *Cheap Scare*

- The shape of the bath or basin fluctuates, rippling like water. The effect is subtle but enough to cause an investigator to doubt what they are seeing.

### **Ingrid's Bedroom (18)**

Although Ingrid Schwartz moved out of the house to a hotel some time ago, this room is still recognizably hers. The decor has a more feminine aspect, while the wardrobe contains a few pieces of discarded teenage clothing.

A successful **Spot Hidden** roll finds a publicity photograph of Harold Hawkings, which has fallen down the back of the dresser. In this shot, he looks very young.

**Keeper note:** avoid using a cheap scare in this room.

#### *Sanity-blasting Horror*

- Best applied to an investigator alone in the room. The wall between this and the guest bedroom shimmers, then blinks away, revealing a traumatic scene from the investigator's past (use their backstory as inspiration). This is no illusion but an actual gateway through time and space to the event itself. The scene plays out again, its participants unable to perceive the voyeur from the future. The investigator cannot change the past: bullets or other objects dematerialize at the gateway, and if the investigator attempts to leap through they are knocked back, receiving 1D3 damage from a strange, blue flare. Unless the investigator refuses to watch and immediately leaves the room, the Keeper should call for a **Sanity** roll and apply a loss appropriate to the event witnessed (suggest 0/1D4 to 1D3/1D6)—depending on the nature of the event, this could also prove to be a cathartic moment (with a Sanity gain if the Sanity roll is successful).

### **Workshop (19)**

This room sits directly above the prop room (10) and its door is kept locked (the key is in the master bedroom). The door can be bashed open with a successful **STR** roll or have its lock picked with a successful **Locksmith** roll.

## HOUSE OF MEMPHIS

The door is kept locked because this is where Memphis devises and builds his new illusions. The room is somewhat messy, containing partially assembled props and spare pieces of wood. A rack of tools sits opposite the windows. The new props are completely mechanical and without much in the way of Egyptian styling—these are the bare bones of illusions to come. An investigator making an extended examination of the pieces may attempt a **Mechanical Repair** roll to gain an insight into the workings of a particular illusion.

A dressing screen divides the room. Behind the screen are covered racks of Memphis' costumes, as well as a sewing machine. Memphis actually performs much of his own tailoring, enabling him to install secret pockets and other subterfuges.

### *Cheap Scare*

- The sewing machine runs by itself behind the screen.

## ATTIC

Above the stairs, guarding the entrance to the attic, is an eye inscribed into the woodwork; it is an Evil Eye ward (*Call of Cthulhu: Keeper Rulebook*, page 259). Any investigator passing through its gaze suffers the following for the next 24 hours: their chance of succeeding at a Luck roll is halved, their gun jams on a roll of 75% or higher, and they must take a penalty die on all characteristic rolls. Should any investigator be foolish enough to stand and stare at the eye for an extended period, the Keeper should ask for a **POW** roll; failure induces a momentary faint, causing the investigator to tumble down the stair for 1D3 damage.

The entire attic space is given over to Memphis' library (21). The sloping walls restrict the amount of floor space and thus the bookshelves are close to the ground. Skylights offer enough natural illumination to read by, and there are a couple of desks and comfortable study chairs.

**Keeper note:** Harold Hawkings made use of the books in this room in pre-Bhutan days.

Most of the books contain a monogrammed bookplate identifying them as belonging to Memphis the Great, although some just have the initials "A.S." written on the flyleaf in pencil. The books change character as one goes deeper into the library. On the shelves nearest to the door are standard works of historical and anthropological interest. Halfway in, abruptly, the collection turns to books about theatrical magic (a useful resource for budding magicians; see **Learning Magic**, page 119); many are contemporary, but mixed in are much older volumes, including a 1665 edition of *The Discoverie of Witchcraft*—an exposé on the work of medieval charlatans

and the first published book on magic. The collection is not exhaustive, but it is highly selective. Almost any major conjuring work of significance can be found here. The final section, at the back, contains occult books; a successful **Spot Hidden** or **Library Use** roll finds a 15th century tome in English, the *Book of Eibon* (see box, nearby).

While Memphis may not actually prevent an investigator from removing the *Book of Eibon* (see page 132) from the house, they will definitely experience an unfortunate happening while attempting to leave with it—as they descend the staircase, a stair becomes temporarily insubstantial and their foot seems to actually pass through it. The Keeper should ask for a **DEX** roll: failure means a fall down the stairs, face first, for 1D6 damage; a fumble indicates a fall over the banister for 1D6+2 damage. A successful **Jump** roll halves damage.

## BASEMENT

The basement (20) is a chilly, dark space and rather empty. Kitchen supplies and chopped firewood can be found near the access stairs, while numerous food sacks contain vegetables and grains. During the last six weeks, rats have found a way to access the basement and now forage among the food sacks. The first time an investigator shifts a sack, the Keeper should call for a **Luck** roll; failure means a bite to the hand (1 damage)—a wicked Keeper may ask for a **CON** roll to determine if the bite becomes infected, causing a penalty die for the next 1D3 days on DEX rolls or skills requiring manual dexterity involving the bitten hand. In any case, the rats scatter to the northeast corner upon being disturbed. Investigation reveals nothing suspicious down here, although some very old props from the early days of Schwartz's pre-Memphis career are piled at the back of the basement, including trick canes, an escape trunk, a small valise, hatbox, and so on. These are rather cheap and do not feature his later trademark Egyptian styling. Their paint is flaking and the wood is rotten in places.

### *Cheap Scares*

- Investigators isolated down here can be intimidated with the simple "door slams shut and lantern blows out" trick. Cold air from the rat hole and unexpected noises from the darkness should be enough.

### *Sanity-Blasting Horror*

- A gust of hot air rushes across the investigators, first in one direction and then the reverse. The blast is powerful enough to knock them to the ground if failing a **DEX** roll. It feels like something immense is breathing in and out, in and out... (1/1D2 Sanity loss).

## PUTTING IT TOGETHER

By now, the investigators should have uncovered numerous clues to help them figure out what is going on. These are summarized below:

- The official police verdict is a whitewash. Underworld figures at **The Speakeasy** (page 112), including Orson Vaughan, are adamant that the burglary team would not have killed each other, and Inspector Edwards admits he was pressured into closing the case (**The Police Station**, page 116). Vaughan even suspects that Memphis, or one of his fellow magicians, may be involved in the deaths.
- Something happened to Memphis and his assistant, Josephine Lynch, while they were in Bhutan. **Handouts: Memphis 1–2** give the official story, but the magicians at **Nelson's Restaurant** (page 118), and even his own daughter,

Ingrid Schwartz, confirm Memphis' personality changed as a result of his time there and he withdrew from his old friends and acquaintances upon returning to Boston. Schwartz even grew to fear him and moved out of the family home as a result. Some of the details of that unearthly transformative experience are described in **Handout: Memphis 4**.

- The relationship between Memphis and Harold Hawkings was on the rocks when the older magician disappeared. **Handout: Memphis 3** underlines their initial happiness at the arrangement, but, Reuben Levy (**Ace Emporium Magic Shop**, page 117) and the magicians at **Nelson's Restaurant** (page 118), along with Ingrid Schwartz, describe how that friendship has broken down, to the point that their professional relationship ceased a year ago.
- Harold Hawkings has undergone a personality change in recent weeks and is under some sort of strain. The investigators can observe some of this for themselves at



## BOOK OF EIBON

*English, translator unknown, circa 15<sup>th</sup> century*

A flawed translation from the Latin *Liber Ivonis*, the earliest and most complete version of a manuscript alleged to have been written by the notorious wizard Eibon. While the contents will require much time to comprehend, the reader may be drawn to two places in particular, due to the book's spine being cracked in a couple of places (thus, the book falls open at either of these pages). The first place concerns "contacting Yok Zothoth" and appears to be a formula and/or ritual for summoning something, while the second place, further on in the book, opens on a "spell" called "Call Forth Ye Form Beyonde," that suggests something to do with "unrested spirits."

**Keeper note:** the latter spell is important (see **Putting It Together**, above, and the **Conclusion**, page 133), so ensure the investigators note the place and contents where the book falls open. If they fail to do this (perhaps they do not find the book), then Howard Hawkings might act to get the book and use the spell.

**Sanity Loss:** 2D4

**Cthulhu Mythos:** +3/+8 percentiles

**Mythos Rating:** 33

**Study:** 32 weeks

**Spells:** Breath of the Dark Sea (Create Mist of R'lyeh), Call Forth Ye Form Beyonde, Contact Spawn of Zhothaquah (Contact Formless Spawn), Contact Yok Zothoth (Contact Yog-Sothoth), Create Gate, Wither Limb.

### Spell: Call Forth Ye Form Beyonde

- **Cost:** variable magic points; 1D4 Sanity points
- **Casting time:** 30 minutes

This spell "draws into the physical plane any presence which lingers unseen," meaning, basically, that it forces a psychic presence to take physical shape. There must be a primary caster who leads the ritual, although any number of others may support. To cast the spell requires 5 magic points and 30 minutes of chanting. Every additional magic point spent by the caster or supporter reduces the casting time by 1 minute, to a minimum of 1 minute. Upon the conclusion of this time, the caster must make a Hard POW roll to successfully cast the spell. Once identified within the *Book of Eibon*, this spell can be learned with one day's study.



**The Wilbur Theater** (page 112). Other than that, Ingrid Schwartz, as Hastings' fiancée, can relate the details of his increasing instability and how it mirrors those changes undergone by her father (**Meeting Ingrid Schwartz**, page 115), and the magicians at **Nelson's Restaurant** (page 118) are also able to confirm his erratic behavior.

- Memphis is not away on any research trip this time. If he was, he would have taken his travel journal with him (**Master Bedroom**, page 126). If the investigators have gained Ingrid Schwartz's confidence, she admits that she suspects Hawkings is responsible for her father's disappearance (**Meeting Ingrid Schwartz**, page 115). Hawkings' possession of a book from Memphis' library (**Meeting Harold Hawkings**, page 114), and his suspicious behavior regarding it, seem to support her fears that he has been in her father's house in recent weeks.
- There is no rational explanation for some of Memphis' effects. At least, not according to Max Marvello (**Nelson's Restaurant**, page 118), although **Handout: Memphis 5** suggests that Memphis could be exploiting another method to achieve his illusions.
- Something is definitely amiss in **The Memphis House** (page 121), as evidenced by the investigators' experience of the unsettling phenomena when they visit and explore the scene of the crime. There are also strange books (**The Book of Eibon**, page 132) and even stranger artifacts (**The Plane Orbs**, page 130) scattered throughout the house.

If the investigators deduce that Memphis inhabits the house somehow (perhaps from **Handout: Memphis 5**), they can use the **Call Forth Ye Form Beyonde** spell (page 132) in the *Book of Eibon* to pull Memphis into a physical form, while the orbs provide limited ammunition to deal with his uncanny assault (**Confronting the Presence**, page 133).

If they don't figure it out, Memphis draws Hawkings to the house, intent on possessing him (**The Showdown**, page 135). The investigators may interfere at their own risk, but their assistance is potentially the only way that Schwartz and Hawkings can be reunited without Memphis' shadow hanging over them, however briefly. After all, Hawkings is guilty of murder, and there's no guarantee that his sanity will remain intact after facing off against his mentor one last time.

## CONCLUSION

The investigation will likely reach its conclusion in one of two ways: either the investigators realize there is a lingering and malevolent presence in the house (and learn how to confront it), or Hawkings is drawn to the house for a final struggle with his nemesis, Memphis.

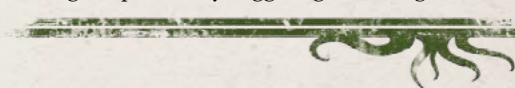


## KEEPING ON TRACK

If the investigators become sidetracked or seem to unsure of where to go next, you may need to nudge them toward the salient clues. The two most useful tools for this are Ingrid Schwartz and Josephine Lynch.

Should the investigators know Schwartz—through their visit to the theater—but don't really develop the relationship, or not think to engage with the city's magic community, have Reuben Levy get in touch with Schwartz claiming to have some information that might be important, or to know someone who does. Then, Schwartz can contact the investigators and direct them to Levy's shop (**Ace Emporium Magic Shop**, page 117) where he can point them in the direction of **Nelson's Restaurant** (page 118).

Should the investigators become prematurely fixated on the mansion itself, it won't hurt to remind them they are essentially snooping around the house of an influential celebrity—who may, theoretically, return at any moment—while there are other avenues they could be exploring. If this is not enough, introduce (or re-introduce) Josephine Lynch. Although she is distrusted at both establishments, she can lead them to either **Nelson's Restaurant** (page 118) or **The Speakeasy** (page 112) as a ploy to get them out of the house long enough for Memphis to complete his ensnarement of Hawkings—remember, Lynch is in cahoots with Memphis. For instance, she might claim that a completely innocuous magician was involved in Memphis' disappearance, purely because that magician rejected her advances in the past. As an interesting twist, depending on what they've done to upset her by this point, Lynch may even take a drive-by shot at any investigators hanging around outside the house before roaring off, potentially triggering a thrilling car chase.



## CONFRONTING THE PRESENCE

If the investigators decide to deal with the discarnate magician by casting the spell **Call Forth Ye Form Beyonde** (page 132), they can improve their chances of success by using the plane orbs (**Storage Room**, page 126) to locate the spot in the house where Memphis' presence is currently strongest, and cast the spell there. The Keeper may locate this wherever they like; the prop room is the most obvious place because of the possibilities it offers, though the house's

theater or its library in the attic are both suitable, if distinctly less entertaining, alternatives. If they do cast the spell in the most advantageous location, wherever the Keeper decides that is, they gain a bonus die on the casting roll.

Memphis tries to disrupt the investigators' spellcasting as he understands what its completion would mean. Therefore, he uses the powers at his command to attack the investigators. Although his previous corporeal form was magically destroyed, he can still use spells while disembodied, and can spend his magic points on various location-based attacks. The Keeper should try to use these in combination to maintain tension and drama during the spellcasting, especially if it is taking place in the prop room. If at any point during the ritual the chant falters, or the primary caster drops out for more than 3 rounds, the spell automatically fails and must be begun again.

If the spell is cast at the crime scene, then the following special attacks are available to Memphis. In any other location, unless otherwise stated in an attack's description, he is limited to the appropriate sanity-blasting horrors for the room in question, if they haven't already been used, or the **Architectural Distortions** attack (following).

### Memphis' Special Attacks

#### *Floating Swords/Knives*

For 1 magic point per item per round, Memphis can animate chopping knives from the kitchen or the swords from the burglary murder. He requires a successful POW roll to hit. An investigator may Dodge or perform a fighting maneuver to trap the floating weapon. Memphis can, of course, simply animate a different weapon as needed on a following round. A successful hit deals 1D4+1 damage. Any spellcasting investigator struck must succeed in a **POW** roll to keep chanting despite the pain.

#### *Indian Rope*

For 2 magic points per round, Memphis can control a length of rope, causing it to whip around in the air like a snake. He requires a successful Hard POW roll to hit and wrap it around the victim's neck. An investigator may Dodge or fight back as normal. If the attack succeeds, the victim is dragged into the air and begins to asphyxiate, losing 1D3 hit points per round. It takes a successful Extreme **STR** roll to free oneself, although other investigators can free them with a successful Regular **STR** roll, but only if they stop chanting to concentrate on the task.

#### *Wrist Chopper*

For 3 magic points per round, Memphis can attempt to possess an investigator and drag them toward the

wrist chopper and its hungry blade. This act requires the disembodied magician to succeed at an opposed **POW** roll versus the target. If Memphis wins, the investigator remains fully conscious throughout and may attempt another opposed **POW** roll on consecutive rounds to regain control and throw off the possession. The Keeper may choose the number of rounds it will take to approach the chopper: 3 is a suitable number, but adjust this as necessary. An investigator putting a hand or foot into the chopper will lose it, suffering 1D4+2 damage, and possibly, a Major Wound. Other investigators can attempt to keep the possessed person away from the apparatus with a successful opposed **STR** roll versus the possessed investigator. If the victim has a higher Build than their rescuer, a penalty die is added to the roll.

Alternatively, Memphis attempts to use the Zig-Zag Girl apparatus, forcing the possessed investigator inside and then crushing them for 1D6 damage per round they are interred. The cabinet's door can be ripped open and the victim pulled free with a successful **STR** roll, although the rescuer cannot maintain their chant while doing so.

Should Memphis exhaust his magic points, he may rest and regain them at the rate of 1 per minute (for further details, see Memphis' profile in **Creatures and Monsters**, page 141). During this period, all attacks stop and the house becomes eerily quiet.

#### *Architectural Distortions*

For a one-off spend of 10 magic points, Memphis can distort the very structure of the house, reshaping the rooms in disturbing, non-Euclidean ways and provoking a **Sanity** roll (0/1D3 loss)—any investigator failing the Sanity roll also breaks their chant. Here are some suggestions for how Memphis warps the house:

- A new doorway or window opens up that clearly leads to a room not situated on the other side of that wall; perhaps, one on a different floor or one directly behind the investigators. They may even see themselves through the open doorway.
- The room begins to shrink. It may seem that the investigators themselves are growing and will soon be trapped in a bizarre parody of *Alice in Wonderland*.
- Walls become floors or ceilings become walls; the fabric of the building is rotated in incomprehensible and inconsistent ways.
- A staircase intrudes into the current space, formed from the elements of the room itself.
- Other investigators may appear to be standing on the ceiling or walls (as like an M. C. Escher picture, such as *Relativity*).

**Keeper note:** remember, investigators smashing a plane orb are able to lock down the distortion for the duration of the orb's effect.

## HOUSE OF MEMPHIS

### If the Spell Succeeds

As the ritual concludes, the house shudders as Memphis is drawn into the physical world. As there is no unoccupied organic receptacle/host he can use to replace his own at this point, he instead manifests in the fabric of the mansion itself. A harrowing, unearthly cry, still recognizably human and male, echoes through the space. The investigators feel this event as vibrations throughout their entire bodies. Pieces of the ceiling plunge to the floor, windows shatter, and lamps topple and smash, optionally requiring a successful **Dodge** roll to avoid 1D4 points of damage from flying debris.

Finally, the architecture itself tears and buckles, pulling and thrusting into a huge sculpture: the frozen face of Memphis the Great! Its expression is one of terrible agony and despair. At this precise moment, the plane orbs—if there are any left—cease to glow and all supernatural phenomena in the house end, permanently. Witnessing this grand event triggers a **Sanity** roll (1/1D4 loss).

With Memphis gone, Hawkings is free of his malign psychic influence. It is now up to the investigators, if they are aware of Hawkings' role in his mentor's death, whether or not to turn him into the police and confirm Ingrid Schwartz's suspicions. And, if they were hired by George Pickering, then they must also decide what sort of an explanation

they're going to give to the attorney regarding Memphis' fate and what caused the damage to his house.

### If the Spell Fails

Provided the investigators have magic points remaining, they may attempt the spell a second time. Failing again, though, is disastrous: the primary caster's body is torn apart (1/1D6 Sanity loss for onlookers) and their consciousness is drawn into the fabric of the house with Memphis. Lacking the necessary understanding of Yog-Sothoth, and therefore unable to slip between planes like the great magician, they are now trapped in claustrophobic, geometric madness until the house is demolished!

## THE SHOWDOWN

If the investigators fail to deal with Memphis in good time, the old conjurer gains enough power and control to draw Hawkings directly to the mansion, where he will attempt a permanent transfer into the younger man's body. If the Keeper decides to use this option, then they should choose a moment when the investigators are either with Hawkings or are inside the house, before setting these final events in motion.



*When magic tricks go wrong!*

Wherever he is, Hawkins abruptly stops what he is doing, looks up as if hearing something, and immediately takes the fastest route to the Memphis house, driving or walking as necessary. Throughout the journey, his face has a dazed, faraway look, and he doesn't respond to any communication. If physically restrained, he struggles and eventually attempts to draw his gun (if the investigators didn't take it from his locker at **The Wilbur Theater** (page 112), which may lead to a violent struggle. This state persists until he arrives at the house or for around 18 hours, when the effect wears off and he drops into a deep sleep. When he awakens, the process begins again.

**Keeper note:** for added drama, have Ingrid Schwartz follow after her fiancé as well. She may have been with Hawkins when her father asserted his influence, or perhaps the investigators called her in to try and reason with her confused but determined beau.

Unless prevented, Hawkins reaches the mansion. As he crosses the threshold, he pauses, shakes his head, and seems to come out of the trance. At that moment, the door behind him turns into a wall. If the investigators are still outside, it takes them a couple of rounds to find an alternative entry point.

Whether they are inside the house or not, the investigators hear Hawkins yelling, "*You're nothing! You're in my imagination! I killed you!*" If they had any suspicions regarding Hawkins' role in Memphis' disappearance, the young illusionist appears to have just confirmed them. If they suspect that Memphis is haunting the house in some way, then Hawkins' behavior and this outburst also tend to confirm it.

As the investigators catch up with Hawkins inside the house, they see him begin to chant and gesture, and a strange purple half-light suffuses his body. He appears to be completely unhinged and completely oblivious to their presence, even if Schwartz is with them. As Hawkins gestures, pieces of the house shatter around him as if pummeled by a huge, unseen fist. Witnessing this scene calls for a **Sanity** roll (0/1 loss).

**Keeper note:** in his uncontrolled rage, Hawkins is lashing out with the **Fist of Yog-Sothoth** spell (*Call of Cthulhu: Keeper Rulebook*, page 259).

### Enter the Magician

To begin with, Memphis is content to let Hawkins vent his anger against his house, knowing it will weaken his enemy even further. For his part, Hawkins hopes to force Memphis to manifest himself so he can destroy him properly this time with the **Claws of the Void** spell (see page 137). If the investigators attempt to intervene, Hawkins casts **Wrack** on his nearest assailant (*Call of Cthulhu: Keeper Rulebook*, page

265) in order to discourage them. If they persist, he casts the reduced version of **Create Barrier of Naach-Tith** to force them away (see page 137).

**Keeper note:** there is a real danger during the confrontation between the two rival magicians that the investigators could end up just watching the action taking place around them, with no real way of affecting the outcome. This is unsatisfying for the players and should be avoided. Have the duel as a cinematic backdrop to whatever the investigators are doing, rather than as the entire focus of the conclusion. Both Hawkins and Memphis are intent on their personal agendas, giving the investigators a genuine opportunity to deal with them while they are focused on each other. You don't even necessarily need to worry about keeping track of which NPC has spent what in terms of magic points unless you really want to—to minimize your in-game bookkeeping, you could also work out what spells the pair cast before the session begins, adjusting the conflict depending on the investigators' actions, or just narrate the duel to fit around what the investigators are doing to give them a satisfying conclusion.

While the investigators can attempt to break through any barrier Hawkins casts, they may wish to consider other options to deal with the situation. For example, if they have discovered the **Call Forth Ye Form Beyonde** spell (**The Book of Eibon**, page 132), then now might be an ideal time to set up in the room nearest the "duel" and cast the spell while Hawkins is keeping Memphis distracted. Even if they haven't learned the spell by this point, but have the book (or know where it is), the Keeper may wish to permit them to cast it directly. In this case, this requires an initial skim read of the text, costing 2 **Sanity** points to locate the correct spell, followed by a **Hard POW** roll; they gain a bonus die to the casting roll if they succeed at a spontaneous **Cthulhu Mythos** roll first.

The investigators could, of course, cast the spell in the same room as the duel, but this makes their intentions obvious and causes Memphis to split his attention between them and Hawkins, although the investigators could use this to their advantage, albeit unwittingly. Remember, once Memphis has exhausted all of his magic points, he must slip back between the planes and rest for at least 9 minutes in order to recharge, during which time he cannot cast spells or cause architectural distortions. Although they have no idea how long they've got before he returns, such a respite might be all the investigators need to get the spell, or any other plan to deal with Memphis, well underway.

Unless the investigators decide to cast **Call Forth Ye Form Beyonde** and drag Memphis to his doom, he finally deigns to manifest in front of Hawkins. He seems to fold out from the architecture, dressed as his stage persona, drawn in eerie

half-light. Nothing Hawkins casts seems to affect the older man, even the barrier (if cast), which he steps through with a mocking laugh. In desperation, Hawkins casts Claws of the Void. Memphis flickers out briefly, only to be replaced by a giant image of his face, which laughs all the harder Hawkins sags, exhausted. Witnesses should make a **Sanity** roll (1/1D6 loss).

**Keeper note:** unfortunately for Hawkins, his spell won't work a second time against Memphis as the old magician has no body left to destroy.

Memphis' giant, glowering head now begins to chant. Hawkins screams and tries to back away as Memphis pummels him with either his Fist of Yog-Sothoth or Dread Curse of Azathoth spells (*Call of Cthulhu: Keeper Rulebook*, pages 259 and 254, respectively). Once he has weakened Hawkins sufficiently or knocked him unconscious, Memphis attempts to take control of Hawkins' body using the Mind Transfer spell (*Call of Cthulhu: Keeper Rulebook*, page 260).

As an alternative strategy to casting Call Forth Ye Form Beyond, if the investigators found the plane orbs (**Storage Room**, page 126) and are aware of what they do, then they can use them to reduce the severity of Memphis' attacks against Hawkins (even if the barrier is in place), as the released vapor passes straight through it. An added bonus is that smashing an orb once Memphis has manifested locks him in place, giving the investigators a chance to strike at him as, during this period, he can be damaged by physical means; any damage dealt to him reduces his POW as if it were hit points. If his POW can be reduced to zero before the orb's effects wear off, everything that is Memphis will be dissipated into the void. This option gives the investigators an opportunity to team up with Hawkins to vanquish his nemesis, provided the younger magician is still in any fit state to aid them.

If Schwartz accompanied the investigators to the house or followed Hawkins there of her own volition, she could, potentially, be used as a distraction or weapon against either of the two warring illusionists. While the post-Bhutan Memphis has largely ignored his daughter, somewhere, buried deep down, he still has an attachment to her, as does Hawkins. It is up to the investigators to come up with a plan as to exactly how they could exploit Schwartz's presence, but they should remember that she is a sensible and practical young woman, not given to rash acts or physical altercations.

**Keeper note:** if the players are struggling to come up with a plan to deal with Memphis, in a brief moment of lucidity, Hawkins could scream out a few hints to a possible solution to their investigators, such as, "The orbs! Try the orbs!" or "The

library! There must be something in the library that can hold him." If they haven't found the *Book of Eibon* by this point, then a successful **Luck** roll locates it, and they may cast the spell on the fly as discussed previously.

**Keeper note:** as tempting as it may be, unless the group consists of a large number of tough investigators who can handle themselves both physically and/or magically, then you should avoid bringing Josephine Lynch into the showdown, as her presence is likely to prove one dangerous distraction too many. If they succeed in destroying Memphis, Lynch soon finds out and hunts them down, potentially leading to a whole new adventure. If they fail to stop Memphis, she may even contact them in order to gloat, once she's got over any conflicting emotions concerning her boss' new form (**The End of the Duel**, following).



### NEW AND VARIANT SPELLS

#### Claws of the Void

- **Cost:** 8 magic points; 1D6 Sanity points
- **Casting time:** 3 rounds

This nasty spell disrupts the target's body, sending it to multiple planes, utterly destroying anyone not in the service of Yog-Sothoth. The appalling visual effect is like watching something being torn apart by an unseen animal, although no remains are left. It costs 1/1D6 Sanity points to witness someone being killed in this horrific manner.

#### Create Barrier of Naach-Tith (variant)

- **Cost:** variable magic points; 1 Sanity point
- **Casting time:** 1 minute

This variant of the spell (*Call of Cthulhu: Keeper Rulebook*, page 253) produces a reduced version of the shield that fits inside a large room. The barrier has 2D10 STR for each magic point expended, provides protection against both physical and magical attacks, and looks like heat shimmer in the air. It costs 1 Sanity point and lasts 1D6+2 combat rounds once cast. Any creature or person bisected by the barrier as it is cast is pushed outside it without incurring any harm. Anything trapped inside may attempt to break out with an opposed STR roll versus the barrier's STR.



### The End of the Duel

If the investigators, either on their own or with Hawkings' and/or Schwartz's help, manage to defeat Memphis by some means other than Call Forth Ye Form Beyonde, then his spirit leaves the house for good. A strange wind whips through the rooms as the air compresses, then expands. The house itself seems to sigh and then settle; no further supernatural events occur thereafter.

If Hawkings survived the confrontation, the investigators are presented with something of a moral dilemma—as odious and deranged as Memphis was, Hawkings still murdered him in a fit of jealous rage. Do they turn him in to Inspector Edwards, or let him get on with his life? Either way, if Schwartz was present to hear his confession, she breaks off their engagement and flees the house after thanking the investigators for their assistance.

Exactly what they report to George Pickering, if he hired them, is up to the investigators, and may well depend on whether or not Hawkings survived and/or has been charged with Memphis' murder. Pickering will not be happy if there has been extensive damage caused to the property, and may deduct the cost of repairs from any fee he promised them. In the same way, if they promised to let Orson Vaughan know who killed the Leary brothers, the investigators may need to think carefully about what they tell him, although unscrupulous sorts may consider laying the blame at Hawkings' door and allowing Vaughan to deal with the situation, rather than involving the police. This option could also come into play if Memphis successfully hijacks Hawkings' body and assumes his life, though the investigators better hope and pray Vaughan never finds out they deliberately set him and his men up to do their dirty work for them.

If Memphis survives and takes over Hawkings' body, he attempts to pass himself off as his former protégé, although a successful **Psychology** roll reveals the lie, if required. If confronted, he taunts the investigators, demanding to know who is going to believe them if they try to tell anyone the truth of what they've witnessed. If Schwartz is present, Hawkings/Memphis brutally ends "their" engagement and attempts to leave. It is up to the investigators as to whether or not they attempt to stop him, but chances are he won't have sufficient magic points left to attack them in any other way than physically. Now he is in Hawkings' body, they can certainly hurt and even kill him as they could any other person.

Should the investigators kill Hawkings to prevent Memphis' escape, his life force escapes and leaves for other planes of existence—for the moment, at least. His attempts to find a new body to inhabit could form the basis of a new adventure of the Keeper's design, or he could seek vengeance on the people who thwarted him. As for his devoted assistant, Josephine Lynch

may find herself conflicted between her adoration of her old master and her contempt for the physical form he has taken (whoever that may be), but in the end, she stands by him and assists him in whatever way he deems necessary.

### Targeting an Investigator

If Hawkings is killed or otherwise prevented from returning to the house so that the duel doesn't take place, the disembodied conjurer turns his attention to an investigator. Memphis attempts to draw the investigator to the house, requiring an opposed **POW** roll with the intended target; if Memphis succeeds, this effect manifests as strange dreams, dark moods, and short "blank" periods where the investigator seems to lose track of what they are doing. In time, unless the victim can succeed at another opposed **POW** roll (one attempt per day) to free themselves of Memphis' influence, the investigator is compelled to return to Memphis' mansion, where the conjurer attempts to take full control with his Mind Transfer spell and a final opposed **POW** roll.

**Keeper note:** as this option has the potential to remove an investigator from a player's control and eventually take them out of the game by turning them into an NPC, it should only be used with that player's consent; however, it could form the basis of an exciting new campaign, where a former friend and ally suddenly turns on their colleagues, as long as the player doesn't mind surrendering their character and rolling up a new one.

One final option, if Memphis is not stopped, is that he demands the ultimate sacrifice from Lynch and possesses her body instead. Suddenly, Lynch takes over Memphis' house and show, and a new star is born. But the investigators had better watch their backs...

### Optional Trans-dimensional Ending

If the Keeper wishes, this scenario can be used as a springboard to a further scenario set in any exotic location. At the climax of the Hawkings-Memphis struggle, or as a desperate gambit by one of the combatants, the entire house is ripped out of Boston and translated through the planes by the power of Yog-Sothoth. The Keeper may place the house anywhere: a snowy valley, the Plateau of Leng, the Dreamlands, and so on. Not only do the investigators still have two deranged illusionists to deal with, but now they also have to find a way to get home!

The Create Gate spell from the *Book of Eibon* could eventually be used to return to Boston, if they have the book with them. Investigators who return too soon to the now vacant lot of the Memphis estate find it tough to explain what has happened to the mansion they were supposed to be keeping out of the newspapers!

## HOUSE OF MEMPHIS

### REWARDS

Suggested Sanity point awards (and penalties) for the investigators for this scenario include:

- Defeating Memphis, either by drawing him permanently into the fabric of the house or by destroying his ethereal form: +1D6+1 Sanity points.
- Saving Hawkings: +2 Sanity points.
- Turning Hawkings into the police for murdering Memphis: +1D2 Sanity points.
- Allowing Memphis to take over Hawkings' body: -1D6+1 Sanity points.
- Allowing Hawkings to get away with murder: -1D2 Sanity points.
- Killing Hawkings to stop Memphis: -1D4 Sanity points.
- Causing serious harm to Schwartz as a result of their actions, or causing her death: -1D4 Sanity points.

## CHARACTERS AND MONSTERS

### NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

#### George Pickering, age 62, Memphis' attorney

STR 60 CON 50 SIZ 60 DEX 50 INT 80  
APP 70 POW 50 EDU 75 SAN 50 HP 11  
DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 5 MP: 10

##### Combat

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

##### Skills

Accounting 45%, Charm 65%, Credit Rating 60%, Drive Auto 40%, Language (Latin) 40%, Law 75%, Library Use 70%, Persuade 70%, Psychology 65%, Ride 45%, Spot Hidden 70%.

#### Joe Edwards, age 43, police inspector

STR 60 CON 60 SIZ 80 DEX 30 INT 65  
APP 40 POW 65 EDU 65 SAN 65 HP 14  
DB: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 6 MP: 13

##### Combat

Brawl 40% (20/8), damage 1D3+1D4  
.32 revolver 40% (20/8), damage 1D8  
12g shotgun (2B sawed off) 60% (30/12), damage 4D6/1D6  
Dodge 25% (12/5)

##### Skills

Appraise 40%, Art/Craft (Acting) 25%, Credit Rating 40%, Drive Auto 30%, First Aid 40%, Intimidate 50%, Law 40%, Listen 40%, Persuade 60%, Psychology 75%, Spot Hidden 60%.

#### Generic Speakeasy Thug

STR 55 CON 50 SIZ 60 DEX 65 INT 30  
APP 40 POW 45 EDU 30 SAN 45 HP 11  
DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 8 MP: 9

##### Combat

Brawl 35% (17/7), damage 1D3, knife 1D4+2; small club 1D6  
.32 revolver 35% (17/7), damage 1D8  
Dodge 35% (17/7)

##### Skills

Intimidate 70%, Listen 35%, Locksmith 40%, Spot Hidden 40%, Stealth 40%.

#### Orson Vaughan, age 52, career criminal

STR 75 CON 65 SIZ 50 DEX 40 INT 80  
APP 30 POW 85 EDU 70 SAN 85 HP 11  
DB: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 6 MP: 17

##### Combat

Brawl 70% (35/14), damage 1D3+1D4; brass knuckles 1D3+1+1D4  
.38 Revolver 75% (37/15), damage 1D10  
Dodge 20% (10/4)

##### Skills

Accounting 55%, Appraise 25%, Credit Rating 75%, First Aid 40%, History 30%, Intimidate 90%, Language (English) 70%, Law 20%, Listen 45%, Locksmith 45%, Spot Hidden 60%, Stealth 40%.

## CHAPTER 4

### Reuben Levy, age 66, loveable magic retailer

STR 40 CON 30 SIZ 55 DEX 70 INT 65  
APP 40 POW 60 EDU 45 SAN 60 HP 8  
DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 5 MP: 12

#### Combat

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

#### Skills

Art/Craft (Stage Magic) 55%, Charm 75%, Credit Rating 45%, History 50%, Language (English) 45%, Listen 50%, Psychology 60%, Sleight of Hand 75%, Spot Hidden 70%.

### Max Marvello, age 43, working magician

STR 50 CON 50 SIZ 60 DEX 75 INT 70  
APP 50 POW 55 EDU 50 SAN 55 HP 11  
DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 7 MP: 11

#### Combat

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

#### Skills

Art/Craft (Acting) 40%, Art/Craft (Stage Magic) 60%, Charm 60%, Fast Talk 60%, Language (English) 50%, Listen 35%, Psychology 45%, Sleight of Hand 55%, Spot Hidden 75%.

### Josephine Lynch, age 37, glamorous but violent assistant

STR 65 CON 60 SIZ 30 DEX 70 INT 85  
APP 90 POW 35 EDU 50 SAN — HP 9  
DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 9 MP: 7

#### Combat

Brawl 55% (27/11), damage 1D3, dagger 1D6+2, or hatpin 1D6  
.32 automatic 60% (30/12), damage 1D8  
Dodge 35% (17/7)

#### Skills

Art/Craft (Stage Magic) 65%, Charm 80%, Credit Rating 30%, Cthulhu Mythos 12%, Disguise 70%, Drive Auto 65%, Firearms (Submachine Gun) 45%, Language (English) 50%, Listen 25%, Psychology 45%, Sleight of Hand 20%, Stealth 55%.

### Caleb Madison, age 57, caretaker

STR 60 CON 70 SIZ 60 DEX 50 INT 65  
APP 55 POW 70 EDU 50 SAN 65 HP 13  
DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 6 MP: 14

#### Combat

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

#### Skills

Art/Craft (Gardening) 65%, Drive Auto 50%, Electrical Repair 60%, First Aid 40%, Mechanical Repair 60%, Natural World 40%, Spot Hidden 55%, Throw 60%.

### Ingrid Schwartz, age 25, unlucky heiress

STR 30 CON 45 SIZ 45 DEX 60 INT 75  
APP 55 POW 75 EDU 70 SAN 65 HP 9  
DB: -1 Build: -1 Move: 8 MP: 15

#### Combat

Brawl 25% (12/5), damage 1D3-1  
Dodge 50% (25/10)

#### Skills

Art/Craft (Stage Magic) 50%, Charm 40%, Credit Rating 60%, Disguise 45%, History 35%, Language (English) 70%, Language (French) 55%, Language (Latin) 45%, Library Use 45%, Natural World 40%, Persuade 75%, Ride 25%, Sleight of Hand 40%.

### Harold Hawkings, age 31, haunted magician

STR 55 CON 50 SIZ 50 DEX 85 INT 70  
APP 80 POW 65 EDU 65 SAN 25 HP 10  
DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 9 MP: 13

#### Combat

Brawl 35% (17/7), damage 1D3  
.22 Short automatic 25% (12/5), damage 1D6  
Dodge 60% (30/12)

#### Skills

Art/Craft (Acting) 65%, Art/Craft (Stage Magic) 80%, Charm 70%, Credit Rating 45%, Cthulhu Mythos 7%, History 40%, Language (English) 65%, Language (French) 45%, Locksmith 60%, Psychology 45%, Sleight of Hand 60%, Spot Hidden 65%.

**Spells:** Claws of the Void, Create Barrier of Naach-Tith (variant), Fist of Yog-Sothoth, Wrack.

## CREATURES AND MONSTERS

**Memphis the Great, age 56, disembodied conjurer**

STR — CON — SIZ — DEX — INT —  
 APP — POW 85 EDU — SAN — HP —  
 DB: — Build: — Move: — MP: 17

**Special Powers**

**Regenerate:** as a disembodied spirit and resident between the planes, once his magic points are exhausted, Memphis the Great must rest to regain them at the rate of 1 magic point per minute. During this rest period, he cannot perform any manipulations of his surroundings or cast spells, and must wait until at least half of his magic points (rounding up) have regenerated before he can do so again.

**Combat****Attacks per round:** 1

Being incorporeal (unless he can take over someone's body), Memphis fights by either manipulating his surroundings (**Confronting the Presence**, page 133) or by casting spells.

**Skills**

Cthulhu Mythos 34%.

**Spells:** Curse of the Putrid Husk, Dominate, Dread Curse of Azathoth, Fist of Yog-Sothoth, Implant Fear, Mindblast, Mind Transfer, Words of Power.

**Sanity Loss:** 1/1D4 to see Memphis forced to manifest as part of the building; 1/1D6 Sanity points to see Memphis' gigantic, leering non-corporeal head.



The magic tricks of Memphis the Great



# THE NINETEENTH HOLE

*In which the investigators tangle with otherworldly dimensions at a newly renovated Scottish golf course*

This scenario is suitable for up to six players of any skill level and can be run over the course of one to two sessions; the Keeper should find it easily adaptable to their players' level of experience. The action takes place northwest of the city of Dundee, Scotland in the late 1920s (September 1928, to be precise), but the events could be shifted to a different time period and/or location with a little work on the Keeper's part.

## KEEPER INFORMATION

On May 27th, 1928, successful American publisher and Philadelphia socialite Arthur Edward Macmillan and his wife Crystal arrived in Scotland to oversee the regeneration of his ancestral home—Crow Wood Hall—near Dundee. It was the second transatlantic voyage for the couple in three years, having previously toured Scotland, England, and France on their honeymoon in the summer of 1925. It was during that first trip that Macmillan's new bride fell in love with the Scottish countryside and the romantic promise of rural life. Upon returning to America, Crystal worked tirelessly to convince Macmillan to return, and ultimately retire, to Scotland.

Arthur Macmillan initially resisted the idea. Though approaching his 65th birthday, he had reservations about handing his publishing empire over to his three sons Albert, Charles, and Gordon. Eventually, however, the elder Macmillan gave into his wife's fancies and his sons' assurances—or at least, that is the story he would have people believe. In truth, Macmillan would have stayed in America were it not for the discovery of a golf club—Thistledown—up for sale less than a mile from his ancestral property.

Macmillan's first love was for reading and books, but golf followed as a close second. The possibility of owning his own golf club was the deciding factor in his decision to retire to

Scotland. A final contributing factor was that the course was a historic one created by the famous British golf course designer, Alister MacKenzie.

The golf course at Thistledown was one of MacKenzie's earliest designs and, unfortunately, was considered a failure by most, despite a number of outstanding and innovative holes. A series of less-than-flattering reviews contributed to the club's demise only six years after its opening in 1909. The course proved an embarrassment for MacKenzie, who left it out of his first book on course design, *Golf Architecture* (Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton, Kent & Co, 1920). Macmillan's restoration plans call for resurrecting MacKenzie's excellent five holes and re-designing the remaining 13.

Upon their arrival in Scotland, Arthur Macmillan quickly completed the purchase of Thistledown and set about hiring local craftsmen to fix up the clubhouse, leaving Crystal to bring Crow Wood Hall up to her own lavish standards. Four long months passed, and while each endeavor met with significant challenges, finally each restoration project neared completion.

Unknown to Crystal, Macmillan had been dealing with a number of problems at the golf club. First, midway through the renovation, a large number of the workmen started complaining of chronic headaches, dizziness, and sleeping problems. As the number of cases grew, the work on the clubhouse slowed. Shortly thereafter, some men refused to work in the clubhouse, claiming it was haunted. Macmillan refused to give credence to such foolish superstition, but the claims kept coming.

Toward the end of the summer, Cameron Nairn, Macmillan's on-site foreman, struggled daily to find enough men to work on the project. As the situation grew more desperate, Macmillan decided to intervene directly. On September 14th, 1928, Macmillan drove his new Crossley 3-litre automobile down from Crow Wood Hall

to investigate. After a lengthy and heated discussion with Nairn, Macmillan stormed off across the golf course, touring it before returning to the clubhouse.

As work finished for the day, Nairn was preparing to lock up the gates to Thistledown when he noticed that Mr. Macmillan's motorcar was still parked outside. Men leaving the worksite noted Macmillan's arrival in the clubhouse, but none could confirm his departure. Growing worried, Nairn conscripted a couple of men to help him search the building.

Forty-five minutes later, the three men had to admit defeat. There was no trace of Macmillan in the clubhouse. A further 30 minutes were spent checking the grounds and course, but to no avail. Their employer had, apparently, vanished. With no other option open to him, Nairn called the Dundee police.

Crystal Macmillan was beside herself with worry when police arrived. They related the mystery of her husband's disappearance at Thistledown and Nairn's efforts to track him down. Even had he decided to walk home, Arthur Macmillan should have arrived hours ago. In the days following, no further signs of Macmillan were found. To all intents and purposes, Crystal Macmillan's husband had simply disappeared into thin air.

### THE TRUTH BEHIND THE STORY

It is widely believed that the course and clubhouse were uninhabited prior to its sale to Arthur Macmillan in 1928. In fact, Dr. Donald Gilmour and Dr. James Lackie secretly took up residence in the clubhouse in spring 1918. The move was motivated by their dismissal from the University of Edinburgh and their determination to carry on their exotic research.

An experimental physicist and engineer, respectively, Gilmour and Lackie were dismissed for misappropriation of funds, grossly unorthodox research, and damaging university property. Were it not for Gilmour's connection to the Duke of Montrose, both men would likely have ended up in prison. Following the misadventure, Lackie and Gilmour were declared irresponsible fantasists for their outrageous metaphysical hypotheses and summarily removed from their laboratory and their accommodation.

A chance mention in an Edinburgh pub led the pair to the abandoned golf club northwest of Dundee. As the bastard son of Douglas Graham, 5th Duke of Montrose, Gilmour had previous experience with Thistledown—in fact, he had attended its opening as a young man. Years later, he had all but forgotten the failed club, but Gilmour now saw its potential as a large, if unconventional, laboratory, in which he and Lackie could continue their experiments. Gilmour

approached his father for funds, falsely promising to take himself away to India on some business venture, but instead used the money to purchase equipment and establish a secret laboratory in the clubhouse's basement.

The two men's research into etheric projection—that is, projecting the human consciousness into the ether and/or dimensions beyond—lay well outside of accepted science and natural laws. Gilmour, in particular, was always fascinated by the occult and esoteric knowledge and found an ally in Lackie. They sought comfort in the divergent wisdoms presented in Theosophical, Rosicrucian, Neoplatonic, and Hermetic traditions, and grew convinced that etheric projection was a real scientific possibility.

More than a decade of pushing at the boundaries of science led them to stray unwittingly into the realm of magic. Rare though it is, such incursions occur. Gilmour and Lackie's experiments drew increasingly on a mix of Mythos magic, hyper-mathematics, and experimental technology.

Less than a month before Arthur Macmillan bought Thistledown Golf Club, the two men achieved their greatest breakthrough. Using Lackie's curiously engineered machinery and Gilmour's theoretical computations, both men escaped their physical forms and inhabited the vastness of the ether for five seconds. It was a triumph, but a triumph all too short-lived. Both men worked feverishly over the next few weeks to secure more and more time in the ether. Lackie constructed a special timer for the device that would allow them to extend their excursions dramatically and, thus, further their experiments.

Another late breakthrough allowed them to travel far enough into the ether to approach and, finally, breach the veil into another world or dimension—a demesne full of strange possibility. For a brief moment, they beheld a panorama full of otherworldly foliage and wildlife—a landscape ripe for discovery and plunder. Gilmour and Lackie grew giddy with their success: they were about to change humanity's understanding of reality, to alter science, religion, and philosophy. They had achieved what no others had!

And, then the trucks arrived and the workmen along with them. Despite the danger and disruption, Gilmour and Lackie resolved to continue their work in secret, leaving the bulk of their experimentation to be done throughout the night. They made greater and longer forays into the ether, eventually leaving the machine quietly running during the day.

Everything changed when Arthur Macmillan arrived. While the workmen never lingered in the Thistledown basement, this impertinent old man did. Intent on their research, Gilmour and Lackie did not register the threat Macmillan posed until it was too late.

In the dark cellar, Macmillan—having noted discrepancies in the clubhouse plans—discovered the false wall in the

boiler room that Lackie had constructed to prevent intrusion. Worse still, Macmillan managed to find the secret door under the stairs and open it. Divorced from their physical bodies and away exploring the ether, Gilmour and Lackie were in no position to prevent Macmillan from walking into their laboratory. When the old man found that he could not rouse the two, seemingly sleeping, men, he made to turn off Lackie's peculiar machine. Owing to its profoundly unusual design, Macmillan did not succeed in turning it off, but in fact, boosted the power beyond its fail-safes.

In the dim lantern light, Macmillan started as the machine emitted a shower of sparks and began to glow ominously. He reached down to turn a knob on the control panel but found that his hand went clean through it. Taking a step back, Macmillan, in fact, stepped outside himself. His body remained, but he was no longer in it. In the basement of Thistledown Golf Club, the old man's body fell lifelessly onto Lackie's machine. The shock of this was enough to push him over the edge and Macmillan lost consciousness.

Returning to the laboratory, Gilmour and Lackie found Macmillan's ethereal body lying on the floor and his corporeal body slumped over the machine. The situation quickly went from bad to worse when they realized that the man's weight was locking the delicate timer in place, effectively trapping all three of them in the ether. Without the timer to stop it, the machine would continue drawing electricity from the club indefinitely. Under the machine's influence, their sleeping bodies would remain in hibernation, perhaps ultimately dying of neglect, and they could do nothing—nothing but wait.

### The Current State of Play

As the scenario begins, Macmillan, Gilmour, and Lackie remain trapped in the ether, their bodies in a state of suspended animation in the basement laboratory. The work on the clubhouse and course has been abandoned since Macmillan's disappearance. The last visit to the golf club was by two detective inspectors and four policemen who conducted a cursory search of the clubhouse and golf course some 48 hours after Macmillan's disappearance. During their tour in the clubhouse, the two inspectors witnessed enough odd occurrences to convince them that the mansion might indeed be haunted; however, none of their experiences made it into the incident report.

With work at the club stopped during the investigation, Nairn and a few of the craftsmen are now idle, spending their time in the Queen's Head pub till the situation is resolved. They nurse their pints of beer and talk about the strange events at Thistledown and of Macmillan's vanishing.

At Thistledown, Lackie's machine continues to draw power from the clubhouse. Energies both etheric and extra-

dimensional continue to radiate from the basement upward throughout the building and out onto the golf course itself. The outward flow of dimensional energies has caught the interest of a number of dimensional shamblers, who now freely move throughout the clubhouse and grounds.

Within the clubhouse, different etheric energies and dimensional instabilities have traversed the breach opened by Lackie's machine and have intruded into individual rooms or pooled variously across Thistledown's fairways and greens. The longer the machine operates, the more pressure these dimensional forces will exert in the real world, and the greater the chance that this growing instability will attract more powerful Mythos entities. If the dimensional breach is left open indefinitely, there is no telling what horrors might pass through or what damage might result in the corporeal world.

The only positive aspect to this growing etheric spillover is that Macmillan, Gilmour, and Lackie have greater and greater effect on the real world. As time passes in the scenario, the three men are substantiated to the point that they appear as ghosts and can even "act" as poltergeists.

## INVOLVING THE INVESTIGATORS

The investigators' aim is to investigate Arthur Macmillan's disappearance, amid claims of ghostly sightings, curious illnesses, and possible foul play at Thistledown Golf Club. While doing so, they discover a truth stranger still and far more dangerous.

One way for the investigators to become involved is through Mrs. Macmillan. Crystal refuses to believe her husband is lost and is unwilling to leave the matter with the police, whose attitude both angered and upset her. Instead, she has called her friends and contacts in Scotland and America, looking for anyone who might provide help, vowing that nothing (and no one) will stop her from being reunited with her husband. A wealthy and influential woman, Crystal Macmillan spares no expense to see the mystery of her husband's disappearance dealt with properly, making her an ideal entry to the scenario, even for impoverished investigators and those traveling from further afield.

Perhaps the investigators are friends or business associates of either Crystal or Arthur Macmillan, contacted because of their discretion and reliability. Investigators could also be related to the Macmillans in some way, or be friends with one of Arthur's sons, and thus be contacted directly by Mrs. Macmillan or indirectly via Albert, Charles, or Gordon after Arthur's disappearance. Alternatively, the investigators may be contacted—either in person or by post—by lawyers in Britain, America, or elsewhere in the world working on Mrs. Macmillan's behalf. And, if not contacted by Crystal or her

proxies, the investigators may be brought in directly by one or more of her stepsons (or their lawyers), perhaps even with the ulterior motive of wanting to confirm their father's death so they can claim their inheritance.

On the other hand, one or more of the investigators might be journalists working for a local newspaper. After all, the disappearance of a prominent local employer and landowner tied to alleged ghostly goings-on at his golf club should surely be able to generate some lucrative column inches. Or, are the investigators medical or construction professionals, visiting Thistledown to track down the source of the workers' puzzling symptoms? They could even be members of a local paranormal group, keen to investigate the alleged haunting, or junior police officers sent in for one more look after the Macmillan family exerts their considerable local clout to have the case resolved.

Lastly, perhaps the investigators are on vacation and read of Arthur Macmillan's disappearance in the Scottish

newspaper *The Scotsman* (**Handout: Nineteenth 1**) or reprinted in the London *Times*. Their interest piqued, they head to Crow Wood Hall to see if they can solve the mystery. After all, that reward sounds pretty tempting...

This scenario can be run with existing investigators, either as an interlude in a larger ongoing campaign, as a standalone story, or as the foundation of a new campaign in a different country, using some or all of the hooks mentioned above to draw investigators into the plot. Due to the multiple ways in which they might become involved, there is no need for the investigators to be either British citizens or permanently located in Britain; foreign nationals are just as likely to find themselves embroiled in the events at Thistledown.

If new investigators are created for *The Nineteenth Hole*, the following skills should come in useful: Climb, Electrical Repair, Law, Locksmith, Mechanical Repair, Occult, Psychology, social skills (particularly Persuade), Science (Mathematics or Physics), and Spot Hidden.

### *Handout: Nineteenth 1*

## AMERICAN PUBLISHER VANISHES FROM RENOVATED CLUB DISAPPEARANCE CONFOUNDS POLICE

**D u n d e e** —Police are calling for the help of farmers and tenants northeast of the city after the disappearance of Mr. Arthur Macmillan, recently of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Mr. Macmillan, aged 64, moved into Crow Wood Hall north of Abernyste with his wife Crystal Macmillan in May of this year. Shortly after their arrival, Mr. Macmillan bought the derelict Thistledown Golf Club and began renovations with plans of reopening the club the following year.

On September 14, Mr. Macmillan left Crow Wood Hall at noon to visit the renovation site. Throughout the course of the day numerous workmen and the site foreman, Mr. Cameron Nairn, met with or saw Mr. Macmillan, but at the end of the day Mr. Macmillan's car remained parked outside the club, with Mr. Macmillan himself nowhere to be seen.

After a search of the premises, Mr. Nairn telephoned the Dundee Police and Mrs. Macmillan directly. After 48 hours and a detailed investigation at the Thistledown Club, police have officially declared Mr. Macmillan missing.

Detective Inspectors William Black and Michael McAndrew are now requesting farmers, tenants, and townfolk in Abernyste, Fowlis, and nearby townships to report any sighting of an American man in his early sixties, of average height and build, with thinning white hair, wearing a navy tweed suit, and using a cane topped with a silver ram's head. Mrs. Macmillan is offering a substantial reward for information leading to Mr. Macmillan's safe return.

## DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Descriptions and roleplaying hooks for the main non-player characters (NPCs) encountered in this scenario are detailed below, while their profiles are given at the end of the scenario (**Non-Player Characters**, page 177–179). Descriptions of minor characters are provided in the locations where the investigators encounter them.

### **Arthur Edward Macmillan, age 64, missing owner of Thistledown Golf Club**

An American and former businessman attempting to enjoy his retirement to Scotland. Things haven't exactly gone according to plan in that regard.

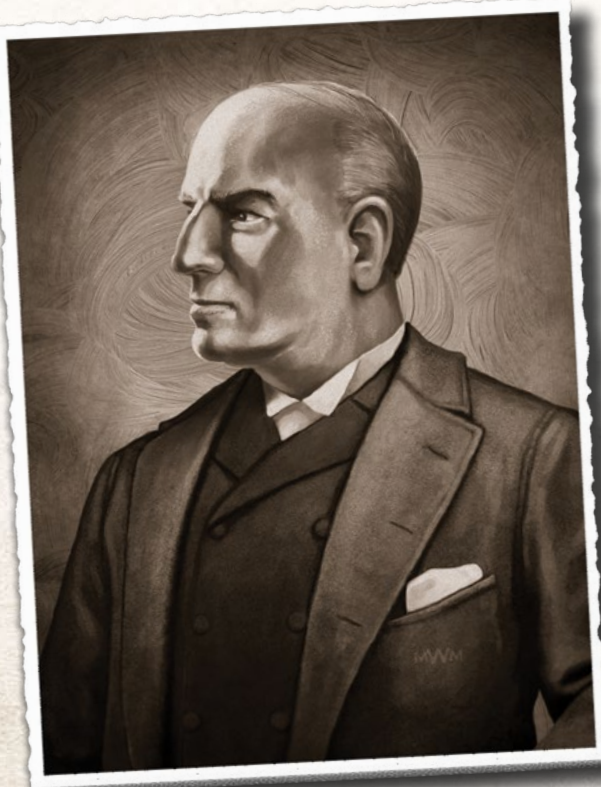
- **Description:** a stout white man, bald apart from a few wisps of white hair, with a Roman nose and deep-set brown eyes. Possesses a penetrating stare and a dour expression, and walks with the aid of a black cane topped with a silver ram's head handle.
- **Traits:** taciturn and business-like.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** Macmillan's initial role in the scenario is to act as the catalyst for the investigation. Interaction with him is essentially impossible until the investigators enter, or release Macmillan from, the ether. Otherwise, he is intelligent,

shrewd, resourceful, and could prove a very valuable ally for the investigators. After his experience in the ether, he may well fund the investigators to find further ways of protecting the world, as he sees it, against forces from the "Outside."

### **Crystal Lauren Macmillan, age 58, worried wife of Arthur Macmillan**

Arthur Macmillan's latest wife, Crystal is beginning to regret encouraging her husband to return to the family seat.

- **Description:** formerly a good-looking woman, her delicate features currently show distinct signs of tiredness and worry. Even so, there is a glint of determination in her eyes. Her silver hair is neatly coiffured, and she wears expensive, well-tailored clothes.
- **Traits:** caring and determined.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** Crystal's role is, potentially, to be the instigator of this investigation and to serve as the investigators' prime contact (**Involving the Investigators**, page 145). While Crystal's knowledge of the events at Thistledown is unfortunately limited, she knows everything there is to know about Crow Wood Hall and, of course, her missing husband. She stops at nothing to see her husband returned to her, and if she has to, moves heaven and earth to do so.



Arthur Edward Macmillan



Crystal Lauren Macmillan

**Donald Harrison Gilmour, age 48,**  
*experimental physicist and etheric traveler*

The esoteric research of Gilmour and Lackie is the cause of Arthur Macmillan's disappearance and, therefore, the underlying catalyst for this scenario. Gilmour is bent on discovering all that etheric travel has to offer. Unlike his partner, he is driven by personal fame and wants to go down in history as the first etheric explorer.

- **Description:** a short, pale-looking, and reedy sort of man. His red-brown hair could do with a good trim. Poorly dressed, and in need of some sunshine.
- **Traits:** Suspicious and temperamental.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** investigator interactions with Gilmour are only possible within, or following his expulsion from, the ether. Gilmour has an extraordinary knowledge of experimental physics and, although he isn't aware of it, of relevant Mythos magic.

**James Robert Lackie, age 46,**  
*experimental engineer and etheric traveler*

As with his associate, Gilmour, Lackie's machinations act as a catalyst for this scenario. Lackie is a brilliant and unconventional engineer who believes that his machine will change the course of history, making him rich and famous, and proving the naysayers wrong.

- **Description:** tall and powerfully built, but otherwise nondescript. His blond hair is a little longer than the current fashion, and his former suntan has faded after months holed up underground with Gilmour.
- **Traits:** needy and secretive.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** any interactions with Lackie are only possible within, or following his expulsion from, the ether. His desire to profit from his invention may make him difficult to deal with, although he responds well to flattery and may be a useful future contact for the investigators.

**Cameron Nairn, age 52,**  
*Thistledown construction foreman*

Until Arthur Macmillan's disappearance, Nairn was the foreman in charge of the restoration of Thistledown Golf Club.

- **Description:** a small, dark complexioned Scotsman, with rounded shoulders and jet-black eyes. An alcoholic, he has a bulbous, reddened drinker's nose and a depressed expression, and his cheeks are covered with broken thread veins. He seems thoroughly worn down by life.
- **Traits:** worn and depressed.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** was among the last men to see Arthur Macmillan before his disappearance. He is particularly significant to the investigators as a source of information regarding the goings-on in the clubhouse and on the golf



Clint Davis

James Robert Lackie

## THE NINETEENTH HOLE

course prior to Macmillan's intervention. He also possesses a sizeable ring of keys for accessing the course and all areas of the clubhouse.

### **Gerald Keating, age 55, butler**

Keating is the newest in a long line of Crow Wood Hall butlers.

- **Description:** a stout and short man, with gray hair and a thin mustache; his eyes are keen and his smile seems genuinely warm.
- **Traits:** responsible and genuine.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** helpful and honest to a fault, Keating answers any of the investigators' questions and tries to satisfy their requests to the best of his ability. Should the investigators want for anything while staying at Crow Wood Hall, Keating is the man in charge of making sure their every need is met.

### **Audrey Grant, age 48, housekeeper/cook**

Grant is Crow Wood Hall's housekeeper and cook.

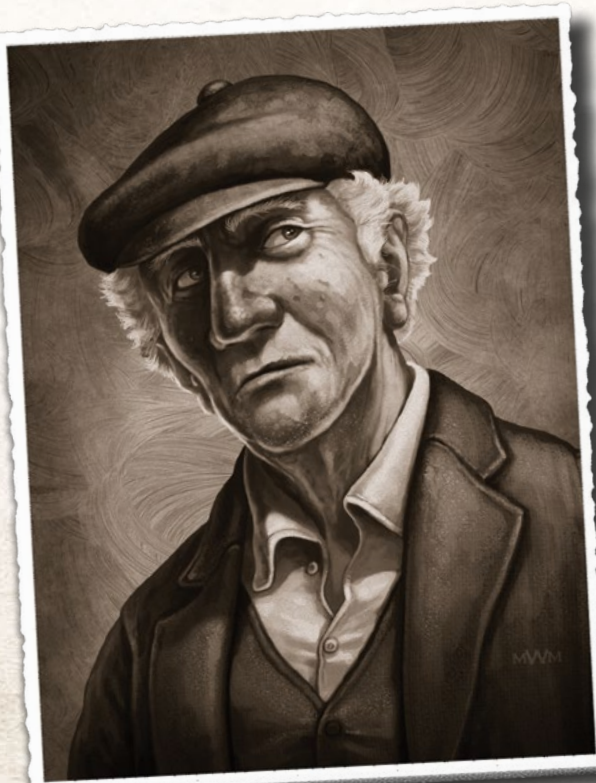
- **Description:** a thin and upright woman, with sparkling blue eyes and a rosy complexion. She has a kind and caring face.
- **Traits:** forthright and caring.

- **Roleplaying hooks:** investigators may encounter Grant if they interview the staff at Crow Wood Hall. Her world revolves around Crystal Macmillan and, consequently, she knows little of Arthur Macmillan's comings and goings. She does, however, have an intimate knowledge of Crow Wood Hall and the various goings-on within its ancient walls.

### **Theresa Dalkeith and Katie MacDonald, ages 16 and 17, maids**

Invariably found together, Dalkeith and MacDonald are maids at Crow Wood Hall.

- **Description:** youthful, willowy, and quite attractive, Katie has dark hair and brown eyes, while Theresa has auburn hair and striking green eyes.
- **Traits:** young and mischievous.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** Dalkeith and MacDonald are most likely to be encountered around the house when seeing to their duties or during any interviews of the Crow Wood Hall household staff. They can help with information regarding the house and recent happenings but have little knowledge of the world beyond the hall. They may prove more useful to the Keeper than to the investigators as instigators of a number of potential red herrings.



Cameron Nairn



Gerald Keating and Audrey Grant

### **Peter Craig, age 37, groundskeeper**

Craig is the Crow Wood Hall groundskeeper, although he also keeps the Macmillans' automobiles sparkling clean.

- **Description:** an athletic man with thick, curly black hair, a full beard, and gray-blue eyes. His expression makes it clear he doesn't like to be bothered by people asking questions.
- **Traits:** difficult and elusive.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** investigators may encounter Craig if they interview the Crow Wood Hall household staff or need to borrow Crystal's car. As a source of information, he knows more about the land around Crow Wood Hall than its new owners, but is reticent to share information and is decidedly less trusting.

### **Gordon Kilburn, age 45, valet**

Kilburn is Arthur Macmillan's valet and the man who knows the most about Macmillan's temperament and private practice prior to his disappearance.

- **Description:** a thin and weedy man, with angular features and dull hazel eyes. He looks extremely fidgety and ill at ease.
- **Traits:** nervous and restless.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** Crystal suggests early on that the investigators should interview Kilburn to find out information

she may not have been privy to. Though currently suffering a number of nervous effects as a result of intercepting etheric communications from Arthur Macmillan, Kilburn strives to inform the investigators to the best of his ability and to undertake any duty they might give him.

## START: THE TEE OFF

The investigators need to find their way either to Crow Wood Hall or Thistledown Golf Club. The following sections are written on the assumption that they have been hired by Crystal Macmillan and are making their way to meet with her at her husband's ancestral home. If they've become involved through a different route, then adapt the information accordingly.

## TRAVELING TO DUNDEE AND CROW WOOD HALL

If the investigators were approached by Crystal Macmillan's lawyers or were contacted by her directly, she has arranged for their travel to be paid in advance and for a cab to deliver them from the Queen's Head pub to Crow Wood Hall on their final leg of the journey. Otherwise, the investigators



*Theresa Dalkeith and Katie MacDonald*



*Peter Craig*

make their own arrangements, probably requiring travel by train and motorbus or car in, addition to any international travel. Routes, times, and some indicative costs are provided below in addition to a brief description of the city of Dundee.

### From America or Europe

Investigators arriving by ocean liner from North America dock in Glasgow on the west coast, then travel 50 minutes by train (costing 6 shillings (s) for first-class or 4s for second) to the capital, Edinburgh, in the east before heading north, again by train, to Dundee. From Europe, ferries and steamers dock near Edinburgh, and again, investigators must board a London & North Eastern Railway train from Edinburgh to Dundee. The train from Edinburgh takes roughly 80 minutes and costs 10s for first-class or 6s for second. The journey to Dundee is a very picturesque one and includes a trip across the vast steel spans of the Forth Bridge, a truly remarkable feat of Victorian engineering.

**Keeper note:** the currency of the United Kingdom is the Pound Sterling. One pound (£) is divided into 20 shillings (s) or 240 pennies (d), with 12 pennies making 1 shilling. Prices are quoted in pounds, shillings and pence, written as £/s/d. For conversion, there are, roughly, \$5 (US dollars) to £1 (one Pound Sterling).



Gordon Kilburn

### From within Great Britain

Investigators already in Great Britain can travel north to Scotland along the west coast (Glasgow) or east coast (Edinburgh) train lines before changing for Dundee. Prices and times vary greatly depending on departure points, but traveling up from London takes roughly seven hours and costs £4/11s for first-class and £2/9s for second. If the investigators have their own car, they can drive directly to Dundee and on to Crow Wood Hall.

### From Dundee to Crow Wood Hall

In 1928, Dundee is dominated by industry and stands as Scotland's second city of commerce after Glasgow. Situated on the banks of the Tay River Estuary, the city is home to docks, shipbuilding yards, and a large number of factories and workhouses. More than 165,000 people call the royal burgh of Dundee home, working primarily in the jute, linen, and shipping industries. From the Tay riverside, Dundee is not especially attractive, being largely industrial, but its inner-city boasts many impressive buildings, including the Old Town House, St. Paul's Episcopal Cathedral, and the recently completed Caird Hall, home to concerts and town meetings. Nearby, the Albert Institute houses a gallery, museum, and library. The city also benefits from the presence of University College (affiliated with St. Andrews University), as well as a number of department stores, banks, and post offices.

Travel to Crow Wood Hall from Dundee is accomplished by motorbus or automobile, as the train line northeast through to Coupar Angus does not stop near the hall. Bus travel can be arranged from the railway station or at the town center for 1s. Automobiles may be rented from Dundee Motorcars on Dock Street at a cost of 2s per day.

The bus northeast from Dundee travels through the small town of Fowls before stopping at the Queen's Head pub, where the investigators disembark. If the investigators are driving their own car, they can continue northwest of the pub on a gravel road to the gated driveway of Crow Wood Hall.

### ARRIVING AT CROW WOOD HALL

Crow Wood Hall is a Scottish mansion house built in 1768 and extended in 1855 to include 16 rooms over three floors. The approach to the house is via a tree-lined private driveway that runs just over a mile (1.6 km) and connects to the nearest road into Dundee (some 30 minutes away by automobile). The property is bounded on all sides by either farmland or forest. The nearest town is Abernethy, roughly 5 miles (8 km) due south of the Hall.

Arriving at Crow Wood Hall, the investigators are met by the butler, Keating, and may spot Craig, the

## A CHANGE OF LOCATION

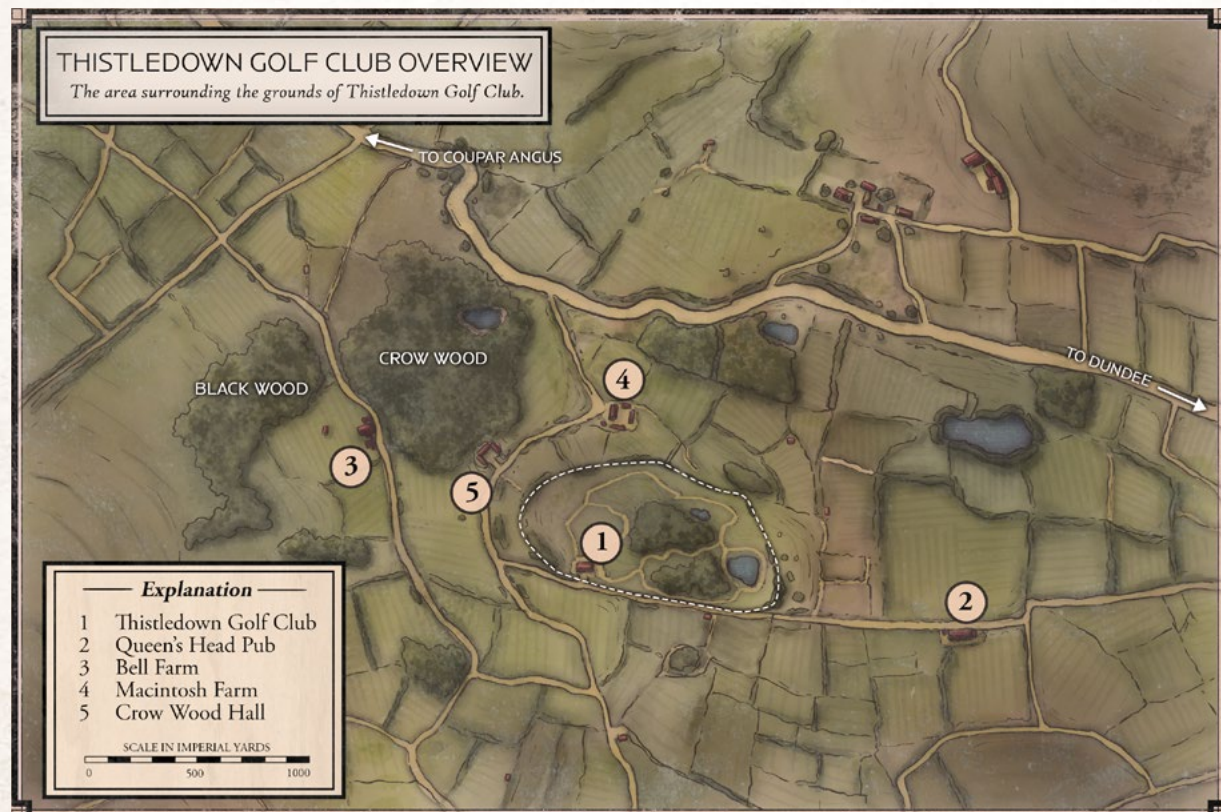
The rural locations of Thistledown Golf Club and Crow Wood Hall are designed to isolate the investigators from the industrial bustle of Dundee and surround them in a pastoral setting of small farms, rolling moors, and dense forests. All of the primary action takes place within a 2-mile (3 km) radius of Thistledown, but the investigators may have cause to visit Dundee to speak with the police, visit the University College or city library, or to purchase equipment.

Should the Keeper wish to change where the scenario is set, the relative rural isolation is an important consideration to keep in mind when deciding on where to site Crow Wood Hall and the neighboring golf club. Golf courses, by their nature, require considerable amounts of space and so will, ideally, be situated away from large areas of habitation—but not too far, to maintain the investigators' ability to interact with local law enforcement and other valuable external sources of information.

groundskeeper, working beside the nearby stables-turned-garage. Keating is dressed impeccably in a finely tailored suit befitting his profession. He greets the investigators on Mrs. Macmillan's behalf and asks them to follow him, while their baggage is immediately transferred up to their rooms on the second floor.

Internally, the house exhibits a surprising and somewhat eclectic mixture of modern and traditional styling. The resulting "Romantic" interior design is the creation of Crystal Macmillan who has, for the past four months, personally directed Crow Wood Hall's renovation. The parlor, library, and other principle rooms contain original decorative, plasterwork facias above dark oak paneling and marble fireplaces. The halls are freshly painted and decorated with white, fluted pilaster columns. The ornate central staircase accessing all three floors is furnished with wide, timber banisters that glisten with waxy polish. All in all, the mansion house is an impressive affair.

To the left of the central stairs, Keating opens the door to the parlor and directs the investigators inside. Once all of the investigators have entered the room, he leaves for the kitchen to fetch tea, fresh scones, and a selection of cakes. Inside the newly refurbished parlor, Crystal Macmillan is sitting, reading the latest edition



of *The Herald*, surrounded by pictures of her husband. She looks up quickly when the investigators arrive, her eyes searching the doorway as though hoping to see her husband standing there. After a moment, she smiles and stands up to greet the investigators personally.

### Talking to Crystal Macmillan

Crystal Macmillan has not stepped foot outside Crow Wood Hall since her husband's disappearance and it is beginning to show. Her normally bright and energetic flair is tempered by worry and lack of sleep. Hope is still clearly written on her face, however. She believes that her husband will return any moment, and refuses to leave the house or undertake any activity unrelated to bringing him home again.

Crystal begins by inquiring after the investigators' journey. Keating arrives a moment later, carrying a fine silver platter containing food and refreshments. He stays long enough to pour tea before backing out of the room and quietly closing the hall door. Crystal continues the pleasantries until the investigators have had a chance to drink or have something to eat. Once the investigators have settled, she changes the subject to the matter at hand.

Arthur Macmillan has not returned, she begins, picking up a framed photograph near her. The photograph clearly shows Macmillan—a portly, mostly bald man in his 60s dressed in a gray tweed suit—standing in front of Crow Wood Hall. A successful **Psychology** roll notices that he is smiling in a way that subtly suggests a desire to be elsewhere.

No information has been forthcoming and no one has reported seeing her husband since he left for Thistledown Golf Club on that fateful day. (Depending on how long it has taken the investigators to arrive, Macmillan may have been missing for only 48 hours or for considerably longer; adjust the timings mentioned below accordingly.) Her face is pained as she runs through the list of inquiries that she has made locally: within her social set in Dundee, among her friends in lowland Scotland and throughout Britain, and with family (Macmillan's three sons—Albert, Charles, or Gordon—in particular), as well as friends back in the United States. None of these inquiries has resulted in any useful information regarding her husband's disappearance on September 14th. Her desperation is clear. Her husband, she relates, is not a young man and he has been missing for a terribly long time now.

She is furious with the Dundee police, particularly Detective Inspectors McAndrew and Black, for their lack of initiative and commitment. After visiting the golf club, they did not appear overly concerned with Macmillan's disappearance. She argues that they have treated her abysmally, not kept her informed (as is her right), and have treated the case with a cold, business-like detachment.

Crystal has made no attempt to visit the golf club herself, but a day or so prior she asked the Thistledown foreman, Cameron Nairn, to come to Crow Wood Hall. Nairn seemed, to her mind, a competent man, but—she admits fully—she knows little of the construction business. In Nairn she saw genuine concern for her husband's well-being, despite some clear tension between them. If the investigators inquire as to the nature of this tension, she relates that Macmillan kept the details of his business at Thistledown to himself.

**Keeper note:** a successful **Psychology** roll at this point reveals that Crystal is upset by something or keeping something to herself. Alternatively, a successful **Spot Hidden** roll discerns a touch of color appears in her cheeks, as if she might be embarrassed. She is in fact still stinging from an argument that she had with her husband the night before his disappearance.

Continuing, Crystal recounts that she and Macmillan each had a “pet” project over the past few months, with her refurbishing Crow Wood Hall while Arthur restored the clubhouse and course at Thistledown. She knows little of his activities regarding the golf club, suggesting that he talked business more readily with his valet and the other men in their employ than with her.

She suggests that the investigators start by talking to the household staff at Crow Wood Hall, and puts the hall and all its amenities at their service. If the investigators require a car, she offers the use of the Humber 14/40 5-Seat Tourer in the garage. A good car is a necessity in these parts, she notes, particularly for when they visit Thistledown or if they need to travel further afield (the Queen's Head pub and the police in Dundee are two possibilities she mentions). To access the Thistledown site, they need Cameron Nairn's keys. Her husband was the only other person to have a set of keys to the site and clubhouse, and they have vanished with him.

She insists that the investigators stay at Crow Wood Hall for the duration. Mrs. Grant, the Macmillans' housekeeper and cook, has been preparing for the investigators' visit, having recently restocked the larder and wine cellar. Although, Crystal proposes, if any of the characters prefers beer or ale to wine, they will need to visit the nearby Queen's Head pub, where they may also find a number of the men who were working at the golf club and perhaps Mr. Nairn. (Crystal will not abide beer or ale in the house after her late brother Milton drank himself to death).

**Keeper note:** if the investigators are not in the area at Crystal's invitation and have nowhere to stay, then the Queen's Head offers a bed and breakfast service at very reasonable rates.

If the investigators desire to rest after their journey, Crystal has Keating escort them to their rooms on the second floor. If they would rather begin their investigations, then they can speak with the Crow Wood Hall staff or walk to the garage where Craig can provide them with the keys to the Humber Tourer. If it is late in the day, Crystal suggests that they delay their investigations until the following morning. She is happy to send word for Nairn to meet the investigators at the Queen's Head on the following afternoon to retrieve the keys to Thistledown.

Crystal dines at 7 pm every evening and insists that the investigators join her. She otherwise gives them their freedom and reiterates that any help she or her staff can provide will be gladly given.

**Keeper note:** should the investigators inquire about Crystal's troubled sleep (perhaps after talking with the staff or having intuited such circumstance), she admits that she suffers nightly from nightmarish visions of her husband calling out and begging her for help. They are nothing more than bad dreams, she posits, but the visions make sleep difficult. These nightmares are, in fact Arthur Macmillan trying to contact Crow Wood Hall and Crystal specifically. She and—to a lesser extent—the valet Kilburn are the only people in the house who are conscious of these etheric calls.

## CROW WOOD HALL HOUSEHOLD STAFF

The staff at Crow Wood Hall (butler, housekeeper/cook, two maids, groundskeeper, and valet) know little of the circumstances behind Macmillan's disappearance. They can speak only to what they know of events before he vanished and since. Busy as they are with taking care of Crow Wood Hall and Mrs. Macmillan, they have not ventured into Dundee or visited the Thistledown site themselves. Their lives rotate around the house and their employers. Only the butler, Keating, reads the daily news and has any idea of affairs beyond the estate.

The staff expresses real concern for their employers. In the case of Crystal Macmillan, they have watched her struggle with her husband's disappearance, seen her go without sleep and food, and have heard her crying. She is not the woman they met months ago when first employed. Her mirth and excitement have been replaced by suffering and anguish.

Before Mr. Macmillan's disappearance, Mrs. Macmillan's primary concern had been the refurbishing of Crow Wood Hall. At this point, the work is nearly complete and she had most recently turned her attention to restocking the library and replacing the lost silver. After Mr. Macmillan's disappearance, however, all these diversions were pushed



*Crystal Macmillan's nightmares*

aside as she spent all her time on securing help to find her husband.

The staff is very glad to have someone finally on the case. Mrs. Macmillan has been very dismissive of the police and very vocal about the lack of attention given to her husband's vanishing. Each member of the household has some information to pass on regarding the events prior to that night and of events since.

### Gerald Keating (butler)

The night before Mr. Macmillan's departure, Keating witnessed a disagreement between the married couple. It was the first argument that he—or, indeed, any of the staff—had witnessed since his employment. Mr. Macmillan was upset about progress at Thistledown and Mrs. Macmillan had tried to dutifully calm his nerves. Unfortunately, he seemed to interpret her intentions as patronizing and made a disparaging remark about her, *"Useless flapping about things she didn't understand,"* suggesting she should concentrate instead on curtain patterns. Mrs. Macmillan had stormed off, but the next morning at breakfast things seemed to have been resolved. Mr. Macmillan announced his intention to, *"see what was holding things up"* at Thistledown and left shortly after lunch. He did not return.

Since Mr. Macmillan's disappearance, Keating has done his best to help Mrs. Macmillan. Although Keating has never visited the Thistledown site himself, he has some knowledge of the site foreman, Cameron Nairn. Of Nairn, Keating relates that he is well known, especially at the Queen's Head. A successful **Charm** or **Persuade** roll results in further illumination: *"Let's just say that Nairn likes a drink, more than a man should, and he's prone to rash choices. I don't frequent the place, but from what I've heard, Nairn's spent most of his waking hours—and no doubt his money—at the Queen's Head since his wife left him last December."*

### Audrey Grant (housekeeper/cook)

Mrs. Grant enjoys working for Mrs. Macmillan, who is amiable enough, but suggests that she's too kind for her own good. A successful **Persuade** roll reveals that Grant believes Mrs. Macmillan should never have hired the two young maids now working at Crow Wood Hall: *"They're too inexperienced, just too young, especially that Theresa. She's a pretty girl, but she lacks sense and propriety. Katie is little better, but at least she knows her place. Both of them are too superstitious by far—they'll believe any old nonsense."*

If the investigators press her further on the nature of the maids' superstitions, Grant reveals that she's overheard them on a few occasions talk about ghosts and hauntings. A staunch Presbyterian, Grant dismisses such talk outright. She doesn't want Mrs. Macmillan hearing any nonsense about ghosts in

Crow Wood Hall, especially now that Mr. Macmillan has vanished. Grant still hopes that Mr. Macmillan will return, for Mrs. Macmillan's sake, and because she would like to stay on at Crow Wood Hall until she retires.

### Theresa Dalkeith and Katie MacDonald (maids)

As with Grant, both girls had little to do with Mr. Macmillan, limiting their comments to working for his wife. They both have only positive things to say about their employers—each is secretly happy to have secured such easy and well-paid work.

Katie, more than Theresa, was aware of a change in Mr. Macmillan's mood prior to his departure for Thistledown. This is in large part to her reading through some crumpled-up papers in Mr. Macmillan's study. One paper was, *"Like a ledger"* and Katie couldn't make much of it, but the other piece of paper was a short letter to the Thistledown foreman, Cameron Nairn. It revealed that a large number of the workmen at the club complained of constant headaches on the site and many had fallen ill, delaying the work.

If the investigators have talked to Mrs. Grant or bring up the topic of superstitions, both girls blush. Theresa admits an interest in folktales and a belief in ghosts. She confides that she's seen a black dog—*"a hell hound, big and black,"*—running along the edges of the Crow Wood. She also glimpsed a ghost of a man in old-fashioned clothing in the library one dusky evening. The spectral image gave her a fright and she went running into the dining room and finally the kitchen to find Katie with Mrs. Grant. Mrs. Grant made her swear not to say a thing to the Macmillans.

### Peter Craig (groundskeeper)

Craig lives in a small garret above the former stables, which now acts as a garage for Mr. Macmillan's Crossley 3-litre and Mrs. Macmillan's Humber Tourer, as well as storage for the work ongoing in the main house. Craig rarely visits Crow Wood Hall proper, preferring to spend his time outdoors or in his small apartment. He has only spoken to Mrs. Macmillan twice in the four months since his employment. Mr. Macmillan was Craig's primary contact at Crow Wood Hall, although he occasionally shared a cigarette with the valet, Gordon Kilburn.

Craig is a difficult man to talk to and avoids contact generally. This might appear mysterious, but it is indicative of Craig's severe shyness. He prefers solitude and nature to human interaction of any kind. Should the Keeper wish, he may prove elusive and require that the investigators spend some time tracking him down somewhere on the Crow Wood Hall grounds. When they do speak with him, Craig mostly talks about the new Crossley 3-litre, which he inadvertently scratched with a shovel one evening. Macmillan

was furious but forgave him soon enough. On the day of his disappearance, Mr. Macmillan was again agitated when he left. When Craig had some difficulty unlocking the rusty padlock on the stable doors, his boss got surprisingly irate. In secret, Craig is worried that one more altercation might signal the end of his employment.

If the investigators have already spoken to the maids and heard Theresa Dalkeith recount her sightings of an unnaturally large, black hound in the Crow Wood, Craig reveals that black dogs have figured in local folktales for generations. The nearby Crow Wood and Black Wood are supposed to be a haunt of black dogs—the most famous being “Black Jamie”—who is said to have lurked in the Crow Wood since 1755, as well as will-o-the-wisps, and even a ghost or two. Having lived and worked in these parts his entire life, Craig discounts all such tales as, *“Utter rubbish as only fools would believe in.”*

### Gordon Kilburn (valet)

Kilburn is, despite his outwardly calm demeanor, a nervous man. The investigators may pick up on this in the manner of his speech and his constant fidgeting (or with a successful **Psychology** roll). Kilburn conveys to the investigators that his employer was in a stage of considerable agitation on the day of his disappearance. He had confided in Kilburn the previous evening that he felt let down by the Thistledown foreman, Nairn. Most of Mr. Macmillan’s anger, however, targeted the *“Lazy bastards”* Nairn had hired and their *“superstitious nonsense.”* Kilburn didn’t press his employer on the point and so knows little more than that.

The longer the investigators spend with Kilburn, the more visibly distressed the man becomes. If the investigators manage a successful **Charm**, **Persuade**, or **Intimidate** roll, Kilburn reveals that he has had difficulty sleeping since Mr. Macmillan’s disappearance. He has been plagued by terrible nightmares, often involving his employer appearing as an apparition in a dark place—always, Kilburn emphasizes, *“a terrible, dark place.”* Kilburn is not a man who normally remembers his dreams so this rash of nightmares has taken a particular toll on his already strained nerves. He can give no rationale for why he should be suffering these dreams, although he believes that he is not the only one. He relates that he heard one of the other employees, whom he will not name, mention that Mrs. Macmillan had been suffering from nightmares as well.

## INVESTIGATIONS FURTHER AFIELD

Locations near Crow Wood Hall that might be of interest to the investigators include the Queen’s Head pub (a 10-minute drive away), the Crow Wood itself or the Black Wood (a 5-minute walk northwest), and the Macintosh and Bell farms immediately to the east and west of the Hall, respectively. Further away, the investigators can visit Abernethy, the nearest township south of Crow Wood Hall, or return to Dundee to visit the police, the university, post office, or any other number of resources in the city.

### VISITING THE QUEEN’S HEAD

The Queen’s Head is a two-story, wood and stone country pub originally built in 1848. Situated at a crossroads and not far from the closest access point to the main road running between Dundee and Coupar Angus, it is a prime meeting spot for farmers, townsfolk, and visitors alike. The main floor of the building consists of one large hall with the bar along the back wall and the kitchen, pantry, and toilets accessible down a narrow hallway to the right of the bar. The interior of the bar is furnished in untreated wood that has weathered and split over time, giving the small pub an undeniable character.

Seating for patrons consists of four long, monolithic tables forming a square, surrounded on all sides by small, worn rectangular stools. At lunchtimes and evenings, the Queen’s Head heaves with farmers, local workers, and residents having a pint and discussing the day’s events. In a part of the world where few men have the time or the inclination to read the newspapers, most pick up word of important events at the pub.

When the investigators visit—day or night—the pub is teeming with men dressed in work clothes, having just stopped in for a drink and a chat. The laughter and conversations continue when they arrive; in fact, their presence largely goes unnoticed in the busy pub. Behind the bar, the owner, Henry Adams, and his wife, Margery, serve patrons and clean glasses as fast as they can. The Adams’ son, Gregor, occasionally pops out from the kitchen down the hall bearing plates of piping hot food for different tables.

Apart from the tables, some space is available on chairs along the left-hand wall. A few solitary souls sit in these, keeping to themselves. Unless he has reason to be elsewhere, Cameron Nairn occupies one of the chairs near the bar. He sits in his work overalls nursing a pint of ale, occasionally looking up when a conversation at a table catches his ear. Unlike the majority of men in the pub, Nairn looks anything but happy.

### Talking to Cameron Nairn

Regardless of whether the investigators take up Crystal Macmillan's offer to contact Nairn or not, they find the foreman here most times, day or night. Nairn sits with a half-full pint of beer and two or three empty glasses beside him. To say that the man has become a fixture in the pub would be an understatement.

Even if Crystal has sent word ahead, Nairn appears surprised and more than a little confused when the investigators arrive at his little corner of the pub. He is dressed in his foreman's clothes, which look decidedly shabby and the worse for wear, and he smells unpleasantly earthy. Unless the investigators direct the conversation, Nairn starts at the beginning, explaining that his experience as a construction foreman in Dundee led Mr. Macmillan to him. Nairn stopped working for big industry after hurting his back and had semi-retired to Abernyte, where his wife's family originated. After separating from his wife last year, he moved into a small miner's cottage not far from the Queen's Head. When Arthur Macmillan approached him, Nairn thought the opportunity to renovate Thistledown Golf Club might signal a change for the better.

For this reason, he found the troubles at the site upsetting. He was desperate to get his life in order, but then things started going wrong—things that didn't make sense, things out of his control. He did his best to placate the men and Mr. Macmillan. When men started to complain of headaches, he tried changing their hours, moving them around the site and more, but things only got worse. The men started falling ill, many exhibiting 'flu-like symptoms. They couldn't work and he struggled to find craftsmen to replace them. Toward the end, it became a daily struggle to find enough men willing and able to continue the work.

Progress slowed though real gains were still made. The newly designed golf holes were completed only a week or two late and the landscaping on the course was finished shortly thereafter. The problems—from start to last—were in the clubhouse. The plasterers, carpenters, and plumbers were the first to complain of headaches and fall ill. No one—not Nairn nor the craftsmen themselves—could find a source for the illness. The damp had been dealt with months before, there were no gas leaks, and it was summer, so the weather was not to blame. But, anyone who spent long periods in the clubhouse fell ill. Then, the other trouble started: the rumors, the supposed "ghostly sightings," and other superstitious talk.

Some of the men reported hearing strange sounds coming from empty rooms or finding their tools moved or missing. It was taken as tomfoolery at the beginning, but it persisted and got steadily worse. Others complained of changes in temperature or a kind of electric charge in the air. And then, about a month ago, a few of the men came forward to say

they had "seen" things. It was like an epidemic: reports came in of strange sparks in the air, floating globes of light, and shadows and walls shifting and dancing.

Nairn reported all of this to Macmillan, who reacted with anger and incredulity. The men started complaining, some quit the site, and the renovations slowed to a crawl. Two weeks before Macmillan came to the site, an electrician brought in from Dundee walked off the job after an hour's work. He babbled about a ghost and the clubhouse being haunted. A few days later another man reported seeing a luminous phantom at the end of the upstairs hall that vanished a moment later.

Finally, just two days before Macmillan's visit, a group of three men—honest ones—came to Nairn at midday saying that a specter had walked into the ballroom where they were working. It was indistinct and shifting, but they all saw it. It came toward them, raising an arm, and then vanished. They refused to return to the ballroom. Nairn didn't know what to believe. He was beginning to have doubts himself when Macmillan informed Nairn that he would be coming to Thistledown to set things straight.

Macmillan arrived in his car shortly after noon the next day. The elderly American was furious with the lack of progress and with Nairn's "*apparent lack of leadership*." The foreman tried to explain the situation and stand by his men, but Macmillan would hear none of it. For the first time since he'd taken the job, Nairn considered leaving it behind. Macmillan ranted and shouted for a good ten minutes, drawing an audience of the craftsmen and letting them all know what he thought of his foreman and the situation at Thistledown. By the end of the tirade, Nairn felt smaller than a mouse.

Macmillan then stormed off toward the first hole, walking at a brisk pace, muttering angrily. He wasn't seen again for more than an hour, having apparently toured the course. By this time, most of the men were giving their employer a wide berth and quietly going about their work in the clubhouse when he stalked in. Nairn heard nothing more of Macmillan's activities and, as the day came to a close, the foreman assumed that his employer had left the site without being seen. That was until he found Macmillan's fancy car still parked outside Thistledown's gates.

The investigators know the rest of the story: no sign of Macmillan could be found. Nairn called the police and Mrs. Macmillan, informing them both that the man had vanished. Work at the site stopped and, two days later, he opened the gates for the last time for the Dundee police. They spent a few hours searching, found nothing, and left in a hurry. The gates to Thistledown have been closed ever since.

If the investigators press Nairn on the subject of ghosts or paranormal activity, he shakes his head in disbelief.

He, for one, never saw anything unusual. He admits that Thistledown has “*an unusual feeling to it*” but says no more. A successful **Psychology** roll determines that, despite his inebriation, Nairn is telling the truth and that the foreman does not appear to bear any ill will toward his employer, and genuinely seems to hope for Macmillan’s safe return.

If asked whether or not he would like to see the Thistledown project completed, Nairn immediately answers yes. He would be delighted to see the job done and done well. Should the investigators ask whether he would be willing to come to the site with them, he declines, saying that he is better off where he is.

When the investigators are done asking their questions, Nairn hands over a substantial ring of keys that provides access to the Thistledown golf course and all areas of the clubhouse. Before they leave, he wishes them luck.

### Talking to the Laborers and Craftsmen

A number of the craftsmen and laborers who worked at Thistledown Golf Club are present in the Queen’s Head when the investigators come to interrogate and retrieve the keys from Cameron Nairn. Nairn points them out, if asked, but will not help with introductions. The closure of the site cost the men their immediate livelihood and many blame Nairn to one extent or another.

The four men—a carpenter (Jones), a mason (MacDonald), and two fitters (Abernathy and Gemmel)—are all between 20 and 50 years old. All have weathered skin and calloused hands. They are courteous enough to talk to the investigators, but talk more openly if a round of drinks is purchased for them.

Each of them lives locally and was happy to find work close to home. The loss of that work is a sore point, but then the site was not without its problems. The four men can attest to having heard first- or second-hand stories of strange happenings at the golf club, most commonly taking place in the clubhouse, but occasionally on the golf course as well. None of them witnessed anything like ghostly apparitions, yet they all agree there is something is “*very peculiar*” about Thistledown. Jones and Gemmel did hear strange sounds, while MacDonald says he felt changes in temperature or pressure, but that sort of thing is common enough on work sites.

Attempts to **Intimidate** the men may go badly if failed, whereas a successful **Psychology** roll reveals that peer pressure between them might be limiting their willingness to talk about what they have experienced. That same pressure will, unfortunately, stop any of the men agreeing to talk to the investigators alone. Ultimately, they suggest that the characters visit the site themselves if they want answers.

## VISITING CROW WOOD OR BLACK WOOD

Crow Wood (immediately north of the hall) and Black Wood (to the northwest) are, in fact, two sides of the same ancient forest. Populated by a mixture of coniferous and deciduous trees, the forest is home to sparrows, black birds, dunnocks, wood pigeons, coal and long-tailed tits, and a truly impressive number of crows. Investigators roaming the Crow or Black Woods may also spot gray squirrels, while their walking might frighten away a fox or two, but—unless the Keeper determines otherwise—they will find no trace of black dogs or other legendary creatures.

In fact, the high canopy of leaves and the dense floor of pine needles make the forest a very pleasant place during the day; however, at night, the woods are dark and quiet, and shadows close in on every side. Those traversing the wood by night without a torch or other light source stand a very good chance of tripping on exposed roots or walking into low branches.

**Keeper note:** should you wish to add an element of danger or threat here, any of the Mythos creatures that can be encountered at Thistledown Golf Club might also turn up in the woods near Crow Wood Hall, particularly if they have followed the trail left by Macmillan as he reaches out from the ether for his wife Crystal. Profiles for these threats are provided in the **Characters and Monsters** section (page 179).

## VISITING THE MACINTOSH OR BELL FARMS

The Macintosh and Bell families have farmed in this region for generations, and they have watched Crow Wood Hall sit empty for more than 30 years. The arrival of the Americans four months ago has made little difference to their lives. The Macmillans came around to introduce themselves, but, beyond that, there has been little interaction between Crow Wood Hall and the neighboring farms.

Dougal Macintosh is, by far, the most approachable of the family patriarchs and welcomes the investigators into his home for a wee dram of whiskey when they arrive. Macintosh knows of Macmillan’s disappearance, as do most folk, but has not seen the American since his initial visit. If the investigators ask about rumors of ghosts or black dogs, the ever-practical Macintosh raises a bushy eyebrow.

There has been talk of black dogs in the area for hundreds of years, he relates. His personal belief is that the stories of these horrors date back to medieval times when wolves freely roamed the forests. With a shake of his head, he dismisses both black dogs and ghosts as, “*Romantical rubbish*”—“*nothing goes bump in the night around here*,” Macintosh suggests.

### VISITING DUNDEE

A 30-minute drive from Crow Wood Hall, Dundee is likely the furthest destination the investigators will visit. The Dundee Police, University College, the city library, and the main post office are all found clustered within the city center only a short walk from one another. Additionally, if the investigators wish to purchase equipment, a number of large department stores are available for common goods or, if they are seeking something more unusual, they could try their luck on the black market at the docks.

### Talking to the Police

Detective Inspectors William Black and Michael McAndrew are both busy men, but they will begrudgingly give the investigators a few minutes of their time. Macmillan's disappearance is one of many cases that each of them is overseeing at the time of the investigators' visit. If the investigators mention the story in *The Herald*, they report that no one has come forward with any information.

Detective Inspector Black states upfront that he is more concerned about finding murderers in Dundee than chasing after some dodderly American who got himself lost in the woods. Black suggests that, as far as he is concerned, there was no sign of foul play or anything mysterious at Thistledown

Golf Club. The old man will show up soon, he announces confidently, adding "*One way or another...*" If the investigators ask for more detail, he shakes his head. "*There was nothing strange about the case.*" He finishes dismissively, saying, "*You're wasting your time out there—and mine here. Good day.*"

Detective Inspector McAndrew is far more personable. He is also far more troubled about the Macmillan case, but not because of the missing persons aspect. People go missing all the time, he offers. A successful **Persuade** roll convinces the man to open up. What troubles him is "*That house*," he says enigmatically. Making sure that no one can overhear him—especially Black—McAndrew continues, stating, "*There is something wrong with that place, that clubhouse, believe you me.*"

When they arrived at Thistledown, the two detective inspectors searched the clubhouse while four policemen searched the golf course. The policemen found nothing, encountered nothing. But inside the clubhouse, both he and Black experienced things that didn't make sense. Black won't talk about it now—not with McAndrew, not with anyone—but McAndrew cannot forget what he heard and saw.

They were near the back of the building in the men's changing area. The place was still under construction and lit only by dim light coming in from a high window. As they walked into that space, something in the deep shadow at



Talking to the police

the end of the room opposite them moved. A split-second later, a glimmering figure appeared in the gloom and slowly faded out of existence. Neither of them moved for a moment, but a second later Black turned on his heels and left. By the time McAndrew caught him at the door, Black was already dismissing what they saw as a trick of the light. When McAndrew suggested that they report it, Black told him off, warning him not to put a single word of it into the police report.

The thing he saw—that they saw—wasn't anything like how ghosts are described in fairy stories or folktales, he suggests. It was a bigger than a man: a faintly glowing, shimmering mass that wasn't quite insect and wasn't quite human. It made his blood run cold then and it still does even now. It didn't make a sound and he can't even be sure that it noticed them before it disappeared, vanishing right in front of them.

If the investigators suggest a connection between the creature McAndrew describes and Macmillan's

disappearance, his forehead wrinkles and shrugs. He can't be sure of any link: can ghosts make people disappear? He can't offer them much beyond what he has told them, and he doesn't fancy a return visit to the club. Black wouldn't go for it anyway. As the investigators leave, he mentions that if they can find any hard evidence, he'd be happy to follow it up.

### Using University College or Dundee City Library

The libraries and staff of University College and the municipality of Dundee are available to the investigators between the hours of 9 am and 7 pm. While the collections held in the city library are more in keeping with popular interest and are less academic, they are nonetheless a valuable resource. A large section on Scottish history and tradition is bounded by a collection of local interest books, a broad selection of folktales, and volumes on the occult. Members of the library's staff are more than willing to point the investigators in the right direction.



## POTENTIAL RED HERRINGS

A number of red herrings are provided for Keepers to add some misdirection into gameplay or to extend it. Alternatively, Keepers might wish to create their own.

**Red Herring 1:** in the summer of 1916, when the military repurposed the golf course at Thistledown as a training ground for recruits, a young army nurse named Mary Conlon slipped from her cabin one night to meet with one of the enlisted men on the fifth green away from prying eyes. The next morning, Conlon's body was found in the rough at the edge of the green having been brutally murdered. An investigation was conducted into the nurse's death but none of the soldiers or locals were ever accused or found guilty. Since that night, a number of golfers and visitors have seen a woman in white lurking in the rough of the fifth green.

**Red Herring 2:** since the opening of Thistledown Golf Club in 1909, there have been numerous reports of spectral figures, strange balls of light, and an oppressive feeling of fear and threat on the ninth green. The ninth stands as the furthest hole from the clubhouse and, in light of these events, it was given the name "Satan's Reach." At least one death

is associated with the ninth hole: in September 1913, the body of golfer John Campbell was found lying bloated on the green. An autopsy revealed that Campbell had poisoned himself, and many locals believe that he did so because he was possessed by the devil.

**Red Herring 3:** a number of local accounts suggest that a hellhound or "black dog" haunts the Thistledown course. According to these accounts, an ominous hound prowls the golf course on the full and new moon of every month, with anyone seeing the dog doomed to die. One unsettling account tells the story of the hunter James Netherwell and his son, who set out to kill the dog and thereby end its reign of terror. The story recounts how the black dog appeared on the next new moon and led Netherwell and son on a chase across the course. Finally, on the ninth green, the dire hound slowed enough for Netherwell to take a shot and fell the beast. But, when Netherwell approached the body, he found he had shot dead his son David instead. In his grief, Netherwell turned his gun upon himself and committed suicide. To this day, both hunter and hunted are said to haunt the course.



A few books on golf mention the opening, and eventual closure, of Thistledown Golf Club. One or two of these books mention that the golf course was used as a training ground by the British Army before the Great War. These same books provide Keepers with an opportunity to introduce one or more of the red herrings (see **Potential Red Herrings** box, nearby).

The University College library is small in comparison to the holdings of other Scottish universities, but it maintains the essentials and provides the investigators with access to academic tomes on law, science, engineering, and, to a lesser extent, the arts. The histories of Scotland and Dundee presented here are considerably drier than those in the city library, but provide much the same information. While there are no books on the supernatural, there are a number of texts dealing with subjects and phenomena that either sit on, or push, the boundaries of modern science.

Additionally, the academic staff at University College can be a valuable information source at points throughout the scenario. Keepers are encouraged to use these opportunities to manipulate investigators and/or the story, and to introduce new plot elements.

## INVESTIGATING THISTLEDOWN

A little over a mile (1.6 km) south of Crow Wood Hall and 2 miles (3.2 km) northeast of the Queen's Head pub is the road to Thistledown Golf Club. The road shows its years of neglect. Outside of the deep ruts created by the heavy trucks moving to and from the site, the road is overgrown with tall grass and shrubs. The quarter-mile (400 m) distance to the club gates is strewn with potholes.

A short distance down the road, the Thistledown clubhouse can be seen rising over nearby treetops. The clubhouse is recognizably modeled on a Scottish Baronial mansion, complete with turrets at each corner and crenulations atop each wall. Through the rusting gates, the clubhouse's restoration looks to be all but complete. The whitewashed walls of the two-story structure jump out against the green landscape and the new windows shine brightly. If an investigator makes a **Spot Hidden** roll, an Extreme success results in them seeing a shadow move across one of the second-floor windows.

The courtyard in front of the clubhouse is another matter. Through the gates, the investigators can see piles of lumber stacked to the left while a heap of broken plaster moldings, torn-out fixtures, rusted kitchen appliances, and old plumbing lies to the right. Parked just outside the gates on the left is Macmillan's cream-colored Crossley 3-litre.

The formerly immaculate vehicle may be looking the worse for wear depending on how long it's been abandoned here (bird droppings, fallen leaves, mud splashes, and so on). If the investigators take a moment to examine the motorcar, they find nothing out of place or unusual.

Gaining access to the golf course and clubhouse requires getting past the padlocked chain that holds the rusting gates fast. If the investigators have already talked to Cameron Nairn and acquired his ring of keys, then the padlock can be swiftly removed. If, however, they have come without Nairn's keys, the massive lock and thick chain links provide a real challenge; a successful Hard **Locksmith** roll sees the job done, however.

Climbing over the gates is dangerous as the iron fence that surrounds the golf club is topped with ornate spikes. A successful **Climb** roll is required to safely maneuver over the fence, avoiding the spikes; failure requires a **DEX** roll, which if successful, means the investigator avoids the iron spikes, otherwise they suffer 1 damage.

Once the investigators have gained access to the site, they can visit all the available locations within the golf club, including the newly redesigned 18-hole golf course and the 20-plus rooms in the clubhouse.

## THE THISTLEDOWN COURSE

The course at Thistledown has 18 holes and was originally designed by noted architect Alister MacKenzie (1870–1934). Commissioned by the Montrose family in the summer of 1900, construction of the course and its clubhouse began in fall 1901 and was completed in spring 1903. Thistledown opened with local fanfare but garnered little national attention. After a promising start, the course suffered a steady decline in interest and profits. Blame for its performance was attributed to its location—too far from population centers—and to a number of high-profile reviews that declared young MacKenzie's design as, “decidedly hit and miss.”

After six years, the Montrose family finally closed the club and, from 1909 onward, the course grew derelict. A small number of local golfers occasionally stole onto the course after the closure, but without proper upkeep, it became overgrown and was useless by the end of 1911. With the outbreak of war in 1914, the course found some utility as an infantry training ground, but that occupation, too, was short-lived. In 1917, the gates to Thistledown were closed seemingly for good, and both the clubhouse and the course were abandoned. Macmillan's renewal of the course in 1928 has brought it up to its original standards and greatly improved the lackluster holes from MacKenzie's initial design.

## THISTLEDOWN GOLF COURSE IN DETAIL

Like most Scottish courses, Thistledown makes excellent use of Scotland's rocky landscape, brimming with wild shrubs, colorful flowers, and heathers. Each hole employs varied landscapes, sand and/or water traps, and "rough" areas to increase the challenge and make the course more interesting.

### COURSE TITLES AND SPECIFICS

Hole	Name	Yards	Par	Hole	Name	Yards	Par
1	Kite	369	4	10	The Burn	437	4
2	Laggan	390	4	11	Badger Hole	308	4
3	Naiad	378	4	12	The Railyard	413	4
4	Dunwell	506	5	13	Bridgend	471	4
5	The Greenman	211	3	14	Lomond	187	3
6	Bass Rock	501	5	15	Glen Nevis	438	4
7	Fuente Blanco	406	4	16	Foxhound	524	5
8	The Arab	162	3	17	The Stage	266	3
9	Satan's Reach	432	4	18	Crow Wood	475	4
	Out	3,355	36		In	3519	35
					Total	6874	71

### Playing Golf at Thistledown

During the scenario, if the investigators choose to play golf, they first must acquire golf clubs and balls from either Crow Wood Hall (Macmillan owns three sets of clubs) or from the clubhouse shop. For proper rules, Keepers are encouraged to visit the R&A ([www.randa.org](http://www.randa.org)) or USGA ([www.usga.org](http://www.usga.org)), who have jointly administered the rules of golf since 1952.

In brief, for each hole, golfers are expected to hit the ball with a club from a teeing ground to the green and into the hole in a series of strokes. Par denotes the number of strokes a golfer should take to complete the hole. The fewer strokes ("under par"), and lower score, the better. The golfer with the least number of strokes after 18 holes, and therefore the lowest score, wins.

If wishing to use game mechanics to judge who wins a round of golf, the Keeper can make it simple by calling for an opposed **DEX** roll between the competitors. Or, they could play hole by hole, using the same rule, or make the roll a combined one, using **DEX** and **Sleight of Hand** (to account for fine judgement and finesse)—beware, though, as this could become tedious! A few players may already possess the **Art/Craft (Golfing)** skill, if so, they can use that skill instead, with the Keeper applying a penalty die to the non-golfer's **DEX/Sleight of Hand** roll. Feel free to improvise.

### Groundskeeper's Hut and Generator

The groundskeeper's hut (off the ninth hole) is very overgrown and contains nothing of value. The small brick house is severely weathered, its windows are broken, and its interior is rotting with damp. Some 20 feet (6 m) from the hut is the generator out-building that houses the huge diesel-powered generator for the clubhouse.

**Keeper note:** Lackie has cleverly designed a trigger for the generator that remotely starts the machine to maintain power to the clubhouse. The electrical trigger consists of a wired box attached to the generator. It is obvious that the new-looking trigger is not part of the original—now rusting—machine. As long as there is mains power supplying the clubhouse, the generator remains off. It can be started or stopped manually at any time without removing the trigger, unless the Keeper deems otherwise; however, if the trigger is still in place and the mains power to the clubhouse has been cut, the generator may keep turning itself back on again each time it is manually turned off until the trigger is removed with either a successful **Mechanical** or **Electrical Repair** roll, if the Keeper wishes (**Revelations and Resolutions**, page 175).

## COURSE ENCOUNTERS

The following encounters can coincide with the investigators' exploration of the golf course; some are suitable for inclusion in the clubhouse. Most are subtle effects, but a few are more spectacular and/or dangerous. These etheric or dimensional effects are provided as tools for Keepers to use to enhance gameplay, to increase tension and drama, and to provide players with a greater challenge. The Keeper is encouraged to alter any of the information below to better suit their needs.

### Potential Etheric and Dimensional Effects

#### *Dimensional Static*

Energies drawn from one dimension to another create split-second, microscopic vacuums in the air. The result is a sharp, popping static or white noise that suddenly surrounds the investigators. Seemingly emanating from nowhere and everywhere at the same time, the experience is greatly unnerving.

- **Duration:** 1D6 minutes.
- **Damage:** none,
- **Sanity loss:** 0/1 point.

#### *Glowing Motes*

Motes of ether suddenly illuminate brightly in the area, glowing steadily like brilliant little stars. Individual motes are variably inches or many feet apart, forming strange constellations. The motes themselves—though visible and projecting light—are wholly insubstantial and have no corporeality; they cannot be touched, moved, or otherwise interacted with. When a person or object inhabits the same space as an etheric mote, it winks out of existence only to reappear once the space is free again.

- **Duration:** 1D10 minutes.
- **Damage:** none.
- **Sanity loss:** 0/1 point.

#### *Gaseous Vortex*

A huge outpouring of carbon dioxide floods into the area from an unseen etheric breach, causing the air in the area to be churned into a sudden and violent windstorm. The lashing vortex whips up loose objects, snuffs out candles, and causes the investigators to gasp for air. The winds are powerful enough to knock people over and cause larger objects to shake or shift.

- **Duration:** 1D4 minutes.
- **Damage:** 1D4–2.
- **Sanity loss:** 0/1 point.

#### *Dimensional Barrier*

The fundamental incompatibility of etheric energies between two adjacent areas creates an impassable, invisible barrier. No passage between these areas is possible and no amount of strength or force can breach the barrier.

- **Duration:** 1D4 hours.
- **Damage:** none.
- **Sanity loss:** 0/1 point.

#### *Etheric Explosion*

Dimensional energies moving too quickly from one space to another results in an explosion and subsequent shockwave. The investigators' reality appears to explode outward from a central point—the visible world balloons out silently, and then ripples inward until finally snapping back into place. A powerful wave of unseen energy hits the investigators.

- **Duration:** instantaneous.
- **Damage:** 1D6+2.
- **Sanity loss:** 0/1 point.

# THE THISTLEDOWN CLUBHOUSE

**Keeper note:** refer to **Handout: Nineteenth 2**, page 170, which provides a floorplan of the clubhouse.

There are three entry points to the clubhouse: the ornately carved wooden door at the front entrance, the glass patio doors into the great hall that also lead out to the golf course, and a concealed side door giving access to the clubhouse basement. The basement door is intended for staff and is hidden behind two rows of planted trees. A narrow road looping round to the side of the house slopes down sharply between the rows of trees to allow delivery vans access to the basement door.

If the investigators have Nairn's keys, it takes only a moment to find the correct key for any of the external doors; otherwise, a successful **Locksmith** roll allows them access. All of the windows are newly fitted and locked. Access through any window requires smashing the pane and reaching in to manipulate a brass fixing that locks the window in place. There is no exterior roof access to the house. The clubhouse has no attic but does have a narrow crawlspace allowing access to ceiling light fixtures and electrics—the only point of access to this crawlspace is through a hatch in the second-floor vestibule.

## CLUBHOUSE FIRST FLOOR

### Entrance/Foyer

The clubhouse's entrance and foyer are attractively painted a pale hunter's green. Elaborate plaster cornices and white fluted pilasters stand out against the green walls. High overhead, a large crystal chandelier hangs from the ceiling; it is activated by a brass switch near the front desk. Three rolls of dark green carpet and another roll of thick underlay are stacked against the southern wall across from the long, polished oak front desk. The floor here is unfinished and mostly original; the newer floorboards stand out a dull gold among the older silver-gray planks.

The polished oak desk is 4 feet (1.2 m) high and fills the space between the eastern wall and the stairwell on the western wall. It has clearly never been used. An abandoned toolbox (containing a hammer, three boxes of nails, two boxes of wood screws, and a selection of screwdrivers) sits on the bare floor just behind the desk. The stairwell and a single guardrail run up from the first to the second floor. A series of small circular windows angles up the stairs and overlook the front of the clubhouse. The remaining windows

are all narrow, stained glass windows, which depict romantic representations of golfers on brightly colored greens.

Those spending more than a minute in the room notice an irregularity with the windows. If the investigators have come during the day, they notice that the stained-glass windows in the southern wall and the two panes on the western wall (that flank the front door) are black, despite it being light outside. The reverse is true if the investigators have come at night, in which case bright light pours through the stained glass despite it being dark outside. The same is true for two of the four picture windows going up the stairs: the bottom two are dark while the top two let in natural light (again, reverse this order for night).

If the investigators look carefully at the stained glass, they see that its colors are effectively rendered black by the "darkness" beyond. There is no apparent reason for the darkness—actually the result of a dimensional boundary currently aligning to the southern and western walls of the room. Should the investigators re-open the front door, they observe that it is light outside and that the colors of the stained glass are brightly lit from the outside (reversed if night). If one of them goes so far as to break or crack the darkened stained glass, it paradoxically allows light into the room. The confusing effect may warrant a **Sanity** roll (0/1 loss) at the Keeper's discretion.

The bottom two picture windows on the stairwell reveal more. Investigators looking through these clear panes during the daytime see an otherworldly night scene outside. A kind of moor or plain is barely visible in the gloom, bereft of trees or grass. A split-second later, a number of strangely iridescent shapes shoot past the window in the night sky. The things move too fast to be seen clearly, but their shape suggests unnaturally bent wings, long claws or talons, and clusters of tails or tentacles; again, a **Sanity** roll may be needed (0/1D3 loss).

### Hall

The hall is painted in the same pale hunter's green as the entrance/foyer and its floor is similarly unfinished. A brass light fixture clings to the ceiling, its incandescent bulbs hidden within flower-like glass enclosures (the brass switch is on the western wall). The hall is empty apart from four small tables and five high-backed chairs that have been pushed against the southern wall. Two narrow, stained-glass windows light the room in kaleidoscopic colors. The scenes depicted on the stained glass are like those in the foyer.

### Golf Shop

The shop has the same painted walls as the hall and foyer beyond. The floor is bare and the room has no light fixtures, just a wire hanging through a hole in the ceiling. Two

windows on the southern side and one on the eastern side of the room provide the available light. One long, oak shelving unit has been attached to the north wall and extends from floor to ceiling. An ornate desk is pushed into the southeast corner and piled high with cardboard boxes containing golf balls, books on golf, golf shirts and caps, and even a few pairs of golf shoes. Three golf bags with clubs lie stacked beneath the desk.

A moment after stepping into this room, the investigators hear a barely audible scratching coming from the northeast corner. A moment later, the scratching gets louder. Investigators might imagine a squirrel clambering up the wall outside or rats in the walls. The scratching soon becomes incessant, getting louder and louder. The sound is definitely coming from the northeast corner, but there is no immediately visible cause. Finally, the scratching is loud enough that some investigators might think to cover their ears. Then, suddenly, it stops, leaving only stunned silence.

Any investigator looking closely in the corner, or succeeding with a **Spot Hidden** roll from anywhere in the room, notes a deeply gouged “X” roughly scraped into the oak floorboards. The x-shape is not new: enough dust and debris has settled into the grooves to suggest it is decades old. If the investigators wish to pull up the floorboard containing the x-shape, they can do so with the hammer from the toolbox in the foyer—five minutes’ work—however, the investigators find nothing of significance beneath the floorboard, just a few wooden beams and the ceiling of the basement below.

### The Great Hall

Taken together, the hall and the great hall run the entire width of the clubhouse. The great hall is the larger of the two and accesses the men’s and women’s changing areas via oak doors, with the golf course outside visible through the two etched-glass French doors at the far end of the great hall. Brass nameplates on the oak doors differentiate the women’s facilities on the left (western) side of the hall from the men’s on the right. The lush dark-green carpet is soft underfoot.

Unless the investigators walk down the length of the great hall or succeed with a **Spot Hidden** roll, they likely miss a smaller, simpler door lying flush against the western wall near the French doors. This door is painted the same color of green as the walls and bears no handle, just a keyhole, and leads to the internal basement stairwell (**Basement Access**, page 167).

The same white pilasters found throughout the clubhouse are in evidence here. Three electrical wires descend from holes in the ceiling awaiting light fixtures. There is nothing else of interest in the great hall.




## COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE ETHER

During the characters’ investigation of the clubhouse, both Gilmour and Lackie—who are increasingly intent on returning to the real world—attempt to contact them. As the boundaries between the ether, our dimension, and other dimensions become more elastic and permeable, the two men’s attempts to communicate or influence events inside the clubhouse become more effective. A number of these etheric interactions are written into the descriptions of clubhouse rooms below, but the Keeper is encouraged to use additional communications to unsettle the investigators, to increase tension, or even potentially to direct or misdirect the investigators’ actions.

Generally, Gilmour and Lackie’s communications seek to direct the investigators’ progress toward their hidden laboratory. The Keeper may wish to play up their frustration as they repeatedly attempt to inform the characters while failing spectacularly time and time again. As their frustration increases, the tone or temperament of their etheric intrusions may, for example, become more extreme, even to the point of being mistaken for the antics of an angry poltergeist. Also trapped within the ether, Macmillan’s attempts at communication are all aimed at Crow Wood Hall and are specifically intended for his wife, Crystal. Macmillan’s attempts to communicate are significantly more pained and emotionally intense than those of Lackie and Gilmour. If any of the investigators should intercept or be susceptible to Macmillan’s influence, they may well feel as though they have been contacted by a desolate—and desperate—ghost.

Lastly, given the inter-dimensional instabilities present in the clubhouse and on the course, the Keeper may choose to have the investigators intercept messages from entities in other dimensions and realities. They might, for example, receive ghostly warnings from the future or from themselves trapped in alternate realities. A Great Old One or other vast alien intelligence might seek to manipulate the investigators to some nefarious end (allowing the Keeper to insert foreshadowing for future adventures). Regardless, these communications are useful tools to maintain tension and pace throughout the scenario.



### Women's Changing Area

The door to the women's changing area is locked. Nairn's keys or a successful **Locksmith** or **STR** roll opens it. Inside the room, the southern and western walls are covered in fitted wooden lockers painted to match the lilac walls to the east and north. Two polished wooden benches run parallel to the lockers and a single incandescent lightbulb rests atop the eastern most edge of the bench near the door. A flower-fluted light fixture is affixed to the center of the ceiling (the brass switch is just inside the door to the great hall). In addition to the overhead light, a series of smaller theatrical bulbs are ensconced around four mirrors on the north wall to either side of the door to the women's shower room. The floor throughout is polished oak. The lockers are all empty and there is nothing of significance in here.

**Keeper note:** as the investigators make their way through the women's changing area, they suddenly hear a strange series of broken and clipped whispers rush quickly through the room (roughly from the women's shower room door to the great hall door). A successful **Listen** roll determines that the whispers sound like those of children (in fact, they are the cries of Macmillan, Gilmour, and Lackie distorted by transmission through the ether). The same rush of whispers sounds once more a moment later, but barely audible this time. If someone achieved a Hard success or better on their Listen roll, they discern one particular voice in the mix and

the broken words "never," "meant," "ease," and "ace" (resulting from Gilmour projecting "Never mind this! Come to the basement! Our bodies are in the basement!").

### Women's Shower Room

A toilet and three shower stalls fill this room, leaving only a narrow corridor besides. None of the stall doors have been fitted and each lies just inside the stall. The plumbing, electrics, and extensive tiling look complete. The floor is covered in white tile and grout dust. The investigators likely track this dust back into the women's changing area, unless they take care not to.

### Men's Changing Area

For the most part, the men's changing area is a mirror-image of the women's changing area, except for the fact that it is larger and does not have lit mirrors. Wooden lockers line the south and east walls, with oak-polished benches parallel to them. The floor is likewise polished oak. Two light fixtures on the ceiling are of a glass-shell design (the brass switch for these is on the west wall near the door to the great hall, but the electricity does not appear to work). Two thin frosted glass windows on the east wall sit above the wooden lockers letting in a little natural light. Otherwise, the room is quite dark. It is also quite empty.

**Keeper note:** two dimensional shamblers use the dimensional instability present in the men's changing room and men's shower room as a doorway into this world. One or both may be present, depending on how much of a challenge Keepers wish to give their investigators. Watching from a parallel dimension, the shamblers are alert to movements and noises within and outside the clubhouse, and will either attack here or stalk the investigators for a more opportune moment. A single dimensional shambler takes on no more than two investigators, but both together might take on five or six. While they may appear and attack the investigators, the Keeper may use this encounter to scare rather than injure them. A profile for the dimensional shamblers are provided in the **Characters and Monsters** section (page 179). The Keeper might use the shamblers' tactic of disappearing into another dimension to give the players a clue, transporting an investigator briefly into the ether realm where Macmillan, Gilmour, and Lackie are trapped, allowing a momentary glimpse of Macmillan or the other pair before being brought back to the reality of the clubhouse. While it may be tempting to cart an investigator off to another dimension permanently, it does mean the player's fun has ended (without a new character to play), so take care with such dimensional hopping. The Keeper is advised to employ temporary jumps (perhaps inciting a **Sanity** roll) and return the investigator to somewhere else in the clubhouse or



Dimensional shamblers

locality, so they can rejoin the group—this tactic used to disperse the investigators. Remember that the shamblers are intelligent and will phase out if faced with a dangerous response from the investigators, or simply have them leave after inflicting a couple of rounds of combat.

### Men's Shower Room

Two toilets and five shower stalls fill the men's shower room, which is half as large again as the women's room. None of the stall doors are yet fitted and each is leaning just inside its stall. Despite the fact that the entire room is covered in bright white tiles, the space is dark and filled with shadows. Only two small frosted glass windows on the east wall provide any light, and the wooden stalls break up most of that. Wires for two light fixtures hang through small holes in the ceiling and a small hole near the door holds a curl of wire in it. There is nothing of particular interest in this room, although a successful **Spot Hidden** roll finds an unopened tin of solvent in one of the shower stalls.

If the investigators have spoken with Detective Inspector McAndrew and heard his tale (**Talking to the Police**, page 159), then they recognize this as the area in which he and DI Black saw the strange glimmering figure. As noted in the men's changing area previously, one or both of the dimensional shamblers may be watching the investigators, possibly having just winked into existence behind them.

### Basement Access

The basement access door is locked. It can be opened with a key from Nairn's ring or with a successful **Locksmith** or **STR** roll. The corridor beyond is lit with a single, bare bulb hanging from the ceiling (the switch to activate the light is just inside the door). A long row of floor-to-ceiling shelves runs along the northern, exterior wall. The upper shelves are empty but the bottom shelves are full of half- and unused cans of paint, lacquer, and polish. A collection of paint trays and used brushes—of varying widths and quality—lie just above the paint cans.

The stairwell down to the basement is bare wood and turns south at a landing halfway between the first floor and the basement. As the investigators reach this landing, the temperature drops dramatically. If they stop to investigate, they can see frost clinging to the final few steps. The light switch for the basement storage area is at the bottom of the stairs on the west wall, also covered in thick frost.

If at any time the investigators rush up or down the bottom-most steps, they stand a good chance of slipping and falling if they fail a **DEX** roll. Investigators falling on the stairs should roll **Luck**: with a successful roll, they only take 1D3 points of damage; with a failed roll, they suffer 1D6 damage.

The description of the basement and its contents are on pages 172-175.

## CLUBHOUSE SECOND FLOOR

The clubhouse's second floor is considerably more luxurious and impressive than the first floor. Intended to be more of a social space, this upper floor houses a large restaurant and ballroom, a gentlemen's parlor and smoking room, and a small library that also serves as a meeting room. Hidden away from view, the second floor also houses the club's office, staff room, kitchen and pantry, bar, and storage. Grand rectangular windows, 6 feet (1.8 m) high and 3 feet (90 cm) wide, overlook the golf course.

### Library/Meeting Room

The door to the library/meeting room is the first the investigators see from the top of the stairs. It bears a polished brass handle and an ornate brass plaque that identifies its function.

**Keeper note:** gravity within the library has shifted 90 degrees to align with a dimensional extrusion. This extrusion is barely visible as a slight blurring of reality along the southern side of the room (noticeable with a successful **Hard Spot Hidden** roll). The beams within the library itself creak ominously with the shift. The northern wall is now "up" while the southern wall is "down." Anyone stepping into the room experiences a vertigo-inducing gravity shift and "falls" across the room to the southern wall some 20 feet (6 m) away, suffering 2D6 points of falling damage.

When the investigators open the library door, the heavy oak door flies open (essentially falling away). The door then proceeds to act very oddly, as though it were magnetically attracted to a point at the center of the room. The library is unlit, but a light switch is just visible inside the room on the left. To switch on the lights, an investigator needs to either walk into the room or stretch their torso into the room.

At this point, something very peculiar and surprising happens—if it hasn't already. If the investigator stepped into the room, they appear to be grabbed and pulled violently across it, disappearing into shadow. If the investigator merely stretched or leaned into the room, then their companions have a split-second to catch them before they fall—the investigators in the hall must succeed with a combined **DEX** and **STR** roll to stop their companion from seemingly being sucked into the shadows.

If the investigators manage to turn on the light—before or after one or more of them falls 20 feet (6 m) across the room—then they see a truly strange sight. All of the bookshelves, the meeting table, and the seven chairs in the room are literally piled up against the southern wall, apparently defying gravity. If the characters conduct an

experiment or two (e.g. throwing a coin into the room or similar), they come to realize that gravity has shifted 90 degrees inside the room, causing the south wall to become the “ground” and everything else (including them!) to be essentially up in the air, which may provoke a **Sanity** roll (0/1 loss).

If one or more investigators have already fallen into the room, they find themselves in a curious predicament. Their colleagues and the north door are 20 feet (6 m) “above” them now. They either need a rope (some of which is available outside the house near the stacked timber) or they need to crawl to the door on the south wall and “fall” into the parlor, again experiencing a phenomenal gravity shift. If the unlucky investigator is hurt to the point of being unable to move, then the other characters will have to affect a rescue.

The walls of the room are a deep brown, the floor is polished oak, and the ceiling is white with an ornate plaster boss around the central light fixture. Besides the gravity shift, there is nothing of particular interest in the room.

### Restaurant/Ballroom

Walking down the hall toward the restaurant and ballroom, the investigators come to a point roughly 5 feet (1.5 m) past the library/meeting room door where they can see into the ballroom area. What they see there will likely stop them in their tracks. Above the polished dancefloor and centered between four floor-to-ceiling columns, a huge host of chairs, tables, toolboxes, drop cloths, and other detritus spins slowly and silently in mid-air, with this weird effect provoking a **Sanity** roll (0/1 loss).

**Keeper note:** an extra-dimensional pocket tenuously clings like an invisible soap bubble to the four pillars in the center of the room. As it wobbles and bounces against forces unknown, the bubble moves and stretches up to 5 feet (1.5 m) past the columns in any direction in a chaotic dance. This movement subtly impacts the chairs, tables, and other items trapped inside, which consequently float this way and that, revolving in a slow-motion ballet, occasionally bumping into one another and changing course. While beautiful, the phenomenon is extraordinarily dangerous: nothing can live inside the invisible bubble, which is, in fact, an airless void possessing no gravity and conforming to no natural law. Anyone foolish enough to walk between the pillars immediately experiences decompression and is drawn into the bubble. The shock to their system is so devastating that they suffer 1 damage every two seconds until death. The Keeper may allow a **Luck** roll, which if successful allows the hapless investigator spin through the void and pass out

the other side, suffering 1D4 damage instead. Alternatively, those outside of the bubble, if thinking quickly, might be able to throw in a rope for their colleague to catch, enabling them to be pulled free. Anyone dying inside the bubble is preserved as a ghastly reminder of the deadliness of the situation, with witnesses asked to make a **Sanity** roll (1/1D6 loss). Lastly, if any of the investigators’ limbs or extremities are even momentarily caught within the bubble—perhaps trying to rescue a comrade—they suffer 1 damage.

The undulating edge of the dimensional bubble is only visible as a disturbance in the air and is difficult to spot. Only a successful Hard **Spot Hidden** roll permits an investigator to follow the edge as it swells and sways between and beyond the four pillars. Sticking to the outside walls, investigators can safely circumvent the phenomenon and access the parlor door, the bar window, or the vestibule door leading to the kitchens and office. Anyone rushing into the room—perhaps trying to rescue a friend who has met with an accident in the library—or acting especially careless should roll **Luck**. A failure indicates a limb comes into contact with the bulging curve of the dimensional bubble (suffering 1 damage), while a fumble indicates the investigator is pulled bodily into the bubble.

### Parlor

The parlor is in shadow until the investigators flick the switch on the east wall. At this point, the beige walls and deep brown carpet spring into view. Eight leather chairs are lined up against the western wall, waiting to be placed alongside one of the six small coffee tables. A single oak bookcase is fixed to the south wall (in fact a door leading to the office) and the door to the library sits on the north wall.

A successful **Spot Hidden** roll identifies the moveable bookcase as a door leading south. Finding the latch for the door within the bookcase requires a minute’s worth of testing or another successful **Spot Hidden** roll (or a Hard success or better on the previous roll). The latch is hidden on the underside of the middle bookshelf. Pressing it upward releases the latch, allowing the bookcase to be moved.

Anyone opening the door to the library must jump back as a wooden chair “rolls” awkwardly into the room (call for a **Dodge** roll, with 1 point of bruising damage if failed as they are hit by the chair). Additionally, from this vantage point, a bookcase appears to have been nailed sideways to obscure the upper half of the library doorway. If the investigators have not visited the library already, they will find entry to the room problematic, to say the least (see **Library/Meeting Room**, page 167).

### Office and Storage

The office is one of the few fully functioning areas in the clubhouse. A window to the south offers natural light. A small desk sits against the south wall while a larger one stands 3 feet (90 cm) from the west wall. Both are covered with painter's drop cloths. The desks have high-backed leather chairs behind them similarly covered with drop cloths. The walls of the room are painted the same beige as the parlor. A brass plaque lies on the eastern wall between two doors, with three switches mounted within it activating the lights in the office, in the staff room, and in the bar.

After a moment in the room, a strange sibilance can be heard, seeming to come from nowhere at all. If the investigators pause and succeed with a **Listen** roll, they hear it again, albeit fainter. It sounds very much like a hoarse, elongated "yes." It fades to nothing after another moment.

All of the drawers in the smaller desk are empty, apart from an empty cigarette packet in the bottom drawer. The long top drawer of the larger desk is locked, while the side drawers contain a selection of blank paper, some unopened bottles of ink, a few pens, a large number of pencils and erasers, rolls of tickets, boxes of wooden tokens, various bits of stationery, and a large box filled with golf scoring cards.

The long top drawer cannot be opened with any of Nairn's keys—they are much too large for the diminutive lock. A successful **Locksmith** roll opens it or, alternatively, a good hard pull will rip it free (**STR** roll), breaking the lock in the process. Within, the investigators find a few legal letters from Macmillan's lawyers in Dundee and two versions of the plans for the Thistledown clubhouse—one considerably older than the other (**Handouts: Nineteenth 2 and 3** see pages 170-171).

A successful **Law** roll reveals that the legal letters pertain to obtaining a liquor license and a small matter of defining the western boundary of the golf course. The two maps are far more interesting. The newer of the two is a recently drafted plan to aid in the restoration of the clubhouse. It is signed by Macmillan's architect (Harold Clemens) in Edinburgh and dated June 12, 1928. The older plan appears to be the original from 1903. There is nothing else of interest in the desk.

**Keeper note:** present the players with both handouts showing the floorplans. They should discover the same discrepancy that Macmillan discovered—the basement in the original plan is significantly larger than the new plan, and a door from the furnace/boiler room appears to have been missed out entirely.

### Bar

The unfinished bar is essentially empty and currently acts as little more than a corridor between the office and the vestibule. A tin of wood polish sits atop the bar beside a soft brush. All of the shelves behind the bar are empty and dusty.

### Staff Room

The staff room is pitch-black until someone switches on the appropriate switch on the brass plaque in the office. This room has acted as a lunchroom during much of the site's restoration. It still smells vaguely of rotten apples and moldy bread. A single sheet of paneling, teetering atop a large, empty wooden spool, acts as a table. Pieces of paper lie scattered across the makeshift table, each showing gambling debts accrued through a long line of card games. Six chairs, like those found in the restaurant, sit around the table, now empty.

Across from a window in the southern wall, the northern wall is dominated by a large chalkboard. When the investigators first arrive, the chalkboard is blank apart from a single game of tic-tac-toe crossed out at the bottom-left corner. A box of chalk sticks lies on the floor propped against the wall.

A moment after the investigators walk into the room, a sound rattles the window, drawing their attention. Anyone moving to the window sees that nothing of note seems to be taking place outside; however, before they leave the room, they find that the chalkboard is now covered with arrows pointing downward. Should they bother to count, more than 50 chalk arrows drawn in a shaky hand now point down at the floor. Keepers may wish to call for a **Sanity** roll (0/1 loss).

### Vestibule

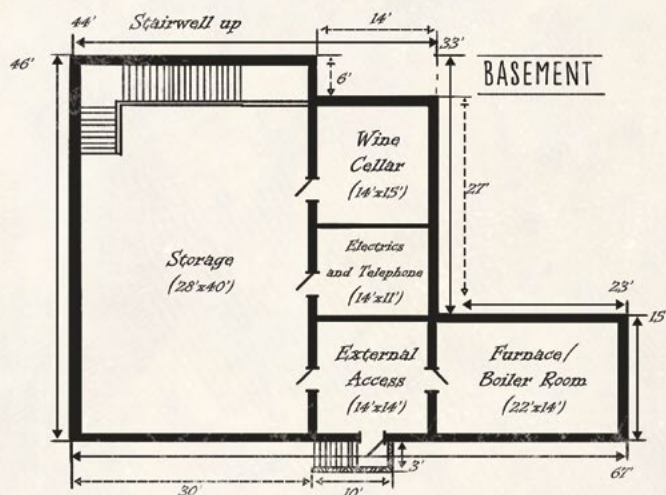
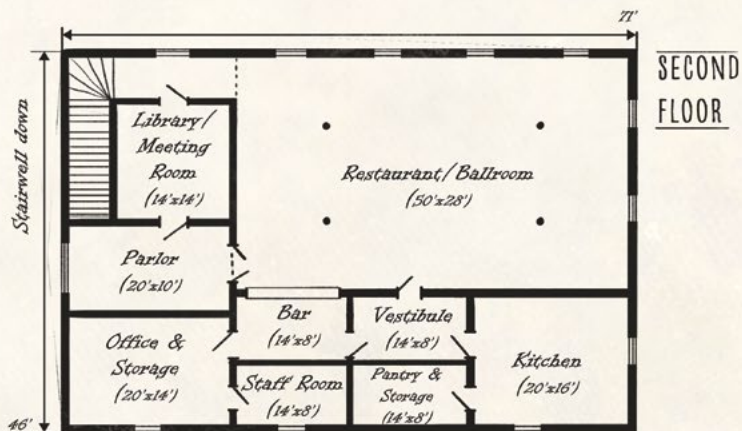
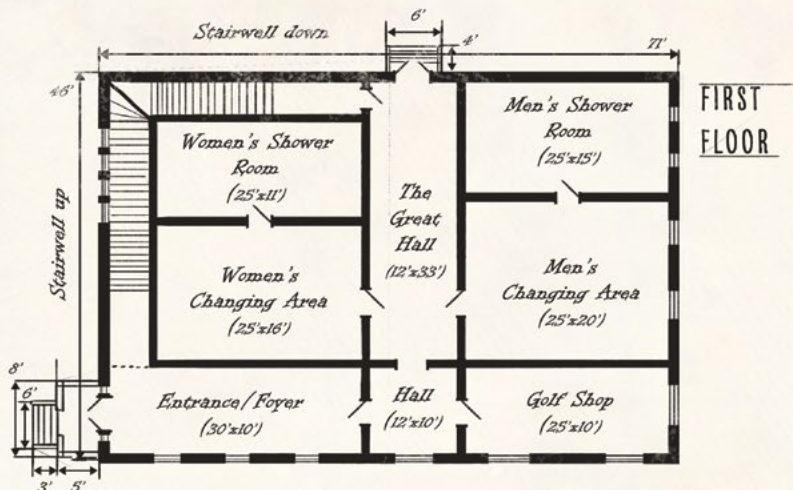
The vestibule here is little more than an access point to the kitchen (to the east) and the bar and office (to the west). Dedicated wooden shelving lines the south wall awaiting cutlery, glassware, napkins, condiments, and other restaurant paraphernalia. The vestibule is empty. A hatch in the ceiling provides access to a crawl space that runs above the entire floor.

### Kitchen

Tall windows on the south and east walls provide natural light in the kitchen. A strip of wire extends from the ceiling where a light fixture is meant to be. Only a third of the cooking equipment in the room has been installed and many components lie in their boxes against the east wall. Gas, plumbing, and electrical hookups stick out of the southern

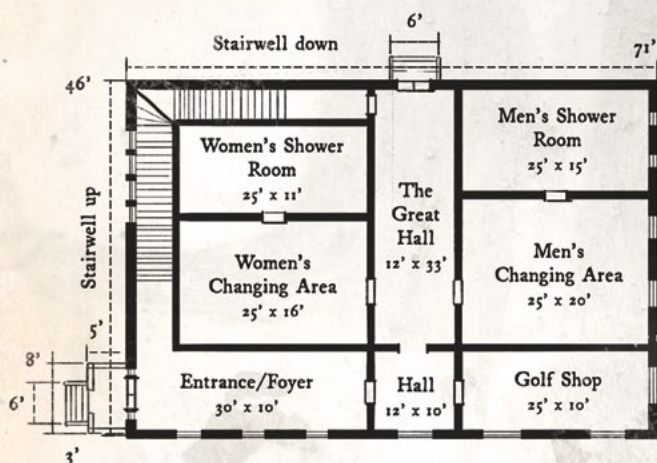
# CHAPTER 5

## THISTLEDOWN GOLF CLUB—RESTORATION

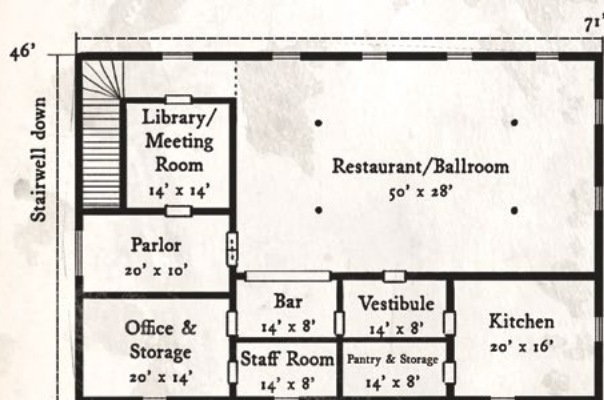


*Harold Clemens*  
 Harold Clemens, Edinburgh  
 12th June, 1928

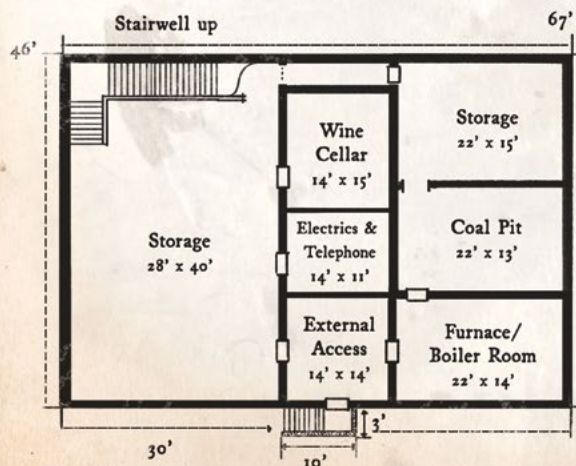
# THISTLEDOWN GOLF CLUB—PLAN, 1903



FIRST FLOOR



SECOND FLOOR



BASEMENT

*Allister MacKenzie*  
Alister MacKenzie

wall at regular intervals awaiting connection to cookers, deep fryers, washing sinks, and other implements. A significant amount of plaster dust covers the floor.

As the investigators move through the kitchen, the observant among them—or anyone succeeding at a **Spot Hidden** roll—notes that the white plaster dust forms shapes with each step, reconfiguring into strange fractal-like patterns and swirling vortices around their feet. No logical reason can be found for the movement of the dust or the unsettling patterns it creates.

## Pantry and Storage

A single south-facing window dimly lights the pantry and storage area. Rows of shelves line the room and more storage is provided in two square shelving units standing like wide columns in the middle of the room. All of the shelves are empty and, in truth, this room seems to be all but forgotten.

A moment after the investigators walk into the room, a distant booming or drumming-like sound reaches their ears. As the booming gets louder, it sounds more and more like an eerily distorted human voice, calling out, “*Down, down, down, down, DOWN!!!*” There is nothing else of interest in the room.

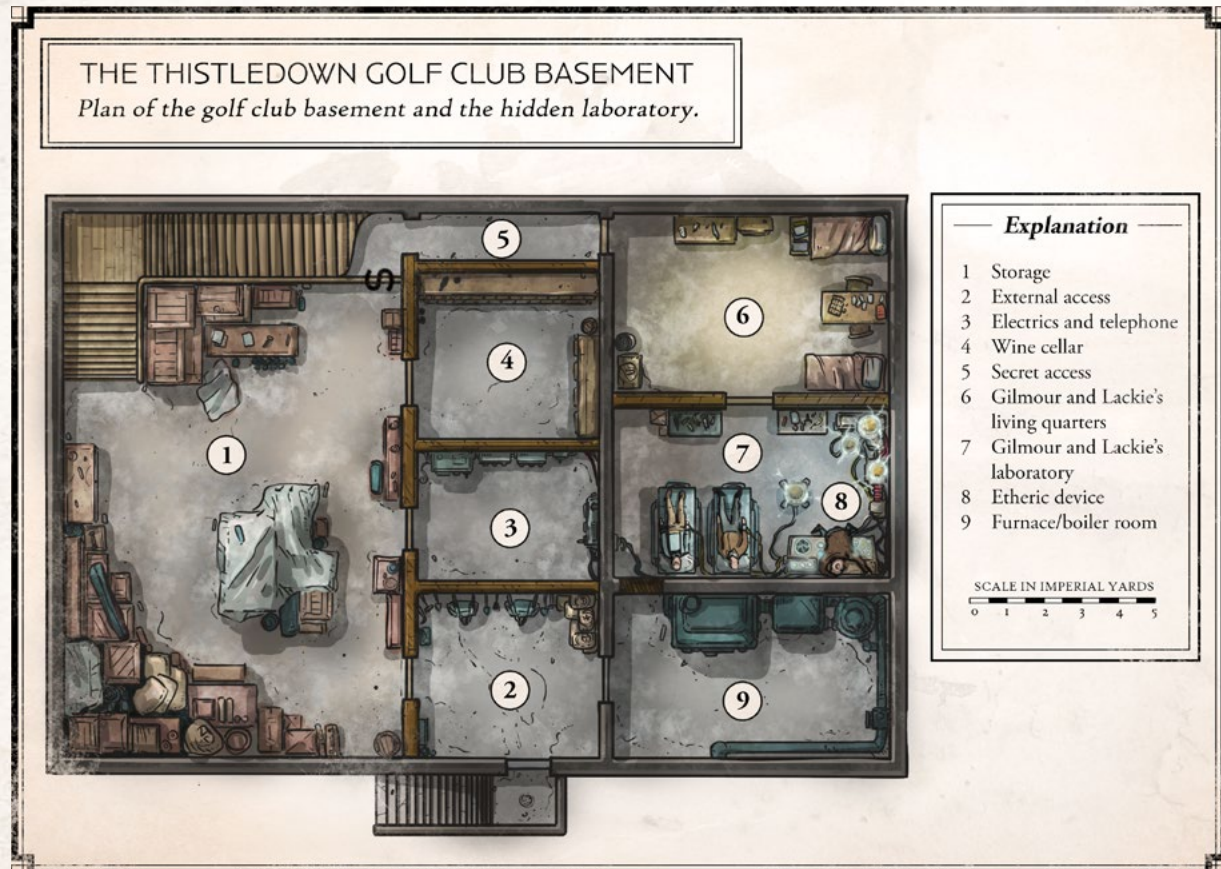
## CLUBHOUSE BASEMENT

Refer the **Thistledown Gold Club Basement** map, nearby; the numbers in parentheses in the section below correspond to this floorplan. Note that a player version of this map is provided in the **Collected Handouts** section, but, do not use this map until the basement’s hidden rooms have been revealed in play, as these secret areas appear on the map.

### Storage (1)

The main storage area in the basement runs the entire width of the clubhouse, north to south. The building’s stone foundations form the north, west, and south walls. On the east side of the storage area, a series of rooms have been constructed out of wood, accessible through simple wooden doors. The area is filled with a huge collection of boxes, crates, and canvas bags, variously containing golfing supplies and goods for the golf shop above; kitchen utensils, pots and pans, glassware, and other items destined for the restaurant; tablecloths, towels, and napkins; and just about anything else the golf club might require.

At the moment, everything in the area is covered in thick frost. By the time the investigators hit the basement’s hard-pack earth floor, their breath is visible as clouds of frozen



moisture. The basement is literally freezing. The light switch at the bottom of the stairs activates bare bulbs in this area, as well as the wine cellar, electrics and telephone, and the external access area.

**Keeper note:** the temperature in the storage area is  $-40^{\circ}\text{F}$ /C, meaning frostbite and hypothermia are potential issues with prolonged exposure to this level of cold. Extreme frostbite causes the investigator's lips, ears, fingers, and toes to turn white or blue, although in the early stages (known as "frostnip") the only symptom is pins and needles in the exposed extremities. Hypothermia, on the other hand, occurs when the body's core temperature drops below  $95^{\circ}\text{F}$  ( $35^{\circ}\text{C}$ ) and causes shivering, clumsiness, confusion, and tiredness. Due to the low temperatures, call for a **CON** roll every hour the investigators are in the basement without adequate protective clothing; after 2 hours spent here, this becomes a Hard **CON** roll. Failure indicates the onset of frostbite and/or hypothermia, and inflicts 1 damage per hour until they return to a warmer environment. Those suffering from hypothermia either incur an increased level of difficulty to non-combat skill rolls and/or a penalty die—the Keeper may also wish to inflict them with delusions as per the *Call of Cthulhu: Keeper Rulebook* (page 162). Hit points cannot be recovered while still exposed to the intense cold. Once an affected investigator has been warmed through and rested, they may once regain hit points at the normal rate. Any frostbitten areas warm over time and sensation returns with a painful stinging and burning.

Of key significance in the room is the secret door (5) in the northeast corner leading under the stairs and providing access to Gilmour & Lackie's living quarters. At a glance from the bottom of the stairs, only a successful Extreme **Spot Hidden** notices a very slight variation in the wood panels beneath the stairwell; however, if the investigators specifically check the northeast corner or announce their intention to check under the stairs (perhaps alerted by the inconsistencies they found on the maps in the office (**Handouts: Nineteenth 2 and 3**), they soon discover the inconsistency (no roll required). Pushing a fingertip through a knothole in the panel springs the door open.

The secret access door opens outward and warm air rolls out, instantly turning to a frozen mist at the investigators' feet. A rusty spring screwed into the inside of the door and connected to a nearby support beam provides resistance to opening the door too wide, slamming it shut again once inside.

### External Access (2)

This simple room provides access to the furnace/boiler room, the main storage area, and the clubhouse's exterior through the heavy steel door on the south wall. The packed earth floor

near the external door is damp from rainwater seeping under the door. A large collection of gardening equipment (hoes, rakes, and so on), some heavier tools (picks, shovels), a few bags of grass seed, and two new wheelbarrows dominate the northern side of the room. There is otherwise nothing of interest in the room.

### Electrics and Telephone (3)

This small room contains a series of large electrical junction boxes and a smaller telephone access point. A vast array of thick insulated wires and clasped bundles of thinner wires snake up from the electrical boxes, while a much smaller set of wires rises up to the ceiling from the telephone access point. Each of the large electrical boxes displays bright yellow painted words warning "LIVE ELECTRICITY."

Any investigators opening the junction boxes see a mass of exposed wires and connection points. Many are labeled, but just as many are not. Two huge wires coming into the central box are labeled "External Main" and "Generator Backup." With the boxes open, the investigators can attempt an **Electrical Repair** roll to determine the nature of the electrical distribution in the clubhouse. A successful roll accounts for all the rooms in the clubhouse but also notes an additional electrical supply line leading up out of the central junction box and continuing through a drilled hole in the eastern stone wall. This is the only set of wires that do not travel directly into the ceiling for distribution elsewhere.

**Keeper note:** should any investigator be foolish enough to tempt fate and actively poke their fingers in among the bare wires inside any of the electrical junction boxes, they will be electrocuted. Have that investigator make a **Luck** roll: with a success, they only make brief contact and are thrown clear of the wires; with a failure, the mains power holds them fast, electrifying their bodies and doing considerable damage (1D8 per round until death or someone else manages to break their contact with the electrical current).

Like the wine cellar (4), there is a slim chance that one or more of the investigators might hear Lackie's machine thrumming through the stone wall. A successful Extreme **Listen** roll identifies the sound and that it is coming from due east on the other side of the stone wall. There is nothing else of interest in the room.

### Wine Cellar (4)

The door to this room is locked. One of Nairn's keys opens it, as will a successful **Locksmith** or **STR** roll. The wine cellar is, unfortunately, quite empty. The entire north and south walls are covered in wine racks, while the east wall contains a corral for beer kegs below some open shelving. Cold air from the

main storage area rushes into the room when the investigators open the door, turning into a roiling, ankle-deep mist, that largely obscures the dirt floor from view. The wall to the east is stone, while the others are constructed of wood.

Being so close to Lackie's machine, there is a very slim chance that one or more of the investigators might hear its gentle thrumming through the stone wall. A successful Extreme **Listen** roll identifies that there is a sound coming from a position roughly due southeast. There is nothing else of interest in the room.

### Secret Access (5)

With limited headroom in some places due to its position under the basement stairs, this dark and dusty corridor provides access to a single wooden door. If the investigators make a successful **Listen** roll at the door, they hear the distant humming of some kind of machine, but nothing more.

### Gilmour and Lackie's Living Quarters (6)

Lit by a bare bulb, this room smells of stale food, sweat, and urine. Two cots lie opposite one another on the north and south walls. A wide table and two rickety chairs sit between them. A pack of cards, a pocket chess set, and a collection of crime novels sit atop the makeshift desk. A smaller table close to the secret access (5) contains a block of moldy cheese, two loaves of moldy bread, and half a rotten ham. At the foot-end of the north-side cot, a rectangular serving tray holds a collection of 19 books on experimental physics, an abacus, a slate tablet, and some chalk.

The south wall of the room is wooden and appears hastily or poorly constructed. A number of nails poke out from the wall and are home to a number of men's coats, shirts, trousers, and a few hats. A chamber pot stands in the southwest corner—the source of the stale urine smell. A single wooden door leads to the south. A gentle whirring and thrumming sound can be heard through the door and wall in that direction.

If the investigators take the time to look through Gilmour's books, they find they all relate to esoteric topics in exploratory physics. A couple of the books relate to electromagnetism (including a slim text written by Lord Kelvin), but most focus on radical hypotheses relating to etheric projection (a successful **Occult** roll recognizes this as a counterproposal to astral projection), dimensional barriers, and the structure of the known universe. Written in chalk on the slate tablet is a complex, advanced mathematical formula. A successful **Science (Mathematics or Physics)** roll recognizes time as one of the variables, but the other elements of the equation are wholly alien to the investigators, regardless of pre-existing knowledge.

### Gilmour and Lackie's Laboratory (7, 8)

The first thing the investigators notice when opening the door to this room is the two cots opposite them holding the bodies of two strange men. Left of Gilmour and Lackie, and dominating the southeast corner of the room, is the source of the thrumming: a strange machine unlike anything they have seen before. Slumped over what appears to be a control panel of some sort—full of knobs, dials, and switches—is the body of Arthur Macmillan, his ram's head cane at his feet.

**Keeper note:** any investigator rushing into the room and touching any of the three men or Lackie's machine drops to the ground, seemingly lifeless. In truth, their intelligence has been pulled into the ether and, a moment later, they fade into existence beside Macmillan, Lackie, and Gilmour. They, too, are now trapped in the ether between dimensions—see **Etheric Travels and Beyond** (page 175) for further details.

If the investigators take a moment to survey the scene, they note the bodies of the two strangers are connected to the machine by wires attached to metal cuffs around the men's right wrists. They also see that the few wispy white hairs at the back of Macmillan's head are standing up straight, as though under the influence of a static charge.

To the immediate left and right of the investigators (assuming they are standing in the doorway) are two tables with a number of open wooden boxes stored beneath them. The tables and boxes contain an absurd collection of electrical components, spools of wire, handcrafted circuits, and a number of pieces that defy description and whose function can only be guessed at.

The bodies of the two men on the cots appear gaunt and thin. All three men appear—without touching to confirm—to be alive but in some kind of deep sleep or hibernation. Macmillan's body is literally slumped over the control panel of the machine, effectively blocking access to it. The purpose of the machine and what affects Macmillan and the two is an utter mystery.

### Furnace/Boiler Room (9)

The huge furnace and adjacent boilers provide hot water to the many radiators situated throughout the clubhouse. A large cold-water pipe cuts in through the south wall and an intricate system of plumbing provides cold water to the mansion. Turning off the huge furnace was one of the last things that Cameron Nairn did before leaving Thistledown for the last time. Should the investigators wish to turn the furnace back on, they need to succeed at a **Mechanical Repair** roll.

All four walls of this room appear to be thick stone. The northern wall is, unlike the others, whitewashed. Those succeeding with a Hard **Spot Hidden** roll note that the

whitewashing has cleverly covered a rebuilt section of the wall in the northwest corner. Closer examination reveals that a door leading north once stood in this corner. If the investigators have already gained both sets of clubhouse plans (**Handouts: Nineteenth 2 and 3**), then there is no need to roll—the original plan clearly shows there should be a door in that corner. Anyone placing their ear to the rebuilt section can clearly hear a gentle thrumming—as if from some kind of machine or engine—beyond the stone.

If the investigators wish to break down the rebuilt wall, one or two of the heavy picks in the external access room (2) and a successful **STR** roll make short work of it. Breaking through the wall here provides direct access to Gilmour and Lackie's laboratory, and the bodies of Lackie, Gilmour, and Macmillan.

## REVELATIONS AND RESOLUTIONS

Lackie, Gilmour, and Macmillan are trapped in the ether when the investigators find the three men's bodies and the experimental machine. The continuous running of the machine—which normally would have terminated by use of a timer set into the control panel—is maintaining the etheric projection and continues to do so as long as there is electricity powering the machine.

For all its bizarre elements, Lackie's machine is a thing of genius and could, if powered, run for years or even decades; however, the machine generates an etheric breach and is, ultimately, the source of the dimensional instabilities within the clubhouse and across the golf course. If left running, the machine would undoubtedly cause permanent breaches and intra-dimensional expansion, causing multiple dimensions to simultaneously coexist in one space and resulting in persistent, large-scale elemental and physical effects. More worryingly, the breach opens the "door" for invading extra-dimensional lifeforms, including all manner of Mythos monsters.

Thus, the longer the machine is active, the worse the damage. Cutting off the electricity is also the investigators' only means of returning Arthur Macmillan and the two wayward scientists to their bodies. A number of possible resolutions are open for the Keeper to consider.

A simple means of bringing the scenario to a conclusion is for the investigators to go back into the electrics and telephone room (3), where a successful **Electrical Repair** roll safely disconnects the mains power to the machine; alternatively, they could cause a short using one of the picks, shovels, or spades in the external access area. With the electricity cut off, the machine winds down and, a second or two later, the three men take sudden breaths, having returned to their earthly bodies.

As a twist, Keepers could require the investigators to discover that Lackie created a dedicated electrical spur to the generator at the groundskeeper's cottage near the ninth hole (**Groundskeeper's Hut and Generator**, page 163). Unless they've already found it and disconnected it, then the moment the investigators sever the mains power supply, the switch on the generator kicks it into action, keeping the etheric machine running and the three men trapped. The investigators must, therefore, escape the house, traverse nine holes—overcoming dimensional instabilities on the way—and shut the generator down in order to finally release Macmillan, Lackie, and Gilmour.

Finally, to make things considerably more challenging, the Keeper could call on one or two dimensional shamblers to cause trouble (see **Men's Changing Area**, page 166), or use the hound of Tindalos option listed in the **Confronting the Mythos** section (page 176). The Tindalosian could appear inside the clubhouse or emerge from the groundskeeper's hut near the ninth hole. The hound might make an appearance just as the beleaguered Macmillan and the two scientists escape from the ether, intent on punishing them for their dimensional transgressions. Of course, the Keeper is encouraged to come up with alternate endings in line with their own campaign.

## ETHERIC TRAVELS AND BEYOND

Should one or more of the investigators end up trapped in the ether along with Macmillan, Lackie, and Gilmour—or should they choose to enter the ether as a group—the Keeper has a number of interesting options to consider. Firstly, the investigators succeed in finding Macmillan, but also find themselves with no way of returning him to his body, or them to theirs. Secondly, within the ether, the investigators can talk to Lackie and Gilmour, and hear their side of events. But the fact remains: they are trapped.

The breach opened by Lackie's machine means that the ether is very thin immediately surrounding Thistledown Golf Club. The further away the investigators travel, the more insubstantial their reality becomes and the more "real" the ether becomes. The Keeper can choose any description for the ether: it could, for example, resemble a gray mist between dimensions, haunted by otherworldly sounds and visions, or it could be truly indescribable, in proper Lovecraftian fashion. Give vent to your imagination. Should the investigators choose to push deeper into the ether, they eventually find themselves coming into contact with other dimensions and can, if the Keeper wishes, travel into them.

At that point, the options for continuing the story move beyond the limits of this scenario. The Keeper could build entire worlds or devise short trips into alien dimensions or

even the Dreamlands. The investigators may finally choose to leave their mortal bodies behind and inhabit the ether permanently. Alternatively, they might be drawn back toward their home reality.

Investigators wishing to exit the ether may have to wait for others outside the ether to facilitate their return. If their fellow investigators are working on the problem, they might only be trapped for a few minutes, or a few hours. If, however, the entire group entered, or was pulled, into the ether, then they have at least 24 hours to wait before Crystal Macmillan summons the Dundee police again and demands an escalation of the investigation now that the investigators have disappeared as well. Arriving in force, the police—or possibly other investigators—will have to battle the worsening dimensional instabilities and, with a little luck, discover the secret laboratory.

An alternative option could see the investigators trapped in the ether seeking out the dimensional shamblers (perhaps using a spontaneous **Cthulhu Mythos** roll to do so), hoping that, by chance, these creatures pull them back to their own dimension. Maybe the investigators can try to communicate with the shamblers and bargain for their travel home—just what these alien horrors would want in return is left to the Keeper to decide (perhaps, the shamblers come to collect the debt at some future stage...). Again, the Keeper is

encouraged to come up with their own unique endings (or beginnings) under these circumstances.

## CONFRONTING THE MYTHOS

In the course of the investigation, the characters should come upon at least one dimensional shambler. If the group is larger than three investigators, the Keeper may want to use a minimum of two dimensional shamblers. For larger and/or more experienced groups, additional challenge to the scenario comes by way of introducing a hound of Tindalos who have taken note of the investigators' or the shamblers' interdimensional travels. Profiles for both monsters are provided in the **Characters and Monsters** section, page 179).

Within the story, the appearance of a Tindalosian or a dimensional shambler on the golf course, or near the edges of one of the greens, gives a measure of credibility to the folktales of black dogs and ghosts heard at Crow Wood Hall and elsewhere in the scenario. Additionally, while paranormal events represent an overarching red herring in the scenario, the Keeper might wish to add a "real" ghost (*Call of Cthulhu: Keeper Rulebook*, page 333) or, forsaking the non-Lovecraftian nature of ghosts, use different Mythos entities instead.



Being stalked by a hound of Tindalos

## CONCLUSION

If the investigators return Arthur Macmillan to his body and to his wife, Crystal rewards them very handsomely with a check for £100 (\$500). Additionally, once her husband has recovered, he can be counted on as an influential benefactor in both Great Britain and the United States. Macmillan insists that Gilmour and Lackie are jailed for his imprisonment, but due to the unusual circumstances the charges are unlikely to stick—indeed, at best, he may be able to get them charged with criminal trespass, which Gilmour's father is able to make go away. If let loose, the two scientists flee Great Britain, possibly heading to India as Gilmour had originally promised his father (*The Truth Behind the Story*, page 144). Lackie's machine is scrapped under Arthur Macmillan's personal supervision. Cameron Nairn is re-employed and the restoration of Thistledown is completed a month later. The investigators are always welcome at the club and Crystal praises their efforts far and wide, potentially leading to other commissions and adventures. If the investigators do not manage to find and return Arthur Macmillan, Crystal is heartily disappointed but pays them accordingly (£50/\$250) and begins the hunt for new investigators.

If the investigators became trapped in the ether, they are either returned to their bodies a day or two later when the police shut off the electricity to the clubhouse or they might venture on to stranger journeys in unknown dimensions. If they are returned by the police, Crystal pays them as promised, but given their recklessness, Arthur Macmillan chooses not to associate with them further. If they choose dimensions unknown, the possibilities are limitless—perhaps they travel so far that they can never return to their bodies or perhaps they find a means of securing new lives elsewhere. Anything is possible.

## REWARDS

Suggested Sanity point rewards for this scenario include:

- Freeing Arthur Macmillan and reuniting him with his wife: +1D6 Sanity points.
- Destroying Lackie's machine: +1D3 Sanity points.
- Defeating a dimensional shambler: +1D10 Sanity points (maximum).
- Defeating a hound of Tindalos: +1D20 Sanity points.
- Failing to find or rescue Arthur Macmillan: -1D4 Sanity points (-1D6 if he was a friend or associate).

## CHARACTERS AND MONSTERS

### NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

**Crystal Lauren Macmillan,**  
*age 58, worried wife of Arthur Macmillan*

**STR 40   CON 50   SIZ 50   DEX 70   INT 60**  
**APP 70   POW 60   EDU 50   SAN 50   HP 10**  
**DB: 0   Build: 0   Move: 6   MP: 12**

#### Combat

Handbag                      20% (10/4), damage 1D3  
Dodge                        25% (13/5)

#### Skills

Art/Craft (Painting) 25%, Charm 70%, Credit Rating 80%, History 50%, Listen 20%, Persuade 65%, Ride 20%, Spot Hidden 25%, Swim 20%.

**Gerald Keating, age 55, butler**

**STR 55   CON 65   SIZ 50   DEX 70   INT 70**  
**APP 60   POW 75   EDU 60   SAN 75   HP 11**  
**DB: 0   Build: 0   Move: 7   MP: 15**

#### Combat

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

#### Skills

Accounting 45%, Art/Craft (Butling) 75%, Charm 65%, Credit Rating 30%, First Aid 40%, History 45%, Listen 60%, Psychology 60%, Read Lips 50%, Spot Hidden 55%.

**Audrey Grant, age 48, housekeeper/cook**

**STR 60   CON 65   SIZ 60   DEX 60   INT 70**  
**APP 55   POW 80   EDU 55   SAN 80   HP 12**  
**DB: 0   Build: 0   Move: 7   MP: 16**

#### Combat

Brawl                        30% (15/6), damage 1D3,  
or rolling pin 1D6  
Dodge                        30% (15/6)

#### Skills

Accounting 45%, Art/Craft (Baking) 75%, Art/Craft (Cooking) 70%, Credit Rating 25%, Lore (Presbyterian) 40%, Persuade 45%, Psychology 50%, Spot Hidden 55%.

## CHAPTER 5

### **Theresa Dalkeith and Katie MacDonald, ages 16 & 17, maids**

STR 50   CON 65   SIZ 60   DEX 65   INT 60  
APP 70   POW 60   EDU 45   SAN 60   HP 12  
DB: 0   Build: 0   Move: 8   MP: 12

#### **Combat**

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

#### **Skills**

Art/Craft (Dusting) 55%, Art/Craft (Tidying) 55%, Credit Rating 15%, Fast Talk 65%, First Aid 40%, Listen 40%, Occult 30%, Spot Hidden 45%, Stealth 60%, Throw 40%.

### **Peter Craig, age 37, groundskeeper**

STR 70   CON 75   SIZ 70   DEX 50   INT 65  
APP 50   POW 55   EDU 50   SAN 55   HP 14  
DB: +1D4   Build: 1   Move: 8   MP: 11

#### **Combat**

Brawl                      45% (22/9), damage 1D3+1D4,  
                                 or shovel 1D8+1D4  
Dodge                      35% (17/7)

#### **Skills**

Art/Craft (Gardening) 75%, Credit Rating 20%, Drive Auto 60%, Electrical Repair 40%, Intimidate 55%, Mechanical Repair 40%, Natural World 70%, Persuade 50%, Throw 60%.

### **Gordon Kilburn, age 45, valet**

STR 40   CON 45   SIZ 50   DEX 65   INT 60  
APP 40   POW 50   EDU 60   SAN 50   HP 9  
DB: 0   Build: 0   Move: 7   MP: 10

#### **Combat**

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

#### **Skills**

Appraise 55%, Art/Craft (Valeting) 80%, Credit Rating 30%, First Aid 60%, Language (French) 30%, Listen 70%, Persuade 45%, Psychology 50%, Spot Hidden 65%, Stealth 55%.

### **Cameron Nairn, age 52, Thistledown construction foreman**

STR 55   CON 40   SIZ 55   DEX 50   INT 65  
APP 45   POW 70   EDU 60   SAN 70   HP 9  
DB: 0   Build: 0   Move: 6   MP: 14

#### **Combat**

Brawl                      50% (25/10), damage 1D3  
Dodge                      25% (12/5)

#### **Skills**

Accounting 45%, Appraise 45%, Credit Rating 30%, Electrical Repair 50%, First Aid 50%, Listen 40%, Mechanical Repair 50%, Operate Heavy Machinery 40%, Persuade 50%, Psychology 50%, Spot Hidden 55%, Throw 30%.

### **Arthur Edward Macmillan, age 64, missing owner of the Thistledown Golf Club**

STR 50   CON 60   SIZ 50   DEX 40   INT 70  
APP 40   POW 60   EDU 70   SAN 40   HP 11  
DB: 0   Build: 0   Move: 5   MP: 12

#### **Combat**

Brawl                      35% (17/7), damage 1D3,  
                                 or walking stick 1D6  
Dodge                      30% (15/6)

#### **Skills**

Accounting 65%, Credit Rating 80%, Economics 40%, Firearm (Handgun) 20%, Intimidate 50%, Law 50%, Listen 40%, Psychology 60%, Spot Hidden 50%.

### **Donald Harrison Gilmour, age 48, experimental physicist and etheric traveler**

STR 40   CON 50   SIZ 40   DEX 60   INT 95  
APP 50   POW 70   EDU 90   SAN 40   HP 9  
DB: -1   Build: -1   Move: 7   MP: 13

#### **Combat**

Brawl                      20% (10/4), damage 1D3-1  
Dodge                      30% (15/6)

#### **Skills**

Credit Rating 50%, Cthulhu Mythos 6%, Drive Auto 40%, Fast Talk 65%, Language (Latin) 50%, Library Use 50%, Listen 25%, Mechanical Repair 15%, Natural World 30%, Occult 50%, Persuade 40%, Science (Mathematics) 90%, Science (Physics) 95%, Spot Hidden 35%, Stealth 35%.

### **James Robert Lackie, age 46, experimental engineer and etheric traveler**

STR 70   CON 60   SIZ 70   DEX 60   INT 75  
APP 40   POW 60   EDU 90   SAN 40   HP 13  
DB: +1D4   Build: 1   Move: 7   MP: 12

## THE NINETEENTH HOLE

### Combat

Brawl	35% (17/7), damage 1D3+1D4, or wrench 1D6+1D4
Dodge	35% (17/7)

### Skills

Credit Rating 30%, Cthulhu Mythos 7%, Drive Auto 30%, Electrical Repair 95%, First Aid 45%, Intimidate 30%, Locksmith 40%, Mechanical Repair 95%, Occult 45%, Operate Heavy Machinery 50%, Pilot (Boat) 40%, Science (Engineering) 90%, Spot Hidden 30%, Stealth 30%, Throw 25%.

## CREATURES AND MONSTERS

### Dimensional Shambler, *strange traveler*

STR 95	CON 80	SIZ 95	DEX 55	INT 35
APP —	POW 55	EDU —	SAN —	HP 17
DB: +1D6	Build: 2	Move: 7	MP: 11	

### Special Powers

**Trans-dimensional Travel:** able to leave a plane of existence or translocate to another place at will, signaling the change by beginning to shimmer and fade; the transition costs 4 magic points and takes 1 round to complete. During this time, while they may be attacked, they cannot fight back or dodge. A shambler can take objects or beings with it when it transports to another dimension or place. By clutching the desired object or being in its claws and expending an additional magic point per 50 SIZ points of the object or creature, that which is held makes the transit also. Objects and victims lost are usually never found again, but, sometimes, a person may be returned at different time or location after taking a weird and scary journey through one or more other dimensions or realms.

### Combat

**Attacks per Round:** 2 (claws; snip, tear, rent) or 1 (grab)  
May attack with both fore-claws to rent, tear, or snip, or may attempt to grab an opponent and disappear with them into another dimension or place.

**Grab (mnvr):** foregoing its usual attacks, a shambler attempts to latch onto a target with its claws. If successful, on the following round, it may instantly transport to anywhere in this plane of existence or to another dimension. Before the shambler can transport, the held target may attempt to break free with a successful opposed STR or DEX roll. Likewise, should the shambler suffer the loss of half of its hit points, the held target may make a Luck roll to determine if the shamble relinquishes its grip. Those transported may or may not be able to survive in the environment to where they have been rudely taken.

Fighting	45% (22/9), 1D8+DB
Grab (mnvr)	45% (22/9), grabbed and held for 1 round before disappearing to who knows where?
Dodge	30% (15/6)

**Armor:** 3-point thick hide.

**Spells:** 40% chance of knowing 1D3 spells.

**Sanity Loss:** 0/1D10 Sanity points to encounter a dimensional shambler.

### Hound of Tindalos, *scavenger of time*

STR 85	CON 155	SIZ 85	DEX 55	INT 90
APP —	POW 125	EDU —	SAN —	HP 24
DB: +1D6	Build: 2	Move: 6/20*	MP: 25	

\*Flying.

### Combat

**Attacks per round:** 1 claw, bite, tongue)  
May use its paws, bite, or tongue to attack.

**Blue Ichor:** a hound of Tindalos is covered with a sort of bluish pus. When a victim is struck by a Fighting attack, a gout of this mucoid stuff is smeared over them. This pus-like stuff is alive and active, dealing 2D6 damage to the opponent, plus equal damage for every round thereafter where the ichor remains on the victim's body. The ichor can be wiped off with a rag or towel with a successful DEX roll (during combat). It can also be rinsed off with water or some other agent. Fire would kill the ichor, though the victim also suffers 1D6 damage to burns.

**Tongue:** with a successful tongue attack, a deep penetrating (though bloodless and painless) hole-shaped wound is formed. The victim takes no physical damage, despite the peculiar wound, but loses 3D6 points of POW permanently.

Fighting	90% (45/18), damage 1D6+DB, plus blue ichor (see above)
Tongue	90% (45/18), damage 3D6 POW drained (see above)
Dodge	26% (13/5)

**Armor:** 2-point hide; regenerates 4 hit points per round (death at zero hit points); immune to mundane weapons (enchanted weapons and spells deal full damage); at zero hit points, a hound shatters into crystal fragments.

**Spells:** knows 1D8 spells.

**Sanity Loss:** 1D3/1D20 Sanity points to encounter a hound of Tindalos.

# COLLECTED PLAYER MAPS AND HANDOUTS

## OBITUARIES

CORBITT, Lynn Anne Meyers, aged 22. Died in childbirth, in her home. A graduate of the Pierpoint school, Mrs. Corbitt was married to local businessman, Bernard Corbitt, two years ago. Funeral services for both mother and child will be held Saturday afternoon.

Mrs. Corbitt is survived by her parents, Edward and Shirley Meyers, and her husband, Bernard Corbitt, president of Corbitt Importers of America.

## Nurse Hospitalized After Accident In Patient's Home

Professional nurse, Miss Mona Dunlap, was admitted to Central Sanitarium yesterday following an accident that took place in a patient's home. Her condition was diagnosed as serious.

Miss Dunlap, hired by Mr. and Mrs. Bernard Corbitt to help with Mrs. Corbitt's confinement, apparently suffered a stroke while attempting to deliver the Corbitts' baby unassisted. Mr. Corbitt returned from his office Wednesday afternoon to find Nurse Dunlap unconscious and his wife and infant son dead due to complications arising from the birth. Doctors at the sanitarium say the woman has yet to regain consciousness and it may be some time before the full extent of her injuries are known.

*(Both articles dated 12 years ago)*

Handout: Corbitt 3

## LOCAL MAN ARRESTED IN ANIMAL SLAYINGS

Police today announced that a suspect has been arrested in connection with the recent rash of pet kidnappings in the southwest part of town.

Although released later for lack of evidence, Randolph Tomaszewski is considered the prime suspect in the recent disappearances of nearly a dozen dogs and cats from the homes and yards of the neighborhood surrounding Central Hospital.

Tomaszewski is employed at the hospital as an orderly.

It will be remembered that many of the missing pets have been discovered later in parks, usually mutilated or partially eaten. Public outcry over the atrocities has been strong and police hope that they have uncovered a lead that will eventually allow them to close this case.

*(3 months ago)*

Handout: Corbitt 1

## LOCAL BUSINESSMAN KILLED IN ACCIDENT

It was learned today that Theodore Corbitt, owner of Corbitt Importers of America, is dead, victim of a tragic accident while vacationing in India. Corbitt, while in the company of his son, Bernard, died in a fall while the two were traveling through the high mountains of the Punjab.

According to authorities, the two men were on a hiking trip when they were set upon by a group of bandits known to frequent the area. While being pursued down the mountainside, the elder Corbitt apparently lost his footing and fell to his death. His son managed to escape, eventually making it to safety. The elder Corbitt's body has not yet been located and authorities fear that it may be lost, possibly consumed by the wild dogs that roam the mountain.

Theodore Corbitt is survived by his wife, Elaine, and one son, Bernard. At this time, it is not known if Bernard Corbitt will take over management of the family business.

*(Dated 14 years ago)*

## JOURNAL #1

September 10

Another embarrassing memory lapse today. This journal should help me deal with the problem.

September 13

I have had Mother sign the last of the legal papers that transfer ownership of Corbitt Importers of America from her to myself. She seems to be doing well in the new nursing home and I hope they can give her the treatment and attention she needs. I'm afraid her condition continues to decline rapidly. The death of Father seems to have unhinged her mind. If she knew my role in his death, although I don't in the least feel responsible, I'm sure it would kill her. She would never understand the power of my new lord, Ramasekua. Could she have but experienced those moments on the mountain when HE appeared in all his terrible magnificence! He spoke with me and left his mark upon my breast. Then he took hold of my father and the two became one with each other. Before devouring him, Ramasekua tore my father's head from his shoulders...

October 29

Have met a charming young woman at a social gathering, her name is Lynn Meyers. I have arranged to take her to the pictures next week. My lord, I think, would approve of her.

December 12

Spent thirty hours in ceremony, have located Ramasekva. He wants a bridge to the world and needs my help. I have agreed. My studies have shown that Ramasekva is an obscure Asura, an East Indian demon. The Asura are said to be older gods, the ones who ruled before the coming of Shiva. Certain things spoken of in Wenn's book lead me to believe there may be a link to a being called Yog-Sothoth.

JOURNAL #2

January 10

I found myself wanting to make Lynn my wife and have sealed the thought by proposing to her. She accepted, and we have set the date of marriage for March 9 of this year. Ramasekua assures me the time is right.

March 13

Have returned from our honeymoon. Lynn and I have decided to keep the family place as it is excellent for raising children. In May, all being well, Lynn will accompany me on my trip to Ceylon for a new herbal tea supply. This may be my last trip out of the country for a while. A man who plans a family must be willing to settle down a bit.

April 1

Had to send Lynn to visit her mother while I cast the ceremony. I don't believe she is ready to understand yet. Ramasekua has told me he wants a union of flesh. He demands the union be made with my wife. I am to await thirteen days, cast another, easier ceremony, and then wait. Ramasekua is to inhabit my body!

April 14

Cast the ceremony in the morning and Ramasekua came. I/he visited Lynn for several hours. She seems to suspect nothing.

July 19

Have told my wife to remain in bed throughout the day, as she has taken ill from her pregnancy. I took the day to contact Ramasekua. I am to deliver the child myself, at home. My master has directed me to raise this child as if it were my own.

November 21

Horror of horrors! My life is ashes. Poor Lynn went into labor today and in the course of giving birth to the child she expired, despite all I did to save her. Nurse Dunlap blundered into the room at the wrong moment, and when she saw the child, took leave of her senses. In trying to take care of her I may have neglected Lynn at a critical moment. At any rate, she is gone, and I blame only myself. A second child, a boy, was born dead, and I have turned both bodies over to the funeral home. The child of Ramasekua I have hidden in the basement. The thing is limbless and appears to have trouble breathing. I don't think it can live for long.

November 25

The funeral of Lynn and the child was held. Her parents were heartbroken and felt pity for me. I later consoled them and promised to stay in touch.

November 26

The ceremony of Ramasekua brought him forth to explain the child. He said the thing would live and that I am to spend the next ten years preparing for a time when it would need me. When the time comes, I am to equip it for life on Earth. It will be given limbs and lungs. I am not to contact Ramasekua until ten years and a day have elapsed.

December 14

I have found someone to help me, a man named Randolph Tomaszewski. He works at the local hospital and assures me that he can supply me with the parts necessary to the experiments I need to conduct over the next few years. He is an unsavory type, but I need his help. I have agreed to supply him with a small amount of the drugs he desires and he, in return, will try to fill my needs. Perhaps through association with myself, he will find a way to better himself. He seems a particularly irreligious and bitter man. Next week I will make my first trip to the dump and see what my confederate has been able to find for me. The experiments should prove a challenge, but I have every confidence that I can learn, especially with my lord Ramasekua's guidance.

## JOURNAL #13

November 25

The child grows large, and the time has come. Entered the ceremony with Ramasekua. He told me that when Spring has arrived that I am to search out fresh limbs and organs to be added to the creature—the time of experimenting is over. As the thing is still a child, I will use only the limbs and organs of children. My experiments show that the more youthful parts adapt much better than older ones. Any parts that are unusable I am directed to feed to the child. Ramasekua wants it to develop a taste for such things and says that it is now the time for growing.

## JOURNAL #14

March 19

Tomaszewski says I am asking too much of him and claims that he is having difficulty supplying me with parts. The needs of the child increase all the time and I have boosted again the strength of the drug I give the man, hoping that it will entice him to be more cooperative. I fear however that the drug simply exacerbates his derangement.

I must admit to feeling guilt—aiding and abetting his false beliefs somehow seems wrong. However, to try and tell him the truth would, I'm afraid, serve only to further unhinge his mind. I will continue the pretense of believing in his "Master." I value the services Tomaszewski renders too much to risk further damage to his grasp on reality.

Most of the child's organs are now in place and a few limbs have been attached. The grafts heal nicely. My years of experimenting are paying off.

March 28

I swear the child is growing ever more quickly. Unfortunately, this means I must have further dealings with Tomaszewski. However, the child's progress is a wonderful thing to behold, although it definitely needs more limbs as its size increases.

April 8

Back to the rubbish dump again. The child's rate of development is, if anything, even more prodigious than before. I wonder how much longer we will need to sustain its growing hunger and need for further augmentation?

April 11

Another growth spurt, requiring yet more surgery and sustenance for the child. Its attempts to walk afterwards truly put one in mind of a determined, if somewhat clumsy, toddler.

April 19

It cannot be long now. At least, I hope it won't be. I love the child as if it were my own, and I have no doubt our Lord Ramasekva will be pleased with his "son," but I fear how much longer I can continue to convince our supplier to cooperate. There is only so much I can do to increase the narcotic properties of his favored method of mind-expansion before it becomes toxic, and I still have need of his services, however odious they, and he, may be.

May 14

Another day, another visit to our friend for more supplies. I am, I believe, justifiably proud of my work on the child, and I don't doubt his father will be, too, when the time comes.

May 25

Tomaszewski is growing fractious again and demands ever more compensation for his efforts. I look forward to the day I no longer have to pander to his misbeliefs, though, to be fair, he has never failed to provide for us when asked. I also fear that my trips to the dump may draw attention before too long. Still, the child is positively thriving, and is a magnificent thing to behold.



MR. CORBITT'S PROPERTY  
Mr. Corbit's house and surroundings.

— Explanation —

- 1 Greenhouse
- 2 Vegetable garden
- 3 Mr. Corbitt's house

SCALE IN IMPERIAL YARDS

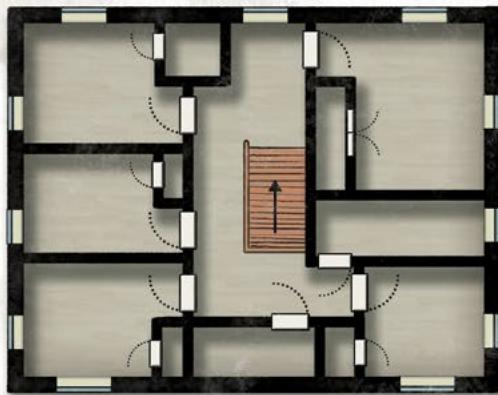
0 5 10

# MR. CORBITT'S HOUSE

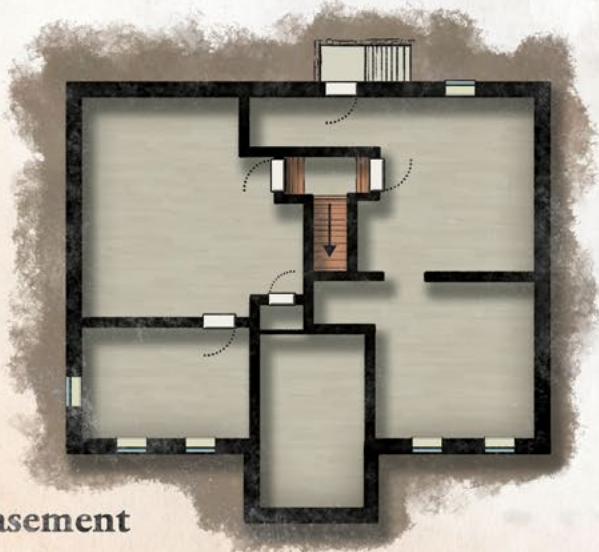
*A plan of Mr. Corbitt's house.*



**Ground Floor**



**Second Floor**



**Basement**

*Player Notes*

0 2 4 6 8 10

SCALE IN IMPERIAL YARDS

# DODGE BROTHERS

Attorneys-at-Law  
14 Main Street, Gamwell  
January 30th, 1925

Dear —,

I have been referred to you by a mutual friend. As his attorney, I am very interested in locating the missing Mr. Arthur Cornthwaite and our associate mentioned your name as being one skilled in locating missing people, particularly those of Mr. Cornthwaite's persuasion. Thus, I have taken the liberty of contacting you.

I am a partner of an established legal firm in Gamwell. Mr. Arthur Cornthwaite is one of our clients, and as his attorneys we hold certain documents in trust for him. It would appear that Mr. Cornthwaite has departed without notifying us of his movements.

This leaves us in a quandary as to how to manage his estate in his absence without his authority on such matters. We would like you to locate Mr. Cornthwaite and obtain from him his wishes in respect of this matter, or better still request that he contact us. If it should, heaven forbid, transpire that Mr. Cornthwaite is no longer with us, then we will need some evidence of same to proceed with his wishes as outlined in his Last Will and Testament. Hopefully this in an unnecessary contingency, but one which we must nevertheless consider in the light of Mr. Cornthwaite's mysterious departure.

I hope that you are free to give this matter your immediate attention, and would like to extend an invitation to you to attend an interview at our offices as soon as is convenient, to discuss both the details of the situation and your professional fees.

Anticipating a prompt reply,

Yours faithfully,

*Walter Dodge*

Encl: article from Gamwell Gazette

*Gamwell Gazette***GAMWELL MILLIONAIRE ABSENT***January 17th, 1925*

Gamwell's most prosperous son, Arthur Cornthwaite, will not be seen at church over the next few weeks. Mr. Cornthwaite has apparently left the area for a time, possibly for a vacation, or in relation to his studies.

Some mystery surrounds Mr. Cornthwaite's departure, as it came without notice. However, an inspection of his mansion and grounds by Sheriff Whitford has revealed no cause for alarm. The last person to speak to Mr. Cornthwaite was his attorney, Mr. Walter Dodge, on the 7th of this month. At that time, he gave no indication of his imminent departure, but according to Mr. Dodge, he did seem quite preoccupied, no doubt with his travel plans.

We all know well that besides being a Gamwell landowner, Mr. Cornthwaite is also a millionaire, a scholar, a philanthropist, and an explorer. He may well be off laying the groundwork for some future exciting expedition, or perhaps just relaxing for a time in New York. Gamwell citizens will no doubt remember fondly Mr. Cornthwaite's numerous generous donations to local charities and to the town library and join with us in wishing him a safe and happy journey.

*Gamwell Gazette***GAMWELL FAMILY SLAIN IN TERRIBLE ATTACK**

**Mother and Three Children Killed**  
*Police Seek Missing Father*

*May 17th, 1895*

A tragedy of awful proportions unfolded today in Gamwell when Mrs. Gloria Curwen and her three children (Harold 5, Sarah 3, and Susan 2) were found brutally murdered on their estate north of Gamwell, the well-known Fitzgerald Manse.

Deputy Whitford of the Gamwell County Sheriff's Office made the grisly discovery while making a routine inspection. "I've never seen anything like it," the brave but shaken deputy told this reporter, "They were all dead." The family had indeed been brutally and cowardly slain, struck down by repeated blows from an axe. Not even little Susan was spared from this hideous fate.

No murder weapon has been discovered, and Mr. Arthur Curwen, the children's father, is presently missing. He is wanted by the police for questioning, although fears are also held for his safety.

**TRAGEDY BEFALLS FITZGERALD HOME***August 15th, 1865*

Horrific news has driven anguish through Gamwell this week with the tragic slaying of Mr. Albert Fitzgerald and his entire family. While convalescing from an injury sustained at the Battle of Appomattox, Virginia, John Fitzgerald is believed to have shot his father, his mother, Elma, and his younger siblings, Simon and Grace, in a fit of mania before turning his weapon upon himself. Readers may remember, William, the Fitzgerald's eldest son, having played a role in the second battle of Bull Run in 1862, suffering a wound and subsequently dying of his injuries. Notice of funeral arrangements to be announced.

*Gamwell Gazette***THE MISSING PEOPLE: THE TRIBE THAT THE JUNGLE SWALLOWED**

*English, by Thomas Pratt, 1913,  
Oxford, England*

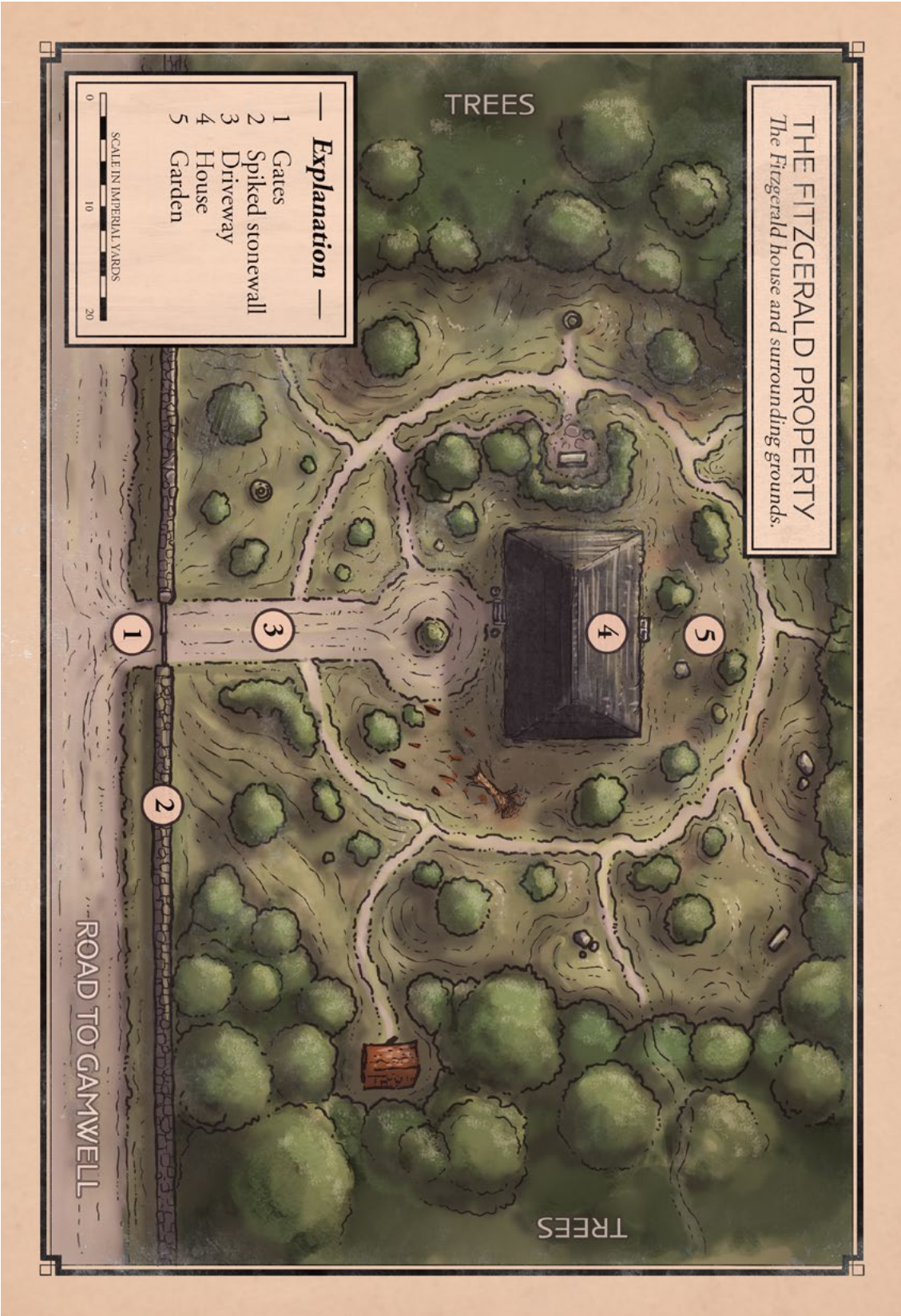
**S u m m a r y :** This book concerns a South American tribe in ancient times, whose existence is testified to by various ruins, but of whose demise nothing is known. The book is based on legends of the tribe and archaeological discoveries. Pratt makes note of the tribe's religious fervor, and conjectures that they may have been wiped out in civil holy war. He mentions, in particular, a "great dome," depicted in carvings and art. He believes that this was an actual stone structure, that it probably still stands, and may well house the last secrets of the missing people.

To whom it may concern,  
I am writing this statement in the event  
of my joining my staff and my expe-  
dition members in death. I, Arthur  
Cornthwaite, being of sound mind and  
body.

No time for formality or legalisms. It is  
the thing I must tell you of. What is  
sanity, when faced with this?

I thought I had fled from it in that  
foul green place, that accursed temple,  
yet somehow it has followed me here. I  
know the signs, there can be no  
mistake. It is with me. It is a thing so  
clever, so terrible that

MELODRAMA! What's the point! Notes  
to myself in an empty house! Whoever  
reads this knows, or will know, of it,  
but what you must also know is that it  
has a weakness so simple, so



Right: Fitzgerald Property - Player map  
Opposite: Fitzgerald Mansion - Player map

# THE FITZGERALD MANSION

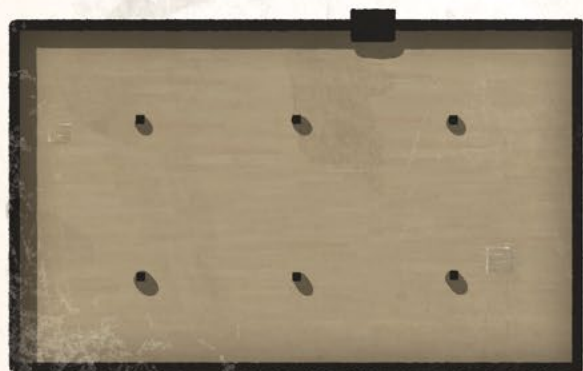
*A plan of the Fitzgerald mansion.*



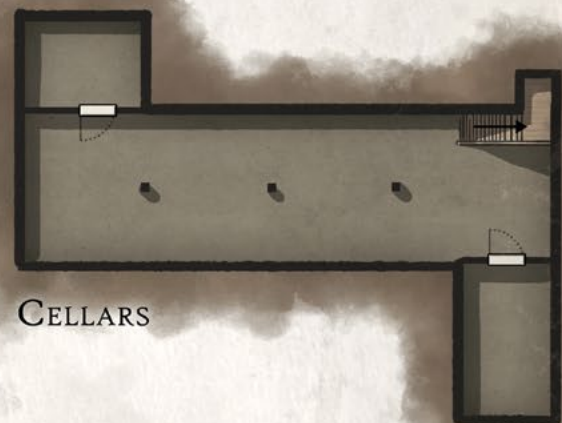
FIRST FLOOR



SECOND FLOOR



ATTIC



CELLARS

## Player Notes



Fireplace




Stairs

All arrows point upstairs

SCALE IN IMPERIAL YARDS



*Handout: The Code 1*

Form No. 68.	<b>TRANSATLANTIC TELEGRAPH SERVICE</b> —WORLD-WIDE TELEGRAM SERVICE COMPANY—	 D.W. CARLYLE, President	<b>CLASS OF SERVICE</b> This is a full-rate Telegram or Cablegram unless its deferred character indicated by a suitable symbol above or preceding the address.
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This company TRANSMITS and RECEIVES messages subject to the terms and conditions on the back of this blank.

MARCH 30, 1925

I HAVE DONE IT STOP I HAVE MADE THE GREATEST SCIENTIFIC DISCOVERY OF  
ALL TIME STOP I NEED YOUR HELP PLEASE COME FRIDAY APRIL 3 5PM TO  
WELLINGTON MANOR HAMPTON NY 12852 STOP IT IS OF THE UTMOST  
IMPORTANCE STOP

KENNETH CONNOLLY

*Handout: The Code 2*

March 14, 1925

My dear friend,

I hope this letter finds you well. I know we haven't spoken in quite some time, but my research has led me to some strange discoveries. I'm sending you this letter as a safety precaution. I'm not sure when, or even if, this letter will reach you, but I must ask a very bizarre favor of you. I need you to memorize this code:  
F194-7L-507L

Once you have memorized it, burn this letter. I cannot have this falling into the wrong hands. Mention to no one that you know it. I'm sorry for not explaining more, but the less you know the better. Please do not forget this code—it could be a matter of life and death. Hopefully, you'll never have to use it.

Yours,  
Dr. Kenneth Connolly

P.S. Don't trust Elizabeth or her brother.

May 5, 1924

Just moved into the old house with Elizabeth. Still have some unpacking to do, but it's great to be back. I had some wonderful summers here. I'm excited to start construction of the device with Elizabeth. She's truly brilliant. I love her so much.

May 15

Elizabeth has had some amazing insights into our work. She said that she gets them through a special ritual, a "meditation" she calls it, and she persuaded me to do it with her. And now, something has happened. I've seen something. No, I've seen many things. Elizabeth's occult studies—they've given me a new way of thinking. I don't know how to describe it. The beginning. I touched something. A mind? A being? A concept? I don't understand it. She called it Gog-Sothoth, though that is only one way of looking at it. I need time to think.

May 16

After a good night's sleep, it's clicked. I understand. We were going about this all wrong. I can't work fast enough.

May 30

I love Lizzie so. We were laughing so hard this afternoon. I'm so lucky to have her.

June 9

Our initial experiments have been an amazing success. I can't express my joy. I think we can do this.

June 19

Lizzie wants me to do the meditation again—she says it would help our work move quicker, but I can't. It just doesn't feel right. Frankly, I'm scared. We're working through snags. We're coming up with solutions. I just don't feel like I need to do it again. I wonder, how often she has done these meditations?

July 29

Major breakthrough. We've discovered the best way to temporally travel is through thought. Today I was able to "peer" into the past. It was when the house was being built, must have been 1830 or so. I saw workmen—it was so real. I should be able to move through space as well, but it's hard to get my mind around that. Lizzie suggested the meditation again, but I just can't bear the idea. We're making progress, we don't need it.

Oct 5

Things are moving slowly, but steadily.

Nov 12

We've had an unexpected visitor. Lizzie's brother, David, has come to stay. She's never mentioned him before. He's very charming, but a little strange. I guess Lizzie is too, in her own way.

Nov 15

David is going to be with us for a while. I don't like it. Our work can be quite dangerous and I don't want him getting hurt. But David seems to have no interest in what we're doing, and Lizzie says he prefers to keep his head in books. He doesn't strike me as the bookworm type, as big and fit as he is, but who am I to judge? I'm sure it will be fine.

Jan 3, 1925

Overheard a hushed argument between Lizzie and David. I don't know what it was about, but they seemed to be trying to keep it from me.

Jan 23

Fighting again. Still not sure what's going on. I feel like Elizabeth is hiding something from me. I'm starting to not trust her. I thought it a good idea to put security on the device, so I've installed a code input system. Alpha-numeric. Only I will know the true code. Something like this cannot fall into the wrong hands.

March 3

I want to trust Elizabeth wouldn't jeopardize our plans, but she trusts her brother. I don't. I'm starting to think she's siding with him. I don't know.

March 14

Caught David snooping around the library. He says he was looking for a book, but I don't—no, can't—trust him. There's just something I can't put my finger on. Wrote a letter to an old friend with the code—a safety measure. If this doesn't work out, if something goes wrong... I want someone to take what I've done and make something of it.

March 29

Today is the day I test the machine.

I'm going to do something minor,  
moving 10 minutes into the future.

I've noticed a few strange things,  
but it might just be lack of sleep.

Mostly strong episodes of déjà vu,  
but more disturbingly, shapes of  
people. I'm not sure if it's me or  
possible temporal feedback. Will  
investigate further.

July 22

I've had the most disturbing experience of my life. Some friends of mine appeared at the house. They are from the future and something is wrong. I should be worried, but mostly I'm excited. The device works! I told them where I'm going to keep this journal under the floorboards of the southeast corner of the blue guest room. I will hide this from Lizzie, but I'm sure they are wrong about her.

July 23

I've asked Lizzie if she has any siblings, and she said she's an only child. I wonder if my friends were mistaken.

July 25

Major breakthrough. We've discovered the best way to temporally travel is through thought. Today I was able to "peer" into the past. It was when the house was being built, must have been 1830 or so. I saw workmen—it was so real. I should be able to move through space as well, but it's hard to

get my mind around that. Lizzie suggested the meditation again, but I just can't bear the idea. We're making progress, we don't need it.

Oct 5

Things are moving slowly, but steadily.

Nov 12

We've had an unexpected visitor. Lizzie's cousin, David, has come to stay. She's never mentioned him before. He's very charming, but a little strange. I guess Lizzie is too, in her own way. My friends said to expect a brother, but a cousin? Is she lying to me?

Nov 15

David is going to be with us for a while. I don't like it. Our work can be quite dangerous and I don't want him getting hurt. This all seems a little too convenient. I'm starting to wonder if Lizzie is deceiving me for some reason.

Jan 3, 1925

Overheard a hushed argument between Lizzie and David. I don't know what it was about, but they seemed to be trying to keep it from me.

Jan 23

Fighting again. Still not sure what's going on. I feel like Elizabeth is hiding something from me. I'm starting to not trust her. I've thought it a good idea to put security on the device, so I've installed a code input system. Alpha-numeric. Only I will know the true code.

Something like this cannot fall into the wrong hands.

Feb 20

I purchased a handgun in town. I do not trust David. I know just having this gun might lead to drastic measures but, for now, it's solely for insurance.

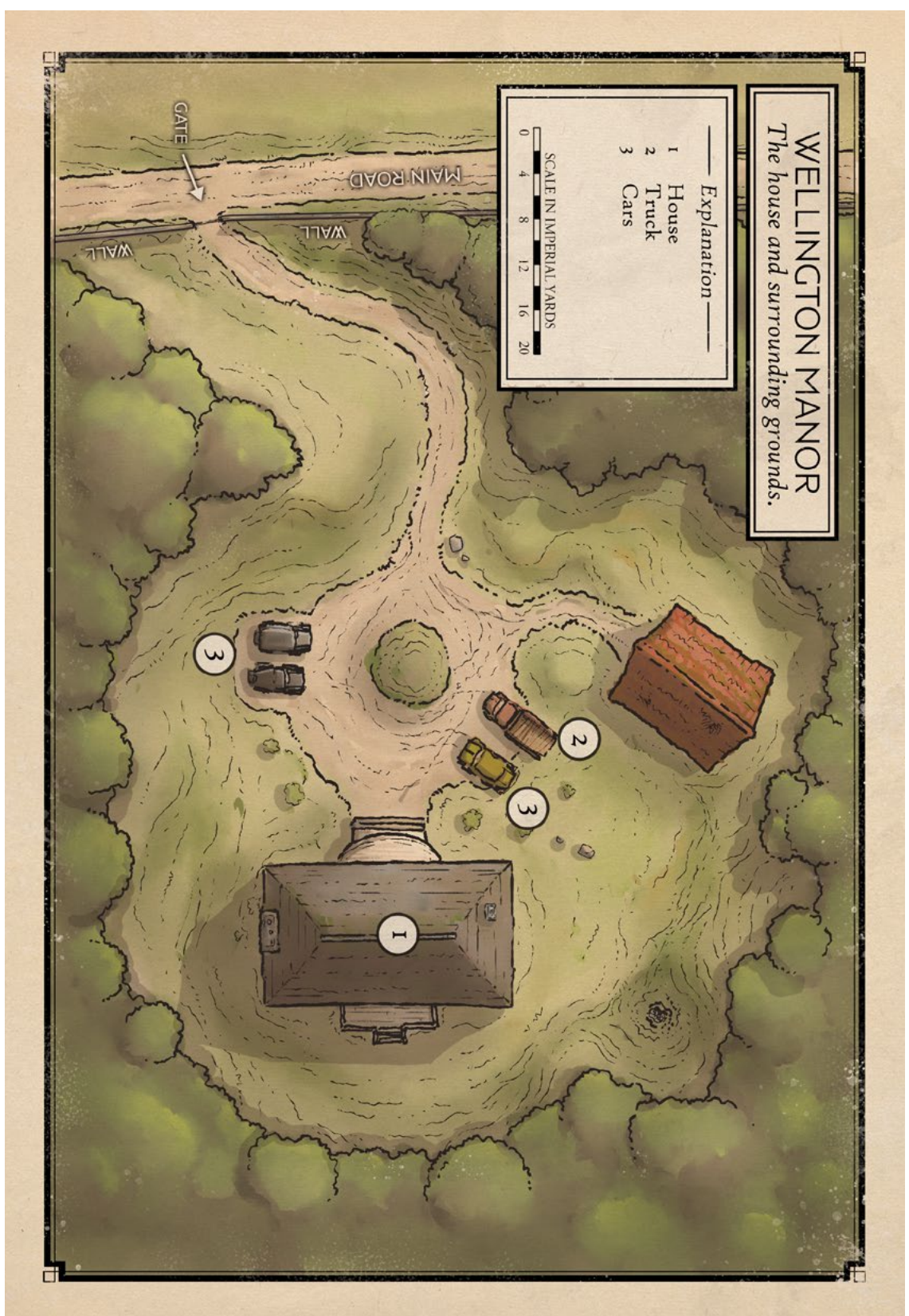
March 14

Caught David snooping around the library. He says he was looking for a book, but I don't—no, can't—trust him. I don't think he's her cousin. He might have something on her—black-mail? I don't know. Wrote a letter to one of the old friends I saw in July. It contains the code—a safety measure. If I'm in danger or something goes wrong, I want someone to be able to fix things.

March 29

Today is the day I test the machine. It's a small step, moving 10 minutes into the future. I've noticed a few strange things, but it might just be lack of sleep. Mostly strong episodes of déjà vu, but more disturbingly, shapes of people. I'm not sure if it's me or possible temporal feedback. Will investigate further.

Right: Wellington Manor Property – Player map



# WELLINGTON MANOR

*A plan of the Wellington manor.*

SCALE IN IMPERIAL YARDS



FIRST FLOOR



SECOND FLOOR



THIRD FLOOR



ATTIC



*Player Notes*

*Boston Globe*

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## MEMPHIS THE GREAT MISSING

---

*May 12th 1919*

Boston magician Memphis the Great, famous for his elaborate stage illusions, has disappeared for real this time. Visiting the kingdom of Bhutan, he reportedly embarked on an expedition into the Himalayan Mountains, but has not returned. His party is five days overdue and he has missed his scheduled performance for King Ugyen Wangchuk. Bhutan is located on the border between India and China. King Wangchuk united the country following several civil wars and rebellions in 1882-1885 and was an instrumental figure in obtaining the Anglo-Tibetan convention of 1904.

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## MEMPHIS ALIVE

*May 15th 1919*

Memphis the Great, reported lost in Bhutan, has been located alive and well. The renowned Boston conjurer, and his assistant Miss Josephine Lynch, were found by the King's men as they returned from the foothills of the Himalayas. Memphis and Miss Lynch had been menaced by brigands and were forced to flee into parts unknown. They were exhausted and hungry but otherwise unharmed. The King vowed that the bandits would be hunted down and brought to justice.

Memphis the Great promised to deliver his delayed performance for King Wangchuk as soon as he could obtain "a good meal, a full night's sleep and a clean shirt".

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*Boston Globe*

*Boston Daily Advertiser*

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## A MAGICAL MATCH

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October 28th 1915

Young conjurer Harold Hawkings pulled something special out of his hat yesterday: an apprenticeship to Memphis the Great. The two will work together to develop a new show for Hawkings, who hopes to follow in his mentor's world-spanning footsteps.

"It's a dream come true for me," said Hawkings. "I always believed that those long nights spent practicing in front of the mirror in my room would pay off. I'm going to need a bigger room to practice in now!"

"Dark times are when people need magic more than ever," said Memphis the Great. "It's time I encouraged the next generation of performers, and I intend to start with Harold here. He's fooled me once or twice!"

Hawkings has already gained a reputation for his skill in cigarette and coin manipulation. He will turn 20 next month.

April 22nd, 1919

Finally, quiet. The monks seemed obsessed with their music rituals, if I can credit that discordant assembly of flutes, horns, bells, and drums with the term. Here on this track we hear only the wind and the cries of strange birds.

April 23rd, 1919

A herdsman tried to interest me in the legend of the migoi, and claimed to possess the skull of such a beast that he would be happy to show me. He had the eyes of a monte man I studied in New York last year. We declined his kind offer and wished him good health. He spat on the ground and muttered a curse as we left.

April 25th, 1919

Still cannot find a trace of this supposed mystic. The forest thinned out as we climbed, and I am certain we are in the right place, judging by the alignment of the mountains. There is no obvious animal life here, and the silence is eerie. If we find nothing tomorrow, we must turn back in order to fulfill our royal appointment.

April 26th, 1919

Darkness is coming on. We should have turned back today. But in the twilight, Josephine spotted what appears to be a man-made stone tower on an outcrop. If we investigate at first light and are disappointed, we can still make it back in time to perform for the king.

April 27th, 1919

This man is as rich a mystery as I have discovered in years. I cannot quite translate his name—it yields something like "Maker of Gates." It seems ironic since his cave dwelling has no protection except blankets. He seems to have no fear of wild beasts.

April 29th, 1919

He levitated my shoe today, completely impromptu. I saw it too. He let me pass my hand completely around it and pluck it from the air. The only possible explanation is that he has been feeding us hallucinogens.

May 4th, 1919

I think I see. But he is holding something back.

May 9th, 1919

Seems totally uninterested in J, despite her dedication to her studies.

May 10th, 1919

He will carry out the call tonight. We must all stand in the tower at the appointed time. His eyes have changed.

May 11th, 1919

The spheres! I see. I see. I see. I see. I see. I see. I see. I see. I see. I see.

May 12th, 1919

I looked for remains. There were none. I copied the symbols. We must have a story to explain our absence.

Nov 16th, 1925

Philips states  $\gamma$ - $\Sigma$  is "coterminous with all time and space." If I can reliably open the way, no frontier would be forbidden. I could travel the very structures of the cosmos, as a spider might traverse the joists and eaves of a house.

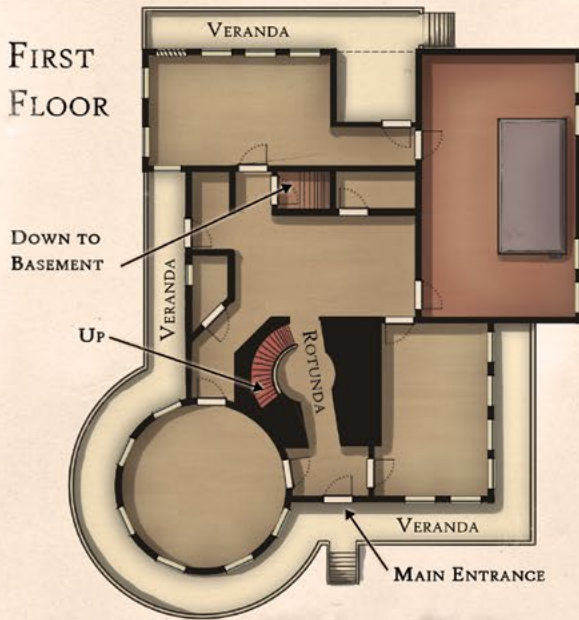
# THE MEMPHIS HOUSE

*A plan of the Schwartz residence.*

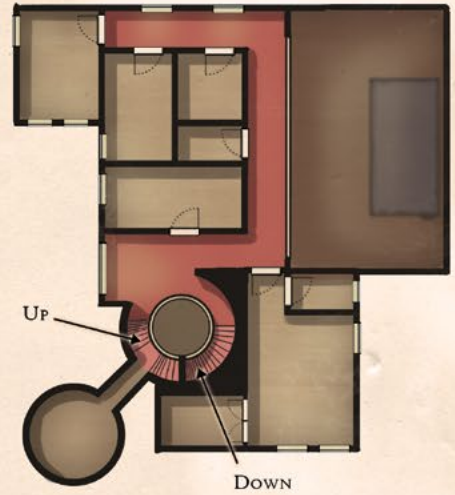
SCALE IN IMPERIAL YARDS

0 2 4 6 8 10

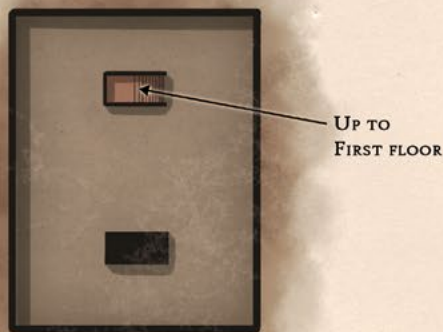
FIRST  
FLOOR



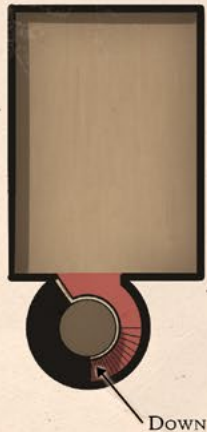
SECOND  
FLOOR



BASEMENT



ATTIC



*Player Notes*

## AMERICAN PUBLISHER VANISHES FROM RENOVATED CLUB

### DISAPPEARANCE CONFOUNDS POLICE

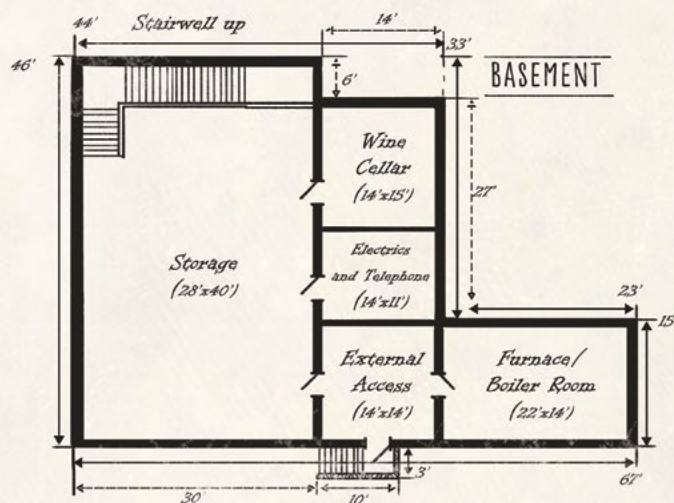
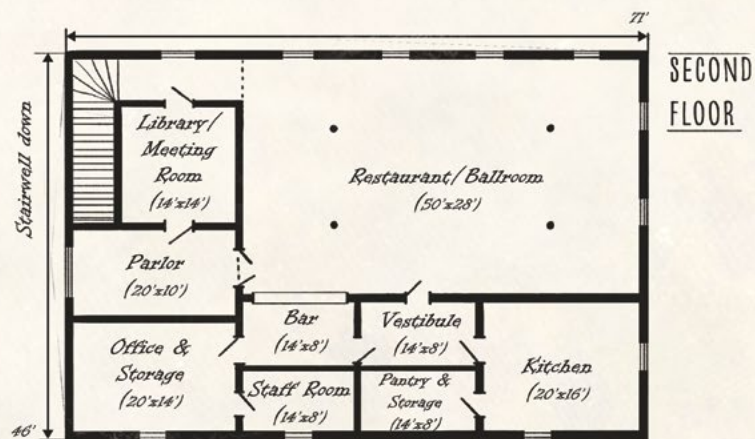
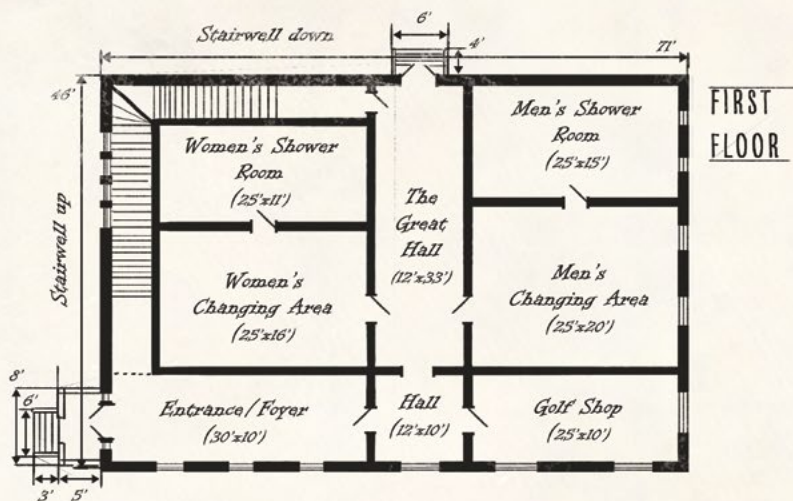
D u n d e e —Police are calling for the help of farmers and tenants northeast of the city after the disappearance of Mr. Arthur Macmillan, recently of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Mr. Macmillan, aged 64, moved into Crow Wood Hall north of Abernyte with his wife Crystal Macmillan in May of this year. Shortly after their arrival, Mr. Macmillan bought the derelict Thistledown Golf Club and began renovations with plans of reopening the club the following year.

On September 14, Mr. Macmillan left Crow Wood Hall at noon to visit the renovation site. Throughout the course of the day numerous workmen and the site foreman, Mr. Cameron Nairn, met with or saw Mr. Macmillan, but at the end of the day Mr. Macmillan's car remained parked outside the club, with Mr. Macmillan himself nowhere to be seen.

After a search of the premises, Mr. Nairn telephoned the Dundee Police and Mrs. Macmillan directly. After 48 hours and a detailed investigation at the Thistledown Club, police have officially declared Mr. Macmillan missing.

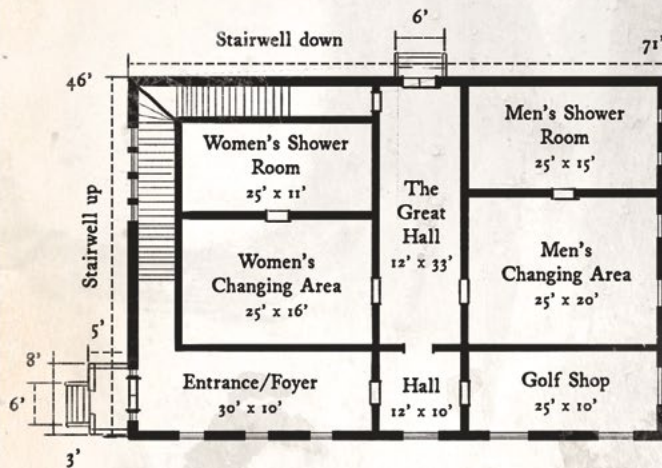
Detective Inspectors William Black and Michael McAndrew are now requesting farmers, tenants, and townsfolk in Abernyte, Fowlis, and nearby townships to report any sighting of an American man in his early sixties, of average height and build, with thinning white hair, wearing a navy tweed suit, and using a cane topped with a silver ram's head. Mrs. Macmillan is offering a substantial reward for information leading to Mr. Macmillan's safe return.

THISTLEDOWN GOLF CLUB—RESTORATION

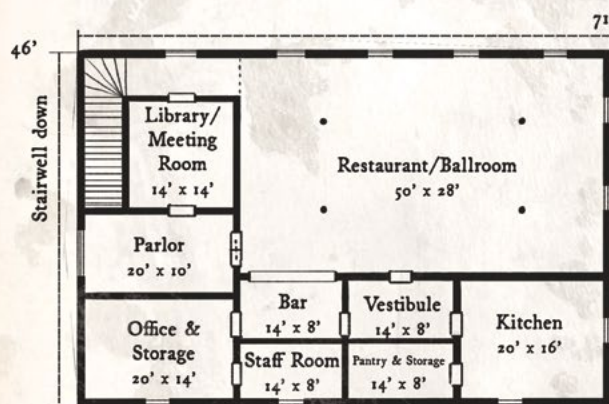


*Harold Clemens*  
 Harold Clemens, Edinburgh  
 12th June, 1928

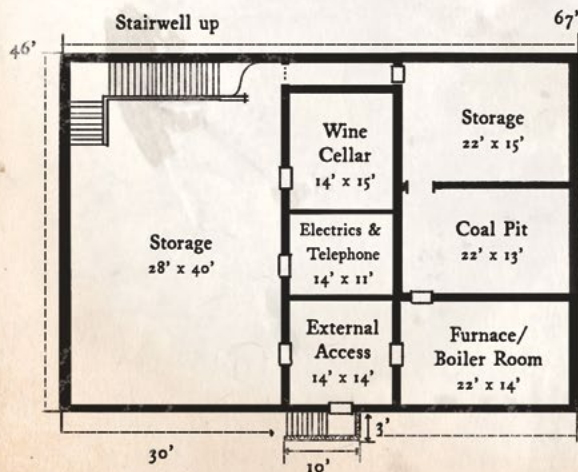
# THISTLEDOWN GOLF CLUB—PLAN, 1903



## FIRST FLOOR



## SECOND FLOOR

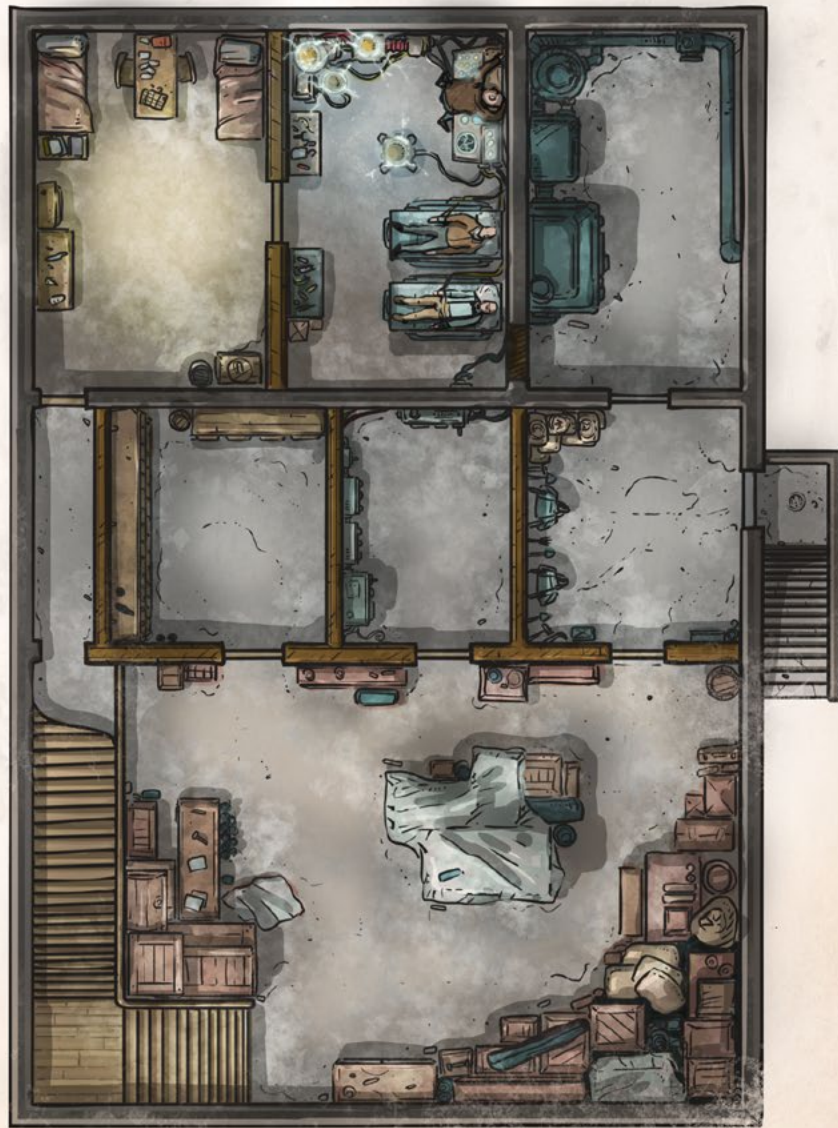


## BASEMENT

*Alister MacKenzie*  
Alister MacKenzie



THE THISTLEDOWN GOLF CLUB BASEMENT  
Full plan of the golf club basement.



— Player Notes —

SCALE IN IMPERIAL YARDS  
0 1 2 3 4 5

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