

Unfriendly

"He who makes a man of himself gets rid of the pain of being a beast."

-With apologies to Drs. Johnson and Duke

Keeper's Information

Darren Houghton is a Delta Green friendly. As a rare book dealer, he has been consulted by the group to authenticate and identify certain unusual texts.

Recently he was contacted by Dr. Elizabeth West, a guise used by the semi-degenerate serpent person Haassathsaa. The creature drugged Houghton and consumed his body and memories. Unfortunately for Haassathsaa, the bookseller suffered from a generally well-controlled schizoaffective disorder, which requires he take a variety of antipsychotic medication. Haassathsaa's biology reacted very badly to the combination of Houghton's illness and the medication treating it, resulting in the effective replacement of Haassathsaa's personality with Houghton's. Awakening covered in blood, with no memories, and the curious items left by Dr. West, a thoroughly disturbed 'Houghton' contacted Delta Green...

It is preferable that Houghton be introduced to the agents before these events, preferably as an amiable outside expert. The contrast between him then and now will give the scenario a far greater impact.

The Assignment

The agents receive an email from A-Cell:

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---Attention:
---Zulu 0320 received alert from friendly Darren Houghton.
---Message suggests severe distress.
---Investigate immediately. Protect group. Assist friendly as able.
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Houghton's cell phone number is provided.

Alternately, if Houghton is known to the agents, he will call them directly as per below.

Contacting Houghton

Darren will answer the phone after a dozen rings. He is confused, frightened, and his speech is somewhat slurred. A psychology roll suggests this is more than simple fear or panic; an impale result suggests he is in a so-called 'mixed state', that is a manic and depressive episode. A few moments of conversation can elicit the following:

- He is alone and unhurt.
- He is at home.
- Something happened; there is a lot of blood, the house has been ransacked, there was a woman there but she is gone now, he does not know where she is but here things are still there (this fact greatly upsets him), she had notebooks full of 'alien writing'.
- He has no memory of the past two days.
- He is unwilling to leave the house.

Once the agents confirm their DG connection he provides his address.

The house

The house is an unremarkable two storey affair built a century previous. It is isolated enough that nothing short of a fire or gunplay will alarm the neighbors. When describing, assume the long-time

home of an intelligent bibliophile with minimal interest in housework. Books, shelved and otherwise, are everywhere; the shelves are disorganized and some volumes are missing. The thermostat is set to 85° and all the lights are off.

Houghton is in the living room, naked save for a blanket. He has washed himself repeatedly but traces of blood can be found under his nails and in his hair. He will answer questions but seems to be in shock.

Agents will note the following:

In the open:

- A purse, containing ID, credit cards, car keys- it is an unremarkable rental parked a few blocks away), a smart phone (off), a pill case (Medicine roll IDs the pills as Rohypnol), and three test-tubes (these contain inexpertly brewed Carotid Toxin, POT 12, see CoC rules page 158). The smart phone is password locked.
- A briefcase, containing 2000 U.S. Dollars, a loaded pistol, three spiral-bound notebooks filled with a curious script (Cthulhu Mythos to identify as Aklo), and book in Turkish (see below). A Spot Hidden roll will also locate a hidden compartment within the briefcase holding ID for at least five other people, both men and women, as well as credit cards in their names.

"The Testimony of Maqn Fah'd al din al Marouk"

- Ottoman Turkish, 18th century.

Recounts the travels of a 16th century Ottoman soldier, particularly on his time in the Arabian peninsula, including the discovery of a curious, potentially inhuman, ruin in southern Arabia (see "The Nameless City") populated with giant mummified lizards.

1/1d2 Sanity, +1 Cthulhu Mythos

- The master bed, soaked in a large amount of blood (Medicine identifies it as a probably fatal volume); Sanity cost 0/1, 1/1d2 if Medicine roll is made. Blood type matches Houghton. Women's clothing has been folded neatly and placed on a chair.

With a Spot Hidden roll:

- A chef's knife with dried blood under the bed. Fingerprints will match Dr. West.
- A bloody human tooth (Houghton's) clogs the garbage disposal.
- Houghton's medication are in his dresser. Medicine or Psychiatry will identify as antipsychotic medication.
- In a closet are trash bags filled with books, newspapers, and magazine. Immediately visible is an old Dungeons and Dragons module (I1, Tomb of the Lizard King). If examined, an Idea roll suggests the common factor is that all the items had something to do with reptiles.
- Finally, if the lights are turned on, Houghton's inhuman shadow will be noticed with a Spot Hidden roll.

Darren Houghton

The key issue for the Agents is Houghton "himself"; Haassathsaa personality has been hopelessly scrambled, allowing Houghton to become the dominant mind. This precarious control is reflected in his current Sanity score. Should Houghton lose 5 or more points of Sanity in short order he will become severely agitated and lash out at anyone nearby for 1d4+1 minutes or until restrained. A loss of 20% of remaining Sanity will cause him to attempt to harm himself with whatever is available unless restrained. Either situation can be mitigated with a successful Persuade or Psychology roll, though the suicidal episode requires a roll under ½ of skill. Should his remaining Sanity be lost, Haassathsaa's personality is reconstituted and Houghton's personality is forever lost.

Unfortunately for the agents, the house is full of little psychic land-mines. Houghton unconsciously recalls everything Haassathsaa knows; each time this manifests (such as knowing the password to West's phone or of the secret compartment), Houghton loses 0/1d2 points of Sanity. If he becomes aware of evidence suggesting that he is, in fact, dead, he will lose 1d2/1d6 points of Sanity, definitive proof 1d6/1d20. Similarly, if he has reason to suspects or is certain he is no longer human he will also suffer similar losses.

Additionally, after 1d3 hours he becomes hungry. Houghton will have an inexplicable hunger for fresh meat and must make a successful Sanity roll to stop himself from gorging himself on it or otherwise must be restrained. He will become aware of his heightened sense of smell at this point and combined with his inhuman appetite he will loses 1d2/1d6 points of Sanity.

Should Houghton suffer 1 or more Hit Points of damage, the magical effects of Consume Likeness will vanish, resulting in a Sanity cost to Agents of 0/1d6 and 1d6/1d20 as above to Houghton. If somehow calmed, Houghton will return to his human form in 1d3 hours; during the interval he will take on the appearance of several humans, including Dr. West.

Finally, Houghton requires his normal daily medications. For each day he goes without his usual drugs he will loses 1/1d3 points of Sanity and will suffer a serious manic or depressive episode (1d3/2d6) if untreated for more than two weeks.

Investigation

A Library Use roll can verify that Dr. West (age 38) is a researcher working for the Chicago Field Museum and has been on sabbatical for the past 9 months after several years of field work focusing on Mayan culture in Honduras. If examined, her phone (as well as Houghton's email) can confirm that she arranged to purchase "The Testimony of Makin Fahad al din al Marouk" from Houghton, including meeting at his house the previous day to confirm the sale.

Resolution

The best option for Houghton is to covertly transport him to a safe location where he can receive significant psychiatric treatment and, perhaps, come to terms with his new "condition". A-Cell, if convinced of the need, can arrange for his institutionalization in 1d3+1 days. Until then, he is the Agent's problem. His disappearance (as well as Dr. West's) as well as the condition of the house will also need to be addressed. A-Cell might also potentially assign the Agents to investigate Dr. West's activities to determine if "she" was acting alone or as part of a group.

Statistics

Darren Houghton/Haassathsaa,
something not quite either

STR 9 CON 12 SIZ 10 INT 17 POW 14

DEX 15 APP 10 EDU 19 SAN 47 HP 11

Armor: 1 point scales

Skills: Bargain 37%, Brew Poison* 44%, Craft (Bookbinding) 85%, History 52%, Library Use 77%

Languages: Aklo* 61%, Arabic 14%, English 96%, Finnish* 21%, French 49%, German* 23%, Muvian 11*%, Russian 16%, Spanish 33%, Turkish* 41%, Tsath-yo* 26%

Attacks: Bite 25%*, 1d8 + POT 12 poison - Fist 50%, 1d3 - Pistol* 46%, 1d8

Spells*: Circle of Nausea, Consume Likeness, Consume Memories, Contact Tsathoggua, Dread Curse of Azathoth, Lamp of Alhazred, Mesmerize, Power Drain, Stop Heart

*Unconsciously known.