



DARKER HUE STUDIOS

HARLEM UNBOUND



A SOURCEBOOK FOR THE **CALL OF CTHULHU**
AND **GUMSHOE** ROLEPLAYING GAMES BY **CHRIS SPIVEY**

*I was leaving the South to fling myself into the unknown...
I was taking a part of the South to transplant in alien soil,
to see if it could grow differently, if it could drink of new
and cool rains, bend in strange winds, respond to the warmth
of other suns and, perhaps, to bloom.*

RICHARD WRIGHT

HARLEM UNBOUND

Investigate Mythos mysteries in 1920s NYC's Harlem Renaissance!
An RPG sourcebook for *Call of Cthulhu* and *GUMSHOE*.

PICTURE THIS...

New York City in the 1920s: Prohibition is in full swing, and bootleggers are living high. African Americans flee the oppressive South for greener pastures, creating a new culture in Harlem. The music of Fats Waller and Duke Ellington pours out of the city's windows and doorways, and the sidewalks are crowded with women in stylish skirts with silk stockings, and men in white gloves and Chesterfield coats. There's a feeling of possibility in the air, like never before. But even in this land of promise, Harlem is a powder keg. While classes and cultures collide, Lovecraftian horrors lurk beneath the streets, creeping through dark alleys and hidden doorways into the Dreamlands. What Great Old One shattered our reality? Can you hold it together and keep the Mythos at bay for one more song?

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- Eight unique Occupations
- Five new Mythos creatures to terrify your investigators
- A bunch of ready-to-play PCs/NPCs
- A random scenario generator
- A crash course on addressing race in gaming

DARKER HUE STUDIOS is a veteran-owned company aimed at increasing the level of diversity in gaming and geekdom through building community, developing new material, and promoting inclusion within the existing gaming industry.



HARLEM UNBOUND

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This book presents descriptions of real people, events, and places. These may not be presented in a real world accurate version but one influenced by the author under a Cthulhu Mythos lens. No offense to anyone living or dead, or to the inhabitants of any of these places is intended.

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CALL of
CTHULHU



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*This book is dedicated
to the lights in my life,
Jill and Zora Spivey.*

*Without you, my dreams
would not be possible.*

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For ease of use, all *Gumshoe* rules will be displayed in red. While in the scenarios, skills and checks will be called out in [BRACKETS], such as [ASSESS HONESTY].

INTRODUCTION:

IN THEIR FOOTSTEPS

*If we must die, let it not be like hogs
Hunted and penned in an inglorious spot,
While round us bark the mad and hungry dogs,
Making their mock at our accursèd lot.
If we must die, O let us nobly die,
So that our precious blood may not be shed
In vain; then even the monsters we defy
Shall be constrained to honor us though dead!*

Claude McKay, *If We Must Die*

HARLEM UNBOUND

Harlem Unbound is your ticket to walking the Mythos- and jazz-soaked streets of Harlem in the 1920s era, during the Harlem Renaissance. The Harlem Renaissance was a new awakening, a surging moment of the Black Movement that was a revolution aimed at changing the world through new ideas, art, and the written word. It was a uniquely powerful movement against the unjust status quo, a time in history that still inspires today. The history, people, and stories in this book shine a spotlight on the people of Harlem, their successes, and their struggles.

That sound floating on the air is hope wrapped in the music of Fats Waller and Duke Ellington. It pours out of the city's windows and doorways. The sidewalks are crowded with women in stylish skirts with silk stockings, and men in white gloves and Chesterfield coats. There's a feeling of possibility in the air, like never before. But even in this land of promise, Harlem's time is fleeting. While classes, sexuality, and cultures collide, Lovecraftian horrors lurk beneath the streets, creeping through dark alleys and hidden doorways into the Dreamlands. What Great Old One shattered our reality? Can you hold it together and keep the Mythos at bay for one more song?

DIFFERENT DRUMMER

Harlem Unbound is a melding of two different worlds: the Cthulhu Mythos and the Harlem Renaissance. This sourcebook flips the standard Lovecraftian view of minorities on its head, putting them in the roles of heroes who must struggle against cosmic horrors while also fighting for a chance at equality.

Players likely come to *Harlem Unbound* for various reasons.

- How does Lovecraft work with black protagonists?
- I want to try something different.
- I have never seen anything like this.
- I know Chris and I'm curious what he has been doing for the last year.

Players step into the roles of Harlemites at the start of the Harlem Renaissance. They'll expose secrets best left hidden, rub shoulders with luminaries who are on their way to making history, thwart cultists, and encounter sanity-shattering horrors, either Mythos- or man-made, but equally inhuman.

The protagonists, non-player characters, and everyone in the book are assumed to be African Americans or immigrants (unless otherwise specified), rather than the standard white characters often found in gaming scenarios that tend to only use non-white characters as a simple splash of "color" or as tokens. In recent years, the wheel is moving, slowly—too slowly—to bridging that gaming gap, but these are early days. Our heroes and heroines come from many walks of life with regard to class, ethnicity, race, religion, gender, and sexual orientation.

WALKING THE WALK

A great writer and friend told me not to use a limited word count as an excuse for what you can't do, but it is important to say upfront that it is impossible to reduce the importance, impact, and influence of the Harlem Renaissance into a single book, and a gaming book at that. My hope, and that of the team, is to impart some small fraction of its essence, and create a jumping-off point for those who might want to swim to the deep end.

This game is unique (only for the moment, I hope) as it actively encourages players and Keepers to take on roles of minorities. This may lead to a more difficult gaming challenge: to look at the past for what it really was. *Harlem Unbound* does not gloss over racism in the name of gameplay. Racism is part of the world and part of the game. This is a chance to try to comprehend the crushing weight that people of color have endured for generations. No, we can't truly know what it was to live during the Harlem Renaissance. And no, white people can never really understand the impact of insidious racism. But we're gamers. We embrace the idea of living different lives through play—and each time we do, we learn something new. If we're lucky, we reach a better understanding of people different from ourselves, and learn to empathize with the “other.” I tried to write the book in such a way that it would be approachable to all gamers, but respectful of the truth of history and racism without making a mockery of the pain and perseverance of so many people.

IN MY SHOES

What if I screw up? What if I play “being a black person” wrong?

IT'S ALL JAKE.

The fact that you picked up this book means that you're interested in this world. And I'm assuming that by this point, you're wondering how you're going to make it work in a game. There's more on that in the storytelling chapter, but rest assured, you can do this. You are trying something new, and you're probably going to wonder if you're doing it right. If you screw up, it's okay. Acknowledge it, and do better next time. We are talking about race, sexuality, and untangling history, and missteps will happen. This is serious stuff within what some people consider “light” escapism, but gaming can be that and so much more. Dust yourself off, pick up your dice, and get back to playing. Harlem is waiting. The year is 1919, and that darker-than-dark shadow just moved...

Welcome, old sport.



CHRIS SPIVEY

May 2017



BLR17

SONG OF HARLEM

"THEIR EYES WERE WATCHING GOD": A HISTORY OF HARLEM

"They don't do things by halves in Harlem."

The New York Times, 1920

FEW CALLED IT A RENAISSANCE AT FIRST, but nobody Italian called the Renaissance that at the time, either. If it was called anything at first, it was the New Negro Movement. If it was called anything—for many black men and women, the name was nothing more or less than hope. They fled the terror of Jim Crow and the poverty of the West Indies for Richard Wright's "warmth of other suns," a place to set down roots and bloom in peace. They fled to the small neighborhood of North Harlem in New York City, bracketed by Italian Harlem and Jewish Harlem. They bought their own grocery stores, laundries, cigar shops, newsstands, bookstores, nightclubs and restaurants. At its height, the neighborhood had more than twice the population density of the city that surrounded it. Harlem was, for a time, the blackest place on the planet, and the saying was that Negroes wanted to go to Harlem the way the dead wanted to go to Heaven.

The world is based on two principles: illusion and fear. Illusion that the world underneath the one we know is something ugly and venal and visceral; fear of that unknown and unknowable world. To be black in America during that time was to live with fear as a constant companion, with the idea that behind any polite face was judgment and the power to wreak ruin upon your livelihood. Fear that meeting a white person with anything less than compliance, assumed inferiority, and the joking and evasiveness of the shuck and jive would bring doom upon their lives.

Many races and creeds called Harlem home; the German and Irish gave way to waves of Southern Italians, Eastern European Jews, Caribbean Latinos, and finally the Great Migration of blacks from the Deep South and the West Indies. To be Negro in Harlem in

the 1920s, at the height of the Renaissance, was to have dignity: it was a place where you could stand straight and strut like a lion, where you didn't have to append sir to the end of your sentence unless you felt it fine and proper. Where you didn't have to play the fool to let white folks relax into complacent contempt, where you didn't have to smile to disarm them. Where you could see a play by Negro playwrights with Negro actors, pick up a volume of Negro poetry speaking loud to Negro yearnings and Negro anger, go to a club and hear the thump and sass and horns of music that was yours. To be Negro in Harlem was to be part of something larger, something black, a drop of blood singing scat in taut veins, fueling muscles hard and scarred writhing under skin deemed uncouth and unacceptable no longer. What white society denied them elsewhere, they could find in Harlem. People called it a Renaissance later, but they called it hope at the time, when they called it anything at all.

The Depression ended the Renaissance and devastated Harlem. Thousands gathered by the remains of the Tree of Hope, a sadly appropriate symbol of the neighborhood in the shadow of the Lafayette Theatre, hoping to touch the stump and let Fortuna chase away their woes. When a black-Latino youth stole a penknife from a store in 1935, the resulting race riot shattered the bones of an already-limping community. The dream was deferred—but not forgotten, even if the African Americans living there no longer felt like they were better off than any other inner-city black person in America. Harlem lived on as a symbol, a launching point for the Civil Rights movement, a place of pilgrimage for luminaries such as Martin Luther King, Jr.

But before Harlem was a symbol, it was a city.

HARLEM RACE RIOT 1935

The Great Depression lasts for six years, and skyrocketing unemployment and police brutality are high. Minorities, as always, are frequently the first fired and the last hired. March 19, 1935 sees 16-year-old Lino Rivera, a black Puerto Rican man, attempting to steal a 10-cent pen knife from Kress Five and Dime store on 125th Street. Employees of the white-owned business of Samuel Henry Kress spot Rivera and capture him. They threaten to take him downstairs and beat him. The manager intervenes and calls the police to take Rivera away, which draws a crowd.

The police are told to release the young man, which they do secretly. When asked by the crowd, the police simply state that it was handled and they go on to arrest some of the crowd for Unlawful Assemblage. The confused crowd, fearing that another black life has been taken, continues to gather. The crowd sees what looks like the police taking Rivera downstairs, an empty ambulance leaving the scene of the crime and a hearse parked across the street a short while later. Rumors of Rivera being beaten to death begin to circulate. The crowd gather outside to protest and Kress Five and Dime closes early. In the evening, someone throws a rock through the window of the store and ignites the riot. It lasts through the night, spreading east and west on 125th street.

When it is over, three blacks have been killed, sixty injured, and seventy-five people, nearly all black, are arrested. Mayor LaGuardia assures white store owners the issue is resolved and establishes a multi-racial Mayor's Commission. The committee is to address the conditions in Harlem and is headed by E. Franklin Frazier, a black sociologist. The committee focuses on issues of discrimination, police brutality, and racial segregation.

"BLESSED VALLEY": NIEUW HAARLEM

From the start, Harlem was a world where peoples collided and birthed something new. Fashion and money, racial mixing and segregation, blood and wealth: these things have always been a part of Harlem.

Harlem, like the rest of New York, was a place of the sea. Long before mankind walked the Earth, beings of crude matter warred with the offspring of gods, and their struggles crossed the world entire. If hoary shoggoths ever crawled along the silty sands of the Harlem River, they were gone when the bright sun kissed the dark soil of Manhattan Island 220 million years ago, uplifted by the Appalachians inching towards the stars. Some things remained behind, though—curious stone altars host to strange spirits and resting on tainted souls, or slivers of alien metal and bizarre architecture jutting out from the fertile soil covered in trees of fir, spruce, oak, maple, and hickory, the last grasping remnants of the Mi-go. Scraped and dredged by glaciers, the plain that stretched across Manhattan Island was eminently suitable for tilling and farming, but it lay quiet and empty.

When men did walk in the area, they called it Muscoota, Schorrakin, Konkyast. They were of the Wappinger band of the Lenni Lenape, and they spoke the same language as their cousins in the Miskatonic Valley. They never learned the secrets of smithing or writing, but they knew much of the darkness in the world at that time, taught by foreigners who came to the tribe from shattered island cities, wielding cruel and strange sorceries with an air of weary fatalism. The Wappinger responded to those who would not submit and subsume into the tribe by using sharpened seashells to shave their heads, gripping the remaining hair into a tight mohawk held straight with bear fat, and masking their faces with war paint. They fought the earliest cultists of the Americas with hatchets and knives and clubs of stone, butchering and scalping the traitorous few who sought to build covens dedicated to the Black Man, an avatar of Nyarlathotep, whose malignant influence periodically reinfected the isle. And so it went for centuries—if any can add color or nuance to these events, they're as dead as the shoggoths, for the Wappingers' fate was sealed in the warm and fair September of 1609.

The Dutch trading ship Half Moon sailed into New York Bay under the command of Henry Hudson, and to the surprise of the indigenous people, began sailing up the river. They weren't the first white men to come to the shores, but they were the first in a generation, and unlike the others, these white men made themselves known to the native people—loudly and without couth. The ship itself defied the reference and understanding of the Wappinger, and the mirth and easy attitude of the people turned to blood in the blink of an eye. The Half Moon's landing party lost a man to a Lenape arrow, and they hurried back to their ship, seeking another route to the Orient. After a second incident further upriver, the blood of natives stained the shores of the Harlem River, and the idea that white men were bad for Harlem became a stated principle among the Wappinger and the island of Manhattan.

The Dutch settlers who came in the early 17th century knew little of the darkness that continually plagued the land they'd eventually call Nieuw Haarlem, but by the time Peter Minuit bought Manhattan Island with sixty guilders' worth of iron and blankets in 1626, trade with the local Lenape tribes had been underway for some time—some of it for relics that long predated mankind's emergence on the planet. Minuit's base in Manhattan, Fort Amsterdam, quickly established itself as New Amsterdam (Nieuw Amsterdam). Only a short distance away, modern Harlem began as a homestead named Zedendaal (Dutch for "Blessed Valley"), along a pleasant stretch of the Harlem River. The Lenape took poorly to the newcomers, and hostilities forced many Dutch settlers to flee to New Amsterdam in lower Manhattan. Still, it was a war of attrition that followed the continental pattern—the Dutch came endlessly, while the Lenape couldn't replace their numbers (or match the white men's willingness to trespass in sacred spaces, releasing horrors they shouldn't, in their rampant madness). When it came time to restore the shattered Lenape trails to the bottomland meadows, it was manacled black hands that mended them under the banner of the Dutch West India Company. The Company considered Harlem's abundant wildlife to be a rich source of furs, requiring little investment beyond hunters. But they didn't care to develop the region beyond hunting, so while the English brought settlers to Massachusetts, Virginia, and Maine, New Amsterdam remained small and the other homesteads isolated.

Only when Peter Stuyvesant assumed the post of director-general did the fortunes of the New Amsterdam colony begin turning from profit to settlement—from pure exploitation to a serious attempt at culture. Given the post in part as compensation for a leg lost to a cannonball, Stuyvesant divided the island into lots, encouraging farmers to settle and till the land. The Harlemites ate on tables strewn with fresh flowers, digging into meals of onions, spinach, and beets, with fresh venison and crab bought from Native American hunters. Unable to trade with the Americans in the open, due to treaty, the Harlemites sent their children to negotiate, and the kids came back speaking the Algonquian languages. Many of them would be later inducted into covens, using the tongues they learned as adolescents to rip dark sorceries out of tribes all along the East Coast. The practice of trade largely ended in 1660, as the upstate war between natives and foreigners spilled down into Haarlem, but the village itself continued to grow. All the while, white indentured servants and black slaves walked the streets in the muggy summers and huddled together in the frigid winters, though the Dutch never had the racial attitudes of the British, and many black slaves bought their freedom. Religion thundered over the lives of everyone in Haarlem, warning them that the days of drinking gin and cider, of bowling and boating, of pleasure and plenty would soon be ending.

"WITHOUT A BLOW OR A TEAR": BRITISH HARLEM

Fewer than 200 soldiers and the tattered, half-ruined Fort Amsterdam stood against ten times as many fighting marines and four English frigates in the hot August of 1664. Peter Stuyvesant had named the settlement after the city of Haarlem, but the settlement lacked the formidable walls of its namesake. Stuyvesant had little choice but to surrender the entire

THE REMAINS OF NEW AMSTERDAM

Many of the cults that periodically infect Harlem in the Renaissance Era date back to the families who took root during this early period in Harlem's history. Several ancestral cults—the aristocratic de Vries, the paranoid Van Kleis, the working-class Rapelyes, and the degenerate Jansens—proudly trace their bloodlines to earliest settlers of the island. One cult, founded by Ambrose Morgens and five other crew members of the Half Moon, has an unbroken line of transmission from the first settlers on the island, pieced together from a rogue Wappinger shaman with the immortal Morgens as a still-living representative of the Black Man. Another family, the van der Heyls, were students of the Necronomicon but have since relocated far upstate.

Peace wasn't in the hearts of the earliest European cultists, but avarice was; the native people had long since recovered what few relics of the Old Ones remained in Manhattan, and they kept a great deal of lore—stories forbidden in Europe—safely ensconced in their woven histories. These cults still grow like tumors in the heart of New York, buying up native (and non-native) relics, strangling themselves with incestual fighting, or being cut out by clever investigators and war-hardened heroes. But like tumors, they always return. By the time of the Harlem Renaissance, many had followed white migrations out of the city. They grew tendrils in Flatbush and Red Hook—and from there, extended their reach into small parts of Harlem—but remained separated by the elevated trains, living in mansions outside the city in Pocantico Hills or Mystic Seaport. But with white traffic into Harlem, many walk the same soil their ancestors did, seeking to abuse and rip occult secrets out of the new natives, just as they did the old.

colony of New Netherland and all related cities to the British, who seized the colony saying “without a blow or a tear.” Stuyvesant had been prepared to fight to the death, having ripped apart a demanding letter from the captain of a British man-o’-war. His position wasn’t shared by his war-weary constituents; the ones who had much to lose in the fighting won out over the warmongers, in part because of a novice in service to the Black Man. Isaack de Forest inflated the numbers of the British invaders in a bald lie to Stuyvesant, and encouraged the latter to surrender without a fight and preserve the property of the colony. Secret covens and rich landowners alike breathed sighs of relief as the British swooped in.

Relatively few blacks lived in Nieuw Haarlem when the British took over and transformed it into Harlem (at first renamed “Lancaster,” though the name never stuck), even though much of the economic activity of Manhattan (and the rest of the British Empire) was fueled by slave labor. Even when the Third Anglo-Dutch War of 1673 returned the island to the Dutch, reverting the place names and the political and social structure, the slaves remained—and the English took the island back a year later. Black slaves were brought in by the thousands, violently uprooted from their homes and transplanted to an alien soil. Those who found their way to the sleepy farming village of Harlem lived a quiet, even relatively peaceful existence, free of the intrigues and mysteries plaguing the continent. Situated as it was in Manhattan, Harlem was a popular place for escaped slaves to run to; a group of Harlemites pleaded with the New York Council to intervene against “a band of Negroes” who had taken to living quietly outside the town.

Harlem became a spot for the idle rich of New York, full of manorial estates generated by the Dutch patroons, and no few took notice of the cults driven underground by the witch trials in Connecticut and Massachusetts. Free from the crime and hustle of the city, rich estates rose on the plains of Harlem. As a consequence, the neighborhood remained somewhat sympathetic to matters of the occult, always an occupation of the idle rich, though long-standing native powers and colonial investigators—from the English constabulary tradition, not the Dutch—grounded and guttered out any truly dangerous attempts at worshipping powers old and dark. This contrarian and superior spirit extended to those not involved in darker activities; many Harlemites supported independence, three generations after the British took control.

Hardly any Harlemite, black or white, opposed separation from Britain. Although elated at the American Revolution’s beginnings at Lexington and Concord, Harlem itself was in a precarious position, strategically valuable to both sides. When the British made lower Manhattan into their base of operations, George Washington turned Harlem into a fortified camp. Alexander Hamilton, then a captain in the Revolution, brought his cannon atop Harlem Heights after the British successfully landed at Kips Bay. On a dark, rainy night, the two men met for the first time in Harlem. Years later, any number of descendants laid claim to the legacies of both men; W.E.B. Du Bois would call the latter “our Hamilton.” Fresh off two prior victories that month, the British assaulted Harlem’s church, only to be forced into a bloody retreat. The Battle of Harlem Heights was Washington’s first success in the war, bolstering the confidence of both army and commander. Two months later, the British returned, razing Harlem’s mill and farmhouse, sending ashes tumbling into Harlem Creek. Harlem stayed empty for the rest of the war, woods and darkness reclaiming a vibrant area.

It was Hamilton who resurrected the town, perhaps unironically. “If I cannot live in splendour in the Town,” he said, “I can at least live in comfort in the country.” Hamilton’s Grange, his grand house, renewed interest in Harlem’s beauty.

The town was slow to recover, and the families who’d lost much in the prior decades invested much more slowly, until Harlem was integrated into New York City as an industrial suburb in 1831. Harlem held a reputation as being a lazy town, with the residents sleeping twenty hours a day. Yet their famous resistance and stubbornness remained: when the “gridiron” plan of New York’s expansion by streets threatened to sweep away the Dutch streets and Indian trails, Harlem’s residents revolted, and the planners eventually warped the streets of New York to accommodate the history of Harlem, even as it devastated the natural beauty. Even the rapid economic boom, links to the city proper, and influx of poor residents to work in their fields and factories didn’t save the town’s elite, and by the 1870s many of the old families had retreated from the heights of Harlem to the far suburbs of the city, or further up to Connecticut and climes more tolerant of their deviant beliefs. Many of the old cults, having long been wiped out and birthed anew, were finally tired of provincial Harlem. They either moved to the more manorial places upstate, or decamped for Massachusetts.

“YOU CAN TAKE YOUR TRUNK AND GO TO HARLEM”: THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY

The Negro tenements on West 130th Street had some of the greatest concentrations of black residents in Harlem. By 1900, tens of thousands lived in Harlem proper. While many African Americans were busy working as servants for wealthier German and Irish families, Harlem—the city—rose, brick by brick. It was not yet black, though—the hovels of poor Irish, Italians, and Jews were torn down to make way for a wave of upper and middle-class white settlers, following the subway and elevated train lines. Most real estate developers thought the development of new neighborhoods would dampen the sudden increase in population, and that Manhattan would grow whiter as time went on.

World War I put an end to that line of thought; tenement building was brought to a standstill by government regulations, but wartime industries and the first waves of the Great Migration desperately required new construction, so minority workers moved in. The prophesized white settlers never materialized, so the overpriced (and now inadequately numbered) row houses wouldn't rent, and many of the previous tenants had long since fled to other areas—the Jewish diaspora out of Central Harlem was already beginning.

It wasn't until Philip Payton created the Afro-American Realty Company to fill the empty tenement rows that the neighborhood began to boom. (As the saying went at the time, if you've got nowhere else to go, “you can take your trunk and go to Harlem.”) When the landlords on Lenox Avenue began to raise rents and evict black tenants, the AARC bought white buildings and evicted white tenants. With Penn Station's construction and the destruction of many former Negro tenements tossing many blacks out on the street, the fear of more race riots tearing the city apart, Harlem gradually became a safe haven for blacks.

They were resisted, in this, by whites and minorities who gradually became white. This resistance was based out of greed and racism, but a few had loftier, albeit deeply and criminally misguided motives: the cult of the Black Man found ever-renewing purchase with many of the immigrants, eager as they were for a new life, and the name alone inspired a quietly burgeoning Negro spirituality. Even as cops harassed black residents without any cause whatsoever, some diligent investigators sought to quell the many myriad cults. Despite what went on in the darkness, shops and businesses



opened up all along the avenues, and even some Jewish residents returned to share in the newfound prosperity. Lenox Avenue became host to Temple Israel, casting in windows prismatic images of the Star of David from within a grand Orthodox temple in a Grecian style.

Black churches themselves weren't far behind; only the oft-maligned Catholics retained a white presence in Harlem (the presence of Negro priests being a point of contention). Blacks in Harlem found themselves with places to live and places to worship, with places of business soon to come.

THE HARLEM HELLFIGHTERS: OVER THERE

“My country calls me and I must answer; and if I live to come back, I will startle the world with my music.”

James Reese Europe

The men of the 369th Infantry Regiment (formerly the 15th New York (Colored) Regiment) weren't the only black men in uniform, but they ended up being among the most famous, and certainly one of the most lauded. With men like James Reese Europe (of the Clef Club), Hamilton Fish, Spotswood Poles, George Seanor Robb, Vertner Woodson Tandy, and Henry Johnson, the Harlem Hellfighters were heroes before their service and living legends after they put on the uniform. At least, they were to the black community; the white Army relegated the unit to labor duties. Unlike white units, they weren't even allowed uniforms during training—Lieutenant Europe was forced to parade his troops in street clothes, broom handles nestled on their shoulders like rifles (they did so in flawless lockstep).

When they sailed to France, they performed a jazz version of “La Marseillaise” to honor the French unit they were assigned to, for no American unit would deign to have Negroes fighting alongside them. The Army tried to convince the French to never shake hands with the Hellfighters, never talk to them socially, never let what the American brass called the “easily raped” French women near the “ungovernable Negro.” It was in vain; the French put the Hellfighters in the trenches, where mud covered the face of every man, where death made everyone equal. This wasn't a sign of their distaste, but of France's deep respect for the Hellfighters' fighting skill: 171 of the Hellfighters earned the Croix de Guerre, the highest French military honor. The “Black Rattlers” spent more than half a year in the trenches (more than any other unit) and never once allowed capture or retreat.

THE GREAT MIGRATION

In 1910, one in ten residents of Central Harlem was black. In 1920, it was one in three. By 1930, it will be seven out of ten. The Great Migration hit Harlem like a hurricane: seeking a better life for their children, largely discouraged from joining the Army, eager to escape the fifteen hundred lynchings in the American South in the decade prior, African Americans decided to go to places largely without trees from which to hang them—namely, the inner cities. They came from Virginia and the Carolinas, from the state of Georgia and the islands of the West Indies. While blacks moved in, whites moved out, fearing crime and violence from the new residents in a naked display of racism. The black residents of New York City worked for thrice the salary of any black worker in the South—even working for Consolidated Edison, owned by the famed Thomas Edison, who called his employees niggers to their face and enjoyed selling his new kinoscope with mocking slides of African Americans engaged in watermelon-eating contests.

With not enough white tenants, and given enough green cash, the property owners stopped caring too much about black renters. The new tenants paid for their homes with jobs in the city's industries, gearing up for wartime production. While the nation went to war, Harlem went to work (though some, such as the Hellfighters, also went to war).

By 1914, 40 percent of Harlem's private houses and 10 percent of the tenements were black-owned. The rest were owned by the same (white) people as before, and they made sure that if black employees would be paid triple what they'd make in the South, the rent would be triple the rate of the rest of New York.

THE RENT IS TOO DAMN HIGH

“So good, it'll make you slap your mama.” The food at most rent parties—fried chicken, pig's feet, chitlins—had to be tasted to be believed, best chased with bathtub gin in your hand. Especially on Thursdays. Those who worked in the kitchens of the rich took Fridays off, so they were able to ply their trade closer to home the night before. Musicians were endemic in Harlem—you couldn't walk a block without seeing three men in shabby suits and a guitar under one arm, busking their way to the evening meal, and they inevitably found themselves invited to these rent parties. Especially if they were performers like Willie “The Lion” Smith, who—like many of his kin—played both the clubs and rent parties equally. The experience was a Harlem tradition, but so was the dire necessity that caused them to spring into existence: close quarters and dire rent, far higher than other parts of New York at the time. Buoyed by community, Harlemites supported one another, and Harlem went from surviving to thriving.

THE HARLEM RENAISSANCE

Alain LeRoy Locke, the New Negro Movement's honorary godfather, boasted that Seventh Avenue at the end of Prohibition was home to "more style, life, variety, and novelty than can be observed in any single length of thoroughfare in the country." Yet Harlem's renaissance began with anger, not culture. The seeds of anger, planted decades before, took root and burst from the fertile soil of black souls. Soapbox speakers—spontaneous gatherings on street corners, especially outside Lafayette Theatre—became commonplace, and they soon found a champion in a pugnacious Jamaican immigrant. The NAACP became active in Harlem in 1910, but it was the 1916 opening of Marcus Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association that had the most impact on Harlem's culture. Garvey's importance to Harlem is difficult to overstate; his image adorned barbershops and street art, magazines and newspapers. His words—eloquently spoken, even without his booming voice to lend thunder to their weight—were quoted by children and adults alike. Coming to America from his homeland of Jamaica at the invitation of Booker T. Washington, Garvey broke with Washington, advocating the inborn nobility of the Negro race and a return to Africa. He frequently clashed with W.E.B. Du Bois, whose work *The Souls of Black Folk* fired the imagination of Claude McKay, a radical and poet who wrote "If We Must Die," a clarion call response to the Red Summer, in which race riots in thirty cities resulted in dozens of lynchings. When Prohibition came into force, Harlem embraced speakeasies, whorehouses, and gambling dens, but also radical leftist magazines and black poetry. If they would be accused by Congress of subverting white order and white society, the black folk of Harlem would embrace that subversion.

In less than two decades, Harlem went from a Jewish and Italian neighborhood with a few thousand black people to the home of eighty-four thousand Negroes: it became the center of the black experience in America. The world entire knew Harlem to be a pot of cultural revolution and excitement—with culture ranging from the politics of Garvey and Du Bois and Washington, to the economics of A. Philip Randolph (head of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, the first African-American labor union), to the poems of Langston Hughes and the songs of Duke Ellington. Models such as Josephine Baker did with their bodies what Duke was doing with the piano, and that was enough—their presence set trends and defined fashion. Zoot suits, Chesterfield coats, top hats, and white gloves became commonplace for the well-to-do attending the theatre of the Krigwa Players or the Alhambra.

*What though the hero-warrior was black?
His heart was white and loyal to the core;
And when to his loved Dixie he came back,
Maimed, in the duty done on foreign shore,
Where from the hell of war he never flinched,
Because he cried, "Democracy" was lynched.*

Carrie Williams Cliffords, The Black Draftee From Georgia

EAST HARLEM

East Harlem has long been a cosmopolitan mixing pot. Besides the poor Irish, German, and Scandinavian immigrants, Southern Italians and Sicilians (and a few Northerners harassed by their Italian fellows) moved to Harlem to support the trolley construction boom in the 1870s—as strikebreakers first, and skilled workers later. Carpenters and stonemasons built the bones of Harlem with bricks and blood. Organized crime became rampant as the early Mafia took hold among the poor, and connected to the greater city's thriving black market. The Italian immigrants shared commonalities with their black neighbors, if not precisely sympathies—Italian immigrants were often targets of public lynchings on the part of the anti-Catholic and anti-immigrant Ku Klux Klan, though never to the degree African Americans were.

At the close of the Great War, East Harlem is Italian Harlem (with a sizeable Jewish population), yet by the era of the Great Depression it's a mix between Italian Harlem and Spanish Harlem—which is which depends on who you asked, and what street corner you were on. The number of synagogues dwindled there as the Jewish population spread throughout New York. As the Harlem Renaissance grew, more Latin American immigrants would come to Harlem, adopting the utilitarian practice of rent parties—complete with their own soul food and bands playing Cuban, Puerto Rican, and Dominican music. Unemployed young women would babysit the children of other immigrants, while bodegas and diners quickly sprang up across Harlem.

THE HARLEM HELLFIGHTERS: OVER HERE

February 17, 1919, was an unofficial holiday in Harlem—it wasn't every day that the Hellfighters were coming home. The heroes were allowed a parade but couldn't march with white comrades. Over 3,000 369th Infantry veterans paraded from Fifth Avenue at 23rd Street to 145th and Lenox. They were greeted with chocolates, cigarettes, and polite applause from the white audience on Fifth Avenue; when they hit Harlem, though, the reaction compared to the white parade was "as the west wind to a tornado," reported the New York Tribune. Lieutenant Europe—who would be killed by one of his own soldiers within the year, and buried in Arlington National Cemetery—braved the cold, sunny day despite his pneumonia to march behind the wounded and lead the band in a jazzy, peppery tune.

The Hellfighters felt, like the black soldiers in every single American war before them, that shedding blood for their country would finally shred endemic racism. In the full bloom of the Renaissance, the men who were Hellfighters loomed large within the neighborhood; while their heroism had faded in the hearts of white Americans, their camaraderie to one another remained, and a Hellfighter in trouble could expect a dozen more veterans instantly at his side. This respect contributed greatly to the New Negro movement—and occasionally resulted in tragedy, such as when Wilbur Little refused to take off his uniform in the presence of white soldiers and was lynched for the crime of wanting to keep his dignity.

"Nor did [...] Negroes like the growing influx of whites toward Harlem after sundown, flooding the little cabarets and bars where formerly only colored people laughed and sang, and where now the strangers were given the best ringside tables to sit and stare at the Negro customers—like amusing animals in a zoo."

Langston Hughes, *The Big Sea*



TODAY: THE CAUCASIAN STORMS HARLEM

The appeal of licentiousness and culture was hard to deny, especially for white audiences. Even as Du Bois criticized McKay for playing up this aspect to attract white readers for to his work, Duke Ellington performed at the Cotton Club for solely white audiences. Individuals such as Casper Holstein worked with their white gangster counterparts, though while the Italians focused on bootlegging, Holstein focused on gambling. The great and press-dominating Chicago gun battles weren't spectacles played out in Harlem—things were done more quietly, with knives and fists and bats in back alleys.

Yet hundreds of gin joints and nightclubs were still closed to black residents, even as they lived a few dozen feet away. Blacks cleaned the floors during the day and retreated to their own homes at night, as white folk streamed in from the rest of the city to partake of some flavor of exoticism wrenched from the links of reformed chains. Some residents created "buffet flats," or black alternative entertainments in residential areas, but by and large many African Americans railed at the fact that they were performing their own work for the benefit of all-white audiences.

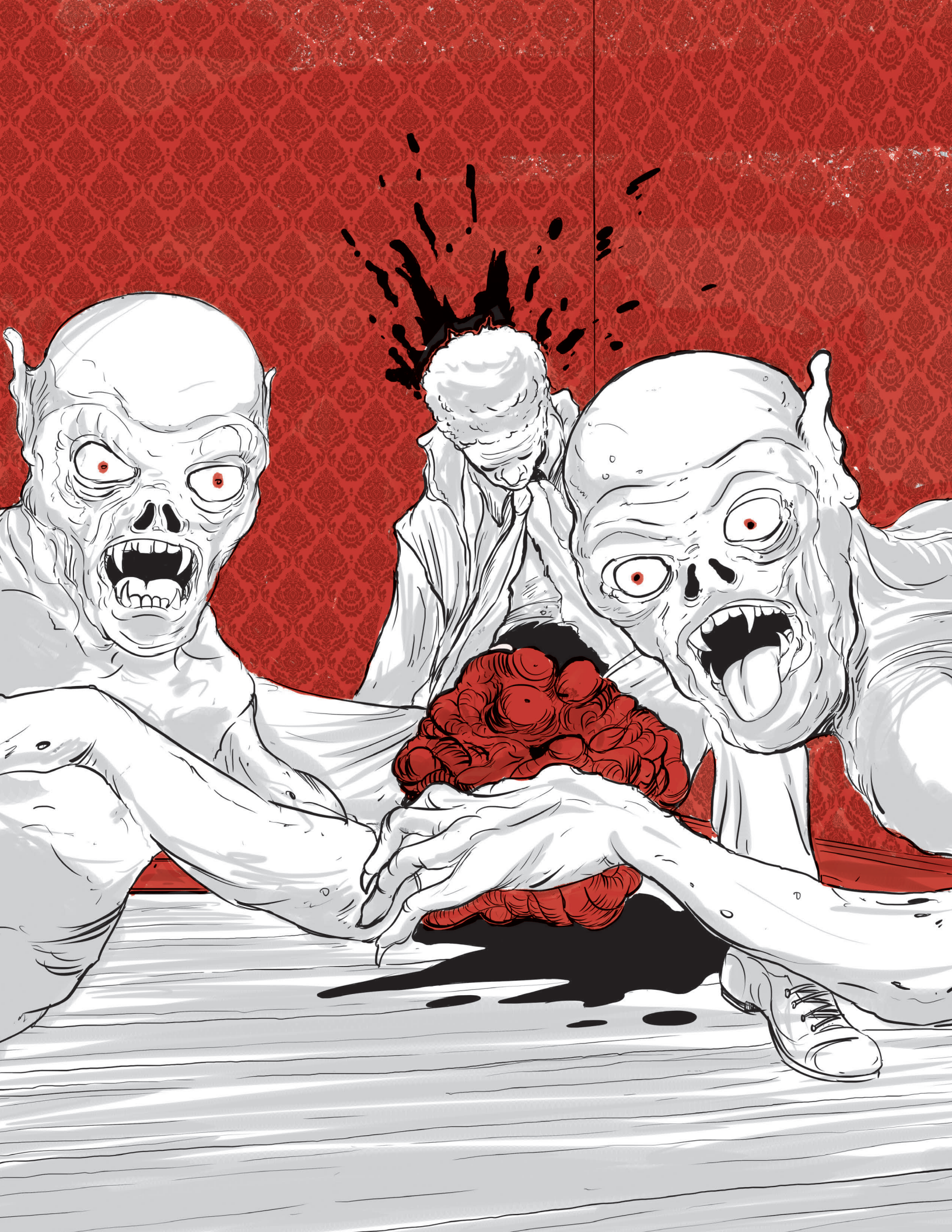
Harlem was many things to many people: a place of exploitation, a place of reinvention. As the second decade of the 20th century drew to a close, Harlem remained blissfully unaware of the fate that awaited it.



HARLEM TIMELINE

- 200,000,000 BCE** Over strange eons, New York and Manhattan are lifted above sea level by the rise of the Appalachian Mountains.
-
- 160,000,000 BCE** The Mi-go mining operations extend as far as what will become Harlem. Some artifacts of this time still remain.
-
- 26,000–19,000 BCE** Humans arrive in the Delmarva Peninsula in Maryland, eventually migrating northward towards the Harlem River. Some are survivors of the City of the Golden Gates, and their descendants among the Lenape represent one of the the largest remnant sources of such lore.
-
- 15,000–9,000 BCE** Humans migrating from upper Canada meet and absorb the indigenous people of the region, forming what would become the Lenape tribes and the Algonquian language group. A few such tribes settle in the Miskatonic Valley.
-
- 1524** Giovanni da Verrazzano arrives in New York Bay.
-
- 1609** The Half Moon, captained by Henry Hudson, arrives at New York Bay.
-
- 1620** The Dutch purchase Manhattan Island from the indigenous people; New Amsterdam is established.
-
- 1623** The New Netherland arrives.
-
- 1647** Peter Stuyvesant becomes Director General of New Amsterdam.
-
- 1660** Haarlem is officially recognized.
-
- 1664** British capture New Amsterdam, renaming it New York. Haarlem renamed Harlem.
-
- 1668** Yellow fever outbreak in the city; first recorded spontaneous instance of the Yellow Sign outside Harlem.
-
- 1712** Massive slave revolt in New York; 70 slaves are arrested, 27 jailed, and 21 executed.
-
- 1732** Colonial government recognizes New York City.
-
- 1774** First Continental Congress convenes.
-
- 1776** Battle of Harlem Heights results in a Colonial victory. Harlem is burned to the ground in retribution.
-
- 1783** New York City celebrates Evacuation Day, the end of the Revolution; the last British ship departs from the harbor, in sight of slave stockades.
-
- 1801** Robert Fulton's steam engine is demonstrated on a boat in the Hudson River.
-
- 1811** The "gridiron" plan for the city's streets is proposed, encouraging debate on how to incorporate places such as Harlem. The town is a few dozen families and some public buildings.

- 1827** New York State abolishes slavery.
-
- 1831** Harlem and New York railroads are incorporated to solidify the link to Westchester County.
-
- 1863** Draft riots: People originally organize to protest being drafted, but it quickly turns into a four-day race riot, with whites (primarily Irish immigrants) attacking blacks. The white rioters ransack and destroy everything in their wake. No official death count is known, but it's believed 120 people were killed, including 11 blacks lynched, and some 2,000 people injured. This causes many blacks to leave Manhattan and drops their population below 10,000.
-
- 1886** Liberty Enlightening the World is dedicated on Bedloe's Island.
-
- 1888** The Great Blizzard is one of the worst in recorded American history, and paralyzes the city for a week.
-
- 1889** The Harlem Opera House opens under Oscar Hammerstein on East 125th Street.
-
- 1900** Race riots: Two major race riots occur in New York and New Orleans. In the New York riot, an undercover officer accuses an innocent black woman of solicitation in the Tenderloin District. When her friend tries to intervene, the white officer attacks him. The man kills the undercover officer. At the officer's funeral, police and white gangs attack blacks and burn their property. Over the course of four days, 10,000 whites composed of gangs and police attack nearly every African American they encounter. No police are ever found guilty or brought up on charges.
-
- 1910** National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) is founded; W.E.B. Du Bois becomes editor of *The Crisis* magazine.
-
- 1912** James Weldon Johnson's *Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man* is published.
-
- 1917** Marcus Garvey founds the New York branch of the United Negro Improvement Association (UNIA). The Silent Protest Parade marches down Fifth Avenue.
-
- 1917** The United States enters The Great War.
-
- 1919** In February, W.E.B. Du Bois organizes the Pan-African Congress in Paris. The "Red Summer of Hate" follows; race riots break out in Chicago, Washington, D.C., and more than twenty other American cities. The NAACP's *Thirty Years of Lynching in the United States* and Claude McKay's "If We Must Die" are published.
-
- 1919** In October, Congress passes the Volstead Act, also called the National Prohibition Act, which prohibits the sale of alcohol—but the federal government lacks the resources to enforce it.
-
- 1919** Harlem Unbound



HARLEM HERSELF

THE ISLAND OF MANHATTAN is bounded by the East, Hudson, and Harlem Rivers, and is one of the five boroughs of New York City. In the early 1920s, the city is a centerpoint of migration, which will make New York City the world's most populous city by 1925. An economic boom after the Great War has created more opportunities as the city grows into surrounding farmland, while in the late 1920s, Lower Manhattan begins growing into the sky with the completion of the Chrysler and Empire State Buildings in the 30s.

Harlem falls between 96th and 155th Streets to the south and north, and the Harlem River and Hudson River on the east and west. Within Harlem, two grand boulevards run north-south through the neighborhood: Seventh and Lenox Avenues. The neighborhood extends to Central Park. Elevated train tracks run above crowded streets, bringing service from Lower Manhattan to 129th Street in Harlem, and along Third Avenue from the Bronx to the north across the Harlem River. With increased demand from a booming population of residents, the "els" make the rattle and grind of trains a common background pulse in the city.

Because there is a pre-existing black population in the neighborhood, Harlem becomes the most popular stop for the newly arrived black migration. Many new to the city come as part of the first Great Migration of people fleeing a segregated and violent South in search of better opportunities in the wake of the Great War. A secondary stream of transplants come from the Caribbean islands. Migration from the West Indies accounts for a little more than 12% of the new population by 1923, making Jamaican and Haitian accents common throughout Harlem.

Between 1900 and 1920, the black population in central Harlem triples, taking advantage of the economic opportunity created by a demand for workers during the war. The changing demographics are not welcomed by white residents, leading to attempts a few years before the war to resist the influx. Financial, political, and journalistic pressure sought to establish Lenox Avenue as an informal color line. By the 1920s, this effort fails under

pressure from the Afro-American Realty Company and the opportunities presented by a thriving and growing population. By 1930, the neighborhood will be 70% black as far south as Central Park.

As a rule of thumb, the higher the street number in Harlem, the higher-class type of establishment or housing you can expect to find there. As a result, the more northern edges of the neighborhood are also the wealthier areas, where the black elite live. There runs a spectrum from major clubs on the north end on down to speakeasies and greasy meal carts toward the south, where a penny buys you a bowl of soup that might've touched meat in a previous incarnation.

SUGAR HILL: 145TH TO 155TH STREETS

On Harlem's northernmost end, in a narrow strip from 145th to 155th Streets and between Amsterdam and Edgecombe Avenues, Sugar Hill plays home to the region's most celebrated African Americans. By Harlem standards, if you can live in Sugar Hill, you're living the sweet life.

Sugar Hill sits on an elevated patch of ground, allowing the blocks of row houses and spacious apartments a commanding view of the rest of Harlem to the south, and Colonial Park to the east. Apartments and row houses alike were built on speculation before the Great War for middle- and upper-middle-class white residents, and feature large windows, decorated flooring, wrought-iron fire escapes, and intricate details. The buildings are set close to the street, giving just enough room for a stoop above a raised basement; they also include conveniences such as elevators and their operators, as well as guards at the door to keep out those who don't belong.

These massive buildings give physical weight to the wealth of their residents, forming solid blocks of brick and stone divided by shared walls and backed up to access alleys. Central courtyards are common to six and seven-floor apartment buildings, providing

light and air to the interiors of apartments that may take up a full quarter of each floor. In 1928, the 500-unit **Dunbar Apartments** is completed, a five-acre complex between 149th and 150th Streets, built by John Rockefeller, Jr. and run by a cooperative association. It provides additional middle-class housing to make up for shortages in the area. Unfortunately, the Great Depression strikes the next year, leading to the foreclosure of the complex.

This neighborhood is experiencing the pressure of a changing population in Harlem. The last bastion of majority-white residents, Sugar Hill is nevertheless undergoing a slow transition, as professional blacks take up residency in the surrounding areas and white families abandon the area. Lawyers, ministers, doctors, civic leaders, businessmen, and successful musicians and artists make Sugar Hill home. Anyone walking these streets may spot famous residents such as Duke Ellington, Cab Calloway, or W.E.B. Du Bois, stepping into and out of their ornate townhouses.

HOOK: One of Harlem's upper-crust calls you in as a P.I. on a case. A family antique has been stolen—not something of value to the world, but a talisman which has been handed down through familial separation and slavery. It provides the one holding it protection from what the client calls “the forces of a crawling chaos.” They need it back, and they need it done quietly.

But Sugar Hill isn't just for the well-heeled or the residential. In some fashionable apartments, decorated in tasteful artwork, one might pay a nickel to lose an afternoon in the haze of a drug the authorities haven't yet bothered to outlaw. Prohibition has done little to quench the wealthy's thirst for alcohol, and with the right bribes, imported rum and other spirits still find their way to the glasses of the influential and their invited guests.

In 1923, Irish gangster and bootlegger Owney Madden buys the floundering **Club Deluxe** from Jack Johnson and keeps him on as manager. Madden renames the 600-seat establishment at 142nd Street and Lenox Avenue the **Cotton Club**, turns it into the outlet for his New York-brewed Madden's No. 1 Beer, bans non-whites from attending unless on the stage, and proceeds to spotlight the most talented African-American performers in the country's history. Other than a brief closure in 1925, after which he cuts Johnson out, Madden succeeds at his game.

For the performers, the Cotton Club offers a higher paycheck than most establishments, as well as the

opportunity to star in live radio shows that might launch their careers. But the Club doesn't welcome them in the house; Madden's emphasis on light-skinned women, as well as his penchant for “jungle” and plantation themes, telegraph to entertainers exactly how he sees them. If you want to actually catch up with the talent, you'd do better to catch them next door at **646 Lenox**, where they let off steam in the basement after the show.

On 155th Street can be found the **Prince Hall Masonic Temple**. Built in 1925, it provides meeting locations first for the William McKinley Lodge, and then later for other fraternal groups in Harlem, including the Prince Hall Freemasons.

HOOK: The Old Croton Aqueduct runs through Sugar Hill, from under Tenth Avenue down to Central Park. The nine-foot-diameter iron pipe is due to be replaced by the New Croton Aqueduct because it is no longer able to keep up with the demands of the growing city. In the meantime, the shallow-buried pipe remains both a source of German cockroaches (locally called “Croton bugs”) and the occasional over-sized frog. Persistent rumors of a large frog population living in the pipe are reinforced when language-like croaking can be heard echoing from the pipe vents in the deepest parts of night.

The **Independent Subway** is under construction, after approval by the Board of Transportation in 1924, and has disrupted the peaceful living of Sugar Hill for many. Two collapsed buildings and blocks of construction debris later, the subway is completed in 1930 to connect at 145th Street beneath St. Nicholas Avenue. It connects to the A Train in 1932.

THE VALLEY: 130TH TO 140TH STREETS

To the south and east of Sugar Hill, between 130th and 140th Streets and particularly east of Seventh Avenue, one enters an area called “the Valley” or the Harlem Plain. The Valley swells with life, laughter, and music. The buildings here are smaller, and were built on speculation (as were the fine apartment buildings of Sugar Hill), but they were intended for middle-class and lower-class residents. The apartments here are generally tenement buildings and walk-ups above shopfronts and small businesses.

Unfortunately, with the construction of the el and the **Lenox Avenue IRT** subway line, the area was overlooked by new residents who moved further north—and empty apartments filled the Valley. The owners were

approached by Philip A. Payton and the Afro-American Realty Company to propose moving black families into these apartments in 1904. Payton's plan was not merely meant to uplift the race, but to line his pockets by charging the black families a higher rent than their white counterparts. These unoccupied apartments become the heart of migration to Harlem, quickly filling with new residents from the South and the Caribbean.

The apartments are small, though New York regulations at the time insist on fire escapes and air shafts to provide light and air to residents, making the newer buildings far more livable than older tenement housing to the south. Still, in the summer, these residences are sweat-filled hotboxes, driving most occupants to socialize on fire escapes and the streets for a breath of cooler air.

Despite their relatively new-built stature, the apartments in the Valley are still tight and overpopulated. The residents often sub-lease their spaces illegally to family and friends in order to make rent, since the landlords in the area have no interest in lowering the rent to match the means of the residents. The financial uncertainty makes for a transient population unable to put down reliable roots.

Taking on additional lodgers is another common way to make rent, but this practice increases the issues of overpopulation in an already dense part of Harlem. As a result, illnesses such as the flu can spread through the Valley quickly. Many families are a single injury or major illness away from being unable to make rent, and children are often called to work from a young age in order to make ends meet. Since child labor is legal, and parents are otherwise faced with homelessness, many children quickly find work in the various garment factories and sweatshops of New York. In many cases, families only manage to make it to the end of the month with all members contributing fully.

Another solution to combat mercilessly high costs is a "rent party," where the weekend before rent is due a large party—with cover charge—is held by the tenant, who profits from the cover in order to make the week's rent. These parties typically feature food, drink, and live music for attendees. Parties are advertised by word of mouth or by passing out flyers. While the landlords rarely care where their tenants get their money, rent parties can get loud. Parties that are too free with the alcohol may attract police attention, resulting in costly "fees" (bribes), the risk of arrest, or worse.

HOOK: Alligator sightings become popular in Harlem in 1930, and are reported in newspapers from the early to mid '30s. The climate is a little cold for reptiles of that size, though, so this urban legend is easily dismissed. The witnesses' descriptions of the gators are mutable at best, describing them as anywhere from five to fifteen feet long, scaled or soft skinned, with glowing red or green eyes. Were it not for the snow shovel with a bite-shaped chunk taken out of it, one would assume they had encountered a figment of their own imagination. As it is, whatever it was sounds less like an alligator the more details are given, and more like the after-effects of bad gin.

Women set up hair-braiding and beauty businesses in their living rooms, and conversation floats out to the street below. Children shoot marbles and run numbers, and the occasional elderly veteran of the Civil War may be found telling stories from his days as a soldier. Look here along the main streets and on 135th for the kind of business which keeps a neighborhood going, not just fancy hot-cha spots. Instead, find a café where one can get a solid meal with recognizable meat for a reasonable price, a cramped tailor's shop, a boxing studio, a series of churches, and the YMCA.

When stepping into a shop, though, prepare to come face to face with whiteness. Only 20% of Harlem's businesses are owned by its African-American residents, and most white owners do not hire staff from among their patrons. As a result, most of the residents of Harlem are forced to go outside of their neighborhoods to find employment in other shops, at the docks, and in skyscraper construction efforts in Lower Manhattan.

On the northern end of the Valley, at 596 Lenox Avenue, the elegant **Savoy Ballroom** opens in 1926 under the management of Charles Buchanan, an African-American businessman, and financed by white entrepreneur Jay Faggen and Jewish businessman Moe Gale. The ballroom, which extends the length of an entire city block between 140th and 141st Streets, appears even bigger thanks to its trick of mirrored walls. At one end of the ballroom, talented young dancers develop new moves such as the Lindy Hop. At the other, the Savoy Hostesses teach more traditional dancing forms, and partner unaccompanied gentlemen for a mere 25 cents per dance. The ballroom stays open every night of the week, glittering and pulsing with what Langston Hughes called "the Heartbeat of Harlem." New dances quickly become the craze, and the Charleston—debuted by Josephine Baker—becomes wildly popular.

HOOK: A new dancer shows up to try his moves on the others at the Savoy. But despite his flashy duds, something in his rhythm just ain't right. The ashy pallor of his skin reveals more than an underuse of Madam C.J. Walker's cocoa butter. Who sent a zombie to the Savoy ballroom, and what do they want?

Strivers' Row at 138th and 139th Streets is a series of rowhouses known to be some of the finest homes and apartments in New York; they were intended for upper middle-class whites, but sit empty until 1920 when the owners finally agree to sell to blacks. The houses quickly attract up-and-coming professionals, the "strivers" that the area becomes known for. Just a little to the south, the public **Harlem Hospital**, including an ambulance station and nurses' home, occupies the block between 136th and 137th Streets on the east side of Lenox Avenue. Although two-thirds of its patients are African American, and it has begun hiring African-American doctors and training African-American nurses, the hospital's leadership and staff remain mostly white.

HOOK: Families of discharged patients report strange changes coming over their family members when they return from a stay at Harlem Hospital. It's almost as though they've become a different person entirely. But why would anyone want to body-swap with a Harlem cleaning woman or underemployed jazz musician, or a kid who spends his days running numbers for the local racket? More worrisome, what will happen when Madame St. Clair discovers this switch, and begins looking for someone to take the blame for interfering with the numbers game in her territory?

The first black-owned recording company, **Black Swan Records**, opens its Harlem studio in 1921. The owner, Harry Pace, names the business after famed opera singer Elizabeth Taylor Greenfield, better known as "The Black Swan." The company's mission is simple: to serve black stockholders, musicians, and their employees. Black Swan Records focuses on jazz and blues recordings but has the honor of being the first company to record black classical music. While it will ultimately close its doors in 1923, the label releases more than 180 records, a number that would take decades for any other black-owned studio to match. In 1922, white-owned record companies begin targeting black artists and impact Black Swan's business. This, along with the board's conflicts with Marcus Garvey, leads to it declaring bankruptcy in December 1923.

HOOK: Getting noticed by Harry Pace can be difficult, as most of his attention is on the music scene of New Orleans. But new talent has been recruited off the street after being heard by those associated with the label such as Ethel Waters, who is one of Black Swan's most popular artists. A strong voice in a crowded nightclub can lead to a rising star.

The **Universal Negro Improvement Association** was founded by Marcus Garvey in 1914, and with 17 members moved to a dank basement in Harlem in 1916. By 1918, UNIA had become a movement for black economic and political power, with offices springing up around Harlem. The original Harlem UNIA headquarters was located at 36 West 135th Street in the Crescent Theater building, and then at 54-56 West 135th Street with the offices of the **Black Star Press**. 1920 sees Garvey cement nearly 1,000 local divisions in the United States, the Caribbean, Central America, Canada, and Africa.

HOOK: After the collapse of the Black Star Line and the arrest of Marcus Garvey in 1925, strange noises have been heard from the basements of three of the warehouses owned by the UNIA between 112th and 113th Streets. On inspection by concerned locals and police, nothing is found to be out of the ordinary—the warehouses are full of crates of cargo. While the Garvey trial is on, these are considered evidence, and orders are to leave them untouched. But a lingering scent of cinnamon and cloves can be traced in the warehouses. Police upped security after the last inspection since finding one of the crates broken open, reportedly by robbers looking for an easy score. What was not included in the report is that the crate appeared to have been clawed open from the inside. Patrols in the area have since reported a feeling like being watched, and the heavy scent of cinnamon and cloves in the air.

Across the street from the **Abyssinian Baptist Church** on 138th Street lies the **Renaissance Casino and Ballroom**. One of the few entirely black-owned and -operated social venues in Harlem, this complex includes stores and a theater, ballroom, and casino. But the ballroom serves two purposes: dancing and basketball. Squeaky shoes and ball early in the evening are followed by dancing until late at night.

Numerous young black writers frequent the **Hobby Horse** bookstore on 136th Street, drinking coffee, writing, and debating ideas.

St. Philip's Protestant Episcopal Church on 134th Street just west of Seventh Avenue is the wealthiest and largest church in Harlem. This grand edifice was designed by Vertner W. Tandy and George W. Foster, who were among the first registered black architects of New York and New Jersey. The church is a center of spiritual and social support for the community. It is far from the only church in Harlem—more than a hundred churches are active, though many of them are small enough to meet in residences and storefronts. Most white churches in Harlem are Catholic, and a smaller number of Jewish synagogues are open in Harlem as well.

If you seek community, culture, and edification, head over to 135th and Lenox, where you will find either the modest 1919 building for the Harlem branch of the **YMCA**, or from 1932 onward, the soaring brick structure. Unlike unintegrated YMCAs around the city or the nation, this branch serves as a haven for African-American men. It provides athletic equipment, rooms to rent by the night or by the month, and spaces where men might exist, express themselves, and encounter others. Here a traveller from Vermont, newly arrived to the city and looking to make his future, might sit down to the communal meal next to an elderly man born into slavery in Alabama who has lived here and in the previous “Colored Men’s Branch” since it opened. If you’re a man navigating New York City, you can get clean and have a hot meal here. You never know who you’ll meet at the YMCA.

Between 135th and 136th Streets on Lenox Avenue resides the **New York Public Library Harlem Branch** (which will become the Schomburg Center). The library opened its doors in 1905 with 10,000 books. A white woman, Ernestine Rose, became the chief librarian and integrates the all-white staff in 1920. She focuses on integrated reading programs for the community and schools, and hosts the library’s first African-American art exhibit, which becomes an annual event. The library branch is quickly becoming a focal point for the budding Harlem Renaissance.

On the western edge of Harlem can be found **St. Nicholas Park**, extending from 141st Street to 128th Street, with a playground along 129th. This park sits on craggy and rough terrain, and the southernmost area of the park is known as the “**Point of Rocks**,” having served as a military campground for General Washington’s men during the Revolutionary War. The Point looms over surrounding buildings in winter, when it is not covered with greenery.

On the other side of that park is **College of the City of New York**, a free public institution of higher education. The College was founded on the principle of educating all who qualified solely on academic merit, allowing students both rich and poor, so long as they were men. Women will not be admitted until 1930. The College runs opposite of the city—black, Jewish, Irish, it doesn’t matter; all male students are welcomed.

HOOK: St. Nicholas Park saw action during the Revolutionary War’s Battle of Harlem Heights, in which Knowlton’s Rangers played a pivotal part. In the depths of winter, local residents have claimed to see flickers of concealed lanterns along the craggy rock face, and hear chanting echoing off the heavy stone—though inspection during the day reveals no obvious entry or exit to that point. The proximity of the College leads many to assume this is the behavior of a fraternity—but so far, none have stepped forward to claim it.

LA BOURGEOISIE NOIRE

A term coined by E. Franklin Frazier, Professor of Sociology at Howard University, “La Bourgeoisie Noire” (translated from French, “The Black Bourgeois”) describes the business class of Harlem. These were people who escaped kitchens and dining rooms and placed themselves into professions such as lawyers, doctors, actors, and so forth.

SALONS

Writers, artists, activists and members of the Harlem Renaissance frequently gather in salons to discuss ideas, works, and the movement. These meetings are often called salons, and vary in formality by group and purpose. They can range from affairs that would leave Edwardian nobility hoping to learn something, to ritual and tradition, to freeform thought sessions.

These environments foster like-minded and talented people. They also offer a degree of mentoring for young members, and a chance to meet luminaries one would otherwise not encounter.

At 136th and Lenox Avenue lies the **Dark Tower Tea Club**, the townhouse residence of A'Lelia Walker, the daughter of beauty care millionaire Madam C.J. Walker. The private residence pulses with visitors on a daily basis under the patronage of A'Lelia.

The **Dark Tower** is the ground floor of the fine townhouse, which was christened as such after the Dark Tower column by Countee Cullen in *Opportunity* magazine. It is dedicated to a creative salon, providing opportunities for writers and musicians to attend readings and performances every evening. Exquisite rosewood furniture fills the salon, as well as a grand gold-painted piano and sky-blue Victrola, and two poems on the wall: "From the Dark Tower" by Cullen, and parts of "The Weary Blues" by Langston Hughes.

Membership to the Dark Tower isn't free. The initial invitation to join states that there is a one-dollar annual fee. The cost associated with a visit varies to include \$0.15 to check a coat or \$0.50 for a sandwich. The Dark Tower closes its doors in November 1928, as Walker leases the mansion to the City of New York.

At 133rd Street can be found the **Clam House**, a long and narrow nightclub tucked in between other far less notorious clubs. This club is properly known as **Harry Hansberry's Clam House**, but Gladys Bentley headlines here, performing in tails and top hat with a chorus line in drag. Her rich alto and obscene improvised lyrics lend an energy to an evening's entertainment that is hard to find anywhere else. While the club has a reputation for homosexual activity, the patrons still practice discretion. Even in the relatively flexible nightclub scene of Harlem, police entrapment can and does occur.

A block over on 133rd Street, **Pod's and Jerry's Catagonia Club** is always hopping with Willie "The Lion" Smith and "Little Jazzbo" blowing the roof off the joint. A few steps away is the **Band Box Club**, known for its spontaneous jam sessions at the bar.

At 132nd Street and Seventh Avenue, the **Lafayette Theatre** (known to locals as the House Beautiful) desegregated in 1913, allowing black theater-goers to join the white audience in the orchestra seats instead of being restricted to the balcony. Here, African-American audiences might attend performances of the black Lafayette Players. The Lafayette specializes in presenting mainstream Broadway shows, primarily by white playwrights, with an emphasis on the equal quality of black acting rather than spotlighting the works of African-American writers. The theater hosts live bands when in between

plays and musicals, and saw the New York City debut of a young 24-year-old Duke Ellington. Unfortunately, the theater goes through two management changes in the 1920s, leading to shows based more on comedy and vaudeville instead of serious drama, until the Lafayette becomes home to the Works Project Administration theater programs.

On Fifth Avenue and 132nd Street, **Edmond's Cellar**, owned by Edmond "Mule" Johnson, has a seven-year run from 1915-1922. This basement cabaret frequently features Ethel Waters with a three-piece band. The crowd is composed of drug dealers, prostitutes, transvestites, and gamblers. The club is known for its "pansy" entertainment.

At 131st Street and Seventh Avenue is a frequent hang-out for musicians, **The Corner**—literally a quiet corner to discuss, play tunes, and bond.

The 1920 play "The Emperor Jones," by Eugene O'Neill, blends surrealism and expressionism in a metaphorical take on the exploitative sugar-based reign of Henri Christophe in Haiti. It is also an indirect critique of the United States' occupation of Haiti in 1915. This play sparks a fascination for Haiti and Haitian imagery in Harlem that will carry through the Renaissance, often in direct answer and counterpoint to the play's own racist and patronizing themes. By the mid-'30s, the Lafayette Theatre again enjoys regular audience attendance, reaching its height with Orson Welles' staging of "Macbeth" in 1936. Known as the "Voodoo Macbeth" for the reframing of the play's setting from Scotland to a mythical island in the Caribbean, this production provides the coda to the themes initiated by "The Emperor Jones."

HOOK: The Voodoo Macbeth is not the first time the Scottish Play has been performed at the Lafayette, nor is it the first time the play has changed its setting location for thematic reasons. But after a series of troubling accidents and mysterious letters associated with a performance of the play in the early 1920s, the Lafayette Players have been hesitant to put on a performance. Management at the theater aren't talking, and most of the actors involved have chalked up the troubled run to the usual problems associated with speaking the name of the Scottish Play out loud. A few older stagehands recall the play's altered setting as a small island south of France known as Carcosa.

Like the Cotton Club, **Connie's Inn** at 131st Street and Seventh Avenue is owned by bootleggers (the three Immerman brothers), and specializes in

African-American performers. And like Owney Madden, the Immerman brothers segregate the house. But unlike the Cotton Club, Connie's also opens after hours to the African-American audiences from the neighborhood. There, in the small hours of the morning, performers might improvise, rising talents might showcase their chops, and the people of Harlem enjoy their own music. Connie's Inn is also a front for a silent partner, Dutch Schultz, a Bronx mobster who uses the club to sell smuggled alcohol. Directly above Connie's, **The Barbecue** boasts the first jukebox in all of Harlem, and the best ribs.

Between the Lafayette Theatre and Connie's Inn one might pause to touch the **Tree of Hope**, a large chestnut tree whose roots force up the sidewalk. Out-of-work or aspiring black performers might touch the tree for luck when headed to a gig, kiss it when finding work, or more practically, gather around it to talk about possible gigs and form new acts.

HOOK: The Tree of Hope provides luck to the neighborhood, but at what cost? When a young hooper goes missing, the last place anyone can recall seeing him is at Connie's; the tree roots twisting the sidewalk have expanded, and seem to pulse if not looked at directly.

Lottie Joplin, wife of Scott Joplin (famed composer, pianist and "King of Ragtime Writers"), runs **Joplin Boarding House** at 163 West 131st Street. Lottie opens the boarding house in 1920 to provide housing for entertainers. A few of the current residents include Ferdinand "Jelly Roll" Morton and Eubie Blake.

JUNGLE ALLEY: 133RD STREET

The name used for this region reveals a lot about how most New Yorkers think of the African-American entertainers performing in the area. A little to the south and west of Sugar Hill, Jungle Alley encompasses numerous joints where you can catch up-and-coming African-American talent, from **Smalls Paradise** and **Connie's Inn** to "**Club Hot-Cha**" (included on a 1932 map with a mysterious "ask for Clarence") and the **Lafayette Theatre**.

All told, more than 125 establishments of various repute fill Jungle Alley with a wide array of entertainment options. They come and go quickly! Clubs here are subject to the fickle demands of the restaurant and entertainment business, while also dealing with the corruption and bribery rampant during Prohibition. Almost all of the establishments are basement operations tucked into the bottommost floors of buildings, with a shop above and apartments above that. It makes for a tight environment, and a dangerous one should the police decide to raid a club.

Thankfully, many of the speakeasies also come with tunnels to allow at least the alcohol and bartender to slip out the back, while the police talk their way in the front door.

HOOK: Clarence can get you anything. Anything. It's probably better if you don't ask how. But sometimes he needs a favor, and he's not afraid to ask you for help.

PANSY ENTERTAINMENT

During the 1920s, a lot of LGBTQ performances are referred to as "pansy."

RAGTIME

The pinnacle of popularity for ragtime was 1895-1918. The music originated in African-American communities and got its name from "Shake Rag," the Kentucky hometown of ragtime pioneer Ernest Hogan. Ragtime is usually written in a 2/4 or 4/4 time pattern of bass notes on strong beats, and chords on weak beats.

SUFFRAGE 101

The founding of the United States established that all white men were created equal. That meant that, much like African Americans, women were denied the right to vote. In 1848, the women's movement launched on a national level under Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott. For seventy years the movement protested, raised public awareness, and lobbied the government until they emerge victorious with the signing of the 19th Amendment on August 18, 1920, and are granted the right to vote.

By day, Jungle Alley is full of a diverse set of families—African-American, Jewish, Latino, Italian, and more—who live in the five-story apartment buildings which flank the clubs. But when you walk the Alley at night, you have a far greater risk of running into white folks from all around town than in most parts of Harlem, and the police who come out to make sure the white folks don't feel threatened. While club curfew is 3:00 a.m., some of the clubs on 133rd have greased the right palms to stay open later, and late-night audiences are more local. A discreet word to waitstaff in most clubs can get you a stiff, if possibly adulterated, drink—and a quarter can get you two reefer cigarettes from the corner man. Marijuana will be legal until the late 1930s.

Dressed for dancing and drinking, guests of the nightclubs of Jungle Alley are often less conservative than partygoers in more wealthy areas of Harlem. If white, they are seeking a taste of “real” Harlem, unfiltered by the carefully sanitized performances of the Cotton Club. If black, they likely live in the valley and are tolerating the daytrippers. Here is where you find the flappers—young women with the newly minted right to vote, though being able to actually use this right is difficult if the woman in question is anything but white. Still, hemlines are up, heels are tall, short hair is in, and finger waves are popular. The short hem of flapper dresses makes it easy to take to wild dance steps, and the flapper reputation for fast living, drinking, smoking, and other scandalous behavior celebrates the independence of the free woman.

At the edge of this neighborhood, on 135th Street near Fifth Avenue, can be found the **Sugar Cane Club**. This cabaret features jazz performances late into the night, well after the 3:00 a.m. curfew, and white and black patrons. During Prohibition, the club functions as a speakeasy as well as a nightclub. While it is a small location, it is popular enough to attract some of the best musicians, and has enough patrons to allow Ed Smalls to open a second club at **Smalls' Paradise** in 1925 after closing the Sugar Cane Club. Smalls is one of the few black nightclub owners in Harlem, and he keeps all of his clubs integrated. In addition to the stage performers, Small's Paradise features dancing waiters and roller-skating waitstaff. There is even a breakfast dance for the late-night crowd willing to stay up to greet the sun.

HOOK: An uptick in poisonous alcohol has caused worry among the smugglers who provide bathtub gin and cheap alcohol to the speakeasies in Harlem. It's not that the patrons are drinking more; it's more that what they are drinking seems to be tainted—and the booze runners in Harlem haven't been able to find the source. Victims report queasy stomachs, and blood and other matter when they cough up their drinks. Rumor holds that it's good old J. Edgar Hoover himself, Head of the General Intelligence Division—nicknamed the Radical Division—trying to kill off the alcoholics who are defying the Prohibition laws. Other rumors hold that if you look at the tainted alcohol in just the right light, it shimmers on the top like oil is on the surface. So far, no one has died, but that doesn't mean someone won't eventually.

Opened in 1915, **Barron's Exclusive Club** reigns supreme for a number of years, touting its success by introducing black talent to white audiences before the Cotton Club. Barron Wilkins is the owner, and is a local politician who finances black boxers and baseball players. This private club regularly sees politicians, artists, athletes, and stars. Gangster Julius Miller shoots and kills Wilkins in 1924.

THE BLACK MECCA

Manhattan Casino, 280 West 155th Street, accessible via subway, is a 6,000-seat hall that hosts baseball games for the ever-growing crowds.

While **Clam House** is a well-known venue, a nightly affair, the Hamilton Lodge at 155th Street, holds the largest annual drag ball in all of New York. Thousands upon thousands of spectators make their way to view the hundreds of mostly young working class men all dolled up. The event is found in numerous papers where they include articles leading up to it and afterwards.

At 125th Street stands the building that will become the Apollo Theater in 1934. Through the 1920s, it is a burlesque theater featuring bawdy variety shows, dances, and comedy as well as stripteases. Owners Jules Hurtig and Harry Seamon strictly enforce a whites-only policy. The banning of burlesque in 1933 sees their business go under, and the theater will be left abandoned for a year before new owners reopen it as the Apollo.

Built by Oscar Hammerstein in 1889, the Harlem Opera House was his first theatre. Residing at 211 West 125th Street, the Opera House changed hands and names multiple times. During the first years of 1920s, it serves as a haunt for the vaudeville circuit; Frank Schiffman

buys the property in 1922 and closes it. The building remains closed for nearly a decade before becoming a movie theatre in the 1930s, and then it is demolished in 1959.

HOOK: In 1924, a number of locals claim to hear strange noises originating from inside the Opera House. Mama Moses swears she saw lights in the building last night. Strange blue lights. But Mr. Schiffman refuses to hear such nonsense, and refuses to look into it. If the investigators break in for some sleuthing around, they unleash some unknown horror bound into the building by Schiffman, and uncover a string of murders leading back to 1889.

Temple Israel of Harlem congregation bought a building at Fifth Avenue and 125th Street that they dedicated as a synagogue. The building was originally constructed in 1887 for a congregation of German Jews. In 1907, the congregation, led by Rabbi Dr. Maurice Harris, had a synagogue built at 201 Lenox Avenue before a permanent move to 201 West 91st Street. Half a decade later, the Lenox synagogue became the **Mount Olivet Baptist Church**.

Enter the **Heaven of Father Divine** at 152 West 126th Street and hear his public addresses nightly at 11:00 p.m. The religious leader and deity, Father Divine plants his Heavens around the country and throughout Harlem, but the 126th Street location is his headquarters. Each Heaven is a reconstituted hotel, with dormitories open both to members of the sect, his “angels,” and to the public at \$2 a night. At Heaven, anyone might obtain a meal with meat for only fifteen cents. Father Divine demands that his followers renounce government assistance, as well as more carnal pleasures, but runs a variety of businesses on a cash basis. Outsider attempts to learn more about the full scope of Father Divine’s investments so far have failed.

HOOK: Father Divine periodically charters a boat, and makes a long trip up the Hudson with select angels. He always returns with more gold, and without the angels he left with. On occasion, he returns with a small canister marked with intricate patterns, which may be seen at the service on the next Sunday—but it is never seen again afterwards. What happens to the angels, and where he gets gold and canisters, is unknown.

Louis Blumstein emigrated from Germany to America in 1885 and was a street peddler for a decade until he could open **Blumstein’s Department Store** on Hudson Street. It moved to 125th Street between Seventh and Eighth Avenues in 1898. After his death in 1920, his family demolishes the original store and builds a five-story regional shopping center worth more than a million dollars.

Lenox Avenue is a popular street for public speakers, from this block down through the poorest areas of Harlem. Often found standing on soapboxes, these speakers may be preachers gathering new recruits to their flock, communists attempting to spark revolution among the workers of Harlem, or even cultists in disguise offering the downtrodden something no one else has...hope. While the former are tolerated, the latter are often ignored by the locals or actively rounded up by police as a public nuisance—and the last always seem to slip through the cracks.

Relations between African Americans and Jews before World War II are mainly of three kinds: Jewish employers/black employees, Jewish landlords/black tenants, and Jewish small businessmen/black customers.

Indeed, integration is resisted by many in Harlem, including many Jewish businesses. Blumstein’s, founded by a German Jewish immigrant in 1898, resists racial integration even as the African-American population of Harlem grows in the 1920s. In 1929, a few African Americans are hired as elevator operators and porters, but higher-paying jobs are not available to them. Over the next few years as the Depression deepens, calls for boycotts of stores like Blumstein’s will be unsuccessful until 1934 when Reverend John H. Johnson began a “Buy-Where-You-Can-Work” campaign, which will ultimately be backed by The New York Age newspaper.

When that campaign begins, 75% of Blumstein’s customers are African Americans. In July, Blumstein’s capitulates due to the economic pressure, and pledges to hire 35 African Americans in clerical and sales jobs. A 1,500-person parade celebrates the victory. Blumstein’s becomes the first to hire a black Santa Claus and use black models and mannequins, and successfully appeals to cosmetic manufacturers to produce makeup for darker skin tones. Blumstein’s transformation is so successful that in 1945, Harlem’s largest newspaper, *The Amsterdam News*, profiles Arnold Blumstein as one of Harlem’s top 10 businessmen.

STROLLING

Strolling is not just walking to get to a place, but rather, it’s taking in the city. It’s putting on your best duds and hitting the street along Lenox Avenue, and socializing with those you meet. It’s stopping to play a quick hand of cards or checkers, or chatting with friends. It’s more of an outing than a walk.

The **Bernheimer & Schwartz Pilsener Brewing Company** shuttered its doors after the passing of Prohibition. The building still stands between 126th and 128th Streets, but the company had purchased it just before Prohibition took effect, and never had a chance to repurpose it. It is empty until the **Interborough Fur Storage Company** buys it in 1930, and a brewery briefly opens there after Prohibition is lifted. During the decade that the building stands empty, it is little more than a pretty-looking red brick shell.

HOOK: Since the owners of the Pilsener Brewing Company are neglecting the building, it makes for a convenient location for illegal fights and their audiences. But not all fighters get back up after they're knocked down—and those who don't are dragged into the shadows of the building for fight runners to deal with afterwards. While police haven't been called yet to address the question of what happens if a fight goes too far, the recent finding of a small stack of bones out back of the building has raised questions. That the bones seem to have been gnawed on by something with human-like teeth—but sharper—has raised eyebrows as well.

Hollywood Cabaret on 124th Street is known for its “pansy” entertainment, and is incredibly popular.

The five-block region from 110th to 115th Streets along Seventh Avenue doesn't differ much from the Valley north of it, but earns its reputation from the sheer volume of sex workers you might find there. Here, too, one finds a great abundance of speakeasies and shady storefronts. Underground boxing matches attract men from all over the city, who throw down their last two bits on a bet.

Aging tenements sag with their load of Harlem's weariest souls, those who keep the city running but are undercompensated, and whose work goes unnoticed until its absence. The buildings on the south end of Harlem are a mix of old tenement housing and warehouses usually laughably out of date from health codes. Too often, one encounters the bloody cough of the consumptive, pulling herself out to work anyway because she has mouths to feed. A family of six hangs out a sign saying “BOARDER WANTED” so they can make next month's rent. But along the regular streets, one encounters more of the same, just in more poverty.

This is the land of desperate people, who might be willing to take desperate chances. Looking to recruit the down-on-their-luck to join you in an underground battle for the very soul of Harlem? This is where you come.

Greenberg's Groceries, at 116th and Madison Avenue, is owned and operated by Shmuel and Celia Greenberg. The corner grocery store covers 1,030 square feet, with a three-bedroom apartment upstairs for the family. The building was constructed in 1899, and now resides in a neighborhood of mostly Jews plus a few Irish immigrants. The store specializes in the charge and delivery trade, markets to the upper class in the Harlem Jewish community, and is something of a neighborhood community center. It is rarely empty, as kids and the elderly stop in to catch up or ask for a sweet.

The basic layout of the store has not changed much since 1907. The meat department occupies most of the back of the store; the one-time side entrance between the produce and dairy departments is blocked off and filled with shelving. Wooden grocery shelves line the opposite wall and are filled with canned goods. Every clerk is armed with a pole that has clamps to reach items on the upper shelves and retrieve them for customers.

The store caters not only to customers who either drive or walk to the store, but also to customers (or their cooks) who telephone in orders. Richard Greenberg is the primary driver of the store's only delivery truck. Shmuel is proud of his full-service meat department, which only carries U.S. Prime and top U.S. Choice meats. Greenberg Groceries employs a number of positions: a produce manager, several clerks, a slew of butchers, and two drivers (one of whom is Richard).

A sprawling brownstone of 6,008 square feet at 278 West 113th Street is the **Houdini House**. In 1904, Harry Houdini purchased the home in a large German Jewish community for \$25,000. The unfinished brownstone was constructed in 1895, but remained unfinished until Houdini had it completed. His lavishly furnished home provides him plenty of living space, a sunken tub to practice his underwater act (his pride and joy), and a library stocked with thousands of books that surrounds his office at the center. Houdini can frequently be found here.

HOOK: Countless rumors swirl around about what mystic artifacts may be hidden away in the brownstone.

Unbeknownst to Houdini, there is a maze of tunnels beneath his home; it houses a dozen ghouls that have taken up residence around the crypt of a long-forgotten medicine man of the Wappinger of the Lenni Lenape.

At 272 Lenox Avenue is the neo-Grec rowhouse of **James Van Der Zee Studios**, which opens in 1930.



THE GOLDEN EDGE: 110TH STREET

A counter to Harlem's rule of thumb, the southernmost "Golden Edge" along 110th Street gains its desirability from its position facing Central Park. Here, members of the African-American professional class live in neat row homes, seemingly with their backs to the neighborhood. But the neighborhood opens its arms to them, providing services their money might not be able to buy in the same establishments as their white peers. It is these families, then, whom one encounters making the long streetcar or el ride north to 135th Street.

HOOK: Silent at the far west corner of Central Park stands a small townhouse at the end of the row. The house is otherwise unassuming but for the neighbors' report of an unsettling stillness around the place. No residents have been seen to come or go, but the place always looks the same. Always.

The same windows with curtains pulled tight—save for the one on the left that twitches after the house is watched for more than five minutes, before going still again. The same half-dead flowers in the same flower pot; even if a friendly neighbor attempts to replace them, they are back by the next morning. And the same newspaper sits on the front stoop. If stolen, it dates to three years ago. Come morning, a new copy of the same paper sits on the stoop. Like clockwork, the house never changes. No one answers to a knock on the door, either, not that anyone would know what to say if someone did answer.

At least they make for quiet neighbors.

COTTON CLUB



HARLEMITES

In Harlem, black was white. You had rights that could not be denied you; you had privileges, protected by law. And you had money. Everybody in Harlem had money. It was a land of plenty.

Rudolph Fisher, *The City of Refuge*

THE PLAYERS TAKE ON THE ROLES of investigators in *Harlem Unbound*, to run headlong into horrors of the **Cthulhu Mythos** that humanity wasn't meant to know, with the hope that the music can play on one more day. Some choose to go it alone; these people often become the subjects of cases for the investigators. All the while, the Mythos eternally churns on, crushing those who interfere with indifference at their insignificance.

You are part of the Renaissance, a movement that can change the world; but for that to happen, the world needs you here. No matter your life or calling, unraveling the Mythos is at the center.

JAZZ IS MORE THAN MUSIC

Before an investigator stumbled into the Mythos or had loved ones shattered by the horrors, they had an occupation, a career or life that defined them up to that point in time—whether as a warbler at the Cotton Club, a numbers runner for Stephanie St. Clair, or a cantor at Ohab Zedek. Whatever this passion or career may be, it helps cement one's body, mind, and soul from the horrors.

An investigator is more than just numbers on a character sheet, or should be; think about the type of character you want before rolling the dice. Ask the Keeper what style of game they are running, and tie the character into that foundation. Having a character firmly entrenched in the setting adds to play and provides stakes in the game. It's also a great idea to discuss character creation ideas with the other players, to help build a cohesive team or establish some sort of dynamic such as Gravedigger Jones and Coffin Ed Johnson, or Jeeves and Wooster.

CREATING INVESTIGATORS

I never ask a man what his business is, for it never interests me. What I ask him about are his thoughts and dreams.

H.P. Lovecraft, *Selected Letters*

Harlem Unbound offers two different systems to create characters and pursue the Mythos. First, the 7th edition ruleset of *Call of Cthulhu*, from Chaosium. Second, Pelgrane Press's OGL *GUMSHOE*, crafted into Harlem Style.

Important Note: Nearly all sections begin with Chaosium's *Call of Cthulhu* rules, or a text box directing you to where to find the relevant information in Chaosium sources. For a condensed overview of these rules, see *Call of Cthulhu: Investigator Handbook*, 7th Edition, Chapter 3, page 43-65. Pelgrane Press' *GUMSHOE* rules are listed right here in this book, with slight modifications to aid in clarification of rules within this particular setting.

STEP ONE: GENERATING CHARACTERISTICS

Characteristics make up the backbone of the investigators, and are rolled randomly with D6s.

For **Strength (STR)**, **Dexterity (DEX)**, **Constitution (CON)**, **Power (POW)**, and **Appearance (APP)**, roll 3D6 and multiply the total result by 5 for the final score.

For **Intelligence (INT)**, **Size (SIZ)**, and **Education (EDU)**, roll 2D6+6 and multiply the total result by 5 for the final score.

STEP TWO: AGE

An investigator's age ranges from 15 to 90. An investigator can be created outside of this range with the Keeper's approval and proper stat adjustments.

AGE MODIFICATIONS

15 to 19: Deduct 5 points among **STR** and **SIZ**. Deduct 5 points from **EDU**. Roll twice to generate a **Luck** score and use the higher value.

20 to 39: Make an improvement check for **EDU**.

40s: Make 2 improvement checks for **EDU**; deduct 5 points among **STR**, **CON**, or **DEX**; reduce **APP** by 5.

50s: Make 3 improvement checks for **EDU**; deduct 10 points among **STR**, **CON**, or **DEX**; reduce **APP** by 10.

60s: Make 4 improvement checks for **EDU**; deduct 20 points among **STR**, **CON**, or **DEX**; reduce **APP** by 15.

70s: Make 4 improvement checks for **EDU**; deduct 40 points among **STR**, **CON**, or **DEX**; reduce **APP** by 20.

80s: Make 4 improvement checks for **EDU**; deduct 80 points among **STR**, **CON**, or **DEX**; reduce **APP** by 25.

To make an **EDU** improvement check, roll percentage dice. If the result is greater than the investigator's present **EDU**, add 1D10 percentage points to the **EDU** score (**EDU** cannot exceed 99).

STEP THREE: DERIVED ATTRIBUTES

For specifics on Sanity, Hit Points, and the like, please refer to the Investigator's Handbook, page 48.

STEP FOUR: OCCUPATIONS AND SKILLS

For specifics on Occupational and Investigative Abilities, refer to the Investigator's Handbook, page 49.

GUMSHOE characters are composed of three core features:

Occupational abilities—the character's concept and the skills associated with it.

Investigative abilities—skills the investigator needs to move the story forward without requiring rolls.

General abilities—skills needed to overcome obstacles in the investigation and help the investigator survive to discover the next clue.

OCCUPATIONAL ABILITIES

Occupational abilities are things that fall naturally within an investigator's career path, and are thus most easily learned. Each skill point spent gives the investigator two ranks in that ability. Any leftover points are lost.

INVESTIGATIVE ABILITIES

A single point in one of these core abilities shows a trained professional or a gifted rookie. Investigative abilities are not rolled, and automatically yield clues when applied in relevant scenes during the scenario. Investigators may spend points out of their investigative ability pools for additional benefits; the Keeper may offer a chance to make a spend.

The number of points the investigators receive is based on the number of regular players, according to the chart below. All players receive the same number of points, but for purposes of determining build points, are not included in the total player count unless they are regular session attendees. For example, if a gaming group of 5 players only has 3 who regularly attend, each player receives 16 points.

# OF PLAYERS	INVESTIGATIVE BUILD POINTS
2	20
3	16
4	14
5+	12

GENERAL ABILITIES

A *Harlem Unbound* investigator receives 60 points in general abilities. General abilities are rolled, unlike investigative abilities, and can fail. It's key to focus general abilities into a few groups of skills with high ratings, rather than a large number of skills with low ratings.

Nearly all skills have no cap on ability ratings; the second-highest rating must be at least half that of the highest rating.

Every character begins with 2 points in **HEALTH**, 3 points in **SANITY**, and 2 points in **STABILITY**.

BACKGROUNDS AND DRIVES FOR PELGRANE PRESS' OGL GUMSHOE RULESET

SAMPLE DRIVES

Every investigator has a personal drive; it's why they fight. It's what defines their character and keeps the investigator going. A few example drives are below, and you can also encourage players to create their own.

Activism: You see broken systems—be they social, political, economic, or other—and can't wait for someone else to fix them. You strive to improve the system through whatever means possible such as rallies, marches, letter writing, art, or other vigorous actions. You must act.

Dreamer: You have always known the world is more than it seems. You may express that knowledge through your art, convincing others with words, or just seeking to understand more. The layer of mundanity that people wallow in is only the first layer, and you must follow the truth to go deeper, no matter the consequences.

Inquisitiveness: You always question what you're told, whether that's the problem or the solution. A simple answer is never the right answer—and you'll get to the bottom of a mystery, or die trying. Progress is made by those who ask questions.

Weight of the World: You always take on the extra task, carry your brother that extra mile, or help your sister up. It could be that you fought in the Great War for your country, or maybe you spend the last of your money on food for a few other families in your tenement building. You do it because if you don't, it won't get done.

Wrong Place, Right Time: You have a knack for being in the wrong place at the right time, whether it's stumbling upon a Cthulhu cult moments away from summoning some being and stopping them, or saving a child being clipped by a speeding car only to get caught in a mob shootout. It's your lot, and you better sort it out.

THE HIGH LIFE

Credit Rating 0

[Credit Rating 0]:

STREET RAT

Credit Rating 1-9

[Credit Rating 1]:

STARVING ARTIST

Credit Rating 10-39

[Credit Rating 2-3]:

STRUGGLING ARTIST

Credit Rating 40-59

[Credit Rating 3-4]:

AVERAGE

Credit Rating 60-89

[Credit Rating 5-6]:

WEALTHY

Credit Rating 90+

[Credit Rating 7]:

PATRON OF PATRONS

Credit Rating 99

[Credit Rating 8+]:

A'LELIA WALKER

OPTIONAL BONUS

For *Call of Cthulhu*, the optional bonuses under each occupation are optional flavor the Keeper can add or disregard based on the game.

RATINGS AND POOLS

The number in each skill is considered its rating, which can be improved slowly over time with experience. The number of points in a skill changes during the course of the scenario as they are spent, and they are refreshed at the start of each new scenario.

WHAT'S A GOOD SCORE?

0: No training and little talent for the field

1-3: More of a hobby

4-7: A studied and reliable skill

8+: A trained professional, oblivious to any observers

BACKGROUNDS AND DRIVES FOR CHAOSIUM'S CALL OF CTHULHU RULESET

PERSONALITY AND BELIEFS DESCRIPTIONS

1. **Dreamer:** You're more at home in your art and dreams than in the real world. Pick two skills from this list and add 10%: **Arts and Crafts** (pick one), **Charm**, **Language (Other)**, **Lore**, or **Sleight of Hand**.
2. **Analytical:** Logic has never led you wrong, and it's your go-to for every situation. Pick two skills from this list and add 10%: **Cryptography**, **History**, **Library Use**, **Mathematics**, or **Read Lips**.
3. **Activist:** You've seen the world for what it is, and know it's broken. You're the backbone of the movement to fix it. Pick two skills from this list and add 10%: **Accounting**, **Credit Rating**, **Listen**, **Persuade**, or **Psychology**.
4. **Tough:** You've had it hard, and only survived through fighting back. Pick two skills from this list and add 10%: **Brawl**, **Dodge**, **Intimidate**, **Throw**, or one **Weapon**.
5. **Leader:** People need someone to follow, and who better than you? Pick two skills from this list and add 10%: **Charm**, **Fast Talk**, **Intimidate**, **Persuade**, or **Psychology**.
6. **Faith:** There is a higher power than humanity, and you live your life by it. Pick two skills from this list and add 10%: **First Aid**, **Persuade**, **Psychoanalysis**, **Occult**, or **Spot Hidden**.
7. **Rebel:** You can't quite make it work. You bounce from this to that, but never stay in one place, role, or job. Pick two skills from this list and add 10%: **Brawl**, **Disguise**, **Intimidate**, **Locksmith**, or **Stealth**.

SIGNIFICANT PEOPLE

Roll 1D10 or pick one from the list below, and make it personal to your investigator. Once chosen, think of the relationship between the investigator and the Significant Person.

1. **Patron** (e.g. a fan of your work, a controlling manipulator awaiting your success)
2. **Rival** (e.g. friendly competition, bitter rivalry, a critic that needs to be won over)
3. **Sibling** (e.g. brother, half-brother, stepsister)
4. **Child** (e.g. son or daughter)
5. **Partner** (e.g. spouse, fiancé, lover, business partner)
6. **Mentor** who taught you your highest occupational skill (e.g. a schoolteacher, the person you apprenticed with)
7. **Childhood friend** (e.g. classmate, neighbor, imaginary friend)
8. **Relative** (e.g. grandmother, grandfather, aunt or uncle who raised you as their own)
9. **A fellow investigator** in your game (pick one or choose randomly)
10. **Parent** (e.g. mother, father, stepparent)

MEANINGFUL LOCATIONS

Roll 1D10 or pick one of the following, and personalize it to your investigator. Think of a name for your selection.

1. **Your studio** (e.g. warehouse, basement, or floor space in tenement housing)
2. **Your hometown** (e.g. rural village, market town, busy city)
3. **The place you met your first love** (e.g. a music concert, on holiday, in a bomb shelter)
4. **A place for quiet contemplation** (e.g. the library, country walks on your estate, fishing)
5. **A place for socializing** (e.g. The Dark Tower, gentlemen's club, local bar, uncle's house)
6. **A place connected with your ideology/belief** (e.g. synagogue, church)
7. **The grave of a significant person.** Who? (e.g. a parent, a child, a lover)
8. **Your family home** (e.g. a country estate, a rented flat, the orphanage in which you were raised)
9. **The place you were happiest in your life** (e.g. the park bench where you first kissed, your university, your grandmother's home)
10. **Your seat of learning** (e.g. school, university, apprenticeship)

TREASURED POSSESSIONS

Roll 1D10 or pick one of the following, and make it specific and personal to your investigator.

1. **An item connected with your highest skill** (e.g. your masterpiece, numbers book, service pistol)
2. **An essential item for your occupation** (e.g. piano, paint brush, lock picks)
3. **A memento from your childhood** (e.g. carved toy, pocketknife, lucky coin)
4. **A memento of a departed person** (e.g. slave record of dead grandparent, a photograph in your wallet, a letter)
5. **Something given to you by your Significant Person** (e.g. a ring, a diary, a map)
6. **Your collection.** What is it? (e.g. bus tickets, stuffed animals, records)
7. **Something you found** but you don't know what it is—you seek answers (e.g. a letter you found in a cupboard written in an unknown language, a curious pipe of unknown origin found among your late father's effects, a strange silver ball you dug up in your garden)
8. **A sporting item** (e.g. cricket bat, a signed baseball, a fishing rod)
9. **A weapon** (e.g. service revolver, your old hunting rifle, the hidden knife in your boot)
10. **A pet** (e.g. a dog, a cat, a tortoise)

TRAITS

Roll 1D10 or pick one of the following, and make it personal to your investigator.

1. **Generous** (e.g. generous tipper, always helps out a person in need, philanthropist)
2. **Good with animals** (e.g. loves cats, grew up on a farm, good with horses)
3. **Dreamer** (e.g. given to flights of fancy, visionary, highly creative)
4. **Hedonist** (e.g. life and soul of the party, entertaining drunk, "live fast and die young")
5. **Gambler and a risk-taker** (e.g. poker-faced, tries anything once, lives on the edge)
6. **Good cook** (e.g. bakes wonderful cakes, can make a meal from almost nothing, refined palate)
7. **Ladies' man/seductress** (e.g. suave, charming voice, enchanting eyes)
8. **Loyal** (e.g. stands by friends, never breaks a promise, would die for their beliefs)
9. **Good reputation** (e.g. the best after-dinner speaker in the country, the most pious of men, fearless in the face of danger)
10. **Ambitious** (e.g. headline at the Cotton Club, become the boss, have it all)

OCCUPATIONS

HORNMAN (MUSICIAN)

You may have hit it big and work nightly at the Cotton Club, or bounce from rent party to rent party for a few dollars a week. Either way, your horn is your life; it makes you wake up the next day, no matter what.

You're likely poor, and still hope for that moment when someone important spots you. Clubs are opening every night in Harlem, and crowds from around the world flood into them to see the talent. This is the *Jazz Age*, and could be your moment to be a part of the backbone of what's coming.

(Examples: Louis Armstrong, Bessie Smith)

Occupation Skill Points: EDU × 2 + (APP × 2 or DEX × 2)

Credit Rating: 5–15

Suggested Contacts: Club owners, musicians' union, organized crime, street-level criminals.

Occupation Skills: Art/Craft (Instrument), one interpersonal skill (Charm, Fast Talk, Intimidate, or Persuade), Listen, Psychology, any four other skills.

Optional: Gain a bonus die when bargaining for a gig or getting into a club.

OCCUPATIONAL ABILITIES: Architecture, Art, Art History, Craft, Disguise, Flattery, Photography, Assess Honesty, and any two Academic or Interpersonal abilities as personal specialties.

CREDIT RATING: 1-3

SPECIAL: Three times during a session, the Hornman can perform a one-point Spend and earn the benefit of spending 2 points for anything related to his music.

HELLFIGHTER (MILITARY)

You're one of the few African Americans who got to serve in the war, and one of the fewer still who actually got to fight. You know the trenches well, as nearly every black soldier was enlisted and very few were officers. You fought longer and harder than most until you got to come home. While your own government didn't acknowledge your service, the French did—and so did the neighborhood that held a parade for you.

(Examples: Sergeant Henry Johnson, Private Herbert Taylor)

Welcome Home...

Occupation Skill Points: EDU × 2 + (DEX × 2 or STR × 2)

Credit Rating: 10–30 (Enlisted), 15–40 (Officer)

Suggested Contacts: Military, Federal Government, Veterans Associations

Occupation Skills: Climb or Swim, Dodge, Fighting, Firearms, Stealth, Survival, Throw, and two of the following: First Aid, Mechanical Repair, or Other Language. Officers may add Accounting, Navigate, two interpersonal skills (Charm, Fast Talk, Intimidate, or Persuade) or Psychology.

Optional: No Sanity test for witnessing a dead body or human violence.

OCCUPATIONAL ABILITIES: Athletics, Conceal, Driving, Explosives, Firearms, First Aid, Intimidation, Mechanical Repair, Medicine, Outdoorsman, Scuffling, Stealth, Weapons. Officer (Rare): Bureaucracy, Reassurance.

CREDIT RATING: 2–4 (officers); 1–3 (enlisted)

SPECIAL: No Stability test for witnessing a dead body, and reduced Difficulty Number of witnessing violence on people or experiencing being attacked.

A FEW BLACK ARMY UNITS

365th Infantry Regiment
349th Machine Gun Battalion
505th Engineer Service Battalion
322nd Butchery Company
312th Labor Battalion
801st Stevedore Companies

DOCKWORKER (EVERYMAN)

You're one of countless millions just trying to get by. You watch the ships come in and go out. Everyone of them is filled or unloaded by your hands. It's not the best job, but at least it's outside, honest, and you have an endless supply of friends beside you.

(**Examples:** Harry Pace, Evelyn Crawford Reynolds)

Occupation Skill Points: $\text{EDU} \times 2 + (\text{CON} \times 2 \text{ or } \text{STR} \times 2)$

Credit Rating: 5–20

Suggested Contacts: Other workers, sailors, and supervisors.

Occupation Skills: Drive Auto, Electrical Repair, Fighting, First Aid, Mechanical Repair, Operate Heavy Machinery, Spot Hidden, Throw, any one other skill as a personal or era specialty.

Optional: A favor for a favor; you know so many people from the dock who you can call for a solid, but then you owe someone. You may be able to get someone to rough up a bad guy, or get a new car for a day, but they are gonna want something of equal value soon.

OCCUPATIONAL ABILITIES: Athletics, Bargain, Filch, Outdoorsman, Sense Trouble, Stealth, Streetwise, and any one personal skill of choice.

CREDIT RATING: 1–3

SPECIAL: Three times per session, you can call in a favor to get a free Spend on any skill. It just takes time, as the person has to be called, and then show up.

PAINTER (ARTIST)

Your life begins and ends at the canvas. You follow your muse—which may require you to explore unseen things, plunge into the depths of drug-addled moments, or simply sip coffee at a café. Whatever it is, you bring it to light on canvas, and frequently seek the watchful eye of a patron.

(**Examples:** Lois Mailou Jones, Archibald K. Motley)

Occupation Skill Points: $\text{EDU} \times 2 + (\text{DEX} \times 2 \text{ or } \text{POW} \times 2)$

Credit Rating: 0–30

Suggested Contacts: Art galleries, critics, wealthy patrons, other struggling artists.

Occupation Skills: Art/Craft (any), History or Natural World, one interpersonal skill (Charm, Fast Talk, Intimidate, or Persuade), Other Language, Psychology, Spot Hidden, any two other skills as personal or era specialties.

Optional: You're a master of your art—reduce any penalty related to your field by one level. An Extreme roll for anyone else is a Hard roll for you.

OCCUPATIONAL ABILITIES: Architecture, Art (Painting), Art History, Craft, Flattery, Assess Honesty, and any two Academic abilities plus one Interpersonal ability as personal specialties.

CREDIT RATING: 1–3.

SPECIAL: Up to three times per scenario, when you experience being in the heart of the Renaissance (gallery, long talk about your latest work, etc.), refresh one Technical point related to the inspiration.

RABBI (CLERGY)

You likely have spent your entire life studying the Torah (bible), and have been dedicated to learning and helping people. You may have just landed in the U.S., or you may have been the rockbed of the Jewish community in East Harlem for decades. Either way, your faith leads you and you guide your congregation in this way. You are the community, and all eyes look to you for advice.

(**Examples:** Father Divine, Mordecai Herman)

Occupation Skill Points: EDU × 4

Credit Rating: 9–60

Suggested Contacts: Church hierarchy, local congregations, community leaders.

Occupation Skills: Accounting, History, Library Use, Listen, Lore, Other Language, one interpersonal skill (Charm, Fast Talk, Intimidate, or Persuade), Psychology, any one other skill.

Optional: Your faith is strong: gain a bonus die when resisting being targeted by spell that mentally controls you such as Dominate, if you are loudly reciting the tenants of your beliefs.

OCCUPATIONAL ABILITIES: History, Languages (Hebrew), Library Use, Psychoanalysis, Assess Honesty, Reassurance, Theology, and one other Interpersonal ability.

CREDIT RATING: 2–5

SPECIAL: You have a knack for listening to and helping people. You may spend two points from your Reassurance pool to calm crazed people, so long as you're rational. Any Psychoanalysis roll is one level lower in difficulty, and requires a one-point spend instead of two.

PATRON (SOCIALITE)

You have more money than you know what to do with, whether it's from family fortune, a lucky windfall, or a booming business. The money doesn't bring you peace or pleasure; it's supporting artists, activists, and dreamers that makes you whole, filling some void you have or providing intellectual stimulation from engaging with your ward. You smile knowing that it's your money that makes it happen.

(**Examples:** Charlotte Osgood Mason, Carl Van Vechten)

Occupation Skill Points: EDU × 2 + APP × 2

Credit Rating: 50–99

Suggested Contacts: Social peers; Dark Tower attendees; people from galleries, museums, and libraries.

Occupation Skills: Art/Craft (Any), History, Other Language, Ride, one interpersonal skill (Charm, Fast Talk, Intimidate, or Persuade), any three other skills as personal or era specialties.

Optional: Two times per session, in any logically possible situation, you can replace any skill with a standard **Credit Rating** check. This may be you hiring someone to pick a lock, or just bribing the police officer to release your fellow investigators.

OCCUPATIONAL ABILITIES: Bureaucracy, Credit Rating, Flattery, and any five other abilities you choose.

CREDIT RATING: 3+

SPECIAL: Three free Credit Rating spends per scenario.

NEGROTARIANS

Zora Neale Hurston coined the term "Negrotarians" to describe the white patrons who financed and supported the Harlem Renaissance. These patrons came from all walks of life, and became involved in the movement for myriad reasons ranging from political to artistic to personal.

CONJURE WOMAN (OCCULTIST/RESEARCHER)

You are part mystic, part detective, and all problem-solver. Some call you a witch doctor, a tribal priest, and master of forbidden religions. Your roots can be from the Deep South, New Orleans, the Caribbean, or Africa herself—but your power is without question, no matter its source. People come to you in need of your magic.

(**Examples:** Doctor Jim Jordan, Aunt Caroline Dye)

Occupation Skill Points: $\text{EDU} \times 2 + \text{APP} \times 2$

Credit Rating: 20–40

Suggested Contacts: Libraries, occult societies, occultists, and patrons.

Occupation Skills: Anthropology, History, Library Use, one interpersonal skill (Charm, Fast Talk, Intimidate, or Persuade), Occult, Other Language, Science (Astronomy), any one other skill* as a personal or era specialty. (*Keepers may allow up to a maximum of 10% Cthulhu Mythos, based on background.)

Optional: Gain a bonus die on Occult rolls related to character's background.

OCCUPATIONAL ABILITIES: Anthropology, Evidence Collection, Library Use, History, Occult, Photography, Assess Honesty, Preparedness, Sense Trouble. (*Keepers may allow up to a maximum of Cthulhu Mythos 10% based on background.)

CREDIT RATING: 2–7

SPECIAL: The first point of Stability or Sanity spent to cast a spell or enact a ritual acts as 2 points (e.g., if a spell normally costs 3 Stability to cast, it costs you 2 instead).

WRITER (AUTHOR)

You are an author, and embrace the written word. There is power in the word to change the course of humanity. Many believe it to be a solitary existence, but you know better. You find yourself rubbing elbows with other writers and publishers of the Renaissance. You may find yourself documenting horrors, writing about the emotions that all humans experience, or bearing witness to the injustices of the '20s.

(**Examples:** Gwendolyn B. Bennett, Rudolph Fisher)

Occupation Skill Points: $\text{EDU} \times 2 + \text{POW} \times 2$

Credit Rating: 5–30

Suggested Contacts: library, publishers, authors and booksellers

Occupation Skills: Art (Literature), History, Library Use, Natural World or Occult, Other Language, Own Language, Psychology, any one other skill as a personal or era specialty

Optional: Gain a bonus die on the first attempt to translate a book, as your natural skill deduces patterns in the written word.

OCCUPATIONAL ABILITIES: Art, History, Languages, Library Use, Oral History, Assess Honesty, and three other abilities as personal specialties or left over from previous jobs.

CREDIT RATING: 1–3

SPECIAL: Every time you indulge your writerly nature in a scenario, you can replenish one Academic pool point per day. This includes translating an ancient tome, spending days in the stacks of a library, or spending a full day writing.

CALL OF CTHULHU SKILL LIST

Base skill values are noted in parentheses; investigators should add Occupation and Personal Interest skill points to these base values.

See *Call of Cthulhu: Investigator Handbook, 7th Edition*, Chapter 4, pages 96–121 for additional details.

[Uncommon] denotes an uncommon skill not written on the standard investigator sheet.

[Specializations] denotes a skill that is broken up into various separate skills.

Accounting (05%)	Intimidate (15%)
Acting (05%)—see Art and Craft	Jump (20%)
Animal Handling (05%) [Uncommon]	Language (Other) (01%) [Specializations]
Anthropology (01%)	Language (Own) (EDU)
Appraise (05%)	Law (05%)
Archaeology (01%)	Library Use (20%)
Art and Craft (05%) [Specializations]	Listen (20%)
Artillery (01%) [Uncommon]	Locksmith (01%)
Astronomy (01%)—see Science	Machine Gun (10%)—see Firearms
Axe (15%)—see Fighting	Mathematics (01%)—see Science
Biology (01%)—see Science	Mechanical Repair (10%)
Botany (01%)—see Science	Medicine (01%)
Bow (15%)—see Firearms	Meteorology (01%)—see Science
Brawl (25%)—see Fighting	Natural World (10%)
Chainsaw (10%)—see Fighting	Navigate (10%)
Charm (15%)	Occult (05%)
Chemistry (01%)—see Science	Operate Heavy Machinery (01%)
Climb (20%)	Persuade (10%)
Credit Rating (00%)—see Chart under GUMSHOE skill	Pharmacy (01%)—see Science
Cryptography (01%)—see Science	Photography (05%)—see Art and Craft
Cthulhu Mythos (00%)	Physics (01%)—see Science
Demolitions (01%) [Uncommon]	Pilot (01%) [Specializations]
Disguise (05%)	Psychoanalysis (01%)
Diving (01%)	Psychology (10%)
Dodge (half DEX)	Read Lips (01%) [Uncommon]
Drive Auto (20%)	Ride (05%)
Electrical Repair (10%)	Rifle (25%)—see Firearms
Fast Talk (05%)	Science (01%) [Specializations]
Fighting (varies) [Specializations]	Shotgun (25%)—see Firearms (Rifle/Shotgun)
Fine Art (05%)—see Art and Craft	Sleight of Hand (10%)
Firearms (varies) [Specializations]	Spear (20%)—see Firearms (or Throw)
First Aid (30%)	Spot Hidden (25%)
Flail (10%)—see Fighting	Stealth (20%)
Flamethrower (10%)—see Firearms	Submachine Gun (15%)—see Firearms
Forensics (05%)—see Science	Survival (10%) [Specializations]
Forgery (01%)—see Art and Craft	Sword (20%)—see Fighting
Garrote (15%)—see Fighting	Swim (20%)
Geology (01%)—see Science	Throw (20%)
Handgun (20%)—see Firearms	Track (10%)
Heavy Weapons (10%)—see Firearms	Whip (05%)—see Fighting
History (05%)	Zoology (01%)—see Science
Hypnosis (01%) [Uncommon]	

GUMSHOE SKILL LIST

OCCUPATIONAL ABILITIES

Academic
Accounting
Anthropology
Archaeology
Architecture
Art History
Biology
Cthulhu Mythos*
Cryptography
Geology
History
Languages
Law
Library Use
Medicine
Occult
Physics
Theology
Interpersonal
Assess Honesty
Bargain
Bureaucracy
Cop Talk
Credit Rating
Flattery
Gambling
Inspiration
Intimidation
Oral History
Reassurance
Renaissance
Streetwise

TECHNICAL ABILITIES

Art
Astronomy
Chemistry
Craft
Evidence Collection
Explosives
Forensics
Locksmith
Outdoorsman
Pharmacy
Photography

GENERAL ABILITIES

Athletics
Bargain
Conceal
Disguise
Driving
Electrical Repair
Explosives
Filch
Firearms
First Aid
Fleeing
Health
Hypnosis
Mechanical Repair
Piloting
Preparedness
Psychoanalysis
Riding
Sanity
Stability
Scuffling
Sense Trouble
Shadowing
Stealth
Weapons

*Slowly but inexorably
crawling upon my
consciousness and
rising above every other
impression, came a
dizzying fear of the
unknown; a fear all the
greater because I could not
analyse it, and seeming
to concern a stealthily
approaching menace;
not death, but some
nameless, unheard-of
thing inexpressibly more
ghastly and abhorrent.*

H.P. Lovecraft, "The Crawling Chaos"

GUMSHOE SKILL DESCRIPTIONS

INVESTIGATIVE ABILITIES

ACCOUNTING (ACADEMIC)

You understand accountancy procedures of institutions or individuals. You can:

- discern criminal enterprises or illicit revenue streams
- notice cheating employees, bribes, blackmail, or dummy companies
- make short-term predictions of business development
- run a numbers game

ANTHROPOLOGY (ACADEMIC)

You are an expert in the study of human cultures, from the stone age to the Jazz Age. You can:

- identify artifacts and rituals of living cultures
- describe the customs of a foreign group or local subculture
- extrapolate the practices of an unknown culture from similar examples

ARCHAEOLOGY (ACADEMIC)

You excavate and study the structures and artifacts of historical cultures and civilizations. You can:

- date and identify artifacts from past cultures
- tell real artifacts from fakes
- properly set up excavation sites and spot discrepancies
- navigate inside ruins and catacombs
- deduce the lives of historical cultures
- identify various forms of forgotten written language

ARCHITECTURE (ACADEMIC)

You know how buildings are planned and constructed. You can:

- guess what lies around the corner while exploring an unknown structure
- judge the relative strength of building materials
- identify a building's age, architectural style, original use, and history of modifications
- construct stable makeshift structures
- identify elements vital to a building's structural integrity

ART (TECHNICAL)

Art requires the investigator to choose a specialty (piano, painting, poetry, dance, sculpture, etc). For each point spent on Art, you pick one art form in which to have a general proficiency. Each additional point dedicated to the same art form shows an increased level of talent. To generate great or legendary art requires multiple spends.

ART HISTORY (ACADEMIC)

You're an expert on works of art from an aesthetic and technical point of view. You can:

- distinguish real works from fakes
- tell when something has been retouched or altered
- identify the age of an object by style and materials
- call to mind historical details on artists and those around them
- recall stolen pieces of art
- remember local artists of similar style

ASSESS HONESTY (INTERPERSONAL)

Humans lie. Assess Honesty is the skill to read human behavior, motives, and character. This lets a trained investigator pick up when someone is lying to them. A percentage of people (politicians, actors, conmen, etc.) are naturally trained or gifted in concealing their motives and may go undetected, as do people who believe in what they're saying or in the inhuman nature of the **Cthulhu Mythos**.

ASTRONOMY (TECHNICAL)

You study celestial objects, including the stars and planets. You can:

- decipher astrological texts
- plot the movement of constellations
- study and debunk UFO reports
- use a telescope

BARGAIN (INTERPERSONAL)

You are an expert at finding an agreeable price, deal, or arrangement that benefits you. You can:

- negotiate for lower or more favorable prices
- mediate hostage situations or diplomatic crises
- swap favors or information with others

BIOLOGY (ACADEMIC)

You have studied the the science of life (botany, ecology, zoology, era-appropriate, etc.). You can:

- detect anomalies in plants and animals behaving strangely
- analyze samples (ichor, blood, etc.) to determine their origins and likely occurrence
- know the natural habitat for mundane plants and animals
- deduce natural poisons and venoms, and how to treat them

BUREAUCRACY (INTERPERSONAL)

You know how to navigate a bureaucratic organization, whether it's a governmental office or a large business concern. You know how to get what you want from it in an expeditious manner, and with a minimum of ruffled feathers. You can:

- convince officials to provide sensitive information
- gain credentials on false pretenses
- find the person who really knows what's going on
- locate offices and files
- borrow equipment or supplies

Bureaucracy is not a catch-all information-gathering ability. Bureaucrats wish to convey the impression that they are busy and harried, whether or not they actually are. Most take a profound, secret joy in directing inquiries elsewhere. When players attempt to use Bureaucracy to gain information more easily accessible via other abilities (such as Research), their contacts snidely advise them to do their own damn legwork.

CHEMISTRY (TECHNICAL)

You're trained in the analysis of chemical substances. You can (in lab conditions):

- among a wide variety of other materials, identify drugs, pharmaceuticals, toxins, and viruses
- match samples of dirt or vegetation from a piece of evidence to a scene
- create temporary explosives, corrosives, or poisons
- determine the effects of chemicals on objects
- perform rudimentary ballistic testing

COP TALK (INTERPERSONAL)

You know how to speak the lingo of police officers, and make them feel confident and relaxed in your presence. You may be a current or former cop, or simply the kind of person they immediately identify as a solid, trustworthy citizen. You can:

- coolly ply cops for confidential information
- get excused for minor infractions
- imply that you are a colleague, authorized to participate in their cases

WHAT IS A GOOD RATING?

Any rating in an investigative ability indicates a high degree of professional accomplishment or impressive natural talent. If you have an ability relevant to the task at hand, you automatically succeed in discovering any information or overcoming any obstacles necessary to propel you from the current scene further into the story.

You may ask to spend points to gain special benefits. Use them wisely; spent points do not return until the next investigation begins.

When choosing investigative abilities, it is better to have a large number of abilities with fairly low ratings, than a small number of abilities with high ratings. Even a 1-point rating is worth having. You'll rarely want to spend more than 3 or 4 points on any one investigative ability. You must have an investigative ability at a rating of at least 1 to get useful information from the skill.

CRAFT (TECHNICAL)

You know how to make physical items. Akin to Art, the crafter must choose one specialty (cooking, jewelry, brewing, blacksmithing, etc.).

CREDIT RATING (INTERPERSONAL)

You know that money and power talk. Credit Rating represents your financial, social, and apparent swagger. Credit Rating can be used in a pinch to replace any ability where money or power would sway things in your favor. It doesn't necessarily mean the actual amount of money, but rather the ability to interact with people of various social classes.

CRYPTOGRAPHY (ACADEMIC)

You can make or break codes and ciphers in any language you can read. Given some time and a dictionary, you may be able to puzzle out foreign alphabets, translating languages by brute force.

CTHULHU MYTHOS (ACADEMIC)

You understand the basics of the inhuman knowledge of the Cthulhu Mythos. This understanding is not rooted in dark tomes or forgotten artifacts of lore, but in the opening of your mind to those items. This broadening perception of the insignificance of humanity comes at a cost. Any use of this ability may cost the investigator Sanity, Stability, or both.

The Keeper provides you with the result of your intuition, sketching out the Mythos implications of the events you have uncovered. This will not be the answer to the scenario, but a hint at the forces behind the coming storm, or a revelation that may save your life at the cost of your mind.

EVIDENCE COLLECTION (TECHNICAL)

You're adept at finding, bagging, and tagging important clues. You can:

- spot objects of interest at a crime scene or other investigation site
- note relationships between objects at a crime scene, reconstructing sequences of events
- store objects for forensic analysis without contaminating your samples

FLATTERY (INTERPERSONAL)

You're good at getting people to help you by complimenting them, as subtly or blatantly as they prefer. You can get them to:

- reveal information
- perform minor favors
- regard you as trustworthy

FORENSICS (TECHNICAL)

You have seen countless crime scenes, autopsies, and cadavers, can pinpoint causes of death with shocking accuracy, and can reconstruct the dead's details (sex, cause of death, profession, etc.). You can:

- closely determine time of death
- figure out what was used to kill a victim
- find and identify any substances on or in the body

GEOLOGY (ACADEMIC)

You are an expert on rocks, soils, minerals, and the primordial history of the Earth. You can:

- analyze soil samples, crystals, minerals, and so forth
- determine the age of a rock stratum
- date and identify fossils
- evaluate soil for agriculture or industry
- identify promising sites for oil or water wells, mines, etc.
- anticipate volcanism, seismic events, avalanches, and other natural phenomena

HISTORY (ACADEMIC)

You're an expert in recorded human history, with an emphasis on its political, military, economic, and technological developments. You can:

- recognize obscure historical allusions
- recall capsule biographies of famous historical figures
- tell where and when an object made during historical times was fashioned
- identify the period of an article of dress or costume

INSPIRATION (INTERPERSONAL)

You appeal to the better nature of reluctant people to talk by targeting their core values (religion, family, pride, friends, etc). Then you work that angle until they have answers to your questions. Ultimately, the person has a residual sense of accomplishment from sharing with you.

INTIMIDATION (INTERPERSONAL)

You elicit cooperation from suspects by seeming physically imposing, invading their personal space, and adopting a psychologically commanding manner. Intimidation may involve implied or direct threats of physical violence, but is just as often an act of mental dominance. You can:

- gain information
- inspire the subject to leave the area
- quell a subject's desire to attempt violence against you or others

LANGUAGES (ACADEMIC)

For each rating point in Languages, you are verbally fluent and literate in one language other than your native tongue. You may specify these when you create your character, or choose opportunistically in the course of play, revealing that you just happen to speak Javanese when circumstances require it. You are not learning the language spontaneously but revealing a hitherto unmentioned fact about your character. You may elect to be literate in an ancient language which is no longer spoken.

Ancient or Unknown languages can be selected with Keeper approval, and should have a good story reason. The Keeper may require an additional point for such languages.

LAW (ACADEMIC)

You are familiar with the criminal and civil laws of your home jurisdiction, and broadly acquainted with foreign legal systems. At a rating of 2 or more, you are a bar-certified attorney. You can:

- assess the legal risks attendant on any course of action
- understand lawyerly jargon
- argue with police and prosecutors

LIBRARY USE (ACADEMIC)

You can locate information in libraries, newspaper morgues, or any collection of documents. Given enough time, if the information you're hunting is in the collection, you can find it. Each use of this ability consumes four hours.

LOCKSMITH (TECHNICAL)

You can open doors and locks, and disarm alarms, without benefit of the key. (You can also find convenient windows to jimmy or coal-cellar doors to force, if need

be.) Many locks require specialized tools, possession of which without a locksmith's license is a criminal offense in most jurisdictions. Very complex or tricky locks may require spends to open them speedily, to avoid noise or damage, or to relock afterward.

Using Locksmith is, in other words, a way to gather clues. A lock that won't open is like a witness that won't talk or a bloodstain you can't find: antithetical to mystery-solving, investigative-adventure design. Only safes, bank vaults, and the like—locks that exist to drive drama or conflict, rather than locks which merely hold clues—require actual tests against Difficulty.

MEDICINE (ACADEMIC)

You know how to diagnose and treat disease, injuries, poisonings, and accidents. You also have a wide knowledge of drugs, poisons, and their effects. If treating an illness and no known cure exists, most theories are inconclusive. A rating of 2+ represents a licensed professional. You can:

- interact with medical professionals
- determine an unconscious person's condition and cause
- diagnose patients
- identify medical abnormalities
- detect when a person is suffering from a physically debilitating condition such as drug addiction, pregnancy, or malnutrition
- gauge the general health of a person

NATURAL HISTORY (ACADEMIC)

You study the evolution, behavior, and biology of plants and animals. You can:

- tell when an animal is behaving strangely
- tell whether an animal or plant is native to a given area
- identify an animal from samples of its hair, blood, bones, or other tissue
- identify a plant from a small sample

OCCULT (ACADEMIC)

You have walked the path and understand the study of magic, superstition, and sorcery through the ages. You may have practiced Hoodoo in Harlem, brought from your Caribbean homeland, or follow the remains of the Golden Dawn. Your knowledge of the supernatural places you on the doorstep to true understanding of the universe. You can:

- identify the cultural traditions informing a ritual by examining its physical aftermath
- supply historical facts concerning various occult traditions
- guess the intended effect of a ritual from its physical aftermath
- identify occult activities as the work of informed practitioners or dabblers

Your knowledge of the occult is that of a detached, even disapproving, outsider. This ability does not allow you to work magic or summon supernatural entities. You can, at best, fake your way through a ritual while attempting to pass yourself off as a believer. Even in this situation, your actions do not evoke supernatural effects.

ORAL HISTORY (INTERPERSONAL)

You can find sources willing to talk, win their confidence, and gather (usually lengthy) oral testimony about historical events, local traditions, folklore, family legend, or gossip. This is an excellent way to do research in illiterate or semi-literate societies, and in rural or small town communities in general. This ability also covers taking shorthand notes or making recordings without spooking your sources.

PHARMACY (TECHNICAL)

You are able recognize compounds, medicines, poisons, and drugs, be they natural or man-made, and understand their effects.

PHOTOGRAPHY (TECHNICAL)

You're proficient in the use of cameras (still and motion), including lenses and filters. You can:

- take clear pictures
- develop pictures and enhance hidden details
- identify fake or doctored photos

PHYSICS (ACADEMIC)

You study the science of matter, its movement through space and time, and its impact on energy and force. This has granted you a theoretical understanding of pressure, electromagnetism, motion, gravity, optics, and radioactivity limited to your era. You can:

- design or hotwire experimental machinery to test, detect, or manipulate physical forces and energies
- understand and apply advanced mathematics, including non-Euclidean geometries
- deduce advanced or alien technologies with time or luck

REASSURANCE (INTERPERSONAL)

You get people to do what you want by putting them at ease. You can:

- elicit information and minor favors
- allay fear or panic in others
- instill a sense of calm during a crisis

RENAISSANCE (INTERPERSONAL)

You know the up-and-comers in Harlem, and which salons to network. It could be that you're one of the Talented Tenth, a friend of a friend, a patron, or maybe you've just got luck. A high rating means you have multiple invites a week to the best salons, and may find yourself sitting next to Thurman, Du Bois, or a power man cultist seeking enlightenment.

STREETWISE (INTERPERSONAL)

You know how to behave among gangsters, number runners, grifters, and other habitués of the criminal underworld. You can:

- know how to talk to criminals to avoid fights and mediate conflicts
- identify unsafe locations and dangerous people
- make and utilize criminal contacts
- tell when practiced criminals and con artists are lying, as with Assess Honesty
- gather underworld rumors

THEOLOGY (ACADEMIC)

You study human religions. You can:

- supply information about religious practices and beliefs
- quote relevant passages from the major scriptures
- recognize the names and attributes of various saints, gods, and other figures of religious worship and veneration
- identify whether a given religious practice or ritual is orthodox or heretical
- fake (or in some traditions, officiate at) a religious ceremony

This ability does not allow you to work miracles, banish demons, commune with deities, or otherwise invoke supernatural power, even if the campaign admits the existence of a non-Mythos God or gods. You may believe in a given religion or not; the skill functions just as well in either case.

If you have a rating in both Cthulhu Mythos and in Theology, you can identify a given ceremony as actually (even if ignorantly or unintentionally) a Mythos ritual. This counts as a use of Theology, and costs no Sanity or Stability. Some questions or clues may fall under both Theology and Occult, or on the boundary between them.

GENERAL ABILITIES

ATHLETICS

Athletics allows you to perform general acts of physical derring-do, from running to jumping to dodging falling or oncoming objects. Any physical action not covered by another ability probably falls under the umbrella of Athletics.

If your Athletics rating is 8 or more, your Hit Threshold—the Target Number your opponents use when attempting to hit you in combat—is 4. Otherwise, your Hit Threshold is 3.

CONCEAL

You can hide things from view and conceal them from search. Your methods might include camouflage, hiding items on your person, sneaking things into drawers unobserved, building secret compartments, or even altering a thing's visual signature with paint or plaster.

This ability also allows you to discover things that are intentionally concealed.

HARLEMANIA

By the mid-1920s, "Harlem" was the word on everyone's lips and burning in their souls. Its reach went as far as Paris, a sister city for the black mecca. Harlemania would reign supreme for roughly five years, before the crash in 1929. Until then, it was where whites wanted to be; not just patrons of the arts, but working-class folks, high rollers, musicians, and mobsters wanted to be a part of it. They weren't interested in walking with blacks as equals, but they liked to gawk from a paid distance, and feel like they were on some exotic trip.

DISGUISE

This is the skill of altering your own appearance, posture, and voice to be unrecognizable. Disguising others in anything more complex than a slouch hat or false mustache is good only for brief periods, as posture and body language are vital components in any successful disguise.

Successfully disguising yourself as an actual person known to those you're interacting with is extraordinarily difficult. Brief voice-only mimicry pits you against a Difficulty Number of 4. Face-to-face impersonation requires a successful roll against a Difficulty Number of 7 for every five minutes of sustained contact between you and the object of your impersonation.

DRIVING

Anyone who's been taught can drive a car down the road without this ability. You, on the other hand, are a skilled defensive driver, capable of wringing high performance from even the most recalcitrant automobile, pickup truck, or omnibus. You can:

- evade or conduct pursuit
- avoid collisions, or minimize damage from collisions
- spot tampering with a vehicle
- navigate, read maps, and maintain a sense of direction
- conduct emergency repairs

For every 2 additional rating points in Driving, you may add an additional ground vehicle type to your repertoire, such as a motorcycle, transport truck, locomotive, buckboard, or streetcar. You may choose exotic types, like tanks and hansom cabs, with the Keeper's approval.

EXPLOSIVES

You're an expert in bombs and booby-traps. You can:

- defuse bombs and traps
- handle nitroglycerine or other dangerously unstable materials with relative safety
- given time, blow open safes or vaults without damaging the contents
- mix explosive compounds from common chemicals
- safely construct and detonate explosive devices or booby-traps of your own

Explosives doubles as an investigative ability when used to:

- reconstruct exploded bombs
- for any bomb (exploded or unexploded), determine the method and materials of the bomb-maker, and deduce his sophistication, background, and skill

FILCH

Your nimble fingers allow you to unobtrusively manipulate small objects. You can:

- pilfer clues from (or plant clues at) a crime scene under the very noses of unsuspecting authorities
- pick pockets
- plant objects on unsuspecting subjects

FIREARMS

You are good with firearms, including their repair and identification.

FIRST AID

You can perform first aid on sick or injured individuals.

FLEEING

Although you are not a strong overall athlete, you can boot it like a bat out of hell when chased by dangerous people, beings, or moving objects.

If your Fleeing rating is more than twice your final Athletics rating, you can buy rating points in Fleeing above your Athletics value at a reduced rate, getting 2 rating points for each build point spent. Hence, if your Athletics rating is 0, all your Fleeing is half-price.

GAMBLING

You are conversant with the rules and etiquette of all forms of gambling, from roulette and poker to horse racing and numbers rackets. To win (or strategically lose) at a game of chance or sporting requires a Gambling test, or a contest if played against an NPC with the Gambling ability. In addition to playing by the rules and winning, you can:

- spot cheating, either by the house or by another player
- stack a deck, rig a horse race, load dice, or otherwise cheat

Palming cards, tiles, or dice is allowed as a Gambling test; anything else requires Conceal or Filch.

Gambling doubles as an investigative ability when used to:

- calculate the odds of events ruled by probabilities
- use Assess Honesty on professional gamblers, despite their poker faces
- interact with gamblers and blend in at casinos

HEALTH

Health measures your ability to sustain injuries, resist infection, and survive the effects of toxins.

When you get hit in the course of a fight, your Health pool is diminished. A higher Health pool allows you to stay in a fight longer, before succumbing to your injuries.

You start with Health 2 for free. When your Health pool is depleted, you may be dazed, wounded, or taking a permanent dirt nap.

HYPNOSIS

This ability represents medical hypnosis as depicted in pulpy genre sources; it is not psychic mesmerism or mind control. You can only hypnotize a willing subject, and only one subject at a time. Using Hypnosis requires a test against a Difficulty Number that varies depending on what you are using it for.

SIMPLE HYPNOTIC STATE: To place a subject in a hypnotic trance, you must succeed against Difficulty 3. During this trance, she is calm and placid.

ESTABLISH ANALYTIC RAPPORT: Once you have successfully hypnotized a subject, your Psychoanalysis pool increases by 3 during any future use of Psychoanalysis on them. Your Psychoanalysis rating must be at least 3 to gain this benefit, and the 3 points must be spent on the subject.

RECOVER MEMORIES: The subject's fragmented or buried memories, as of dreams, traumas, or murky monster attacks, can be called to the surface and "relived." This is a Difficulty 4 test. Reliving an experience that cost Stability will cost the subject the same amount again, although you may practice immediate Psychological Triage to minimize their shock. The Keeper is free to provide false memories if he or she feels you are "leading the witness."

Post-hypnotic suggestion: Upon lifting the trance, you may cause your subject to perform a single action without apparent thought. You may require a "trigger phrase" or simply specify a time: "When you get home, you'll leave the book on the desk." Spells and other complex activities cannot be post-hypnotically induced. The subject will not accept a suggestion contrary to her normal behavior. This is a Difficulty 4 or higher test; the Keeper may increase the Difficulty based on the suggestion.

EASE PAIN: You can relieve symptomatic pain in a subject. This removes the mechanical penalties for being hurt, and lasts until the subject is wounded again. This is a Difficulty 4 or higher test; the Keeper may increase the Difficulty depending on the pain's severity. This does not work under battlefield conditions.

FALSE MEMORIES: You can purposely implant false memories in the subject, or bury real ones. This is extremely unethical without a direct therapeutic benefit (such as easing a remembered trauma). This is a Contest between your Hypnosis and the subject's Stability. Your Difficulty Number is 5; the subject resists with Difficulty 4. Again, the Keeper may increase your Difficulty based on the severity of the memory change. At the Keeper's discretion, if the subject suffers a further trauma (such as her Stability dropping below -5 again), she may suddenly recall the truth.

MECHANICAL REPAIR

You're good at building, repairing, operating, and disabling mechanical devices—from simple stick traps to the most complex adding machines or steam turbines. Given the right components, you can create jury-rigged devices from odd bits of scrap.

Mechanical Repair doubles as an investigative ability when used to:

- evaluate the quality of workmanship used to create an item
- determine the identity of a handmade item's maker by comparing to known work by that individual

PILOTING

You can fly one or more airborne vehicles. You can:

- evade or conduct pursuit
- anticipate bad weather
- avoid collisions, or minimize damage from collisions
- spot tampering with a vehicle
- navigate by compass or the stars, read maps, and maintain a sense of direction
- conduct emergency repairs

PREPAREDNESS

You expertly anticipate the needs of any mission by packing a kit efficiently arranged with necessary gear. Assuming you have immediate access to your kit, you can produce whatever object the team needs to overcome an obstacle. You make a simple test; if you succeed, you have the item you want. You needn't do this in advance of the adventure, but can dig into your kit bag (provided you're able to get to it) as the need arises.

Items of obvious utility to a paranormal investigation do not require a test. These include but are not limited to: notepaper, writing implements, various types of tape, common tools and hardware, light weapons, flashlights of various sizes, chem lights, batteries, magnifying glasses, thermometer, and your trusty hat.

Other abilities imply the possession of basic gear suitable to their core tasks. Characters with Medic have their own first aid kits; Photographers come with cameras and accessories. If you have Shooting, you have a gun, and so on. Preparedness does not intrude into their territory. It covers general-purpose investigative equipment, plus oddball items that suddenly come in handy in the course of the story.

The sorts of items you can produce at a moment's notice depend not on your rating or pool, but on narrative credibility. If the Keeper determines that your possession of an item would seem ludicrous or out of genre, you don't get to roll for it. You simply don't have it.

PSYCHOANALYSIS

You can provide comfort, perspective, and solace to the mentally troubled. You may be an alienist or counselor, a rabbi or pastor, or just an empathetic and intuitive individual. You can restore panicked characters to a state of calm, and treat any long-term mental illnesses they accrue in the course of their investigations.

RIDING

Although staying on a tame, untroubled walking horse (on flattish terrain, anyway) is relatively easy once one gets the hang of it, and staying on a mule or burro even easier, you are a gifted equestrian. You can gallop even recalcitrant or spirited horses, donkeys, and mules past distractions and across the countryside. You can:

- evade or conduct mounted pursuit
- care for, groom, shoe, and stable mounts
- take care of, prepare, and use riding gear such as saddles and bridles
- calm a nervous mount
- drive a horse-drawn wagon or cart
- wield a weapon while riding

SANITY

Sanity is what makes you human. It's how in touch you are with the very essence of humanity. Your Sanity score represents your core belief in that. The Cthulhu Mythos is alien beyond compare; exposure to it erodes away the humanity of those who see the truth of the universe, and begin to understand the irrelevance of their actions and existence. Sanity is never tested. If Sanity reaches 0, the investigator is irrevocably insane—at best, locked away in an asylum, but at worst...

A student of the Mythos with 0 Sanity and a high Cthulhu Mythos score may appear completely normal, as they have assimilated the alien nature of the cosmos.

You get Sanity 3 for free. The maximum Sanity score possible is Sanity - Cthulhu Mythos. For example, if your Cthulhu Mythos is 3, and you put 12 points into your Sanity, then your starting maximum Sanity is 9.

SCUFFLING

You know your way around a fight, be it a street brawl or in the ring for a title bout. You can kill, hold, bob and weave, or knock out your foe. It is your call. High levels of the skill—at 8+— should have a speciality of some kind (Boxing, Bars, Martial Arts, etc). Close hand-to-hand weapons (e.g. brass knuckles, blackjacks, saps)

fall under this skill, as they focus more on supplementing the hit than on damaging the target.

SENSE TROUBLE

Keen perceptions allow you to spot signs of potential danger to yourself and others. Information gained from this ability might save your skins, but doesn't directly advance the central mystery. You might use it to:

- hear the single flapping wing of a Hunting Horror
- see that one of Stephanie St. Clair's goons is after you for bouncing on a bet
- catch a whiff of distilled acid in your bathtub gin
- have a bad feeling about this

Players never know the Difficulty Numbers for Sense Trouble before deciding how many points to spend, even in games where Keepers generously inform the players of other Difficulty Numbers. Players must blindly choose how much to spend.

When more than one player is able to make a Sense Trouble test, the group decides which of them makes the attempt. Only one attempt per source of trouble occurs, conducted by the chosen PC.

SHADOWING

You're good at following suspects without revealing your presence. You can:

- guide a team to follow a suspect for short periods, handing off to the next in sequence, so the subject doesn't realize he's being trailed
- use binoculars or telescopes to keep watch on a target from a distance
- find undetectable vantage points
- hide in plain sight
- anticipate blind spots in your coverage and plan for them, or use them to lose your own shadowers

STABILITY

Any threat, be it Mythos or otherwise, can shake an investigator to his or her core and take a long psychological toll. Your Stability rating indicates your resistance to mental stress. Unlike Sanity, Stability will wax and wane during the course of an investigation.

You start with Stability 2 for free.

STEALTH

You're good at moving (and standing still) without being noticed. You can:

- move silently
- hide in shadows or cover
- avoid security, physical guards (usual) or cameras (unusual)
- eavesdrop without being overheard yourself

WEAPONS

You know how to bring the hurt with a hand-held weapon. You may have learned it in the Great War, fighting the Klan in the deep South, or maybe you just have a natural talent for violence.

HARLEM FASHION

Harlemania was all the rage; it only makes sense that fashion followed. Clothes—much like the art, politics, and literature of the time—were a reflection of the New Negro. Fashion moved away from drab colors and to clothes that were more colorful, graceful, and elegant.

Women's fashions became loose and low-cut; hemlines moved below the knee, and women sported low necklines, colorful silk stockings, and bobbed hair. Josephine Baker embodied this fashion. Men's clothes embraced tailored suits made of wool or linen, in various colors, and with elegant three-pieces seeing more than just church and becoming the norm of nightlife. The Zoot suit—long coat, wide shoulder pads, and high-waisted with wide-legs—hit a height of popularity.

No outfit for anyone would be complete without headwear. For women, this meant colorful scarves or cloche hats, while men frequently wore Homburgs, fedoras or Trilby hats. White gloves, Chesterfield coats and leopard-skin coats could be seen adorning countless people.



SYSTEM STUFF

HARLEM UNBOUND FOCUSES ON ROLEPLAYING, but every game needs a set of rules to ensure a fair and balanced approach. *Harlem Unbound* is doubly so, given the nature of the game, focusing on the gritty reality of being a person of color in a society telling you that you don't matter and you are to be treated as less than human. Despite all of this, you battle the Mythos so that they can segregate you for another day. Rules are important to provide the right backdrop for the action, and to establish the societal norms of the moment.

For those using the *Call of Cthulhu* ruleset from Chaosium, see chapters five (page 82), six (page 100), and seven (page 130) of the Keeper Rulebook. For those using the Pelgrane Press *GUMSHOE* OGL, see below.

GUMSHOE RULES

This section describes the basic *GUMSHOE* rules system, and is addressed to players and Keeper alike.

WHY THIS GAME EXISTS

GUMSHOE speeds and streamlines the time-honored form of the investigative roleplaying game. Investigative scenarios are not about the challenge of finding clues; they're about interpreting the clues you do find.

GUMSHOE, therefore, makes the finding of clues all but automatic, as long as you get to the right place in the story and have the right abilities to interpret your finds.

MYSTERY STRUCTURE

Every investigative scenario begins with a crime, conspiracy, or other act of disorder committed by a group of antagonists. The bad guys do something bad. The investigators must figure out who did it and put a stop to their activities.

The Keeper designs each scenario by creating an investigation trigger, a sinister conspiracy, and a trail of clues.

The investigation trigger. This is the event that attracts the attention of investigators.

The discovery of a murder victim, obviously slain during a ritualistic killing.

A once-dead friend coming to your house for Sunday brunch like nothing has happened.

Waking up with no memory of the last five days, with your body covered in runic tattoos.

The sinister conspiracy. This sets out who the bad guys are, what they've done so far, what they're trying to do, and how the investigation trigger fits into the overall scheme. The Keeper also determines what has to happen to prevent the plot from going forward. This, unknown to the players, is their victory condition—what they have to do to thwart the bad guys and bring the story to a positive conclusion.

Once the Keeper has the logic of the story worked out from the villain's point of view, she then thinks in reverse, designing a trail of clues leading from the investigation trigger to an understanding of the sinister plot and its players, sufficient to get to work destroying it.

Optionally, the Keeper may also plan a series of antagonist reactions. These lay out what the bad guys do when they find out that they're being investigated. The Keeper determines what conditions trigger them, and what the antagonists attempt to do. These may include further crimes, giving the team more to investigate. They may try to destroy evidence, hinder the investigation by planting false leads, or intimidate or dispose of potential witnesses, including accomplices they no longer trust. They may attack the investigators. Foolish, overconfident, or risk-taking antagonists may take them on directly. Clever antagonists will strike from a distance, taking great pains to cover their tracks.

TIP FOR PLAYERS: CONTAINING SPECULATION

Investigative scenarios often bog down into speculative debate between players about what could be happening. Many things can be happening, but only one thing is. If more than one possible explanation ties together the clues you have so far, you need more clues.

Whenever you get stuck, get out and gather more information.

*“Choose your leaders
with wisdom and forethought.*

*To be led by a coward is to be controlled
by all that the coward fears.*

*To be led by a fool is to be led by
the opportunists who control the fool.*

*To be led by a thief is to offer up your
most precious treasures to be stolen.*

*To be led by a liar is to ask
to be told lies.*

*To be led by a tyrant is to sell yourself
and those you love into slavery.”*

Octavia E. Butler
Parable of the Talents

Ordinary crime dramas may call for a simpler structure. The bad guys could still be furthering a sinister plot, or they may be doing nothing after committing the triggering crime other than hoping that the investigators don't catch up with them. In this case, there is no ongoing conspiracy to disrupt. To achieve victory and bring the scenario to a successful conclusion, the investigators need merely prove their case against the criminals. The climactic scene might involve wringing a confession from the wrongdoer, or provoking him into revealing the crucial bit of evidence which will ensure his conviction.

FROM STRUCTURE TO STORY

The Keeper's notes are not a story; the story is the actions the players take, in response to what is being presented. The story proceeds from scene to scene, where you determine the pace, discovering clues and putting them together. Your characters interact with locations, collect physical evidence, and meet supporting characters run by the Keeper, gathering expert and eyewitness testimony.

The first scene presents the mystery you need to solve. This is the introductory scene—it establishes the setting and tone of the story, and provides a few baseline clues. You then perform legwork, collecting information that tells you more about the case. Each scene contains information pointing to a new scene. Certain scenes may put a new twist on the investigation, as the initial mystery turns out to be just one aspect of a much bigger story. As clues accumulate, a picture of the case emerges, until your characters arrive at a climactic scene, where all is revealed and the bad guys are confronted. A wrap-up scene accounts for loose ends and shows the consequences of your success—or, in rare instances, failure. (Why is failure possible at all? Its possibility creates urgency and suspense.)

To move from scene to scene, and to solve the overall mystery, you must gather clues. They fuel your forward momentum.

TESTS AND SUPPORTING CHARACTERS

Game statistics in *GUMSHOE* are, whenever possible, player-facing. This means that when you as Keeper have the choice between making a determination based on a player test, or on a test made by you on behalf of a supporting character, always choose the player test. For example, you may want to specify that there's a chance that a harried relative of a kidnapping victim might eventually lose her patience with the investigators, and participate in a damaging press conference. Rather than having her make a **STABILITY** test to see when and if this happens, set it up so that a player makes a Reassurance spend to forestall her.

Likewise, if you want to have a supporting character steal something in a situation where the PCs are in no position to affect the outcome, simply decree that it happens. Don't bother testing the character's Filch ability. To do otherwise is to engage in false branching; you are creating unpredictability for yourself, in a way that remains invisible to the players. They don't get a chance to alter the outcome, and thus gain no benefit from the uncertainty you've introduced.

GATHERING CLUES

Gathering clues is simple. All you have to do is: 1) get yourself into a scene where relevant information can be gathered; 2) have the right ability to discover the clue; and 3) tell the Keeper that you're using that ability. As long as you do these three things, you will never fail to gain a piece of necessary information. It is never dependent on a die roll. If you ask for it, you will get it.

You can specify exactly what you intend to achieve: "I use **LANGUAGE** to determine if the poem was really written by McKay, or by the serpent man in disguise."

Or you can engage in a more general informational fishing expedition: "I use **EVIDENCE COLLECTION** to search the crime scene."

If your suggested action corresponds to a clue in the scenario notes, the Keeper provides you the information arising from the clue.

Jimmy "Skins" Smith is looking into a missing trumpet for a pal, Little Mike, who owes money to Joppi, a club owner. Little Mike's piece was stolen, and he needs it to earn money to pay back his debt. Jimmy walks through the pawn shop inspecting each horn. His player Jane says "I check all the horns, keeping in mind that Jimmy's makes a lower B note due to a rusty valve." That's all Jane needs to do for the Keeper to prompt the next scene.

Some clues would be obvious to a trained investigator immediately upon entering a scene. These passive clues are provided by the Keeper without prompting. Scenarios suggest which clues are passive and which are active, but your Keeper will adjust these in play depending on how much guidance you seem to need. On a night when you're cooking with gas, the Keeper will sit back and let you prompt her for passive clues. When you're bogging down, she may volunteer what would normally be active clues.

CORE CLUES

For each core scene, the Keeper designates a core clue. This is the clue you absolutely need to move on to the next scene, and thus to complete the entire investigation. Keepers will avoid making core clues available only with the use of obscure investigative abilities. The ability the Keeper designates is just one possibility, not a straight jacket—if players come up with another plausible method, the Keeper should give out the information.

ALTERNATE CLUES

Alternate clues are an excellent opportunity to introduce additional roleplaying, and possibly provide the player a small benefit if purposed. They are discovered in the same fashion as core clues, and the player doesn't know the difference.

Zora Neale Hurston has been tracking down a mysterious man in black robes, and discovers an eyewitness to his most recent murder. The eyewitness identifies the victim, and describes the arcane ritual used for the murder. The victim's identity is the core clue, as it progresses the investigator toward discovering the cultist. The alternate clue is the type of attack, leading to a better understanding of the magic and possible defenses against it. Both are useful, but only one is essential.

SPECIAL BENEFITS

Certain clues allow you to gain special benefits by spending points from the relevant investigative ability pool. During your first few scenarios, your Keeper will offer you the opportunity to spend additional points as you uncover these clues. After that, it's up to you to ask whether there's anything to be gained by spending extra time or effort on a given clue. You can even propose specific ways to improve your already good result; if your suggestion is persuasive or entertaining, the Keeper may award you a special benefit not mentioned in her scenario notes.

Each benefit costs either 1 or 2 points from the relevant pool, depending on the difficulty of the additional action and the scope of the reward. When asking you whether you want to purchase the benefit, the Keeper always tells you how much it will cost. Additional information gained provides flavor, but is never required to solve the case or move on to a new scene. Often it makes the character seem clever, powerful, or heroic. It may grant you benefits useful later in the scenario, frequently by making a favorable impression on supporting characters. It may allow you to leap forward into the story by gaining a clue that would otherwise only become apparent in a later scene. On occasion, the additional information adds an emotional dimension to the story or ties into the character's past history or civilian life. If you think of your *GUMSHOE* game as a TV series, an extra benefit gives the actor playing your character a juicy spotlight scene.

The act of spending points for benefits is called a spend. The Keeper's scenario notes may specify that you get Benefit X for a 1-point spend, or Benefit Y for a 2-point

spend. Sometimes minor non-core information is available at no cost.

Keepers of great mental agility who feel comfortable granting their players influence over the details of the narrative may allow them to specify the details of a special benefit. If you wish to make a spend in a situation where the Keeper has no special benefit to offer you, and cannot think of one that pertains at all to the investigation, you do not lose the points you wish to spend.

INCONSPICUOUS CLUES

Sometimes the characters instinctively notice something without actively looking for it. Often this situation occurs in places they're moving through casually, and don't regard as scenes in need of intensive searching. The team might pass by a concealed door, spot a droplet of blood on the marble floor of an immaculate hotel lobby, or approach a vehicle with a bomb planted beneath it. Interpersonal abilities can also be used to find inconspicuous clues. The classic example is of a character whose demeanor or behavioral tics establish them as suspicious.

It's unreasonable to expect players to ask to use their various abilities in what appears to be an innocuous transitional scene. Otherwise they'd have to spend minutes of game time with every change of scene, running down their abilities in obsessive checklist fashion. That way madness lies. Instead, the Keeper asks which character has the highest current pool in the ability in question. (When in doubt for what ability to use for a basic search, the Keeper defaults to Evidence Collection.)

If two or more pools are equal, it goes to the one with the highest rating. If ratings are also equal, their characters find the clue at the same time.

SIMPLE SEARCHES

Many clues can be found without any ability whatsoever. If an ordinary person could credibly find a clue simply by looking in a specified place, the clue discovery occurs automatically. You, the reader, wouldn't need to be a trained investigator to find a bloody footprint on the carpet in your living room, or notice a manila envelope taped to the underside of a table at the local pub. By that same logic, the investigators don't require specific abilities to find them, either. When players specify that they're searching an area for clues, they're performing what we call a simple search.

DIE ROLLS

All die rolls in *GUMSHOE* use a single, ordinary six-sided die (d6).

TESTS

A test occurs when the outcome of an ability use is in doubt. Tests apply to general skills only. Unlike information gathering attempts, tests carry a fairly high chance of failure. They may portend dire consequences if you lose, provide advantages if you win, or both.

Even in the case of general skills, the Keeper should call for tests only at dramatically important points in the story, and for tasks of exceptional difficulty. Most general ability uses should allow automatic successes, with possible bonuses on point spends, just like investigative abilities.

DIFFICULTY NUMBERS AND STORY PACING

Just as the *GUMSHOE* system keeps the story moving by making all crucial clues accessible to the characters, Keepers must ensure that tests and contests essential to forward narrative momentum can be easily overcome. Assign relatively low Difficulty Numbers of 4 or less to these crucial plot points. Reserve especially hard Difficulty Numbers for obstacles which provide interesting but nonessential benefits.

For example, if an investigator needs to hotwire a car to escape Dutch Schultz's men from bumping her off, assign the relatively low Difficulty Number of 4 to the task. If it seems the investigators should have a tougher time of it, insert a detail justifying their ease of success. The car is the newest model, or an import from France, and the character has never seen it before.

Where it is essential to overcome a general obstacle in order to reach a core scene, allow success whatever the result, but give a negative consequence other than failure for the test. For example, the PC starts to escape in the car but is spotted by a corrupt cop who knows her face now. This rule never protects characters from Health or Stability loss.

The test represents the character's best chance to succeed. Once you fail, you've shot your wad and cannot retry unless you take some other supporting action that would credibly increase your odds of success. If allowed to do this, you must spend more pool points than you did on the previous attempt. If you can't afford it, you can't retry.

GENERAL SPENDS

Occasionally you'll want to create a task at which there is no reasonable chance of failure, but which should cost a character some degree of effort. To do this, simply charge the character a number of points from relevant general ability pools. Where tasks can be performed by cooperative effort, multiple characters may contribute points to them. 1 or 2 points per character is a reasonable general spend.

MAKING GENERAL TESTS WITHOUT ABILITIES

You can always make a test of any general ability if your rating is 1 or more, whether or not you currently have points in its pool. You can never test a general ability when your rating is 0. There are several types of test that players may face—usually alone, but sometimes with help from fellow investigators.

SIMPLE TESTS

A simple test occurs when the character attempts an action without active resistance from another person or entity. Examples include driving a treacherous road, jumping a gorge, sneaking into an unguarded building, or remaining sane in the face of creeping supernatural horror.

In the game world, expenditure of pool points in this way represents special effort and concentration by the character, the kind you can muster only so many times during the course of an investigation.

The Keeper does not reveal Difficulty Numbers beforehand. This rule is meant to force players to decide how much they want to commit to the situation, with the gnawing emotional dissonance that comes from the possibility of making the wrong move.

TOLL TESTS

In a toll test, your success is assured, if you want it enough—but the cost of your effort is not. The Keeper informs you of the Difficulty; you roll the die without announcing an expenditure. Once you see the die result, you then decide whether to spend the points needed to bridge the gap between die roll and Difficulty, or to allow yourself to fail. The base Difficulty of a toll test is 6, which may be modified upward as circumstances warrant.

PIGGYBACKING

When a group of characters act in concert to perform a task together, they designate one investigator to take the lead. That character makes a simple test, spending any number of his own pool points toward the task, as usual. All other characters pay 1 point from their relevant pools in order to gain the benefits of the leader's action. These points are not added to the leader's die result. For every character who is unable to pay this piggybacking cost, either because he lacks pool points or does not have the ability at all, the Difficulty Number of the attempt increases by 2.

In most instances, a group cannot logically act in concert. Only one character can drive a car at one time. Two characters with Preparedness check their individual kits in sequence, rather than checking a single kit at the same time.

COOPERATION

When two or more characters cooperate toward a single goal, they agree which of them is undertaking the task directly, and which is assisting. The leader may spend any number of points from her pool, adding them to the die roll. The assistants may pay any number of points from their pools. All but one of these is applied to the die roll.

CONTINUING CHALLENGES

For tasks where drama, verisimilitude, or suspense call for a feeling of repeated effort, assign the obstacle a pool representing the base Difficulty of doing it all at once, unaided: this will generally be 8 or higher, often much higher. The tests per se use the standard Difficulty of 4.

The players may take turns, cooperate on each action, or use any other means at their disposal in a series of tests: **ATHLETICS** to batter down a door, or **OCCULT** to deduce the cultists' next sacrificial ritual date, for example. The points the players roll and spend accumulate; when they have enough points to overcome the initial Difficulty, the task is done. No points or rolls spent on a failed test add to the total.

Characters can't render an impossible task possible just by applying the continuing challenge rules.

CONTESTS

Contests occur when two characters, often a player character and a supporting character controlled by the Keeper, actively attempt to thwart one another. Although contests can resolve various physical fights (see Combat section below), the most common contest in a horror game is the chase, in which the investigators run away from sanity-shattering entities intent on ripping them limb from limb.

In a contest, each character acts in turn. The first to fail a roll of the contested ability loses. The Keeper decides who acts first. In a chase, the character who bolts from the scene acts first. Where the characters seem to be acting at the same time, the one with the lowest rating in the relevant ability acts first. In the event of a tie, supporting characters act before player characters. In the event of a tie between player characters, the player who arrived last for the current session goes first in the contest.

The first character to act makes a test of the ability in question. If he fails, he loses the contest. If he succeeds, the second character then makes a test. This continues until one character loses, at which point the other one wins.

Typically each character attempts to beat a Difficulty Number of 4.

Where the odds of success are skewed in favor of one contestant, the Keeper may assign different Difficulties to each. A character with a significant advantage gets a lower Difficulty Number. A character facing a major handicap faces a higher Difficulty Number. When in doubt, the Keeper assigns the lower number to the advantaged participant.

Throughout the contest, Keeper and players should collaborate to add flavor to each result, explaining what the characters did to remain in the contest. That way, instead of dropping out of the narration to engage in an arithmetical recitation, you keep the fictional world verbally alive.

ZERO-SUM CONTESTS

A zero-sum contest occurs when something good or bad is definitely going to happen to one of the PCs, and you need to find out which one takes the perk or the hit. Each competing player makes a test of a general ability. A zero-sum contest can be positive or negative. In a positive contest, the character with the highest result gets a benefit. In a negative contest, the one with the lowest result suffers an ill consequence. When embarking on a contest with an open Difficulty,

inform the players that this is an open Difficulty, and whether this is a positive or negative test. They decide in advance how many points to spend to modify their rolls, keeping this number secret from other players by writing it down on a piece of paper. They then roll the dice, reveal their expenditures, and announce their final results. The Keeper can cap the maximum spend.

Be cautious when treating events with negative outcomes as zero-sum contests. Because they guarantee that something bad will definitely happen to one of the PCs, make sure that the negative consequence is distressing, but does no permanent harm to the character.

Worse results of zero-sum contests are acceptable if the characters have had some other fair chance to avoid exposure to the bad situation. If players are tied for best result (in the case of a positive test) or worst (in a negative test), the tied players may subsequently spend any number of additional points from the pool in question, in hopes of breaking the tie in their favor. Should results remain tied after additional expenditures, the Keeper chooses the winner based on story considerations.

COMBAT

FIGHTING

Fights are slightly more complicated contests involving any of the following abilities:

SCUFFLING VS. SCUFFLING: The characters are fighting in close quarters (melee).

SHOOTING VS. SHOOTING: The characters are apart from one another, and trying to hit each other with guns or other missile weapons (ranged).

INITIATIVE: Determine whether the character who attempts to strike the first blow seizes the initiative and therefore gets the first opportunity to strike his opponent, or if his intended target anticipates his attack and beats him to the punch (or the shot, as the case may be).

As *GUMSHOE* is player-facing, how this works depends on whether the PC in the situation is the aggressor or the defender.

In a **SCUFFLING** contest, the PC goes first if their **SCUFFLING** equals or exceeds their target's **SCUFFLING** rating.

In a **SHOOTING** contest, the PC goes first if their **FIREARMS** equals or exceeds their target's **FIREARMS** rating.

Otherwise, the opponent goes first.

In the rare instance where two PCs fight one another, the PC with the higher applicable rating (**SCUFFLING** or **FIREARMS**) goes first. If their ratings tie but their pools do not, the one with the higher pool goes first. If both are still tied, roll a die, with one player going first on an odd result and the other on even.

A contest proceeds between the two abilities. When combatants using the **SCUFFLING** or **FIREARMS** abilities roll well, they get the opportunity to deal damage to their opponents.

HIT THRESHOLDS: Each character has a Hit Threshold of either 3 (the standard value) or 4 (if the character's **ATHLETICS** rating is 8 or more.) The Hit Threshold is the Difficulty Number the character's opponent must match or beat in order to harm him. Less competent supporting characters may have lower Hit Thresholds. Creatures may have Hit Thresholds of 4 or higher, regardless of their **ATHLETICS** ratings.

DEALING DAMAGE: When you roll on or over your opponent's Hit Threshold, you may deal damage to him. To do so, you make a damage roll, rolling a die which is then modified according to the relative lethality of your weapon, as per the following table:

WEAPON TYPE	DAMAGE MODIFIER
Fist, kick	-2
Small improvised weapon, police baton, knife	-1
Machete, heavy club, light firearm	0
Sword, heavy firearm	+1

For firearms, add an additional +2 when fired at point-blank range.

Supernatural creatures often exhibit alarmingly high damage modifiers.

Characters may never spend points from their combat pools to increase their damage rolls.

The final damage result is then subtracted from your opponent's **HEALTH** pool. When a combatant's **HEALTH** pool drops to 0 or less, that combatant begins to suffer ill effects, ranging from slight impairment to helplessness to death.

Unlike other contests, participants do not lose when they fail their test rolls. Instead, they're forced out of the fight when they lose consciousness or become seriously wounded.

ONE GUN, TWO COMBATANTS

If your opponent has a gun well in hand and is ready to fire, and you charge him from more than five feet away, he can empty his entire clip or chamber at you before you get to him, badly injuring you. You are automatically hit. He rolls one instance of damage, which is then tripled. Yes, we said tripled. And, yes, the tripling occurs after weapon modifiers are taken into account. This is why few people choose to charge, when their opponents have the drop on them.

If your opponent has a pistol but it is not well in hand and ready to fire, you may attempt to jump him and wrestle it from his grip. If he has a pistol well in hand but is unaware of your presence, you may also be able to jump him, at the Keeper's discretion. The characters engage in a **SCUFFLING** contest to see which of them gets control of the gun and fires it. The winner makes a damage roll against the loser, using the pistol's Damage modifier, including the +2 for point blank range.

If you jump an opponent with an unready rifle, a **SCUFFLING** combat breaks out, with the opponent using the rifle as a heavy club.

EXHAUSTION, INJURY, AND DEATH

Unlike most abilities, your **HEALTH** pool can drop below 0.

When it does this, you must make a **CONSCIOUSNESS** roll. Roll a die with the absolute value of your current **HEALTH** pool as your Difficulty. You may deliberately strain yourself to remain conscious, voluntarily reducing your **HEALTH** pool by an amount of your choice. For each point by which you reduce that pool, add 1 to your die result. The Difficulty of the **CONSCIOUSNESS** roll is based on your **HEALTH** pool before you make this reduction.

If your **HEALTH** pool is anywhere from 0 to -5, you are hurt, but have suffered no permanent injury, beyond a few superficial cuts and bruises. However, the pain of your injuries makes it impossible to spend points on Investigative abilities, and increases the Difficulty Numbers of all tests and contests—including opponents' Hit Thresholds—by 1.

A character with the **FIRST AID** ability can improve your condition by spending **FIRST AID** points. For every Medic point spent, you regain 2 Health points—unless you are acting on yourself, in which case you gain only 1 **HEALTH** point for every **FIRST AID** point spent. The **FIRST AID** user can only refill your pool to where you were before the incident in which you received this latest injury. He must be in a position to devote all of his attention to directly tending to your wounds.

If your **HEALTH** pool is between -6 and -11, you have been seriously wounded. You must make a **CONSCIOUSNESS** roll.

Whether or not you maintain consciousness, you are no longer able to fight. Until you receive first aid, you will lose an additional **HEALTH** point every half hour. A character with the **MEDIC** ability can stabilize your condition by spending 2 **MEDIC** points to stop the **HEALTH** point loss. However, he can't restore your **HEALTH** points.

Even after you receive first aid, you must convalesce in a hospital or similar setting for a period of days. Your period of forced inactivity is a number of days equal to the positive value of your lowest **HEALTH** pool score. (So if you were reduced to -8 **HEALTH**, you are hospitalized for 8 days.) On the day of your discharge, your **HEALTH** pool increases to half its maximum value. On the next day, it refreshes fully.

When your **HEALTH** pool dips to -12 or below, you are **DEAD**. Time to create a replacement character.

BIGGER FIGHTS

Combat becomes more chaotic when two groups of combatants fight, or a group gangs up against a single opponent. If one group of combatants is surprised by the other (see sidebar), the surprising side goes before the surprised side. Otherwise, determine initiative as follows.

CLOSE-UP FIGHT: If any PC has a Scuffling rating equal to or greater than than any combatant on the other side, the PCs act first.

SHOOT-OUT: If any PC has a Firearms rating equal to or greater than than any combatant on the other side, the PCs act first.

Shoot-outs may devolve into scuffles; this does not alter the already-established initiative order.

The time it takes to go through the ranking order once, with each character taking an action, is called a round. When one round ends, another begins.

In the course of each round, either the PCs or their enemies go first, as already established by the initiative order. Then the other side responds. The order in which the two sides act remains unchanged from round to round.

During the portion of the round devoted to the PCs, each participating PC makes an attack in sequence, according to the players' seating order, from the Keeper's left to right. Sequence becomes irrelevant, obviously, when only one PC is participating (or still standing) in the fight.

In their portion of the round, opponents respond with their own wave of attack attempts, ordered by the characters they're targeting, again using a left-to-right player seating order. Where multiple opponents attack a single PC, the Keeper determines their order of action in whatever manner she finds convenient—usually the order in which she's tracking them in her rough notes.

The order of action can therefore change slightly from round to round for the PCs' opponents, but not for the PCs themselves.

Some beings may strike more than once per round. They make each attack in succession, and may divide them up between opponents within range, or concentrate all of them on a single enemy. Keepers order these attacks in whatever order they find convenient, so long as they fall within portion of the round devoted to enemy attacks. Usually it's easiest to have them act against multiple PCs at once, starting when they reach the first target in the seating order.

When called upon to act, each character may strike at any opponent within range of his weapons.

Creatures may choose to use their actions to deal additional damage to downed or helpless opponents, rather than engage active opponents. They automatically deal one instance of damage per action. Only the most crazed and bestial human enemies engage in this behavior.

Characters who join a combat in progress come last in order of precedence. If more than two characters join during the same round, the Keeper determines their relative precedence using the rules above.

The fight continues until one side capitulates or flees, or all of its members are unconscious or otherwise unable to continue.

SURPRISE

Player characters are surprised when they find themselves in a suddenly dangerous situation. Avoid being surprised with a successful **SENSE TROUBLE** test. The basic Difficulty is 4, adjusted by the opponent's **STEALTH** modifier.

Player characters may surprise supporting characters by sneaking up on them with a successful **SHADOWING** or **STEALTH** test. The basic Difficulty is 4, adjusted by the opponent's **STEALTH** modifier.

Surprised characters suffer a +2 increase to all general ability Difficulties for any immediately subsequent action. In a fight, the penalty pertains to the first round of combat.

ARMOR

Armor may reduce the damage from certain weapon types. If you're wearing a form of armor effective against the weapon being used against you, you subtract a number of points from each instance of damage dealt to you before applying it to your Health pool. Armor in the 1920s was rare, cumbersome, and used primarily by the military. If the investigators find and don light body armor, it's heavy, hot, and marks you out as someone looking for trouble.

Creatures often have high armor ratings. They may possess hard, bony hides or monstrous anatomies that can take greater punishment than ordinary organisms. Most supernatural creatures are more resistant to bullets and other missile weapons than they are to blunt force trauma, slashes, and stab wounds.

COVER

In a typical gunfight, combatants seek cover, hiding behind walls, furniture, or other barriers, exposing themselves only for the few seconds it takes them to pop up and fire a round at their targets. The *GUMSHOE* rules recognize three cover conditions:

Exposed: No barrier stands between you and the combatant firing at you. Your Hit Threshold decreases by 1.

Partial Cover: About half of your body is exposed to fire. Your Hit Threshold remains unchanged.

Full Cover: Except when you pop up to fire a round, the barrier completely protects you from incoming fire. Your Hit Threshold increases by 1.

Some covers are better than others. For instance, if the cover is structurally weak—such as a cheap wooden door—you may have full cover, but the door can be targeted, allowing you a point or two of armor even when hiding.

AMMO CAPACITY: RELOADING

Characters need to reload only when dramatically appropriate. Otherwise, they're assumed to be able to refill the cylinders of their revolvers or jam clips into their automatic weapons between shots. When reloading is an issue, Keepers may request a **SHOOTING** test (Difficulty 3) to quickly reload. Characters who fail may not use their Shooting ability to attack during the current round.

RANGE

The effect of range on firearms combat is likewise simplified nearly out of existence. Handguns and shotguns can only be accurately fired at targets within fifty meters. The range limit for rifles is one hundred meters. A firearm at point blank range adds +2 to damage. Shotguns at 40 yards or more deal -1 damage.

EXPLOSIVES

Explosives and investigators are an unlikely duo. A lone professor, looking into the cause of his missing students to discover a sewer filled with ghouls, uses a few sticks of dynamite to end the threat—or a Hellfighter in the trenches tosses a grenade at a squad of oncoming Germans. Or an investigator hears unfamiliar clicking sounds as they turn the car key, before it explodes.

Explosives, while deadly, are a useful tool and one many investigators may want. To properly set an explosive for maximum efficiency, an Explosives Difficulty 4 sets it. To throw a grenade or lit stick of dynamite is an **ATHLETICS** Difficulty 4 test.

NON-LETHAL WEAPONS

In *GUMSHOE*, non-lethal attacks never take an opponent out faster than standard combat. Otherwise players would have their characters simply knock their enemies out, and then kill them in cold blood, which is unsympathetic and out of genre. Killing an unconscious person in cold blood requires a Stability check.

FIGHTING WITHOUT ABILITIES

A character with a **FIREARMS** rating of 0 is not allergic to guns. Anyone can pick up a revolver and empty it in the general direction of the foe. Likewise, a character with no **SCUFFLING** ability is not going to just ignore the nearby fire axe when a ghoul bursts through a partition wall. However, such characters will use their weapons ineffectively and hesitantly. Using a weapon (including fists or feet) without ability has the following drawbacks:

- You suffer an automatic -2 damage reduction
- You must declare your action at the beginning of each round, and cannot change it
- You go last in each round

If you are using a firearm, a roll of 1 means you accidentally shoot yourself or one of your allies, as selected (or rolled randomly) by the Keeper; do damage as normal (including your automatic -2 penalty)

CALLED SHOTS

In certain situations, simply hitting an enemy isn't enough; you need to get him in a particular spot. When taking a called shot, specify the desired location of the strike and any additional intended effect other than general injury to the opponent. The Keeper decides whether this is a likely outcome of such a hit. If it is clearly not a likely outcome, and your character would logically know this, she warns you in advance, so you can do something else instead.

The Keeper then adds 1 to 4 points to the target's Hit Threshold, depending on the additional difficulty entailed. Use the following table as a guideline. Body locations assume a human of ordinary size. Hit Threshold modifiers for ordinary body parts of extraordinary creatures are left as an exercise for the Keeper. Vehicle target locations are in italics.

DESIRED LOCATION	MODIFIER TO HIT THRESHOLD
Large carried object (rocket launcher, laptop computer, backpack)	+1
Torso, windshield	+1
Chest (if attacker is facing target)	+2
Gut, specific window, tail rotor	+2
Head or limb	+2
Hand or foot, joint, tire	+3
Heart, throat, mouth, or face	+3
Weapon or other hand-held object	+3
Eye, headlight	+4
Chest (if target faces away from attacker)	+4

With the new Hit Threshold determined, you then make a combat ability test, as per the standard rules. If you succeed, your specified effect occurs as desired.



If you strike an ordinary person in the head, throat, or chest with a weapon, add +2 to the damage; hitting the heart adds +3 to the damage. Neither can be combined with a point-blank gunshot, which is already assumed to hit a vital location.

If you strike an ordinary person in a joint (wrist, knee, etc.) or throat with an aimed hand-to-hand blow, lock, or kick, add +2 to the damage; hitting an eye adds +3 to the damage. This assumes a trained, targeted strike intended to disable or cripple. You may narrate some other crippling strike to suit your own specific martial arts idiom, but the modifiers remain the same if you want to do the extra damage.

If, after this damage is dealt, the victim is already hurt but not seriously wounded, you may then pay an additional 6 points from the fighting ability you are using to reduce the target to -6 **HEALTH**. If the target is already seriously wounded, you may then pay an additional 6 **SHOOTING, WEAPONS, or HAND-TO-HAND** points (whichever applies) to kill the target outright.

RUNNING AWAY

Fleeing from an ongoing fight requires an **ATHLETICS** or **FLEEING** test. The Difficulty is 3 plus the number of foes you're fleeing from: to flee one enemy is Difficulty 4, fleeing two enemies is Difficulty 5, fleeing four enemies is Difficulty 7. On a success, melee ends, and you flee; if they intend to chase you, your foes must roll first in the ensuing full contest of **ATHLETICS**. If you fail, the opponent with the highest damage value automatically deals one instance of damage to you. Melee still ends, but you must roll first in the ensuing chase.

In situations where it seems appropriate to make flight more difficult, then on a failure, any directly engaged opponent might spend 3 **ATHLETICS** to block you from fleeing—interposing himself between you and the exit, tackling you, slamming the garage doors, or whatever the narrative description warrants. In this case, your enemies forgo the damage they would otherwise deal.

WHAT DO POOL POINTS REPRESENT?

Pool points are a literary abstraction, representing the way that each character gets his or her own time in the spotlight in the course of an ensemble drama. When you do something remarkable, you expend a little bit of your spotlight time. More active players will spend their points sooner than less demonstrative ones, unless they carefully pick and choose their moments to shine.

Remember, all characters are remarkably competent. Pool points measure your opportunities to exercise this ultra-competence during any given scenario. Even when pools are empty, you still have a reasonable chance to succeed at a test, and you'll always get the information you need to move forward in the case.

Pool points do not represent a resource, tangible or otherwise, in the game world. Players are aware of them, but characters are not. The team members' ignorance of them is analogous to TV characters' obliviousness to commercial breaks, the unwritten rules of scene construction, and the tendency of events to heat up during sweeps.

We represent this most purely in the case of investigative skills, which are the core of the game. Their refreshment is tied to a purely fictional construct, the length of the episode.

However, where a pool could be seen to correspond to a resource perceptible to the characters, we handle refreshment in a somewhat more realistic, if also abstract, manner. Characters' ebbing **HEALTH** scores are perceptible to the characters in the form of welts, cuts, pain, and general fatigue. **STABILITY** is less tangible, but can be subjectively measured in the characters' moods and reactions. Physical abilities, also tied to fatigue and sharpness of reflexes, are also handled with a nod to the demands of realism.

MYTHOS AND MADNESS

As in *Call of Cthulhu* (see Keeper Rulebook, page 154) and numerous Lovecraft tales, the investigators begin as stable and rational people who begin to uncover the Cthulhu Mythos and follow the downward path, which frequently leads into madness and death. *Harlem Unbound* uses the same sanity rules as *Call of Cthulhu* (and an alternate *GUMSHOE* OGL listed below). Harlemites who may have suffered more horror and terrors than their white counterparts suffer much the same when it comes to the Cthulhu Mythos, as in an ironic turn, the Mythos cares not for race, gender, or political or sexual persuasion. That evil is all humanity's own.

STABILITY TESTS

Mental stresses and trauma can take you out of commission, temporarily or permanently, as easily as physical injury. When an incident challenges your fragile sanity, make a **STABILITY** test against a Difficulty Number of 4.

If you fail, you lose a number of **STABILITY** points equal to the trauma; see the table below. The severity of the loss depends on the situation. As with any other test of a general ability, you are always permitted to spend Stability points to provide a bonus to your roll. However, it's never a good bet to spend more points than you stand to lose if you fail.

A failure results in something unpleasant happening to your character (e.g. fainting, coming under the sway of a spell, or spiraling into madness).

Your **STABILITY** loss from failed tests is capped at the worst incident in that scene. Points spent on providing bonuses are still lost.

INCIDENT	STABILITY LOSS
A human opponent attacks you with evident intent to do serious harm	2
You are in a car or other vehicle accident serious enough to pose a risk of injury	2
A human opponent attacks you with evident intent to kill	3
You see a supernatural creature from a distance	3
You see a supernatural creature up close	4
You see a particularly grisly murder or accident scene	4
You learn that a friend or loved one has been violently killed	4
You discover the corpse of a friend or loved one	6
You are attacked by a supernatural creature	7
You see a friend or loved one killed	7
You see a friend or loved one killed in a particularly gruesome manner	8

Keepers should feel free to assess Stability losses for other incidents, using the examples provided as a benchmark. Some especially overwhelming creatures may impose higher than normal Stability losses when seen from a distance, seen up close, or when ripping your lungs out.

Characters make a single roll per incident, based on its highest potential **STABILITY** loss.

Keepers craving an additional level of complexity can alter Difficulty Numbers for **STABILITY** tests depending on the character's attitude toward the destabilizing event. For example, characters who would logically be inured to a given event face a Difficulty of 3, while those especially susceptible face a 5. A character whose daytime identity is that of a surgeon or coroner might face a lowered Difficulty when encountering gruesomely mutilated bodies. A stock car racer would have a better chance against car accidents. But no character type gets a break when encountering supernatural creatures.

LOSING IT

Like **HEALTH**, your **STABILITY** pool can drop below 0.

If your **STABILITY** ranges from 0 to -5, you are **SHAKEN**. Difficulty Numbers for all general abilities increase by 1, and it becomes more difficult to use investigative abilities. If you want to make an **INVESTIGATIVE** spend, make a test with the absolute value of your current Stability pool as your Difficulty. You may deliberately strain yourself, voluntarily reducing your Stability pool by an amount of your choice. For each point you reduce it, add 1 to your die result. The Difficulty of the **STABILITY** test is based on your **STABILITY** pool before you make this reduction. If you fail, you still make the spend, but you should roleplay this failure.

If your **STABILITY** ranges from -6 to -11, you acquire a mental illness. This condition stays with you even after your **STABILITY** pool is restored to normal. See below for more. You also continue to suffer the ill effects of being shaken. Furthermore, you permanently lose 1 point from your Stability rating. The only way to get it back is to purchase it again with build points.

When your **STABILITY** reaches -12 or less, you are incurably insane. You may commit one last crazy act, which must either be self-destructively heroic or self-destructively calamitous—or you may choose merely to gibber and drool.

CAMPAIGNS!

Keepers running extremely long, multi-part investigations may designate certain story events as break points, where all investigative pools are refreshed.

SHATTERING YOUR SANITY

SANITY can only be lost to the horrors of the Mythos, be it from piecing together the foul machinations of a scheme beyond the human ken, fleeing the relentless assault of a Hound of Tindalos, or perhaps casting a spell from some blasted tome to best a cult of Hastur, saving lives at the cost of your own humanity. Any Mythos-related **STABILITY** loss incurs a 1-point **SANITY** loss.

For any investigator who loses 3 points of **SANITY**, their core belief in humanity is under attack. Something within them has broken. The investigator goes **INSANE** for some time, and can only be treated under professional care. After a month, the investigator comes around—but their outlook on the world has been changed, and the lost **SANITY** has not been restored. This is a great roleplaying opportunity as the character's perception has begun to change, and those changes could be represented in any number of small ways.

When a character has only 1 **SANITY** point, they appear wild-eyed and nearly crazed, and all actions have an increased Difficulty of +1 to +2. The character may also catch glimpses of the truth of the world overlaid on top of the mundane, and be unable to differentiate the two (i.e., the investigator may see the outline of a Shan infesting a high school teacher, or a Deep One Hybrid who hasn't deduced their own doomed fate).

MENTAL ILLNESS

If the incident that drove you to mental illness was mundane in nature, you suffer from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). You are haunted by dreams of the incident, and spend your days in a constant state of anxiety and alert, as if prepared for it to repeat itself at any moment. Whenever your senses register any input reminding you of the incident, you must make a **STABILITY** test (Difficulty 4) or freeze up. If you freeze up, you are unable to take any action for fifteen minutes, and remain shaken (see above) for twenty-four hours after that. Tests to see if you show symptoms of PTSD do not in and of themselves lower your **STABILITY** pool.

If driven to mental illness by a Cthulhu Mythos occurrence, you face a range of possible mental disorders. The Keeper rolls on the following chart, or chooses a disorder based on the triggering circumstance. The player is then sent out of the room, while the Keeper and other players collaborate on a way to heighten his sense of dislocation and disorientation.

DELUSION: The other players and Keeper decide on a mundane detail of the world which is no longer true, and has never been true. For example, every person you see in a raincoat is a Deep One, who must be put down; or every time you hear someone speak Latin, you know they are casting some diabolical spell, and you'll do whatever it takes to stop them.

HOMICIDAL MANIA: The Keeper takes the player aside and tells him that he knows one of the other players is a supernatural creature, and here's just how to kill the monster.

MEGALOMANIA: When the character fails at a dramatic moment, the Keeper describes the outcome of his ability attempt as successful, then asks the player to leave the room. Then the Keeper describes the real results to the other players, and invites the megalomaniac player back into the room.

MULTIPLE PERSONALITY DISORDER: At moments of stress, another player is assigned control of the character, speaking and acting as if he's an entirely different person.

PARANOIA: The other players are instructed to act as if they're trying to keep straight faces when the affected player returns to the table. Occasionally they exchange notes, make hand signals to the Keeper, or use meaningless code words, as if communicating something important the paranoid player is unaware of.

SELECTIVE AMNESIA: The group decides on an event that did happen in the world that the player has now forgotten all about. He's married, or killed someone, or has pseudonymously written a best-selling book. Everyone he meets refers to this new, verifiable fact, of which he has no knowledge.

FAINT: At moments of stress, the player may faint at a moment's notice, yet at other times be able to act normally. The choice of fainting is left up to the Keeper or a die roll where odds mean a faint, and evens have no effect.

PHOBIA: The player gains a new phobia (see *Call of Cthulhu*, Keeper Rulebook, page 160 for a comprehensive list).

PSYCHOLOGICAL TRIAGE

A character with the **PSYCHOANALYSIS** ability can spend points from that pool to help another character regain spent **STABILITY** points. For every **PSYCHOANALYSIS** point spent, the recipient gains 2 **STABILITY** points.

If a character is acting in an erratic manner due to the mental illness condition, a another character can spend 2 points of **PSYCHOANALYSIS** to snap him into a state of temporary lucidity. He will then act rationally for the remainder of the current scene.

HEAD GAMES

The mental illness condition may be cured through prolonged treatment using the **PSYCHOANALYSIS** ability. At the beginning of each scenario, in a prologue scene preceding the main action, the character administering the treatment makes a **PSYCHOANALYSIS** test (Difficulty 4). After three consecutive successful tests, and three consecutive scenarios in which the patient remains above 0 **STABILITY** at all times, the character's mental illness goes away.

However, if the character ever again acquires a mental illness, he regains the condition he was previously cured of. Permanent cure then becomes impossible.

A successful **PSYCHOANALYSIS** test undertaken during the course of a scenario suppresses its symptoms until the patient next suffers a **STABILITY** loss.

PSYCHOANALYSIS can also be used to suppress a patient's insanity by denial for a number of days equal to 11 minus **CTHULHU MYTHOS**. The treatment can only be used once per month for every number of the **CTHULHU MYTHOS** rating—for example, **CTHULHU MYTHOS** 1 means it can be tried once a month. This treatment doesn't work for higher levels of **CTHULHU MYTHOS**, as the patient has seen too much of the truth to deny it. Any use of **Cthulhu Mythos** brings the harshness of reality back onto the patient, and sends them spiraling into more madness.

REGAINING POOL POINTS

Spent points from various pools are restored at different rates, depending on their narrative purpose.

Investigative ability pools are restored only at the end of each case, without regard to the amount of time that passes in the game world. Players seeking to marshal their resources may ask you how long cases typically run, in real time. Most groups finish scenarios over 2-3 sessions. Players may revise their sense of how carefully to manage point spending, as they see how quickly their group typically disposes of its cases.

Use of the **PSYCHOANALYSIS** ability permits limited recovery of Stability points in the course of a scenario. Full refreshment occurs between cases. Recovery is possible only when the character is able to spend calm, undisturbed quality time with friends and loved ones who are uninvolved in the battle against the Cthulhu Mythos. The characters must balance the everyday pressures of ordinary life against their activities as covert battlers of the supernatural, and must work to keep their support networks intact. If they fail, they regain no **STABILITY** between scenarios. As part of the character creation process, players must detail their network of friends and loved ones in a paragraph or two of background text, which is then submitted to the Keeper for approval.

An investigator's **HEALTH** pool refreshes over time, at a rate of 2 points per day of restful activity. (Wounded characters heal at a different rate, over a period of hospitalization.) Use of the **MEDIC** ability can restore a limited number of **HEALTH** points over the course of a session.

Pools for the physical abilities of **ATHLETICS**, **DRIVING**, **SCUFFLING**, and **FIREARMS** are fully restored whenever twenty-four hours of game-world time elapses since the last expenditure. The remaining general abilities refresh at the end of each case, like investigative abilities.

RACIAL TENSION MODIFIER

To fully represent the hotbed of tension that Harlem is during this time period, it is suggested that Keepers use the **RACIAL TENSION MODIFIER** for their games. The **RACIAL TENSION MODIFIER** should add a new level of play and complexity that may be welcomed by Keepers and investigators alike. The modifiers apply to all investigators, unless otherwise noted in the scenario.

FOR CALL OF CTHULHU: Where the investigator and target are of different races or cultures, increase the difficulty of the roll (such as social skills) by one level (Regular becomes Hard, Hard becomes Extreme). If necessary, at the Keeper's discretion, an additional penalty die may be applied, dependent on the circumstances. This reflects the mistrust between the different groups for control of the area.

FOR GUMSHOE: Where the investigator and target are of different races or cultures, it costs one additional spend for all interactions (such as social skills). If necessary, at the Keeper's discretion, an additional Spend may be applied, dependent on the circumstances. This reflects the mistrust between the different groups for control of the area.

EXAMPLE HAZARD: ALIEN FUNGAL INFECTION

MILD: For the next two intervals, you lose 2 **HEALTH** every time you make an **ATHLETICS** test.

MODERATE: Make a **HEALTH** test against a Difficulty of 4. If you fail, you suffer an extreme shock at the beginning of the next interval.

EXAMPLE HAZARD: TEMPORAL SHOCK

MILD: For the remainder of the interval, you lose 1 **HEALTH** each time you use an Academic or Technical ability.

MODERATE: For the remainder of the interval, the Difficulty of any general ability rolls increases by 2.

HAZARDS

In or out of combat, the characters' survival may be threatened by assorted hazards, from electrical shock to poisoning.

ELECTRICITY AND OTHER SHOCKS

Damage from exposure to electricity varies according to voltage. You can suffer:

Mild shock, equivalent to briefly touching an ungrounded wire or damaged electrical appliance. You lose 1 **HEALTH** and are blown backwards for a couple of meters.

Moderate shock, equivalent to a jolt from a cattle prod. You lose 2 **HEALTH** and (if in combat time) your next four actions. You always lose at least one action, but may buy off the loss of other actions by paying 3 **ATHLETICS** points per action.

Extreme shock, equivalent to a lightning strike. You suffer one die of damage, with a +4 modifier.

The Keeper should always give you some opportunity to avoid being shocked, whether it be an Athletics test to avoid unexpected contact, or a **SENSE TROUBLE** test to spot the danger.

If you are reduced to -6 or fewer **HEALTH**, the current is assumed to have traveled through your heart or brain, causing cardiac arrest or brain damage, respectively. The Keeper describes appropriate symptoms and futuristic treatments during your sick bay convalescence. Many other hazards may be emulated using the mild/moderate/extreme breakdown above. Simply change the narrative description and side effects, keeping the **HEALTH** pool losses.

FIRE

Damage from exposure to fire varies according to the surface area of your body exposed to the flame, and repeats for each round (or, outside of combat, every few seconds) that you remain exposed to it.

Minor exposure, most often to an extremity like a hand or foot, carries a damage modifier of -2.

Partial exposure, to up to half of your surface area, carries a damage modifier of +0.

Extensive exposure, to half or more of your surface area, imposes a damage modifier of +2.

The Keeper should always give you a chance to avoid being set on fire. The Difficulty of extinguishing a flame is usually 4, but might be higher for anomalous flame-like manifestations, or when you are coated with a futuristic accelerant.

SUFFOCATION

When deprived of air, you get two minutes before the nastiness kicks in. After that point, you lose 1 **ATHLETICS** every ten seconds, as you struggle to hold your breath. Once that pool depletes, you start losing **HEALTH**, at a rate of 1 point every five seconds.

TOXINS

Toxins are either inhaled, ingested, or injected directly into the bloodstream. They vary widely in lethality. Being slipped a mickey by some goon may impose a damage modifier of -2, where a Mi-go nerve gas might range from +6 to +16. Inhaled toxins tend to take effect right away. Injected and ingested toxins take delayed effect, anywhere from minutes to hours after exposure. Their damage might be parceled out in increments, and may prevent you from refreshing **HEALTH** points until somehow neutralized. As with any hazard, the Keeper should always give you a chance to avoid exposure to them.

INVESTIGATOR ADVANCEMENT

At the end of each investigation, each player gets 2 build points for each session they participated in. Players who have characters die in the course of an investigation only get points for each session involving their current living character.

These build points can be spent to increase either investigative or general abilities. You may acquire new abilities with an explanation of how the skill was acquired (e.g., taking night classes, spending some time doing research, practicing in the field, etc.). Increasing current skills does not require explanation unless it's a rare skill, or one that requires extensive equipment.

The following skills may not be increased with build points: **CREDIT RATING**, **CTHULHU MYTHOS**, or **SANITY**. Once lost, they may only be regained during the course of a scenario.

SONG OF HARLEM

*Chant another song of Harlem;
Not about the wrong of Harlem
But the worthy throng of Harlem,
Proud that they belong to Harlem;
They, the over-blamed of Harlem
Need not be ashamed of Harlem;
All is not ill-famed in Harlem,
The devil, too is tamed in Harlem.*

Anonymous, "Harlem"

OPTIONAL BUILD POINTS

Keepers wishing to extend their games or add an element of Pulp may allow characters to spend build points on **Credit Rating**, **Cthulhu Mythos** or **Sanity**. This should be roleplayed and requires some story element.



MMS 12

STORYTELLING

Never forget that we were enslaved in this country longer than we have been free. Never forget that for 250 years black people were born into chains—whole generations followed by more generations who knew nothing but chains.

Ta-Nehisi Coates

TO BE ABLE TO RUN THE GAME, a Keeper needs to have a basic understanding of racism, Jim Crow, the Great Migration, and segregation. For general story keeping information, see page 182 - 221 of *Call of Cthulhu* Keepers book or below for Pelgrane *GUMSHOE* rules on scenario creation. Both are excellent tools and resources.

THE STRUGGLE

America as we know it was built on the backs of African Americans. The White House, at one time a symbol of greatness for the country, was built by slaves. The Founding Fathers had a moment to change the course of the United States with the signing of the U.S. Constitution, to make everyone free and equal, but decided it was more profitable to keep blacks in chains and working as slaves.

Let's establish two basic principles in this section to set the scene:

Racism is real and its impact is immeasurable. It was the mainstream during the Harlem Renaissance, and it's alive and kicking now.

There is **no such thing as reverse racism**. Black people can't be defined as racist. Prejudiced? Yes. Racist? No.

Why can't black people or any non-white group be racist? Simple. The most basic definition of racism is a system built by the dominant race in power to disadvantage another race. That one sentence has caused so much pain, death, and suffering to and beyond this day. People are frequently confused about what racism is. They think it's just actively hating a group—and if they don't hate a group of people, they're off the hook. But hate is one small aspect of racism. Modern-day racism is vastly different than the racism of *Harlem Unbound*.

Modern-day racism is more subtle, unseen in its most powerful movements. It's the endless microaggressions a person of color suffers every day, whether in their home, which should be a safe space, or on the way to work, or in a restaurant with their partner. Racism appears in the waiter who doesn't make eye contact, the boss who uses "coded" language to disparage you out of a raise, and the laws that are passed by the government to remove what few protections and voting abilities you have. To redlining boxing them out of equal housing, categorizing and removing hope. And ultimately, racism rears its ugly head in more violent actions, including the legalized killing of African Americans by the police.

That modern day legalized killing moves us closer to life during the Harlem Renaissance. That cop on the corner is not your friend. You must step to the side of the street as a white couple walks by. There is constant fear of the Ku Klux Klan and you wonder if that shop owner who gave you the side-eye has a white sheet to wear at home, or maybe the police chief or even the mayor.



CHECKLIST OF DON'TS

- Black Accents
- N-Word
- Stereotypes

RACISM: REALITY AND THE GAME

THE BASICS

Racism has been rampant in the Americas since white men first stepped on the continent, enforcing their views on the indigenous people, and with blacks in chains in the bottom of their boats. Since the inception of the United States of America, blacks and anyone not white have been considered *less than*, and at best, second class.

By the start of *Harlem Unbound* in 1919, the first Great Migration is coming to an end, with some 450,000 Southerners fleeing the South and another 800,000 leaving over the coming decade. They flee to seek better lives with a semblance of safety. But even in the safety of Harlem, race impacts every moment of their existence.

CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS

BATTLING BLACKFACE

When playing someone of a different race, there must be sensitivity to avoid any form of cultural appropriation. It is possible to honor and interact with the culture on more than just an aesthetic level.

Blackface? Just don't. Don't try to talk with a "black" accent. Don't try to have "black" mannerisms or fall into any of the countless stereotypes. This is a key thing for any Keeper to convey once you have crafted your scenario.

CAN I USE THE N-WORD IN MY GAME?

Short answer? No.

It is never okay for a non-black Keeper to use it, and even black Keepers should be wary of it. "Wait, what? It's just a game..." is possibly the thought going through your mind.

Let's assume that everyone who would want to say that word in the game is not racist or bigoted (that laughing you hear is my internal cynic). Even if all of that remains true, what does using the word really bring to a scene? Is it impact or shock you're looking for? If so, that can be conveyed by the actions of your antagonists.

For instance, let's say you are running an 1850s *Call of Cthulhu* game set in the deep South. The racist plantation owner in reality would likely use the word, but could just as easily call black people slaves, colored, or other still-insulting words. The horror and intensity will come from his actions, through violence like whipping people or having dogs chase the black investigators. Using actions to portray the plantation owner's racism (rather than words, and more specifically the N-word) provides a strong alternative that allows the GM to use third-person to illustrate the scene.

Both approaches generate tension, but being action-oriented allows focus on the tension within the game. The small group of players who are assembled need to feel comfortable with each other and the Keeper. By using the N-word, the Keeper automatically creates a divide in the room.

The flip side of that coin is that I do fervently believe the N-word should be used in other forms of media, such as television and films. Of course, this can be a fine line to tread—but eliminating the word from all media has the potential to erase the truth. The N-word has power due to the ties of slavery, oppression, and hatred. By totally ignoring it, we would disrespect those of us who came before and endured it. I see a key difference in other media: the setting is not nearly as intimate, and a live person is not using it to address someone in the room personally.

DOUBLE CHECK THE CAST OF CHARACTERS

Once a scenario is done, stop and take a minute to look at the cast of characters, their roles and motivations. Are all of your bad guys black? If so, why? Are all of your helpful characters or heroes white? If so, why?

People, no matter the color of their skin, can be good, evil, or without a particular motivation in one direction or another, and one of the keys to creating a more realistic world is to have that conveyed through the game. Give each race a healthy mix of motivations and don't just stereotype them into roles.

Don't accept the line, "There were no black people here/in/did X." History is full of examples that provide any blanket statement like that wrong.

WHITE KEEPER/BLACK PLAYER

Talk to your player separately. This can be a challenging conversation, but it is critical before beginning the game. How you have this talk depends on your relationship. Do you know each other? Is this the first time you're meeting? The Keeper should initiate the conversation and explain their approach to the game. It's best not to start by asking what the player is comfortable with, as that puts them on the spot and they may not feel like they want to express exactly what's on their mind. Some possible suggestions:

- The Keeper explains how they plan to run the game
- Give a few possible examples of how they will handle different scenes
- Explain the three levels of play and the one the game will use
- Create a covert sign the player can give if things get uncomfortable, and find ways to ensure no one will harass the player about it

If the rest of the group is not black, this is even more important, as the other players may turn and look to the player for signals as to how to play, ignore the player, or worse yet, try to explain what it means to be black to a black person (something that has happened to me a number of times. Trust me, this never leads to a good outcome.). It's your job as the Keeper to get a sense of what allows your player to be comfortable and enforce those boundaries for the group. It should not be the players' responsibility.

JIM CROW LAWS

Jim Crow laws ran rampant in the South, starting in the 1870s. The laws enforced at the state and local levels pushed racial segregation as a new form of the Black Codes which suppressed blacks. A few examples:

- Whites were not introduced to blacks, as it would imply a semblance of equality.
- Blacks were expected to step to the side and let white people walk by.
- It was illegal for a restaurant to serve food to white and black people in the same room.
- Any marriage between a white and black person were forever prohibited.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE BLACK IN AMERICA ?

Submit! Submit! Life is fucked, plainly stated. Apologize! Smile more! You're too aggressive! Know your place! Respect my badge! Serve! Submit! Submit! Submit! That is the message constantly played to African Americans. Being black in America means an unending struggle of enduring racism. Bring them to heel!

THE RISE OF THE KU KLUX KLAN

The Ku Klux Klan is the oldest hate group in America, infamous for its use of violence and lynching, primarily against blacks, but also targeting Jewish people, the LGBTQ community, and immigrants. The Klan began in 1866, aiming to intimidate recently freed blacks back into submission. They would dress in hooded white costumes. The first incarnation ended after Jim Crow became the law of the land.

In 1915, the hate group was revived by those who revered the "Old South" and saw blacks as a threat again, fearing the returning African American veterans of The Great War. During the 1920s, the Klan reached its height in popularity. By 1924, it reportedly had 4 million members in 4,000 chapters across the United States.

APPLICATION IN PLAY

You just had a crash course. Now what does a Keeper do with all of that difficult information? How do you convey that to your players and have them come back? You judge your table. Are they a group that is looking to dive into the full weight of history, or maybe just waist deep, or maybe just want a few toes in the water? That determines how you introduce them to this world. The scenarios are written in the vein of a modern mindset to aid with gaming.

One way to help players who may not want the full history is to just tell them that there are consequences for their actions. Let's create a tiered system of "reality." The first is for the player who wants to play, but is wary of the history, the Passing Player. The next tier is for the player who wants to play and wants a better understanding of what the world may have been like, Harlemites. Lastly, is the player who wants a serious exploration of history, the Purist Player. Each progressive tier will include all of the elements of the previous tier.

The most important thing to do is talk to your players. Judge their comfort level with these issues, and discuss how they want to play.

THE PASSING PLAYER

This level of player is looking to hangout in Harlem, try to cheat Dutch Schultz, take a spin in the Clam House or uncover a Deep One plot on the Harlem River.

At this level, I suggest not using the **RACIAL TENSION MODIFIER** from the System chapter. The Passing level should really tread lightly, implying the setting and backdrop. A few key things to remember:

Being black means removing the possibility of doubt for actions. It's living under the unspoken assumption you are wrong.

Non-black characters on the whole consider them slow, even if you are the smartest person in the room and have been right 99% of the time. People focus on that 1%, and you have to constantly work from the basis that this is your first time doing this thing.

Even when surrounded by white counterparts and friends, it could be subconscious, but if you tell them something, they doubt it until it is confirmed by another white person. Say you stumble upon a body, and call your buddy on the force. He may not think you killed the victim, but if their wallet is missing, he may search you and your car. Then apologize.

THE HARLEMITES PLAYER

My hope is that most gamers fall somewhere within this range, or higher. At this level, introduce the **RACIAL TENSION MODIFIER** and add a moderate level of the backdrop features listed above in addition to the ones below:

- Wealth and class don't protect the character on any level from racism.
- The police's normal response is to threaten or to use outright violence.

THE PURIST PLAYER

Use the entire weight of history and all of the rules in the book. This level requires heavy roleplaying and could lead to amazing storytelling and embracing of history.

THE MYTHOS VS. HUMAN EVIL

At no point does this book endorse lessening the evil acts humans commit—quite the opposite, actually. The Mythos is a cold, alien thing beyond human comprehension. While human evil is something else, humans don't need exposure to the Mythos or to be insane to commit atrocities; it would be easy to play it as such, but not advised.

Cthugha won't be plotting with the Klan about actions they can perform together; however, the Mythos agent may use humanity's evil for its own unknowable purposes. For instance, a recently summoned Nythogtha won't work hand in hand with the Klan to destroy Eatonville. If they are not worshippers, it may, at best, let them live another day or make them its first victims.

LYNCHING

America has a brutal and disgusting history with lynching, the extrajudicial act of killing someone by hanging for an alleged offense. It was main tool of white supremacists from the 1880s to the 1950s, and nearly 4,000 black people were lynched during that time (at least that was recorded). No crime was too small, from transgressions such as not saying "mister" to a white person they passed on the street, or even daring to learn to read.

The "crimes" didn't have to happen in the dead of night; many were legal affairs that allowed Southern politicians to bolster their credibility and build their careers.

DESIGNING SCENARIOS

The *GUMSHOE* system supports a certain style of scenario design. The rules are less important to the success of your game than the way you structure your adventures.

CLUES

If a piece of information is essential to move the story on, it's a core clue. It costs nothing. You can also offer minor tidbits of information at 0 points, if the information is not consequential enough to be worth a point spend.

If you have a piece of information that offers a fun sidelight on the action but is not essential to move through the story, you can make this available with a 1- or 2-point spend. Choose the cost of the spend according to the entertainment value of the information, not the game-world difficulty of completing the task. The whole point of the system is to make clues easy to acquire, so that players can get on with the fun of figuring out how they fit together. Facilitate this by making choices that get information into the hands of players. Habits die hard, so make sure you're not slipping back into the old paradigm and making the clues hard to get.

If an action's consequence of failure might be madness, death, or injury, then by all means make it a test. If game world logic suggests that a supporting character will actively oppose the PC, make it a contest.

CLUE TYPES

Special clue types are as follows.

FLOATING CORE CLUES

It can be useful to structure a scenario with one or more floating core clues. These typically advance the story from one distinct section to another. While an ordinary core clue is linked with a particular scene, a floating clue can be gleaned in any one of several scenes. The Keeper determines during play which scene gives up the clue.

Floating clues allow you to control the pacing of a scenario. They allow the characters to play out all of the fun or interesting experiences in one section of the scenario, before the story takes a dramatic turn. To achieve this, withhold the core clue that moves the investigators to the dark house until after they've met all of the relevant supporting characters. That way, you prevent them from leaping ahead into the narrative without getting all the information they need to fully enjoy what follows.

Likewise, a floating clue allows you to perform like a ruthless editor, skipping unnecessary scenes when you need to kick the narrative into a higher gear. Let's say you've chosen five possible scenes in which the investigators might logically find a necessary core clue. You figure that this phase of the adventure should take about an hour. If the players breeze through the scenes in ten minutes apiece, you can save the core clue for the last scene. If they linger, taking twenty minutes per scene, you'll want to make the core clue available after the third scene.

PLACING INFORMATION

A core scene typically includes many pieces of information in addition to its core clue. Facts may provide understanding and context—or they may obscure the mystery, by focusing attention on irrelevant details. Creating a scene is about anticipating the questions the players will ask, and figuring out which answers ought to be available to the investigative experts their characters happen to be.

Don't make all non-core clues spends. Add spends when:

- You think of facts that seem enjoyably arcane
- A piece of information is tangential or obscure
- Players might get information more quickly than they otherwise would
- They might secure some other practical advantage

If a spend doesn't make the character giving up his points seem more impressive, or confer some other advantage, it shouldn't be a spend.

SCENE DIAGRAMS

To make sure that player choice matters in your scenario, diagram its scenes. Connect them with arrows, checking to make sure that they can be unraveled in any order. It's acceptable to add unpredictability and variance with non-investigative scenes (antagonist reactions, hazards, and sub-plots), but better form when the players can connect the core and alternate scenes in more than one way.

RECORDS ARE YOUR FRIEND

In addition to your adventure notes, there are two other documents you need to run the game.

When you are creating your adventure, make a note of the abilities you've used on the Investigative Ability Checklist. It's a good idea to add clues for as wide a range of abilities as possible. You can also use the Checklist during character creation to ensure all the abilities are covered, and that redundant abilities are left out.

Secondly, during character creation, have your players note their choices of investigative abilities on the GM's Investigator Roster. This enables you to pick out which characters might notice obvious clues, and ensure spotlight time is evenly spread.

When you prepare your next session, you can use the Investigator Roster to see what interests your players. If someone has a 3-point rating in Art History, you could add a some forged artwork or a menacing sculpture to your notes. This is particularly useful in an improvised game.

Player frustration level usually serves as a better trigger for a floating core clue than a predetermined time limit does. If they're having obvious fun interacting with the vivid supporting characters you've created, or being creeped out by uncanny phenomena, you can give them more of what they want by saving the core clue for the final scene. On the other hand, if you see they're getting bored and frustrated, you can slip in the floating clue earlier.

LEVERAGED CLUES

A staple element of mystery writing is the crucial fact which, when presented to a previously resistant witness or suspect, causes him to break down and suddenly supply the information or confession the detectives seek. This is represented in *GUMSHOE* by the leveraged clue. This is a piece of information which is only available from the combined use of an interpersonal ability, and the mention of another, previously gathered clue. The cited clue is called a prerequisite clue, and is by definition a sub-category of core clue.

PIPE CLUES

A clue found early on which is important to the solution of the mystery, but which only becomes significant much later in the scenario, is called a pipe clue. The name is a reference to screenwriting jargon, where the insertion of exposition that becomes relevant later in the narrative is referred to as "laying pipe." The term likens the careful arrangement of narrative information to the work performed by a plumber in building a house.

Pipe clues create a sense of structural variety in a scenario, lessening the sense that the PCs are being led in a strictly linear manner from Scene A to Scene B to Scene C. When they work well, they give players a "eureka" moment, as they suddenly piece together disparate pieces of the puzzle. A possible risk with pipe clues lies in the possible weakness of player memories, especially over the course of a scenario broken into several sessions. The Keeper may occasionally have to prompt players to remember the first piece of a pipe clue when they encounter a later component.

RESTRICTED CLUES

Certain clues which are necessary to the solution of a mystery will not be known to everyone with the ability required to access them. Instead, these are restricted clues—secret, esoteric, or otherwise obscure facts which one member of the group just happens to know.

To preserve the sense that the group has access to little-known facts, only one group member knows the information in question; its revelation comes as news to all of the other investigators, even those who have the same abilities. The first character with the relevant ability to take an action that might trigger the clue is the one blessed with this fortuitous knowledge. Where no clear first actor exists, as in the case where a clue is provided as soon as the investigators enter a scene, then the Keeper chooses the investigator with the highest current pool in that ability (if applicable), or the investigator who has had the least recent spotlight time, or the one who most requires a positive reversal of fortune. Alternately, the Keeper may allow applicable background considerations to determine the possessor of the restricted clue; for example, a character with high **BUREAUCRACY** might recognize an esoterror suspect from back-office work.

TIMED RESULTS

The following structural technique applies to any *GUMSHOE* game where the characters have access to the services of a forensic lab, and rely on tests performed by others.

You can shape the pacing of a case with a timed result. This occurs when believability requires a suitable interval between the submission of evidence to forensic experts, and the results of the testing they perform. In police procedurals, it is common for the direction of an investigation to be suddenly changed when the lab results come in. The scientific evidence may exonerate the current top suspect, or point the investigators toward new witnesses or locations. Alternately, it can change the meaning of previously gleaned information, causing the investigators to re-interview previous witnesses or conduct closer searches of crime scenes.

A timed result can serve as a delayed-reaction core clue, directing the PCs to a new scene. These are useful devices in cases where the scenes can be connected in any order. If the PCs get bored or bogged down in one scene, they can receive a phone call from the lab techs calling them in to receive some much-needed exposition, which sends them in a new direction.

The arrival of a timed result can also change the players' interpretation of their current case notes without moving them to a new scene. They might dismiss a suspect's alibi, alter their timeline of events, or reject information provided them by a witness whose perceptions are revealed as unreliable.

SCENE TYPES

Having planned out your mystery, it's time to arrange it into scenes. Each of these takes place in a different location or involves an interaction with a different supporting character—usually both. Under the title of the scene, write the scene type, the scene or scenes which lead into the current scene, and scenes which lead out from it. Here is an example scene header from the first scenario.

POLICE STATION BLUES

Scene Type: Core

Lead-In: Rent Parties...RAT-A-TAT-TAT

Lead-Outs: In *Tesla's Footsteps*, *Blood Business*, *Touring the Armory*

Scenes fall into the following types.

INTRODUCTORY

The introduction is the first scene of the scenario. It establishes the premise of the mystery, usually a few key NPCs and tone.

CORE

Core scenes present at least one piece of information necessary to complete the investigation and get to the climactic scene. Each core scene requires at least a single core clue.

A core clue typically points the group to another scene, often a core scene. Avoid hard-sequenced core clues, which can only lead to one another in a single order.

You're constructing one way to move through the story to another core clue, not the only way. In play, you may find yourself placing the core clue from one scene into another, improvised scene inspired by the logical actions undertaken by the players. The scene structure guarantees that there's at least one way to navigate the story, but should not preclude other scene orders. By following the structure, you also ensure that you're creating a branching narrative driven by player choices. This avoids having the story be driven only by the actions of supporting characters, which the players observe more or less passively.

ALTERNATE

Alternate scenes provide information which may be of some use in understanding and solving the central mystery, but aren't strictly necessary to reach the conclusion. They often provide context and detail. Or they might provide the same information as core scenes, but in another way. As a third option, they might allow the group to eliminate a red herring possibility. These exculpatory facts are valuable; they let the players narrow their search to find the real answer, even though they don't lead to another core clue, strictly speaking.

ANTAGONIST REACTION

A scene of danger or trouble in which supporting characters opposed to the group's success take action to stop them or set them back is an antagonist reaction scene. This might be a fight scene, but could just as easily be a political hassle, an act of sabotage, or another less direct challenge. If it helps you keep track, you might note in brackets that the enemies faced are tangential rather than primary opponents. Antagonist reactions can be floating—that is, you can use them to kick up the pace, if things are flagging.

HAZARD

A hazard scene presents the investigators with an impersonal obstacle to their safety, or their ability to continue the investigation. It must typically be overcome through tests or contests.

SUB-PLOT

A sub-plot scene gives the investigators an opportunity to wheel, deal, explore, and interact without directly altering the course of the primary investigation. These may arise from personal arcs, side deals, public relations efforts, or simply the curiosity of one or more agents. Where the central mystery provides structure and forward momentum, the sub-plot adds flavor and character. Sub-plots are more suited to long-running campaign play.

HYBRID SCENES

Some scenes double up and become hybrid scenes, most often when a general challenge leads to an information opportunity. It's okay to give out a core clue as a reward for overcoming an obstacle, but only if that core clue is also available by other means. Otherwise, you risk creating a situation where a core clue becomes unavailable, violating the central tenet of the *GUMSHOE* system.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion brings the group to the end of its investigation, and often confronts it with a moral dilemma, a physical obstacle, or both. Functionally, it's a final hazard or antagonist reaction scene. The classic conclusion of an RPG mystery is a big fight. Though in Cthulu, your group may avoid a direct conflict in favor of quick talking and clever thinking. It's easy to make a fight or other action scene feel exciting and conclusive.

ACTIVATING PLAYERS

A common complaint about investigative scenarios is that they "railroad" players into tightly following a slavishly predetermined story path. Although you rarely hear the opposite complaint voiced, a significant number of groups flail in confusion when not steered in an obvious direction.

Let players weigh options for as long as the discussion seems lively and fun. If you see the group get frustrated and unable to make a collective choice, gently insert yourself into the discussion. Summarize the various suggestions made and direct the discussion toward a conclusion. Guide the players in eliminating choices without nudging them to a preferred answer. This detachment is easier to attain when you don't settle on one.

Remind the players that the only way forward in a mystery scenario is to gather more information. When things get static, refer to the characters' drives. Ask them which choices before them most suit their specific drives.

Be ready for moments where players feel overwhelmed, either because there are too many choices to choose between or, more likely, no obviously risk-free choice. Nudge them onward by invoking their drives. Your players will learn to take the initiative, abandoning the "wait for clues" passivity trained into them as they were run through more predetermined scenarios.

AVOID NEGATION

When running a mystery scenario, it helps to think two or three scenes ahead of the players. It's often useful to have a possible climactic sequence in mind, too. That allows you to foreshadow enough to make the ending appear to be a logical outgrowth of the scenes that preceded it. (For more on this, see the next section.)

Don't let the possible plot forks you have in mind become too fixed in your imagination. Instead, keep them provisional, so that you can turn away from them and substitute new choices more in keeping with player input.

This is a long-winded way of restating the basic principle of improvisation used by stage actors: never negate. If, as a sketch unfolds, one performer identifies the other as his mother, the second performer must embrace and build on that choice. To simply swat down the choice and say, "I'm not your mother," is extremely poor form. It stops the story dead and punishes the other participant for attempting to advance it.

In a similar vein, train yourself to respond to unexpected possibilities by embracing them and building them into the ongoing storyline. You may have decided that the pathologist Elsa Hower is an innocent dupe in an esoterror scheme which requires fresh corpses. However, if the players heavily invest themselves in seeing her as a villain, you might consider setting aside that planned revelation, so they can feel a sense of unmitigated triumph when they bring her to justice.

You don't have to accept every piece of player direction at face value. Keep the story surprising by building twists onto the elements you do incorporate. When in doubt, make the player half-right.

It's not necessary to turn the narrative on a dime with every piece of player input. The key is to avoid a scene in which nothing happens, or in which your scene is less interesting than the one suggested by the player.

LEADING AND FOLLOWING

Improvising is a technique, not an ultimate goal. Occasionally you'll find that it's more entertaining for all involved if you seize the narrative reins and steer them in a particular direction. This will tend to happen more near the end of a scenario, when you're trying to wrap all of the threads together into a coherent and satisfying conclusion.

Again, this is a matter of responding to the mood and attitude of the players. When they're actively engaged in the story and throwing out fun suggestions, follow their lead. When their creativity hits the wall, pick up the slack. Improvisation is an organic process of give and take.

RUNNING SCENARIOS

GIVING OUT CLUES

To give out information, the PC needs to be in the right place, with the right ability, and use that ability. This section deals with each of these preconditions. In short, though, whatever you've done in other games, you should always err on the side of giving out information, not holding it back.

HAVING THE RIGHT ABILITY

The rules offer a number of ways to call on abilities, depending on the situation. Choosing the right way to call on an ability is crucial to the forward momentum of your investigative plot. Make this choice according to the consequences of failure.

If the consequence of failure is that a character fails to get a piece of crucial information, success should be automatic provided that the character has the ability in question, and the player thinks to ask for it. However, any credible attempt to get information that would yield a given clue yields that clue, whether or not this is the ability you've specified in the scenario.

USING THE RIGHT ABILITY

You can give out clues both actively and passively. By default, though, *GUMSHOE* assumes that the use of interpersonal abilities is active; the players have to correctly choose an appropriate ability and describe how they're using it, to open a contact up to questioning. When you see that players are hesitant, tell the player with the relevant ability that his experienced character can sense that it will work here:

- “You get the feeling that this guy will crack if you lean on him a little.” (**INTIMIDATION**)
- “He seems kind of smitten by you.” (**FLATTERY**)
- “The squeal of a police scanner tells you you've got a wannabe cop on your hands.” (**COP TALK**)

BEING IN THE RIGHT PLACE

GUMSHOE procedural series require their own conceits in order to keep the story moving in an entertaining manner. They require the audience's complicity in looking the other way. Here the Keeper and players hand-wave certain elements that break the rules of realism in order to keep the game running smoothly, just as TV scriptwriters do. For example, the conceit of primacy in shows such as *Law and Order* ensure that the lead characters get the juiciest cases and more action than any cop is likely to experience in a lifetime. Just as the aforementioned devices arise from the requirements of TV drama, *GUMSHOE*'s conceits grapple with the limitations of a roleplaying session.

The major device you'll want to adopt, needed for all but the smallest groups, is the conceit of elastic participation. Use the conceit of elastic participation to ensure that there is always a PC in the right place.

GUMSHOE works best when you assume that everyone is kind-of sort-of along for every scene—without squinting too hard at any resulting logic or staging absurdities.

ENDING SCENES

In a novel or TV scenario, writers can freely cut to the next scene when their characters have acquired all of the clues available in the current one. The characters might stick around for hours, tying up loose ends and pursuing fruitless questions, but this doesn't happen on screen. We, the audience, are not forced to sit through such sequences.

This kind of concise editing isn't so easy in the roleplaying medium. Players don't know when they've got all the clues.

SAMPLE MYTHOS & SUPERNATURAL ENTITIES

Call of Cthulhu Creatures from *Keepers Rulebook* pages 278-343.

Keepers usually only need game statistics for characters that the investigators have to overcome, or aid them directly, in some way through general abilities. Most witnesses, suspects, and non-combatants require only a text description, indicating for example which interpersonal abilities they're most likely to respond to.

Opponents use the same Hit Threshold and Weapon Damage rules as player characters.

When choosing Health ratings for dramatically unimportant foes, don't worry about simulating their relative robustness in comparison to the general population. Focus on how many hits they ought to be able to take before dropping, according to dramatic logic. If you want a thug who falls to a single burst of automatic fire, give him a Health of 1 or 2.

An Attack Pattern is an optional game statistic suggesting how the opponent might spend its Scuffling and/or Shooting points from round to round of a fight. Keepers should always consult story logic and dramatic needs first, and resort to the Attack Pattern second. You might want a vast, lumbering creature to smash doors and walls around the PCs, and a small vicious ODE to attack with unerring precision. These numbers are a fallback if you can't decide how the opponent would spend, or are uncomfortable choosing to spend enough to guarantee a hit each time. Don't use them just because they're there, even if you find the pull of numbers—oh, sweet, beautiful numbers—generally irresistible.

When you do use the Attack Pattern, increase the spends after each miss until the opponent either starts to hit, or runs out of points. Once engaged, opponents figure out how hard the PCs are to hit, and adjust their efforts accordingly.

Armor is subtracted from each instance of damage the opponent takes. Where a weapon or weapons is listed in brackets after the number, the Armor reduces damage only from those weapons. Some Armor may protect against all Scuffling attacks but not Shooting attacks, or vice versa.

An opponent's Alertness Modifier represents its ability to sense your activities, whether through standard senses like sight and hearing, or exotic ones like echolocation, pheromone recognition, or energy signature reading. When you try to sneak past it, the Alertness Modifier is applied to your base Sense Trouble Difficulty, which is usually 4. It also applies to Shadowing tests when you're trying to observe the opponent without being observed in turn. The Alertness Modifier reflects all of the individual's sensing capabilities, both natural and technological. A second number appearing after a slash represents the opponent's Alertness if its gear is somehow neutralized or taken away.

An opponent with a **Stealth** Modifier is either significantly harder or easier to spot with **Stealth** or **Shadowing**. It alters the difficulty number for that or similar tests.

THE BARON IN BLUES

AVATAR OF AZATHOTH, SEETHING NUCLEAR CHAOS

“And because mere walls and windows must soon drive to madness a man who dreams and reads much, the dweller in that room used night after night to lean out and peer aloft to glimpse some fragment of things beyond the waking world and the greyness of tall cities. After years he began to call the slow-sailing stars by name, and to follow them in fancy when they glided regretfully out of sight; till at length his vision opened to many secret vistas whose existence no common eye suspects. And one night a mighty gulf was bridged, and the dream-haunted skies swelled down to the lonely watcher’s window to merge with the close air of his room and make him a part of their fabulous wonder.”

– H.P. Lovecraft, *Azathoth*

The human-seeming Baron in Blues stands nearly six and a half feet tall. He is dressed in an expensive blue suit; his face appears to be a mass of writhing tentacles, but is actually the void of space, drawing in all who view it. A six-valved horn adorns his left hand. Touching the Baron is colder than the reaches of space, and drains CON and POW. This is the only known avatar of Azathoth, seething nuclear chaos.

The Baron in Blues currently doesn’t have any cultists, as the Baron is a manifestation of one broken writer’s will and the missing pages of a tome dedicated to Azathoth. The mad god used the link to create an avatar, and seeks a cult of followers. Born of out the creativity of a madman, the Baron in Blues may be swayed into a cutting contest to have it return to slumber.

STR 125 **CON** 700 **SIZ** 20 **DEX** 110 **INT** 200
POW 200 **HP** 72 **DB** +1D6 **Build** 3 **MP** 40

Move: 10 (walks rapidly and phases through solid impediments, leaving a frosted outline)

ATTACKS

Fighting attacks: 1 attack per round. Although his touch can kill, and likely has countless powers at its disposal, the Baron in Blues greets and destroys all in the same fashion. It rises the six-valved horn to its “face” and plays. Each tune seems to take an eternity to hear, but ends nearly instantly.

Herald of Endless Night: The music starts as a distant buzzing, getting louder and louder as it goes. It brings a fear of the endless night, as lights die out, leaving only the cold twilight of distant stars over a fifty-foot area. This costs investigators 1D4 CON and POW per round; a Hard POW resists the POW loss, but not the CON. This attack costs the Baron in Blues 4 Magic Points per round.

Cacophony of the Damned: The horn is deafening and sanity-shattering as its blasts reach the audience. The music targets one unfortunate investigator, rupturing their eardrums for 1D10 Hit Points per round. An Extreme CON success resists the penalty die assigned to all the hurt investigator’s actions until healed. This costs the Baron 2 Magic Points per round.

Opening the Void: The Baron turns his full attention to playing a melody so sweet that everyone is left speechless for a moment. Every note burns away the universe, opening a portal to another dimension or planet. This costs 10 Magic Points; for an additional 5 MP, the Baron can call forth 1D6 members from the dimension to fight on its behalf, such as Moon Beasts from the Dreamlands or Byakhee from space.

Fighting: 98% (49/19), the Baron’s music attacks

Armor: 3

Spells: All Call and Contact spells, and others as the Keeper desires

SAN Loss: 1D4/1D10 to see the Baron in Blues

GOLEM

Athletics 8, Health 20, Scuffling 20

HIT THRESHOLD: 4 (Large but fast)

ALERTNESS MODIFIER: +1

STRENGTH MODIFIER: +2

STEALTH MODIFIER: + 2

WEAPON: +2 (Fist)

ARMOR: 3

(Thick clay; most firearms do only 1 point of damage; regenerates 2 Health/round)

STABILITY LOSS: +1

GOLEM

SILENT GUARDIAN AND RELENTLESS HUNTER

The word “Golem” comes from the Hebrew language, meaning something that is incomplete or unfinished. Golems are frequently clay creatures brought to life through magic and belief, and some believe it they are linked to Kabbalistic Jewish mysticism.

There is a well-known story of a Rabbi Loew in Prague, who created a Golem to defend the Jewish Community against anti-Semitic attacks in the 1540s. After some time, the Golem became too violent, and the Rabbi was forced to destroy the creature for the good of all involved.

ATTRIBUTE	AVERAGE ROLLS	
STR	150	(4D6 +20 x 5)
CON	110	(3D6 +10 x 5)
SIZ	150	(4D6 +20 x 5)
DEX	25	(4D6 +20)
INT	10	(4D6)
POW*		
HP	26	

Average DB: +3D6 **Average Build:** 4 **Move:** 5

ATTACKS

Crush: 70% (35/14), damage 1D8 + 3D6, attacks per round 2

Armor: 5 (deactivated if amulet is removed from its mouth); takes minimum damage from firearms

Skills: Bodyguard 70%, Relentless Pursue Prey 85%

Language (Understand only): Hebrew 60%, Yiddish 45%

SAN Loss: 1/1D8

SOUCOUYANT

A number of Soucouyants came with immigrants fleeing the Caribbean to make Harlem their home. These vile, evil creatures found homes in the packed city blocks of Harlem, taking up residence as neighbors, shopkeepers, and the homeless.

The Soucouyant is a shapeshifting vampiric witch. This creature frequently takes the form of an elderly woman during the day. While most would be unfriendly at best, it passes for human until night falls, at which point it can release its true nature. The creature sheds its human skin and hides it, to reveal an animal, ball of fire, or some other indescribable grotesque form that hungers for blood. After feasting, it returns to its skin to carry on.

A key weakness of the creature is its unprotected skin shell. If the empty skin is filled with salt, it shrinks, and the creature can't fit back in. This causes it intense pain, and forces it to reveal its inhuman nature. A Soucouyant can be exposed by piling a heap of rice, peanuts, or sugar before it, which it must stop to pick them up, one item or grain at a time. If the creature is exposed to the sun without its skin for more than a moment, it bursts into flames and dies.

ATTRIBUTE	AVERAGE ROLLS	
STR	105	(3D6 x 10)
CON	105	(3D6 x 10)
SIZ	40	(2D6 x 5)
DEX	50	(3D6 x 5)
INT	50	(3D6 x 5)
POW	50	(3D6 x 5)
HP	14	

Average DB: +1D6 **Average Build:** 2 **Move:** 8

ATTACKS

Attacks per round: 2

Fighting attacks: Soucouyants have the usual range of unarmed attacks open to humanoids.

Bite: The Soucouyant holds its victim to continue draining its blood, or the act of biting may subdue the victim to its will. The creature drains 2D10 **STR** (blood) from the victim each round until dead, or until the victim escapes.

Fighting: 70% (35/15), damage 1D4 + **DB** or weapon

Bite: 70% (35/15), damage 1D4 + special (see above)

Dodge: 45% (23/9) **Armor:** 5

Skills: Fast Talk 45%, Human Psychology 60%, Track (Scent Blood) 75%, Stealth 70%

SAN Loss: 0/1D8 if attacked; 1/1D6 if witness a transformation

SOUCOUYANT

Athletics 8, Health 12, Scuffling 13

HIT THRESHOLD: 5

(Hard to hit because it blends into the night)

STEALTH MODIFIER: +1

WEAPON: +2 (Claw)

ARMOR: 2

(Regenerates 1 Health/round)

STABILITY LOSS: +1

DUPPY

Athletics 8, Stability 8

HIT THRESHOLD: N/A

WEAPON: -1 (Projectile or throw)

ARMOR: 0

(Incorporeal, and requires a Duppy-specific ritual to put the Duppy to rest)

STABILITY LOSS: +1

DUPPY

The word “Duppy” in Caribbean Hindustani means “ghost” or “spirit,” and these malevolent spirits play a major role in folklore. Duppy frequently haunt locations and people, most manifesting at night. The spirit can assume a human or animal form, and some may be the souls of dead people. Different African folklore ascribe their creation in various ways, such as the Obeah, who believe people have two souls. The first soul is a heavenly one that ascends once dead, and the other, an earth soul that can escape to become a Duppy unless trapped in a coffin for three days, with proper rituals.

ATTRIBUTE	AVERAGE ROLLS	
INT	60	(3D6 x5)
POW	110	(3D6 x10)

SPECIAL POWERS

Duppy attack using an opposed POW roll. The creature manifests before its target in the chosen form; it may be a dead family member, a vicious-looking animal, or any horrific visage. The method of attack varies by creature, from clawed wounds to melting flesh, or worse.

The attack itself is an opposed POW roll versus the target every round. If the investigator fails, he loses 2D10 POW. If the character can overcome the ghost, he or she causes the Duppy to lose 2D10 POW. More malevolent duppy can cause great terror—increase the POW loss by 1D10 or more based on the creature. For instance, a serial killer Duppy may cause 4D10 loss when attacking victims, and still only risk 2D10 personal loss.

To banish or put the Duppy to rest requires a specific set of things that the Keeper should decide beforehand, and have clues as to how the characters can discover it.

Various Duppy can manifest other powers that actually affect the world, such as localized telekinesis which allows them to slam/hold doors shut, hurl pottery, or even lift characters off of the ground and move them around the ceiling. These can actually be used to inflict physical damage ranging from 1D2 up to 1D10 a round. Investigators can attempt to dodge hurling objects with a Dodge check plus a penalty die, as there is no obvious attacker, and it's hard to determine where the next attack is coming from.

SAN Loss: 1/1D8

Frightening Assault: Every round, the Duppy can force a Stability loss of 1 (and up to 3 if a powerful evil spirit).

Powers: Some Duppy have developed powers to influence the world. It would be possible to slam doors shut, rapidly lower temperatures in an area, or slam victims into objects (1D6 Health). These additional powers require a few moments to replenish, unless it's a very powerful Duppy.

ZONBI

Zonbis' origins are rooted in slavery. The word Zombie is a variant of the Haitian words "Zombi" or "Zonbi." In the 17th century, the ruling French colonists of Saint-Domingue (now known as the Dominican Republic) kidnapped Africans, and forced them into slavery on sugar plantations. These slaves died in droves from their treatment, forcing the French to steal more people. Some slaves believed dying would set them free, though those who committed suicide would not be released, and were instead trapped in their own bodies in a form of limbo for eternal slavery. This belief became interwoven with parts of the voodoo religion; rural folklore believed a Zonbi to be an animated corpse brought back to "life" by bokor, sorcerers using necromancy, and held under their command.

The Zonbi of *Harlem Unbound* are the living turned into near-dead creatures. The victim is turned into a silent servant by the use of a combination of drugs, magic, and occult knowledge. These poor souls are trapped inside of their own bodies, with no self-control.

ATTRIBUTE	AVERAGE ROLLS	
STR	105	(3D6 x 10)
CON	80	(3D6 x 5)
SIZ	70	(3D6 +10 x 5)
DEX	60	(3D6 x 5)
INT	10	(3D6)
POW	10	(3d6)
HP	15	

Average DB: +1D6

Average Build: 2

Move: 8

ATTACKS

Fighting: 45% (35/14), damage 1D3 + 3D6 (or weapon) + **DB**, attacks per round 1

Dodge: No motivation to do so

Armor: None (All attacks do half damage from the transformation)

Skills: Obey Command 95%, Language (victim's native): 40% (understand only)

SAN Loss: 1/1D6 (1d8 if victim is known)

ZONBI

Athletics 8, Health 8, Scuffling 8, Weapon 5

HIT THRESHOLD: 4

ALERTNESS MODIFIER: +1

STRENGTH MODIFIER: +1

WEAPON: -1 Improvised weapon 2 (Clawed hands)

ARMOR: None

(All attacks do half damage from the transformation)

STABILITY LOSS: +0

(Unless known or victim releasing the Zonbi is not "dead")

PATROLMAN

That cop just gave you the side-eye. You better get gone before he hauls you off downtown for walking while black.

STR 60 **CON** 55 **SIZ** 55 **DEX** 55 **INT** 50
APP 45 **POW** 45 **EDU** 50 **SAN** 45 **HP** 11
DB 0 **Build** 0 **Move** 8 **MP** 9

Special: No **SAN** loss for witness violence or dead bodies.

Nightstick: 40% (20/8), damage 1D3

.41 Revolver: 45% (22/9), damage 1D10, attacks per round 1(3)

Dodge: 35% (17/8) **Armor:** None

Skills: Credit Rating 25%, Fast Talk 40%, Intimidate 25%, Language Own (English) 50%, Law 25%, Listen 40%, Psychology 45%, Spot Hidden 45%

Equipment: Badge, .41 Revolver, cigarettes and lighter

BACKSTORY

- **Description:** Uniformed cop
- **Trait:** Pounding the beat

GANGSTER

No matter who they are working for, one thing is for certain...you better steer clear unless you want a gut full of lead or a drop in the Harlem River with cement shoes.

STR 50 **CON** 65 **SIZ** 45 **DEX** 50 **INT** 40
APP 55 **POW** 50 **EDU** 40 **SAN** 30* **HP** 11
DB 0 **Build** 0 **Move** 9 **MP** 10

Special: No **SAN** loss for violence

Brawl: 37% (18/7), damage 1D3

.38 Revolver: 50% (25/10), damage 1D10, attacks per round 1(3)

Tommy Gun: 40% (20/8), damage 1D10, attacks per round 1(3) or full auto

Dodge: 40% (20/8) **Armor:** None

Skills: Drive Auto 40%, Intimidate 45%, Locksmith 40%, Spot Hidden 50%, Stealth 45%

Equipment: .32 Automatic, cheap suit, knife, 30 bucks

BACKSTORY

- **Description:** Mook in a cheap suit
- **Trait:** Anything for the boss

RIVAL PIANIST

You have been losing gigs left and right. This person seems to be your equal, but has been getting the better of you somehow. No job is stable if someone is challenging you to a cutting contest at every turn.

STR 40 **CON** 50 **SIZ** 50 **DEX** 65 **INT** 60
APP 65 **POW** 35 **EDU** 55 **SAN** 35 **HP** 10
DB: 0 **Build** 0 **Move** 8 **MP** 7

Brawl: 45% (22/5), damage 1D3

Dodge: 50% (25/10) **Armor:** None

Skills: Art/Craft (Piano) 60%, Credit Rating 35%, Listen 80%, Renaissance 55%

Equipment: Smokes, sheet music, and hip flask

BACKSTORY

- **Description:** Artistic
- **Trait:** Photographic memory for melodies

THE CRITIC

The critic has his eyes on you. You could be a writer, artist, or entertainer with an unquestionable skill. But the critic has decided your career is a waste, and spends his time cutting you down in the press, gossip, or whatever does the trick.

STR 35 **CON** 65 **SIZ** 65 **DEX** 35 **INT** 75
APP 60 **POW** 60 **EDU** 70 **SAN** 60 **HP** 13
DB 0 **Build** 0 **Move** 6 **MP** 12

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

Dodge: 20% (10/4) **Armor:** None

Skills: Art/Craft (Critical Review) 75%, Credit Rating 55%, Intimidate 65%, Lore (Harlem Nightlife) 30%, Persuasion 55%, Psychology 35%, Spot Hidden 45%

Equipment: Notebook and pen, black book with names of every editor in town, and an expense account

BACKSTORY

- **Description:** High class
- **Trait:** Jealous of your talent

RABID DOG

The mangled pitiful animal is in the final throes of rabies. Its bite is far worse than its bark; it is a dangerous and infectious creature.

ATTRIBUTE	AVERAGE ROLLS	
STR	65	(2D6+6 x 5)
CON	50	(3D6 x 5)
SIZ	50	(2D6 +5 x 5)
DEX	60	(3D6 x 5)
INT	10	(3D6)
POW	60	(3d6x5)
HP:	10	

Average Damage Bonus: 0

Average Build: 0 **Move:** 12

ATTACKS

Teeth, claws, mauling and infection

Fighting: 55% (27/11), damage 1D8 + **DB** + Infection*

Dodge: 36% (18/7) **Armor:** 2 (Fur and feels less pain)

Infection: If bitten, the victim must make a Hard Con roll or become sick for 1d6 days with a fever, suffering one penalty die.

Skills: Track (by smell) 70%, Spot Hidden 60%

GENERIC MONSTROSITY

This unnamable monstrosity, stands roughly the size of a gorilla with over-elongated features and the smell of the grave. Its mass of muscle is ever undulating.

ATTRIBUTE	AVERAGE ROLLS	
STR	110	(4D6+6x10)
CON	80	(4D6 x 5)
SIZ	100	(3D6 +10x5)
DEX	60	(3D6 x 5)
INT	10	(3D6)
POW	55	(3d6x5)
HP:	18	

Average Damage Bonus: +2D6

Average Build: 3 **Move:** 10

ATTACKS

Attacks per round: 2

Fighting: 55% (27/11), damage 1D6 + 2D6 **DB** with its overlong clawed arms

Dodge: 50% (25/10) **Armor:** 5 (Dense Flesh)

Skills: Climb 65%, Listen 60%, Stealth 50%

Sanity Loss: 0/1D6

RIVAL PIANIST

Art History, Art (Piano) 2, Flattery, Reassurance, Gambling 4, Health 6, Sanity 6, Scuffling 3, Stability 4

WEAPON: -2 (fist)

THE CRITIC

Assess Honesty, Art History 2, Art (Critical Analysis), Bureaucracy, Oral History, Language, Fleeing 6, Health 5, Sanity 4, Stability 6

WEAPON: -2 (Fist)

RABID DOG

Athletics 8, Health 4, Scuffling 4, Health 4, Sanity 4, Stability 2

WEAPON: -2 (Bite)

HIT THRESHOLD: 4

ALERTNESS: +1

PATROLMAN

Athletics 7, Firearms 4, Scuffling 6, Weapons 4, Health 8, Sanity 5, Stability 5

ALERTNESS: +1

WEAPONS: -1 (Billy club, only when in uniform), +0 (Light pistol)

GANGSTERS

Athletics 6, Scuffling 7, Weapons 4, Health 10, Sanity 3, Stability 7

WEAPONS: -2 (Fist), -1 (Kick), +0 (Light pistol), +2 (Tommy Gun)—rarely encountered

GENERIC MONSTROSITY

Athletics 12, Health 16, Scuffling 15, Sense Trouble 4, Stealth 5, Health 16, Sanity 6, Stability 8

WEAPON: +5 (Bite, swipe, or claw)

HIT THRESHOLD: 2

ARMOR: 2

ALERTNESS: +1

STEALTH MODIFIER: -1



SCENARIO HOOKS

Looking for quick ideas for a night or two of gaming? See these three scenario starts for a little help.

THE QUEEN'S GOT YOUR NUMBER

THE HOOK

Madame Queenie just gave you two choices: look into her two-timing accountant, or spend the Renaissance looking over your shoulder for jilting the Queen. Harlem nights are dark, cold, and deadly for those without friends. The investigators find themselves pressed into service for a criminal pillar of the community.

BEHIND THE CURTAIN

Stephanie St. Clair, The Queen of Harlem, calls the investigators to her home one night, or has them dragged there if they refuse. She has heard about their unusual investigative habits, and needs people with their unique set of skills. She could ask Bumpy, her bodyguard and partner—but things would get bloody fast, and that's bad for business.

Harold Weston, accountant, has been with her for years; she trusts him. But he has been acting strangely these last couple of weeks. She believes he is skimming money, but needs to know for what, before acting; Dutch Schultz has started circling her operation, and any misstep could provide her enemies an opening for attack.

Following Weston for a few days turns up that he is an early riser, very friendly, and quite charming. If asked, his friends and colleagues from his job at the bank say it's a total change in behavior. He used to be sullen and always kept to himself, like he had some kind of secret. They all love whatever has happened to him.

If the investigators discover the docks meeting that went sideways, Aaron Johnson is shocked to discover Weston is alive, but doesn't display it. Once it's discovered that he tried to kill the accountant for Schultz, a heated gunbattle or chase ensues.

The paper has reported two missing people over the last week, and the discovery of a dried-out husk of a body, all of which are within four blocks of Weston's home.

PUTTING IT TOGETHER

As the case unfolds, the investigators match wits against an ancient evil that lays dormant. Harold Weston was infected by a Niioth-Korghal, and is currently transforming into an unholy abomination. The Niioth-Korghal was trapped in a piece of its ship, buried at the bottom of the Harlem River for centuries under tons of earth that has slowly been receding. Weston was meeting with a supplier on the docks, when the conversation turned sideways; the supplier shot Weston, who fell into the water, nearly dead. Sinking, he brushed the shard and was infected by the dying Niioth-Korghal, "saving" both of them in the process. Weston has blackouts when the creature takes over and feeds. It has minimized its feeding until it can take full control of Weston's body, but has accidentally overfed and killed a few times. The thing only wants to find a way home, but will kill anyone to get what it wants.

Weston has no idea that he is infected, and has partial amnesia. He doesn't remember the dock incident and doesn't know that he has been having blackouts. The creature takes over during the blackouts to feed, carry out its plans, and monitor its host. So far, it has killed four people; three have been discovered, and the fourth is its minion.

RETALIATION

The Weston thing is not ready to act, and senses it is in the best form possible to advance its plan—but won't risk the investigators discovering it. Rather than confront them directly, it'll set traps to infect other people to go after them.

WESTON/ NIOTH-KORGHAL THING

Athletics 4, Health 10, Scuffling 10,
Sense Trouble 3, Stealth 4

HIT THRESHOLD: 3

ALERTNESS: +2

STRENGTH: +1

STEALTH MODIFIER: +1

WEAPON: -2 (Fist), +0 (Energy Blast)

ARMOR: None. Can only be hurt by a hit to the solar plexus (+2 difficulty). A hit to this area with a weapon made of pure lead does +3 damage.

STABILITY LOSS: +0 (unless seen in true form, then +1)

TRANSFORMATION: The creature can rearrange its mass to do things, such as increase Athletics by lowering Scuffling. Or it can turn itself into a more horrific version of its current form, forcing a +1 Stability check.

ENERGY BLAST: Can fire a blast of concentrated, crackling dark energy for 1D6 damage.

LIFE FORCE DRAIN: The creature can grasp a hold of a living thing (person, dog, etc.) and hold it tight. Then it can begin draining if the victim fails a difficulty 5 Stability check; it drains up to 3 points per round. These points can be added to the creature's Health, Athletics, or Scuffling. Anyone fed upon but not killed is psychically linked to the creature; a difficulty 3 Stability test is needed to suppress any attempt for an hour.

INFECTION: Anyone drained of all power is killed, and becomes a zombie-like husk under Weston's control. The husk needs to feed or will crumble into dust. Most feed daily. Once fed, the husk resembles what it did in life.

A BETTER TOMORROW

Weston is already doomed, as there is no mundane way to remove the Nioth-Korghal without killing the host. Wily investigators may be able to trick the creature into changing hosts, to trap it—but Weston's original wounds from the attack on the docks reemerge, and only immediate access to a skilled surgeon can save him. The primary options for success are to kill Weston and anyone he has infected, or to trap them all.

WESTON/NIOTH-KORGHAL THING AGE 44, VAMPIRIC VICTIM

STR 125 **CON** 150 **SIZ** 75 **DEX** 65 **INT** 75
POW 110 **HP** 23 **DB** +1D6 **Build** 2 **MP** 22
Move 6

ATTACKS

Attacks per round: 2

FIGHTING ATTACKS

Transformation: For 5 POW, it can rearrange its mass to do things, such as increase STR by lowering DEX. Or turn itself into a more horrific version of its current form, costing 1/1D6 SAN.

Energy Blast: Can fire a blast of concentrated, crackling dark energy with the expenditure of 1 Magic Point for 1D6 damage.

Life Force Drain: The creature can grasp a hold of a living thing (person, dog, etc.) and hold it tight. Then it begins draining the life out of the living thing for 1D6 POW and CON per round. As a result, STR and APP each decrease by 2 points every round this power is used. The drained POW and CON are added to its own stats, up to twice the original value. Anyone fed upon but not killed is psychically linked to the creature; a Hard POW roll suppresses any attempt for an hour. It costs 1D6 SAN for the creature to use the host as a viewing point.

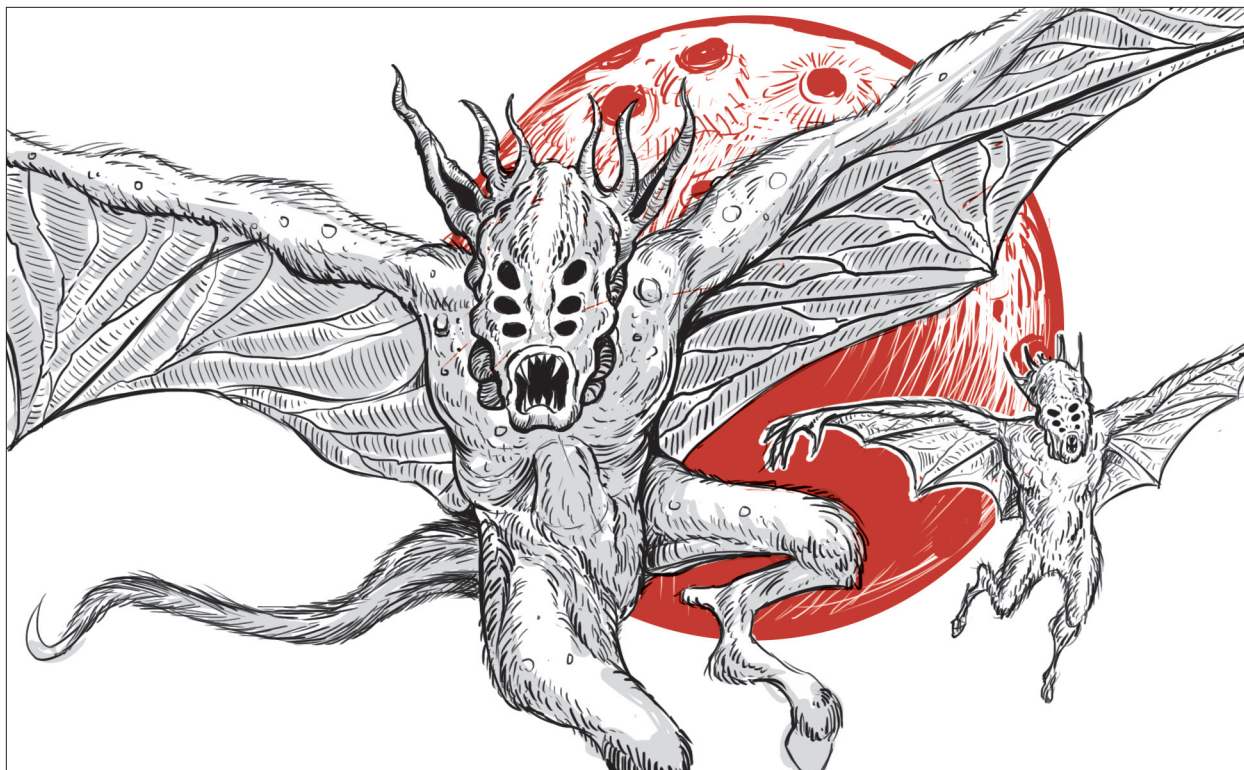
Infection: Anyone drained of all power is killed and becomes a zombie-like husk under Weston's control. The husk needs to feed of life equal to its SIZ, or will crumble into dust. Most feed daily. Once fed, the husk resembles what it did in life.

Fighting: Punch 40% (20/8) or Grapple

Armor: None. Can only be hurt by a hit to the solar plexus (a called shot with a penalty die). A hit to this area with a weapon made of pure lead does triple damage.

Spells: None

SAN Loss: 1/1D8 (if the true form is viewed)



MINION/NIOTH-KORGHAL THINGS

AGE VARIES, DOOMED LEGION

STR 160 **CON** 100 **SIZ** 80 **DEX** 50 **INT** 50
POW 45 **HP** 18 **DB** +2D6 **Build** 3 **MP** 9

Move 6

Brawl: 50% (25/5)

Armor: None. Can only be hurt by a hit to the solar plexus (a called shot with a penalty die). A hit to this area with a weapon made of pure lead does triple damage.

Spells: None

SAN Loss: None (or 1D4 if you see it crumble to dust)

MINION/ NIOTH-KORGHAL THING

Athletics 8, Health 8, Scuffling 16,
Stealth 3

HIT THRESHOLD: 4 (Fast)

ALERTNESS: +1

STRENGTH: +1

WEAPON: -1 (Fist)

ARMOR: None. Can only be hurt by a hit to the solar plexus (+2 difficulty). A hit to this area with a weapon made of pure lead does +3 damage.

STABILITY LOSS: +0 (unless seen in true form, then +1)

WINTRY NIGHTMARE

THE HOOK

The ice business is booming in Harlem, and a few savvy black Harlemites manage to break into the primarily Italian-controlled business. It's "all Jake" (everything's fine), until Trey Williams goes missing. His friend and fellow ice dealer, Noah Kent, hires the investigators to find out what happened to Trey.

BEHIND THE CURTAIN

Trey overheard that Ricci Ice is making daily deliveries for triple the standard price. His curiosity got the better of him, and he saw too much. Mark Huey and his two associates are cultists of Cthugha, and attempt to contact the Great Old One with a massive machine which generates too much heat for any human to use for more than a few minutes. The ice extends how long they can try each day. The cultists sacrificed Trey to Cthugha. A line of victims' ashes can be found in various vases.

PUTTING IT TOGETHER

Investigating Williams' room in a boarding house turns up his customers and route. These should show that he recently expanded his route out by two blocks into East Harlem.

Questioning customers, nearly all black, turns up that Trey was friendly. He was never late, and he's a truck of a man who can carry heavy ice blocks for miles. Someone will also mention that last week, Trey said something about a new customer, and how he recently stole a customer from Ricci Ice on 117th Street.

Checking the paper turns up that six other people have gone missing over the last two months.

At Ricci Ice in East Harlem, the investigators learn that Mark Huey did stop using their services for about three weeks, but then had a double order yesterday. Their previous delivery person for the route mailed a resignation letter a few days ago.

If questioned, Huey claims to not know anything, and does not let them inside his carpentry business, on 123rd Street. Investigating the location shows that it was only rented about six months ago. Daily ice deliveries are greeted at the door by Mark who takes the ice, never letting anyone inside. Other than that activity, two people come and go daily.

Once inside and in the basement, the investigators discover the machine, and confront the cultists.

RETALIATION

If Mark believes the investigators are going to become an issue, he uses the machine to summon a Hunting Horror to dispatch them.

A BETTER TOMORROW

The investigators need to stop the cultists before they contact the Great Old One and kill anyone else.

MARK HUEY, AGE 33, DEVOTED CULTIST (FORMER ELECTRICAL ENGINEER)

STR 45 **CON** 75 **SIZ** 55 **DEX** 50 **INT** 75
APP 60 **POW** 85 **EDU** 65 **SAN** - **HP** 13
DB: 0 **Build** 0 **Move** 5* **MP** 17

*Mark's right leg is burned from a failed contact attempt, but is always covered in pants

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

Luger: 43% (21/8), damage 1D10, attacks per round 1 (3)

Dodge: 56% (28/11)

Armor: None

Skills: Art/Craft (Technical Drawing) 65%, Charm 75%, Cthulhu Mythos 23%, Electrical Repair 47%, Language Own (English) 65%, Library Use 43%, Mechanical Repair 88%, Occult 37%, Science (Engineering) 67%, Spot Hidden 55%

Spells: Brew Space Mead, Cause Blindness, Curse of the Putrid Husk, Bind Hunting Horror

BACKSTORY

- **Description:** Young-looking grad student
- **Trait:** Cold but friendly

HUNTING HORROR

STR 145 **CON** 50 **SIZ** 210 **DEX** 70 **INT** 75
POW 105 **HP** 25 **DB** +3D6 **Build** 4 **MP** 21
Move 7/11 Flying

ATTACKS

Fighting attacks: A hunting horror may attack with its bite, its crushing bulk, and its tail tentacle.

Grasp (mnvr): The tail can be used to wrap around the victim, preventing movement. The hunting horror may then fly off with its victim, or keep fighting. The victim can only break loose with a successful opposed **STR** roll. When a victim is caught in the tail, the hunting horror may only make a bite attack, nibbling at the dangling victim with a bonus die to hit (since the victim's arms are usually pinioned).

Fighting: 65% (32/13), damage 1D6 + **DB**, attacks per round 2

Grasp: (mnvr) target immobilized, must win an opposed **STR** roll to escape

Dodge: 35% (17/7)

Armor: 9-point skin

SAN Loss: 0/1D10

MARK HUEY, CULTIST

Assess Honesty, Craft 2, Cthulhu Mythos, Flattery 2, Occult, Physics 3, Electrical Repair 5, Mechanical Repair 8, Sense Trouble 5, Health 6

WEAPON: -2 (Fist), +0 (Pistol)

SPELLS: See list at left

HUNTING HORROR

Athletics 8 (ground)/11 (air), Health 16, Scuffling 18, Stealth 4

HIT THRESHOLD: 3

ALERTNESS MODIFIER: +1

STEALTH MODIFIER: +1

WEAPON: +2 (Bite)

GRAPPLE: Once grappled, it carries the victim high into the air before dropping them.

ARMOR: -4 (Scales)

STABILITY LOSS: +1

SERVITOR OF THE OUTER GODS

Athletics 4, Health 9, Scuffling 11

HIT THRESHOLD: 3

ALERTNESS: +1

STEALTH MODIFIER: - 1

WEAPON: -2 (Tentacle), roll 1D6 for the number of tentacle attacks.

ARMOR: None, but no physical weapon can harm one: spells and magical weapons do normal damage; regenerate 1 Health per round until dead.

*Due to Burr's binding, the creature is vulnerable to loud musical assaults; they do 1D6 damage.

SANITY LOSS: +2

BLOOD IS BLOOD

CAST OF CHARACTERS

Anna Potter: The client and victim, Director of the Lafayette Players, is just trying to get to opening night. She hires the investigators to look into mysterious singing that follows her.

Eliza Jumel: Ghost and spiritual guardian.

The Lafayette Players: Actors, crew, and band. All are friendly and gossip-filled.

Ronald and Mary Potter: A couple who couldn't have kids and adopted Anna, but never told her of her origins. They aren't easy to break, as it has been a secret for 20 years.

Janice White: A hall of records worker, Janice is all business and doesn't care about anything else.

See the flowchart on the following page for more information on creating this scenario.

SERVITOR OF THE OUTER GODS

STR 75 **CON** 80 **SIZ** 100 **DEX** 80 **INT** 85
POW 100 **HP** 18 **DB** +1D6 **Build** 2 **MP** 20
Move 7

ATTACKS

Fighting attacks: A mass of writhing tentacles batters and twists at the target. Following a successful hit, 1D3 tentacles cause damage. Its tentacles may be used to grapple an opponent with a successful maneuver. The range of its tentacles is 20 yards.

Music of Madness: The discordant music made by these creatures adversely affects human listeners, who must make a Sanity roll every two rounds they endure the music, or lose 1D4 Sanity points. It's suggested that those who lose their mind become Servants or some twisted version of them.

Fighting: 45% (22/9), damage 1D6 + **DB** per tentacle, attacks per round 4

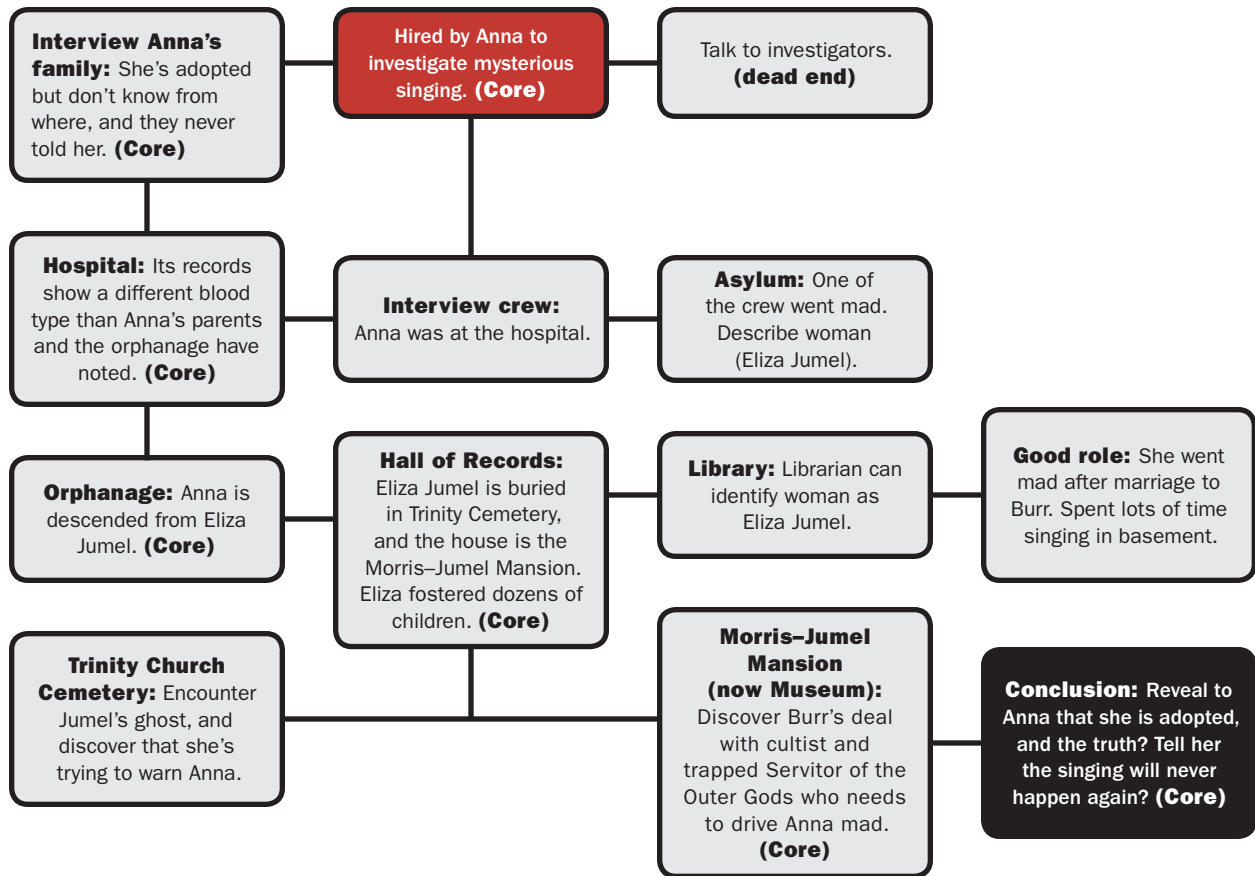
Dodge: 41% (20/8)

Armor: None, but no physical weapon can harm one; spells and magical weapons do normal damage. Regenerate 3 hit points per round until dead.*

*Due to Burr's binding, the creature is vulnerable to loud musical assaults, which do 1D6 damage on a normal success or 2D6 on an Extreme success.

Spells: None; the creature has been partially banished, and has lost its spells

SAN Loss: 1/1D10 Sanity



4D6 SCENARIO GENERATOR

You can build a scenario with 4D6 for an evening of play.

BRINGING IN INVESTIGATORS

1. Family member
2. Criminal organization
3. A friend
4. A rival
5. Authorities
6. Newspaper articles

THE HOOK

1. Person is killed
2. Object disappears
3. Someone is seeking revenge
4. Find ancient artifact
5. Notice someone's strange behavior
6. Hired by a patron to do something

THE ANTAGONIST

1. Human (Mundane: Mafia, Klan or non-Mythos)
2. Mythos Entity
3. Supernatural Entity
(Non-Mythos: Vampire, Ghost, etc.)
4. Human (Mythos: Immortal Wizard, Cultist or Artifact-Wielding Person)
5. Great Old One or a powerful agent of them
6. Mythos Entity

THE RESOLUTION

1. Fight
2. Music
3. Banish
4. Fight
5. Imprison
6. Negotiate



SUPPORTING CAST

“One is the consciousness of acting as the advance guard of the African peoples in their contact with Twentieth Century civilization; the other, the sense of a mission of rehabilitating the race in world esteem from that loss of prestige for which the fate and conditions of slavery have so largely been responsible. Harlem, as we shall see, is the center of both these movements; she is the home of the Negro’s “Zionism.” The pulse of the Negro world has begun to beat in Harlem. A Negro newspaper carrying news material in English, French and Spanish, gathered from all quarters of America, the West Indies and Africa has maintained itself in Harlem for over five years. Two important magazines, both edited from New York, maintain their news and circulation consistently on a cosmopolitan scale.”

Alain Locke, “Enter the New Negro” (1925)

THE FOLLOWING CHARACTERS POPULATE HARLEM, and a number of them can be used as replacement characters, given their full stat blocks. If used, take a few minutes to personalize the history as needed. While a Harlemit now, the character may be from anywhere in Lovecraft Country: Kingsport, Arkham, or Attucks (see Map on page 269). For instance, Samuel Wright is from Attucks, an all-black town named for Crispus Attucks located thirty miles from Arkham.

Otherwise, these support characters exist to bring Harlem to life. They can be an old friend or contact, or that random person in need of aid, or someone who comes to the investigators’ aid at the right moment. A few of the characters come directly from the genius of the *Harlem Unbound* Kickstarter backers and are ready to bring Harlem to the gaming table.

ATTUCKS & HARBORMILL

Harlem Unbound introduces two new cities to the Lovecraft country landscape. The first, Attucks, is named for Crispus Attucks, a black man, the first person to die in the American Revolution (Boston Massacre). The all-black town was founded in 1789 by a small band of free people of color as a safe haven, following attempts to pass abolitionist laws to end slavery in the wake of the American Revolutionary War. It would take nearly a hundred years before the end of slavery in 1863.

Even living under the shadow of bounty hunters, kidnapped townspeople and horrors beyond description, the town flourished. It welcomed escaped slaves, freed people and focused on protecting its own. Some locals’ accounts claim the statue of Crispus, that old Tuma carved out of some strange stone, attacked a group of slavers coming after some refugees. Dozens of stories circle around the town but no one can say with certainty.

Founded shortly after the Civil War, and a short distance from Innsmouth on the water, is Harbormill. This town has not fared nearly as well as Attucks. The city seemed cursed from its very first few moments when the mayor died in his bed, his lungs filled with water. Citizens still claim to see the bloated form on nights with a New Moon.

The last decade has witnessed the city struggling to make ends meet. The Great War actually helped the city, with returning veterans bringing new money, skills, and dedication to make their homes better. A few years ago, a new church cropped up in town with a small following of 8 to 13 congregants, the Esoteric Order of Dagon.



ADELINE "BOMBER" JACKSON

DRIVE: Weight of the World

OCCUPATION: Veteran (Military)

SPECIAL: No Stability test to witness a dead body, and reduced Difficulty Number to witness violence against people or experience being attacked.

BUILD POINTS: 0

Health 7, Sanity 9, Stability 10

Cthulhu Mythos, Languages (German), Medicine 2,

Occult, Assess Honesty 2,

Credit Rating 2, Oral History,

Renaissance, Reassurance 2,

Technical Abilities, Art (Novelist),

Evidence Collection, Outdoorsman,

Athletics 4, Driving 6, Firearms 3,

First Aid 8, Mechanical Repair 3,

Preparedness 4, Psychoanalysis 5,

Sense Trouble 5, Stealth 3

ADELINE "BOMBER" JACKSON VETERAN (MILITARY), AGE 24

Adeline would never say she was remarkable, she would just say she was trying to find a place for herself. Born with a steady hand, steel nerves, and a friendly laugh, her early life was mostly a blur of road trips; her baseball player father bounced from one Negro League team to another, while her seamstress mother kept food on the table and taught her the needle. When their big break hit in 1902 with the Philadelphia Giants, they settled into a new life, and Adeline's love of learning took root.

The family moved to New York in 1911 when her father joined the Lincoln Giants; and Adeline began working in the Bellevue Hospital Center laundry room. In her first year, she witnessed a white nurse save a man's life and stitch up ghastly wounds. That moment changed her life. She spent countless nights reading, and days at work watching and learning.

When the Red Cross needed volunteers for the Great War, Adeline went without hesitation. In 1918, she saved a G.I. from an attack by...*something*...a thing that wouldn't die. Four soldiers kept shooting the thing, but it came at them out of the darkness—ripping one to pieces, shattering the other two's sanity at the sight of it, and sending another flying some 10 feet away. Adeline rammed the thing with her ambulance, destroying the vehicle and possibly the thing; no one can be certain, as a grenade forced her to flee. She pulled the one survivor away from the battlefield, but can never forget that night.

Nowadays, she's living in tenement housing in the Valley with three other young women. She spends her days working on her novel and debating others at the Hobby Horse.

STR 45	CON 65	SIZ 45	DEX 45	INT 65
APP 55	POW 60	EDU 58	SAN 70	HP 10
DB 0	Build 0	Move 8	MP 12	Luck 45

Special: No **SAN** loss for witnessing a dead body or human violence.

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

Luger: 40% (20/8), damage 1D10, attacks per round 1(3)

Dodge: 54% (27/10) **Armor:** None

Skills: Climb 30%, Credit Rating 20%, Cthulhu Mythos 5%, Dodge 54%, Drive 41%, Fighting (Brawl) 25%, Firearms (Handgun) 40%, First Aid 65%, Language Own (English) 58%, Language (German) 21%, Mechanical Repair 45%, Medicine 25%, Navigate 45%, Persuade 45%, Psychology 40%, Renaissance 30%, Stealth 45%

Equipment: Luger, purse, novel, pens

BACKSTORY

- **Description:** Warm and steely demeanor
- **Significant People:** Father, mother, and two young cousins
- **Meaningful Location:** Hobby Horse
- **Treasured Possession:** Luger (you picked it up and used it to defend the wounded)
- **Personality:** Tough
- **Trait:** Good reputation

KAREN "EARS" WILSON

JOURNALIST (JOURNALIST), AGE 30

Since the first time Karen asked, her mother Amy, an Italian choir girl from Brooklyn, has claimed that Karen's father is William Randolph Hearst. She would tell her daughter endlessly about how he loved her first, before her cousin Millicent Veronica Willson stole him away. Karen spent a lot of her youth seeing the great man in action, but always at a distance. No one seemed to tell her the truth—or the conversation would get quiet when she entered the room, and they would talk about the weather.

That constant desire for the truth is what started Karen on a career similar to her uncle "father." She decided that trying to prove herself wasn't worth the effort; if he really was her father, he would step up and let her know. But that focus quickly subsided as the thrill of solving mysteries brought greater pleasure than anything else.

She is still a freelancer, as few papers are interested in employing full-time a woman who's trying to produce hard-hitting news. Karen's journalistic eye is currently trained on Harlem and the impact of the Great Migration on housing conditions, which are downright horrible. A hot story like that is bound to land her a permanent job...right?

STR 55 **CON** 65 **SIZ** 75 **DEX** 45 **INT** 50
APP 60 **POW** 40 **EDU** 65 **SAN** 80 **HP** 14
DB +1D4 **Build** 1 **Move** 7 **MP** 8 **Luck** 75

Special: Your press pass gets you access to a lot of places most can't go.

Sword cane: 45% (22/9), damage 1D4 + 1D4

Dodge: 62% (31/12)

Armor: None

Skills: Art/Craft (Writer) 65%, Charm 65%, Climb 40%, Credit Rating 10%, Dodge 62%, Drive 30%, Fighting (Brawl) 25%, Fighting (Sword cane) 45%, Firearms (Handgun) 20%, History 45%, Listen 35%, Language Own (English) 65%, Psychology 55%, Stealth 65%

Equipment: Sword cane, notebook

BACKSTORY

- **Description:** Muscular with keen eyes
- **Significant People:** Amy (mother)
- **Meaningful Location:** Tammany Hall
- **Treasured Possession:** Broken camera (belonged to a lost love)
- **Personality:** Activist
- **Trait:** You love to talk, and find it easy to get people to reveal their darkest secrets



KAREN "EARS" WILSON

DRIVE: Inquisitive

OCCUPATION: Journalist

SPECIAL: Your press pass gets you access to a lot of places most people can't go.

BUILD POINTS: 0

Health 10, Sanity 6, Stability 6

History, Assess Honesty 2, Cop Talk, Credit Rating 2, Flattery 2, Oral History 2, Reassurance 2, Art (Journalist) 2, Evidence Collection, Locksmith, Conceal 4, Filch 4, Fleeing 8, Preparedness 4, Scuffling 3, Sense Trouble 6, Shadowing 5, Stealth 6, Weapons 5



LUTHER ALEXANDER

CONSULTING DETECTIVE (CONJURE MAN), AGE LATE 20S (MAYBE)

No one knows much about Luther's past. He keeps it tight-lipped. It's almost like he appeared out of the ether one day, to help Sam Battle catch a thief who had previously eluded the white police—and with whom they have now saddled the popular patrolman.

When Luther speaks, any trained linguist can catch occasional slips in his accent and word choice—but it's only for the briefest of moments. If pressed, he simply smiles and changes the subject. For the last few years, that has been the way it is; his landlady, Ms. Herndon, has stopped asking.

Luther's door is always open to those in need, and his prices are reasonable.

LUTHER ALEXANDER

DRIVE: Dreamer

OCCUPATION: Consulting Detective

SPECIAL: The first point of Stability or Sanity spent to cast a spell or enact a ritual acts as 2 points (e.g., if a spell costs 3 Stability to cast, it costs you 2 instead).

BUILD POINTS: 0

Health 7, Sanity 7, Stability 7

Anthropology 2, Cthulhu Mythos, History 2, Languages (English, French, Swahili) 3, Library Use 2, Occult 2, Assess Honesty 2, Cop Talk, Credit Rating 2, Renaissance, Streetwise, Evidence Collection 2, Athletics 4, Disguise 3, Filch 4, Firearms 4, First Aid 3, Health 7, Hypnosis 6, Piloting 4, Preparedness 4, Psychoanalysis 4, Sense Trouble 6, Stealth 3

SPELLS: Elder Sign

STR 55 **CON** 65 **SIZ** 55 **DEX** 60 **INT** 60
APP 50 **POW** 75* **EDU** 72 **SAN** 70 **HP** 12
DB 0 **Build** 0 **Move** 8 **MP** 15 **Luck** 35

Special: Cthulhu Mythos and spells

.38 Automatic: 40% (20/8), damage 1D10, attacks per round 1(3)

Dodge: 55% (27/11)

Armor: None

Skills: Anthropology 30%, Cthulhu Mythos 10%, Dodge 55%, Fighting (Brawl) 25%, Firearms (Pistols) 40%, History 55%, Hypnosis 55%, Library Use 55%, Persuade 60%, Occult 65%, Language (English) 65%, Language (French) 65%, Language (Swahili) 65%, Psychology 40%, Renaissance 20%, Science (Astronomy) 55%, Science (Geology) 45%, Spot Hidden 60%

Equipment: Pistol, hat, handcuffs

Spells: Elder Sign, Create Mist of R'lyeh, and Implant Fear

BACKSTORY

- **Description:** Aloft and mysterious
- **Significant People:** Ms. Herndon (landlord) and Sam Battle (patrolman), both friends
- **Meaningful Location:** Graveyard near Harlem Hospital
- **Treasured Possession:** Book of African fairy tales
- **Personality:** Faith
- **Trait:** Only finds fulfillment when solving a case

YASHIKA "THE SHEIK" COHEN GROCER (PATRON), AGE 41

Yashika, a Jewish man, inspired by Trotsky, had escaped Ukraine in 1919 after working in Kiev when the Bolshevik Revolution began to tear his country apart. Before he left the country, Yashika had returned to his family in their shtetl (Kosheveta) a small village in the countryside 100 miles south of Kiev. Soon afterward, a series of pogroms—some by the White Army, some by the Red Army, some by the Ukrainian Nationalists, and some by the Black Army—began to terrorize Jews across Ukraine. In Kosheveta alone, these “bandits” (pronounced bondets) murdered 49 of the 300 Jews of his village of 2500, including two of Yashika’s older brothers; raped women and girls; inflicted tortuous non-lethal injuries to the Jews; and burned down homes and shops. Naturally, this left the Jews of his shtetl, as well as Jews across Ukraine, with significant mental issues.

While he can never forget these horrors, Yashika tries to put them behind him. He quickly adjusts to life in America. Upon arriving, Yashika works in a Manhattan sweatshop sewing cheap dresses (“shmatas” in Yiddish), goes to night school, learns English, and saves his money. A few years later, he opens his corner grocery store in on the edge of East Harlem. He has a good sense for business and quickly develops a following.

Most of his customers are working people—some Jews but mostly non-Jews. Non-Jews, unfamiliar with his name, dubbed him “the Sheik” after the Rudolf Valentino film character and as a play on the sound of his real name, and it stuck. Arthur Huff Fauset, a black civil rights activist and folklorist, befriends the Sheik; they often talk, sometimes over a glass of hot tea. One evening as the store was closing, the drink of choice became vodka. And the Sheik began to reveal his history to his new friend.

STR 50 **CON** 65 **SIZ** 65 **DEX** 40 **INT** 70
APP 50 **POW** 60 **EDU** 86 **SAN** 55 **HP** 13
DB 0 **Build** 0 **Move** 7 **MP** 12 **Luck** 55

Special: Two times per session, in any logically possible situation, you can replace any skill with a standard Credit Rating check

Brawl: 25% (12/5), damage 1D3 **Dodge:** 20% (10/5)

Armor: None

Skills: Accounting 35%, Credit Rating 5%*, Dodge 20%, Drive Auto 40%, Fast Talk 55%, Fighting (Brawl) 25%, Firearms (Rifle) 35%, History 45%, Persuade 60%, Language (Own) Russian 86%, Language (English) 50%, Language (Ukrainian) 50%, Language (Yiddish) 55%, Law 25%, Library Use 40%, Listen 45%, Ride 35%, Sleight of Hand 40%, Survival (Desert) 40%

*Prior to opening the store, and before becoming Patron. Once successful, Yashika’s Credit Rating is 60%.

Equipment: Kippa, pocket knife

BACKSTORY

- **Description:** Knowledge with world-weary eyes
- **Significant People:** Wife and children
- **Meaningful Location:** Synagogue
- **Treasured Possession:** Journal of voyage to the United States
- **Personality:** Activist
- **Trait:** Loyal



YASHIKA "THE SHEIK" COHEN

DRIVE: Better Tomorrows

OCCUPATION: Grocer

SPECIAL: Three free Credit Rating spends per scenario.

BUILD POINTS: 0

Health 6, Sanity 9, Stability 7

Accounting 2, History 2, Law, Language 3, Library Use, Theology, Bargain 2, Buerreacracry, Credit Rating 1*, Flattery 2, Reassurance 2, Conceal 3, Driving 3, Electrical Repair 2, Firearms 3, First Aid 3, Fleeing 5, Health 6, Mechanical Repair 2, Preparedness 10, Psychoanalysis 4, Scuffling 3, Sense Trouble 3, Stealth 4

[*Prior to opening the store, and before becoming Patron. Once successful, Yashika’s Credit Rating is 5]



EVE MAXWELL

DRIVE: Inquisitiveness

OCCUPATION: Librarian

SPECIAL: Gain a free spend on Language checks, twice per session.

BUILD POINTS: 0

Health 5, Sanity 5, Stability 6

Accounting 2, Stability 6, Bureaucracy 2, Health 5, Cthulhu Mythos, Languages (Hyperborean),

Library Use 2, Physics, Bargain, Bureaucracy 2, Technical Abilities, Astronomy 2, Locksmith 2, Conceal 4, Driving 4, Filch 4, Firearms 3, Fleeing 6, Mechanical Repair 5, Preparedness 8, Sense Trouble 7, Shadowing 5, Stealth 5

EVE MAXWELL LIBRARIAN (SCHOLAR), AGE 22

Eve is a bird-like sparrow of a woman, of average height and appearance, with fashionable short hair. Her most notable feature is the lack of her left arm from the elbow down. Reserved and cautious by nature, Eve's profession has taught her many things—to read, to learn, and to study people. The “accident” has taught her to be prepared.

Having recently been told to move out of her home by her mother, who has found a new lease on life in new social circles, Eve finds her hitherto-restrained curiosity unbound.

The people she follows may not know her, but she knows them—and she has seen what she would call “some very strange goings on.” This and the “accident” have left her with a packed bag by the front door, a spare car in a lockup with a gun under the seat, three different routes out of town, and a clawing sense of dread that something bad is about to happen, again. She is a woman in need of a friend, or someone to rescue.

STR 40 **CON** 50 **SIZ** 50 **DEX** 55 **INT** 55
APP 45 **POW** 55 **EDU** 77 **SAN** 48 **HP** 10
DB 0 **Build** 0 **Move** 8 **MP** 11 **Luck** 60

Special: Gain a bonus die on first attempt to translate a book, as your natural skill deduces patterns in the written word

Brawl: 15% (7/3), damage 1D3

.32 Revolver: 30% (20/8), damage 1D8, attacks per round 1(3)

Dodge: 27% (23/5)

Armor: None

Skills: Accounting 25%, Credit Rating 25%, Cthulhu Mythos 5%, Dodge 27%, Fighting (Brawl) 5%, Firearms (Handgun) 30%, History 55%, Language Own (English) 77%, Language (Hyperborean) 31%, Library Use 70%, Locksmith 56%, Occult 15%, Psychology 65%, Science (Physics) 41%, Sleight of Hand 20%, Spot Hidden 65%, Stealth 38%

Equipment: .32, go bag, car

BACKSTORY

- **Description:** Bird-like and paranoid
- **Significant People:** None...yet
- **Meaningful Location:** Her car
- **Treasured Possession:** Unaussprechlichen Kulten (stolen from rare books collection)
- **Personality:** Analytical
- **Trait:** Paranoid

ALICE "ALTA" KAPLAN COOK (SEER), AGE 18

Alice was born into a traditional Jewish household in Harlem on 103rd Street in 1901. Originally the youngest of three children, both of her siblings died at by the age of two. To fool the spirit of death that hung over their house, her parents began calling the baby Alta, meaning old, in hopes of shielding her. Her parents' ploy appeared to work and they endeavored to make her life as normal as possible. She was raised in her mother's footsteps. She learned to run a household, be religious, and cook.

Unknownst to her parents, while they believed her life to be normal and unaccosted, she acquired the Sight. It's not always controllable, and it is draining to use. She has seen things that would shatter the minds of others.

STR 40 **CON** 80 **SIZ** 60 **DEX** 50 **INT** 55
APP 60 **POW** 75 **EDU** 50 **SAN** 68 **HP** 14
DB 0 **Build** 0 **Move** 7 **MP** 15 **Luck** 60

Special: The Sight 30% and cost 1D6 MP

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

Dodge: 75% (10/4)

Armor: None

Skills: Accounting 25%, Art/Craft (Cooking) 55%, Charm 55%, Credit Rating 10%, Cthulhu Mythos 6%, Fighting (Brawl) 25%, First Aid 40%, Language Own (English) 50%, Languge Own (Hebrew) 50%, Listen 45%, Lore (Jewish Folklore) 30%, Persuade 55%, Psychology 45%, Spot Hidden 35%

Equipment: Great-grandmother's wedding ring

BACKSTORY

- **Description:** Plainly dressed with a steely gaze showing an old soul
- **Meaningful Location:** The burial site of her siblings
- **Treasured Possession:**
- **Personality:** Dreamer
- **Trait:** Smiles and plays her part but knows the truth



ALICE "ALTA" KAPLAN

DRIVE: Dreamer

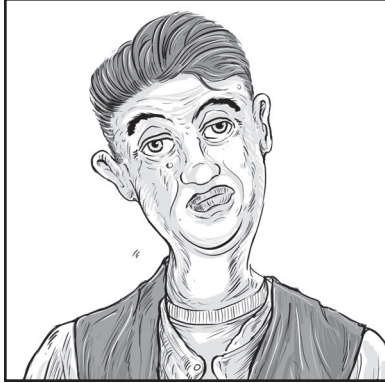
OCCUPATION: Cook

SPECIAL: Three times per session, can use the Sight with a Difficulty 3 Stability check

BUILD POINTS: 0

Health 9, Sanity 7, Stability 7

Accounting 2, Cthulhu Mythos, Language 2, Assess Honesty 2, Bargain 2, Credit Rating, Flattery, Reassurance 2, Craft (Cooking) 2, Locksmith, Photography, Disguise 4, Filch 5, First Aid 5, Fleeing 8, Health 9, Preparedness 4, Psychoanalysis 4, Sanity 7, Stability 7, Scuffling 3, Sense Trouble 5, Weapons 3



BILLY NEILL

DRIVE: Wrong Place, Right Time

OCCUPATION: Bartender

SPECIAL: Three times per session, you can call in a favor to get a free spend on any skill. It just takes time, as the person has to be called and then show up.

BUILD POINTS: 0

Health 7, Sanity 5, Stability 7

Accounting, Sanity 5, Occult, Assess Honesty 2, Cop Talk, Credit Rating 3, Oral History, Reassurance, Streetwise 2, Evidence Collection, Locksmith 2, Athletics 8 (Hit Threshold 4), Firearms 3, Filch 8, Shadowing 6, Stealth 8, Weapon 8

BILLY NEILL BARTENDER (EVERYMAN), AGE 25

Billy is a first-generation Irish-American, and the runt of five brothers. He idolized his three older brothers, and ended up in the Gopher Gang with his first job as a sneak thief (safe cracker and throat slicer). He was so good at it that the gang called him “Old Jack,” resurrected from the East End, up to his old tricks.

The Neill brothers find themselves caught in a dust-up between local gangs—the Hudson Dusters and the Marginals—when a peace treaty goes sideways. Pdraig, the oldest, catches a blackjack to the back of his head, and is summarily trampled underfoot during the ensuing scuffle. Proinsias is taken, and coerced into aiding in Billy’s capture. Billy snatches a jewel off the table before being beaten unconscious, only to find himself tied down to a chair in the presence of Kid Yorke, when he comes to.

Billy is tortured, but Kid is not satisfied, and draws his penknife out from its sheath. Unfolding the blade within full view, the bully has his men hold his prisoner’s head still and widen his left eyelid open. In a slow, ghastly, methodical fashion, Kid slides the blade behind Billy’s eyeball and cuts at the optic nerve until it is severed, leaving nothing save wind blowing through the aperture. With his one good eye, Billy watches Kid’s men burn Proinsias and Pdraig’s bodies, before leaving.

Seamus, the youngest Neill brother, comes out of hiding and frees Billy. Leaving their brothers burning, Seamus heaves Billy over his shoulder and books it as quickly and safely as he can, while keeping his suffering brother stable. They make it out of the block just as the coppers show up.

Billy’s one saving grace is the jewel he stole, worth a fortune. Billy sits on it until Prohibition arrives. Seeing his chance, he purchases a glass eye and a root cellar which he converts into a speakeasy: The Doiléir Íochtair, or Foggy Bottom, with Seamus as bouncer. His motto? Open to all—rich or poor, European or African, your money is all the same color in Billy’s eye. Criostóir, the middle brother, died in the Great War—and the last two Neill brothers believe in protecting their family and neighbors, before defending an America which despises them. Billy hangs an anti-war political cartoon in his speakeasy.

The night he hangs that cartoon, a businessman comes in and screams at it, clawing at his eyes as he flings himself onto the floor. He is pinned down by Seamus, who calms him with some liquor and convinces him he is in no danger. The frightened man cowers and points, claiming he has seen the terrible visage represented in the painting, or at least something which came close to it. Seamus rounds up a group, arms them, and follows the terrified customer to prevent him from lashing out once again.

In their attempt to placate and pacify the poor soul, the mob accidentally comes across the feeding grounds of something horrific. No words can describe it, though Seamus swears up and down that upon seeing the beast, at least half the group dropped their arms and clutched at their heads, some rapping against their skulls and others babbling in tongues. Those who kept their wits about them charged at the thing, though when they came close, the mob went through it as though it had never been there. Upon the disappearance of the strange creature, most of those who had become mad reclaimed their senses, although more than a few who were there that night are still within the confines of the local sanitarium.

Ever since that night, people have made it known that if there is a sighting of something odd, you should make your way to the Doiléir Íochtair—or should you be interested in hunting down any of those odd things yourself, you should also head towards Billy Neill's place for help. But it'll be on your head, should you decide to follow through on any of those tales of living nightmares. Just don't forget to settle up on your tab before the month is out, lest Billy's good eye sees you trying to leg it out of town before then.

STR 55 **CON** 75 **SIZ** 35 **DEX** 65 **INT** 60
APP 60 **POW** 50 **EDU** 47 **SAN** 60 **HP** 11
DB 0 **Build** 0 **Move** 9 **MP** 10 **Luck** 20

Special: Billy has a network of people and can find anything or anyone, given time, money, and a reason. He's a go-to for finding illegal goods or ancient books.

Knife: 75% (37/15), damage 1D4 + 2, attacks per round 2

Sawed-Off Shotgun*: 40% (20/8), damage 4D6 / 1d6, attacks per round 1 or 2

Dodge: 32% (16/6)

*One penalty die for all firearms due to missing an eye

Armor: None

Skills: Appraise 35%, Dodge 32%, Fighting (Brawl) 25%, Fighting (Knife) 75%, Firearms (Shotgun) 39%, Locksmith 70%, Spot Hidden 25%, Throw 20%, Stealth 70%

Equipment: Knife, glass eye, whiskey

BACKSTORY

- **Description:** Short and muscular, with a glass eye
- **Significant People:** Seamus, his only surviving brother
- **Meaningful Location:** Doiléir Íochtair
- **Treasured Possession:** Doiléir Íochtair
- **Personality:** Rebel
- **Trait:** The guy who knows a guy



GENTRY "FINGERS" PRICE PRIVATE EYE (MUSICIAN), AGE 35

"Gentry Price? Whoa, fella. Be careful around that mug. He had a queer turn about a year ago, and ain't never been the same. See, he had a wife once. He had a family. He used to walk a decent beat in Harlem. You could make his silhouette around any corner or any frosted pane you'd care to, frame like that. Tall fella. Not a brick, mind, but tall."

"After that winter, though...well, that was the fire that razed that block in Mount Morris. He lost it all. But don't mention it, or those fingers of his might slip off that clarinet and find themselves around your neck, y'follow?"

—Miles Thurston Aster, speakeasy bartender

GENTRY "FINGERS" PRICE

DRIVE: Wrong Place, Right Time

OCCUPATION: Private Eye (Musician)

SPECIAL: Three times per session, can perform a one-point spend and earn the benefit of spending 2 points for anything related to her music.

BUILD POINTS: 0

Health 8, Sanity 4, Stability 6

Art History 2, Cthulhu Mythos, Health 8, Occult, Assess Honesty 2, Cop Talk 2, Credit Rating 1, Flattery 2, Renaissance, Reassurance, Streetwise, Art (Clarinet) 2, Evidence Collection, Athletics 8 (Hit Threshold 4), Conceal 3, Disguise 10, Explosives 4, Filch 6, Scuffling 10, Shadowing 4, Stealth 4

Gentry "Fingers" Price has a couple of secrets, and is at his wit's end looking for answers. You see, before the night of the fire, he was Hettie Price, Gentry's wife and amateur clarinet player for a small jazz trio. Then the colossal plants that walk like men came, and took Hettie and Gentry out beyond time. However, something went very, very wrong; in a moment of panic, the plant-men sent Gentry and Hettie screaming back in time to their old lives.

Hettie landed in Gentry's body, a ghostly melody threading through her mind. Gentry never returned, and Hettie's body burned in a strange, eldritch fire that froze it to nothing.

More than anything, she wants to know what happened to their daughters. Nora and Nell made it out if the fire, he remembers. She held them in his arms, but then the shock of seeking herself in Gentry's body made her go funny. Gender identity gets weird; she gets lost in his own head. Gentry is trying to stay out of hospitals after seeing what happened to Jonathan Katz in Worcester State.

Now, Gentry pursues any sign of hauntings and echoes in a hunt for her missing husband. Her detective agency operates above a moderately popular speakeasy, the better to weed out the cranks and jokers.

Gentry has no patience for fools, and learned enough about the Mythos to be dangerous as he tries to understand what the Devil happened that night. She's relearning the clarinet, since it keeps the night off, but it's strange playing when you first learned on smaller hands.

As long as no one's looking, she drinks. Pays lip service to the club scene, but hates it. Hates the attention, hates the people, hates the smoke, hates the damnable closeness of it all.

If it wasn't for Nora and Nell, he'd have taken the cyanide solution long ago. She still might, if the song gets much louder. Listen, can't you hear it? Let her play it for you...

STR 60 **CON** 65 **SIZ** 65 **DEX** 50 **INT** 60
APP 50 **POW** 40 **EDU** 60 **SAN** 38 **HP** 13
DB +1D4 **Build** 1 **Move** 7 **MP** 8 **Luck** 85

Special: Immune to any spells targeting her mentally

Brawl: 45% (22/8), damage 1D3 + 1D4 + 2*

Dodge: 20% (10/4)

Armor: None

Skills: Art/Craft (Clarinet) 60%, Disguise 45%, Charm 55%, Credit Rating 20%, Cthulhu Mythos 12%, Fighting (Brawl) 25%, Firearms (Handgun) 20%, Language Own (English) 60%, Listen 45%, Psychology 45%, Occult 30%, Read Lips 35%, Renaissance 27%, Spot Hidden 55%

Equipment: Clarinet, flask, cyanide, brass knuckles*

*Brass knuckles add +2 damage

BACKSTORY

- **Description:** Well-dressed, yet haggard
- **Meaningful Location:** The site of the old family house
- **Treasured Possession:** Locket with picture of family
- **Personality:** Dreamer
- **Trait:** Happiest when playing the clarinet and forgetting about the world

WILMA DE HURST
WARBLER (SINGER), APPARENT AGE 37

Wilma is an up-and-comer; no one heard of her three months ago, but now she's booking gigs all over Harlem. She's striking—her pale skin and azul eyes seems to attract the light, and her voice is nearly hypnotic. When asked about herself, she sheepishly smiles and says, "I am from old money, darling. I don't have to sing, but I need to sing."

A few people have found it strange that she doesn't use a manager and only has one burly-looking fellow with her at all times. But she seems to have talent, and that's all the nightclubs care about.

Wilma is, in fact, Ditra from Russia; she is looking for a runaway ward, Catrina, to return her home. The ward wanted to become famous in America for her dancing. Every day, she spends three hours applying makeup to disguise herself as Wilma.

PLAYING WILMA: Your strengths are getting people to tell you their secrets, and building a network of informants. You will play the part of a nightclub singer until you find your quarry.

CHARLESTON CHASE
DETECTIVE (ONE OF THE BOYS), AGE 44

Charlie, as his friends call him, is an upstanding white cop doing whatever most cops in the '20s do with prohibition in full swing: he's on the take. It's a nice life: no one questions you when you knock down a door; shoot a few blacks, Irish, or Jews; and plant evidence on them for the mob. Charlie doesn't really hate them; he just doesn't think they're real Americans. If Schultz, Cohen, or whoever is willing to give you a ten-spot to look the other way, why the fuck not? Worst case, the chief calls you into his office and takes a cut of your slice.

PLAYING CHARLIE: Charlie is a racist and a bully. He's jealous of anyone who served, as his flat feet kept him out of the Great War. No matter what, he is always right.

"POPS"
BARBER (AVATAR), APPARENT AGE 55

"Pops" is a nickname, but it's what everyone calls him and no one can seem to remember his real name, but it's not a big deal. If pressed, he offers any name people want to hear and laughs it off, saying "When you're as old as me, names don't matter. Just deeds and deals." If asked where he is from, he gladly tells them about his home in southern Nigeria and that he is one of the Igbo people.

The rather portly, grandfather-like barber has three people working for him and a couple of kids who sweep the floor. The shop is open from 1000 to 1800 and is usually busy—it's a great place to catch up on what's going on. After hours, he can usually be found drinking in a cheap dive bar and rarely makes it to the fancier places.

Pops is the cast-off form of Anansi.

PLAYING POPS: Pops is friendly and always ready with a joke, weaving in serious topics between the humor. He's a trickster and always gets more than he wagers. He is currently trying to collect all the wisdom of the world.

BETTY TUESDAY
ANTIQUARIAN (SCHOLAR), 41

Tuesday's shop has been at the same location for three decades, after she inherited it from her father, a freed black man living in the north. Tuesday has built herself a reputation for reliably finding rare books, as well as for her keen translating skills. It's commonplace to see people from all over the world traveling to meet her, and people traveling from all over the States for her assistance. If the investigators bring her something to translate, she is fast, efficient, and has an eidetic memory.

PLAYING TUESDAY: Tuesday is a bit of a know-it-all for good reason—she knows a lot, and likes to share what she knows.

LIAM 'DEVIL' MCSHANE **STUNTMAN (BODYGUARD), 32**

Liam was the only son of an Irish beat cop in NYC with a family of nine; his father, Gareth, was a good man and taught him the little that he could. To help out his family, Liam took up various jobs and ended up working in a factory until the fire. During the fire, he saved a number of people and was caught on camera charging back into the burning building.

Liam was surprised a movie crew was there, and amazed a producer with his selflessness. He whisked Liam away to Hollywood and he became a professional stunt man, *The Death-Defying Devil*, for a few years. The money was decent and he sent most of it home. It was a nice life until Wilson Wallace, the producer who started Liam's new life, needed a favor; Liam knew it was bad, but owed him.

The stuntman and producer went downtown to the warehouse, and something that can't be put into words happened. He still has nightmares about the pulsating gelatinous mass of eyes that crawled up from the beneath the building and crushed Wilson.

Liam moved to back to New York and found that no one had work for a washed-up Hollywood type. He fell in with a low-level crime boss who had seen all of his movies. He gives Liam the occasional odd job that keeps him afloat, or has him shake someone down.

PLAYING LIAM: Liam is a dissatisfied man who oozes regret, but still makes the bad choice every time.

JACKSON "JACK" STONE **PRIVATE EYE (FORMER LAWYER), 38**

Most of Jack's life was laid out before him, and it was glorious. His father was a lawyer at a major firm in Manhattan and he grew up around the law. He went to Harvard, met a beautiful woman from Innsmouth, married and opened a small practice in the Bronx.

The practice did incredibly well, and seemed to attract some of the best and brightest. For a few years, Jack was incredibly happy. Then he started to notice little things that did not add up. One night in 1918, he followed his wife out into the swamplands, and discovered the horrible truth: they were cultists committing ritual murders to some dark sea "thing"—and they had just killed his family.

Jack fled as they gave chase, and was saved by run runner Leroy "Bo" Bryant. To Jack's surprise, Bo believed his tale of monsters, due to the other man's time in the war; Bo helped Jack stop them. The two formed a fast friendship after that, and Jack even defended Bo in court. A rival law firm was owned by a man from Innsmouth, Mark Waite, and he had Jack disbarred and all of his assets frozen when Jack's wife returned from her "trip." She divorced him and married Mark.

Jack still has nightmares of what happened in the swamps, knowing that he killed her there. The nightmares are even worse for him now, thinking about how she returned from the dead, married Mark, and destroyed Jack's life.

PLAYING JACK: You know that evil exists in the world, and it needs to be burned down. Jack is intense, and the fire burning behind his eyes is really noticeable.



HARLEM HELLFIGHTERS NEVER DIE

“When God had made The Man, he made him out of stuff that sung all the time and glittered all over. Some angels got jealous and chopped him into millions of pieces, but still he glittered and hummed. So they beat him down to nothing but sparks but each little spark had a shine and a song. So they covered each one over with mud. And the lonesomeness in the sparks make them hunt for one another.”

ZORA NEALE HURSTON, *Their Eyes Were Watching God*

INTRODUCTION

Harlem Hellfighters Never Die takes place in late December 1920 during the Prohibition Period, in Harlem, New York. This scenario is intended as a straightforward introductory adventure for a team of two or more investigators of no particular skill level, and will familiarize them with a few key locations and investigators in Harlem.

The scenario could be relocated and the time period could be altered with little effort on the Keeper's part. The Keeper would need to change the motivation of the primary antagonist and the target of their wrath. For instance, the scenario could be brought to modern day and deal with Iraq war veterans returning home, and terrorists with a Mi-Go brain cylinder seeking revenge. Most of the scenario would play out the same, just with a modern-day layer. Racial tension has evolved but is still present, and, unfortunately, the **racial tension modifier** is still applicable but perhaps to a lesser extent. Instead of it being used in nearly every encounter, it should be applied to about a half or a third.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

As an African-American Iraq War veteran and gamer of three decades, this scenario has significant meaning for me, and I want to thank everyone who bought this book for the privilege of presenting it.

This scenario briefly touches on segregation in the United States Army and one of the greatest military units to ever serve, the Harlem Hellfighters, who have also, unfortunately, been mostly forgotten.

My hope is that this material educates people about their sacrifice and heroism, which persisted despite the racism that plagued them at every turn, making all of their accomplishments that much more incredible.

BACKGROUND

“We must not eat with them, must not shake hands with them, seek to talk to them or to meet with them outside the requirements of military service. We must not commend too highly these troops, especially in front of white Americans.”

GENERAL JOHN J. PERSHING, in a secret communiqué concerning African-American troops sent to the French military stationed with the American army, August 7, 1918

WHAT HAS TRANSPIRED

During the month-long Battle of Belleau Wood in 1918, the Harlem Hellfighters, under the command of the French 16th Division, disrupt a German Mythos ritual. A German scientific division, *Germanenorden Walvater Desk Heilman Grals (GWDWG)*, have managed to tap into the Mythos through recovered Mi-Go technology, while chanting and using an Ethereal Himmelmchen (a small German bagpipe). The ritual warps the Harmonic Resonance that holds the universe together and keeps the Great Old Ones dreaming. *GWDWG* successfully opened small pocket portals that flooded an area with a temporary high dose of radiation, in three separate incidents that killed everyone (unknown possible side effect of releasing Mythos creatures) under lab conditions. The radiation dissipated in moments, allowing people to access the area without fear of contamination.

GWDWG knew that this would win the war for Germany, and used its clout to be sent into the field. Belleau Wood was designated as the first field test of the devices and master plan. Moments after the ritual begins, the Hellfighters attack—and Phoenix squad, along with its two French commanders, destroy most of the equipment and kill nearly all of the *GWDWG*. The ensuing explosion bathes the brave fighters in Mythos energy, which marks each one of them. Unaware of what happened, all the soldiers serve with honor for the rest of the war.

Vizfeldwebel (Staff Sergeant) Hans Wächter, lab assistant, survives the explosion and battle with the nearly incinerated Oberstleutnant (Lieutenant Colonel) Carl Metzger, lead scientist. Carl, knowing he'll die soon, instructs Hans on how to remove his brain and place it into one of the few pieces of Mi-Go technology they scavenged, the brain cylinder. After a year of failing to properly carry out the ritual, Carl deduces that the finite

amount of energy that resonated with the universe was absorbed by the Hellfighter soldiers—and once they are killed, it will be released, providing the ritual the energy he needs. The Allies may have won on the battlefields, but Germany may still reign supreme.

Carl and Hans only know the French forces that attacked them; they track down the only surviving Phoenix squad commander and kill him. Then, using the knowledge pulled from that French officer, they desecrate the grave of the other Phoenix commander, releasing his energy back into the universe. They then set off to New York to find and kill the Phoenix squad soldiers. The voyage takes more than a month, and Hans is forced to register himself and the “artifact” he is carrying with U.S. Customs.

On the night of their arrival in New York, Hans attacks the New York Harbor Army recruitment office in the dead of night, and steals the files of every African American soldier. One soldier survived, but was driven mad and placed in the care of his family in Harlem. With that information and the names provided by the French commander, they narrow down their search to the last five members of the Phoenix squad. Only two have addresses; Hans and Carl set out the next day to find them, but are overwhelmed by the bustling Harlem.

After reading the local paper that explains the Red Summer, Carl believes they could recruit the Klan to help them in this foreign land—and knows only other fanatics can truly be trusted. Within days, Hans has paid a large sum of gold to a local chapter of the Klan, and has one police chief in his pocket. They can provide him with eyes, muscle, and an understanding of the city.

TIMELINE OF EVENTS:

JUNE 6, 1918	Hellfighters disrupt the <i>GWDWG</i> ritual
1918-1919	Multiple failed attempts at the ritual
OCTOBER 19, 1920	Remy Luc sacrificed
OCTOBER 23, 1920	Jean Claude grave desecrated
NOVEMBER 11, 1920	Boat voyage to U.S.
DECEMBER 17, 1920	Hans registers with customs
DECEMBER 17, 1920	Attack on NYC Recruitment Office
DECEMBER 19, 1920	Deal with the Ku Klux Klan
DECEMBER 20, 1920	Hans rents room in Harlem Hotel
DECEMBER 20, 1920	Frederick "Bex" Williams sacrificed
DECEMBER 21, 1920	Scenario begins
DECEMBER 21, 1920	Investigators attend the Rent Party
DECEMBER 22, 1920	PCs learn of the Hellfighters' disappearance
DECEMBER 22, 1920	Thomas Moore sacrificed
DECEMBER 22, 1920	Investigators contact National Guard Center
DECEMBER 22, 1920	Investigators possibly discover Bex
DECEMBER 23, 1920	Investigators possibly discover Thomas
DECEMBER 23, 1920	Investigators attempt to locate Samuel
DECEMBER 24, 1920	Samuel Wright prints article in paper
DECEMBER 24, 1920	Hellfighters and PCs confront Hans

WORLD WAR I AND THE SEGREGATED ARMY

Racism for the Greatest Generation was a way of life; it seemed immutable, and as natural as breathing. The white male was unquestionably king, and this mentality bled into life inside the armed forces. Even though African Americans served with honor in every United States war engagement, their contributions have repeatedly been quickly forgotten. The glory of African American service is often replaced with the narrative that the soldiers were incompetent, incapable of higher thought, and considered as little more than pack animals that were good only for menial labor.

World War I erupted across Europe on August 28, 1914 and raged on for four years. One of the catalysts was the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand by Gavrilo Princip, a Serbian nationalist with ties to the secretive military group known as the Black Hand. In April 1917,

with Congressional approval, President Woodrow Wilson declared war on Germany. President Wilson cited as justification Germany's violation of submarine warfare in the North Atlantic and Mediterranean, in addition to attempts to recruit Mexico into an alliance against the United States.

African Americans generally stood behind the United States' move to war, as it was a crusade to secure the rights of democracy and self-determination on a global scale. This became a rallying cry as an opportunity to win the respect of their white neighbors, end the segregated society, and stop African Americans from being considered second-class citizens. Despite their eagerness to fight and volunteer, African Americans were being turned away from military service in droves.

RED SUMMER

The Red Summer involved a number of race riots that occurred in more than three dozen cities in the United States, with whites attacking blacks, and in most instances the blacks fighting back. The biggest riots occurred in Chicago, Arkansas, and Washington, D.C. In some cities, martial law was instituted to quell the unrest.

Racial tensions were high, as whites had to compete with blacks for the first time, and jobs were scarce. The Chicago incident occurred one afternoon in late July; Eugene Williams, an 11-year-old African American kid, was floating on a raft off the 26th Street Beach. There had always been an invisible line that separated the white beach from the black beach. The raft mistakenly floated onto the designated white side of the water.

A white man, George Stobort, hurled a rock and knocked Eugene unconscious; he slipped into the water and drowned. A number of black beachgoers asked a white officer to arrest the man, but the Chicago police refused to take any actions against Stobort. As the blacks expressed their anger, a white mob attacked them; a thirteen-day riot ensued, resulting in 38 fatalities (23 black and 15 white), 537 injured, and more than a thousand black families left homeless. White mobs destroyed hundreds of black homes and businesses, as the police watched it all happen. In the end, the Illinois militia was called in to restore peace.

Whites were stunned that blacks would fight back, so much so that The New York Times said "There had been no trouble with the Negro before the war when most admitted the superiority of the white race." Most white newspapers reported the riots in much the same fashion.

SUMMARY OF THE HELLFIGHTERS

The 369th Infantry Regiment of the United States Army fought in both World War I and World War II. The 369th consisted solely of African Americans and African Puerto Ricans, and was known for being the first African American regiment to serve with the World War I American Expeditionary Force under the command of General “Black Jack” Pershing.

The regiment acquired a number of nicknames during its long and honorable service during World War I, such as the Harlem Hellfighters, the Black Rattlers, and the Men of Bronze (which was given to the regiment by the French). The nickname “Hellfighters” came from the German forces due to the regiment’s toughness, plus the fact that they never lost a man through capture, or lost a trench or a foot of ground to the enemy. The 369th Infantry Regiment, the Harlem Hellfighters, helped alter the general American opinion of African American soldiers—and paved the way for future African American soldiers.

Shortly after the declaration of war, the War Department quickly realized that the 126,000 men making up the Army was not enough to win. A volunteer system did not provide enough manpower; on May 18, 1917, Congress passed the Selective Service Act, requiring all able-bodied male citizens between the ages of 21 and 31 to register for the draft. Foreign-born Americans and blacks were over-drafted to the point that blacks made up 10% of the American population, but composed 13% of the U.S. draftees. Even though drafted in great numbers, most of these soldiers served as labor, supply, and service units—while of the rest, only 11% served in combat.

HARLEM HELLFIGHTERS

Emmett J. Scott, former secretary of Booker T. Washington, was appointed Special Assistant to the Secretary of War in October 1917 and as advisor on all matters related to the 10 million African Americans and their role in the war. This leadership position led to the establishing of a special training camp for black officers. The 369th Regiment was formed from the National Guard’s 15th Regiment in New York. Before the 15th New York National Guard Regiment was formed, any African American who wanted to fight in the war had to enlist in either the French or Canadian armies.

The 369th Infantry entered federal service on July 25, 1917 at Camp Whitman, New York. During their time at Camp Whitman, the Hellfighters learned basic military practices: military courtesy, in addition to military basics, they learned how to stay low and out of sight during attacks, stand guard, and march in formation. Then they served in New York for a short time, providing security; then traveled to Camp Wadsworth in South Carolina for combat training designed to mirror the French battlefields. Racism was ever at their heels, and even at Camp Wadsworth they suffered racism from the local community and other army units.

The 369th shipped out on December 27, 1917, the 369th to join its brigade, the 185th Infantry, in France. There, the unit was relegated to labor service duties instead of combat training. On March 1, 1918, the 369th Infantry Regiment was assigned to continued labor service duties while it awaited a decision regarding whether they would be allowed to fight.

The U.S. Army assigned the 369th to the French Army for the entire duration of the United States’ presence in the war. The men were issued French weapons, helmets, and brown leather belts and pouches, although they continued to wear their U.S. uniforms. This was the final decision, as many white American soldiers refused to perform combat duty with black soldiers, and believed they would flee at the first signs of combat.

Even after being assigned to the French Army, the American Expeditionary Forces headquarters issued a notorious pamphlet titled “Secret Information Concerning Black American Troops” to their allies, which warned French civilian authorities of the alleged inferior qualities and supposed rapist tendencies of African Americans. They lived under constant racial threat and harassment.

Once under French command, the 369th was treated the same as any other French unit. The French did not discriminate or promote any sort of racism toward the black soldiers, and for the first time, the men of the

369th were treated equally. The French accepted the 369th Regiment with open arms, and welcomed them to their country. The French were less concerned with race than the Americans, and they were short on troops.

The Hellfighters ignored the German propaganda targeted at them; this propaganda alleged that the Germans had done nothing wrong to blacks, and that the black soldiers should fight against the Americans who had oppressed them for years. These statements only made the Hellfighters even more devoted to the U.S.

The 369th finally had their chance to serve, and did not hesitate, fighting alongside French Moroccans to hold one of the widest sectors on the Western Front. On September 25, 1918, the 369th performed well in very heavy fighting, while also sustaining severe losses, as they captured the important village of Sechault. The regiment fought so valiantly that the 369th advanced faster than French troops on their right and left flanks, and risked being cut off. When the regiment reorganized, it had advanced 14 kilometers through heavy German resistance, earning the name “Hellfighters” from their beleaguered German enemy.

The Hellfighters performed numerous impressive feats, both individually and as a regiment. Pvt. Henry Lincoln Johns, a former rail station porter, and Pvt. Needham Roberts fought off a 24-man German patrol, though both were severely wounded. They expended all of their ammunition; Roberts used his rifle as a club, and Johnson battled with a bolo knife. Johnson became known as the “Black Death” for killing at least four German soldiers and wounding 30 others.

During the moments of downtime, when away from the battle and the trenches, the regimental band played for the French public and thrilled them with American-style music, the music of the soul, the music of Harlem: jazz. Lt. James Reese Europe of the Hellfighters would soon become one of the first African Americans to perform at Carnegie Hall.

Black achievements and valor usually went unnoticed, but for their service and performance in combat, the entire regiment was awarded the Croix de Guerre, the French government’s highest military honor.

Despite the Harlem Hellfighters fighting the longest of any American regiment in World War I, they were not allowed to

march in the Paris parades due to pressure from the United States government. They were also disallowed a place in the French national war memorial. Upon the Harlem Hellfighters’ return home, they were greeted by military police, all of whom had orders not to salute any of the 369th Infantry soldiers. Additionally, they were not invited to join in the 1919 Victory Parade, and had a march of their own later. The march made headlines throughout the country, and despite the U.S. government’s efforts to stop it, the 369th made its mark on America.

While many African Americans believed that fighting for the United States in the Great War would help eliminate racial discrimination, it did not. Ironically, their service, pride, and dreams were greeted by a greater level of racism than before the war. After the war, the racism continued to intensify, as African American veterans were denied benefits that their white counterparts received.

THE BATTLE OF BELLEAU WOOD

Under General Pershing, the Battle of Belleau Wood was the first large-scale battle that the United States armed forces engaged in, and was the most important battle since the U.S. Civil War. The third German offensive of 1918, in late May, penetrated the Western Front to within 45 miles of Paris. This push came dangerously close to breaking Allied lines protecting Amiens and Paris. In their massive push, the Germans moved outside of their supply lines, forcing them to stall at Amiens. While stalled and awaiting additional supplies, they constructed heavy defense positions, and one such position was Belleau Wood.

The retaking of Belleau Wood was composed of two related pushes—the first at Chateau-Thierry, and the second at Belleau Wood. The Chateau-Thierry push took two days, on June 3 and 4. But the fiercely defended Belleau Wood, which provided access to vital rail lines, took three weeks for the Allies to recapture from German forces, from June 6 to 26.

Reclaiming the strategically important position of Belleau Wood came at a high cost with 9,777 United States casualties, 1,811 of which were fatal. There are no clear numbers of German casualties, due to a mass withdrawal of their forces from the area; it is assumed they suffered high casualties, and more than 1,600 of their soldiers were captured.

INVESTIGATORS

The easiest route into the scenario is if at least one of the investigators served in the Great War, or has some type of military background. This is not essential, as the opening scene should provide enough interest for any investigators worth their salt. All of the investigators have received an invitation to attend a Harlem rent party, and know that such invitations are rare. Rent parties involve people from all walks of life, and are an excellent chance to see a little nightlife and possibly make a few connections.

THE SPINE

The following is a likely chain of events that the investigators follow for the scenario.

DAY ONE: DECEMBER 21, 1920

- Newspaper articles about New York Recruitment Office
- Hans attacks the Harlem rent party
- Police arrest the two Harlem Hellfighters

DAY TWO: DECEMBER 22, 1920

- 32nd Precinct— earliest investigators can interview prisoners
- Research into the Hellfighters
- National Guard Armory
- Thomas Moore sacrifice

DAY THREE: DECEMBER 23, 1920

- Possibly interview insane soldier from NYC recruiter attack
- Interviewing locals
- Manhunt for Samuel
- Klan officers take the Hellfighters out to be lynched

DAY FOUR: DECEMBER 24, 1920

- Newspaper article in German, a challenge from Samuel to an Unknown Soldier killing people
- Armory showdown at midnight

KEY LOCATIONS

Location 1: Macombs Place, Apartments 101 and 201

Location 2: Harlem Police Precincts

Location 3: Summer Set Hotel

Location 4: Moore's Auto Repair

Location 5: Macombs Place, Apt 709

Location 6: 110th Street and First Ave, one-story house

Location 7: 369th Armory

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

HANS WÄCHTER

Hans is little more than the muscle for Carl. He enjoys it, and does whatever Carl asks.

CARL METZGER

Metzger is a brilliant and powerful sorcerer who has knowledge of the Mythos that few others do. He is still dedicated to the cause of defeating his country's enemies. He doesn't care about anyone, and lies to get whatever he needs. He hopes to one day have a physical body again.

SAMUEL WRIGHT

Former Captain Samuel Wright served with the 93rd Division in France during the Great War. While in the trenches, he discovered horrors that man was not meant to know. Scarred by what he saw, he made a promise to himself in that blood-soaked trench that mankind would not succumb to madness. Upon returning home, he got a job at the hospital and established the Knights of Ouroboros, a group dedicated to combating the Mythos, with fifteen members scattered throughout Harlem. He is the self-proclaimed protector of Harlem, and a potential friend of the investigators.

LT. LUTHER LANCE

Lt. Lance is stationed at the 369th Armory and is more of a press secretary than a soldier. He is always friendly, and happy to give tours.

ROCCO MASTROIANNI

Catatonic former GI who witnessed a massacre.

JEREMIAH BURTON

Captain of the 32nd, and high-ranking Klan member. He is not excited about working with Metzger, with the Great War ending so recently—but he believes the German's money will help his rank.

SCENES

RENT PARTIES...RAT-A-TAT-TAT

Scene type: Introduction

Lead-in: N/A

Lead-outs: Police Station Blues, Bloody Business

The opening scene is a rent party in North Harlem. The investigators could be locals, or visiting a friend, or perhaps they have heard that some of the Harlem Niggerati would be in attendance. The scenario assumes that the players arrive at the party and give the magic word “Deuce” to be allowed access. It is also possible that the players saw the article in the paper about an attack on the NYC Army recruitment office, and are investigating. If so, have them as witnesses or draw them into the attack on the rent party.

Ralph Bleecher and Ease May Johnson are old childhood friends living in tenement housing at 151st and Macomb Place, apartments 101 and 201. The duo wanted nothing more than to take to the stage, but neither had the talent or willingness to learn the trade. But they did have one talent: the ability to throw a party. Their parties are slowly becoming known throughout North Harlem, and with each party, their pool of contacts grows. While not lucrative yet, they do provide a little extra money, and tonight is no different.

Ease May’s brother Reece plays with the Charleston Kings, and with little effort she convinces him to have the band play at their party. No one outside of Harlem has heard of the seven-man-band, but their skill is without question, and their fee is cheap.

Ralph is a busboy at P.J. Clarkes, on 55th and 3rd, and has been stealing one bottle of hooch a week since Prohibition started. He doesn’t care what kind it is, as long as it’s strong. He knows that no party happens without a bit of booze to pass around.

The investigators walk into the apartment on the right, number 101, belonging to Ralph Bleecher. Their senses are immediately assaulted as the music is jumping, people are dancing, and booze is flowing. The investigators notice that they are walking in time with the music as they move towards the few available seats, pushing through a dozen people dancing the Texas Tommy. Everyone is moving in time and swaying to the music. Another few dozen partygoers are crowded around a makeshift bar in the kitchen, watching a pair of rail-thin black men pour drinks and sing along with the music. The crowd seems to vibrate with energy, and is unbothered by the confined space.

If the investigators battle their way through Ralph’s crowded place into the connected apartment, 201, May Johnson’s residence, they will find that it is even more crowded than 101. More than two dozen people are dancing directly in front of the Charleston Kings, with another two dozen cramped against the walls, bobbing in time with the music that vibrates the entire apartment.

A **Spot Hidden** roll [**MEDICINE**] notices two athletic-looking party goers, the Hellfighters, stand up and wobble towards the door without taking their coats, and walk into the freezing night air. A **Hard Listen**

LOCAL KNOWLEDGE

Ralph has been working three jobs and trying to earn enough cash to ask Ease May to marry him. Ease May’s father refused to grant his blessing the first three times Ralph asked, because he thought the young man was nothing more than a lazy layabout.

THE TEXAS TOMMY

This dance is a two-step with a swingout release of the woman to a single handhold; it simplified the original footwork from three steps into one. In 1928, it was renamed the Lindy Hop by George Snowden, and was captured on film in 1929 in *After Seben*.

RENT PARTY

Rent parties came out of the need to make rent, as 5,000 to 7,000 people lived in a single block of cheap apartments that were overly expensive due to white landlords doubling and tripling the prices. A four-or-five-room apartment is packed to capacity trying to make rent. This frequently has two or three families living together and leads to sleeping in shifts or moving furniture so that people can sleep on the floor. Eventually this can lead to getting a few friends together to pay for a party, as it costs less than going out. This becomes a second business to some people and they even start making business cards and calling in favors for better and better bands and booze, even though Prohibition is in full swing.

NIGGERATI

The term Niggerati is a combination of two words—“nigger” and “literati”—and was used with deliberate irony by Wallace Thurman to describe a group of prominent African American intellectuals and artists in the Harlem Renaissance. The group included Zora Neale Hurston (who labeled their rooming house Niggerati Manor), Richard Bruce Nugent, Jonathan Davis, Gwendolyn Bennett, Aaron Douglas, and Langston Hughes.

SNOW AND SLICK STREETS

Due to the recent snow, icy streets, and lack of concern about the streets from the city: Any rapid movement, movement over 3, incurs one penalty die to all actions. The streets also impose a penalty die to driving [**DIFFICULTY 6 DRIVING**] through the city if traveling over 15 mph. The falling snow imposes a penalty die to all **SPOT HIDDEN** checks that are further than 10 feet away.

[**DIFFICULTY 3 SENSE TROUBLE**] roll catches a faint echo of some reedy musical sound coming from outside, but the investigators are bumped by one of the many dancers, and the sound is little more than a recent memory.

If the investigators follow the two men outside, they see some 90 feet in the distance what looks almost like a marching band in the snow, slowly advancing toward them. Each member seems to shuffle more than walk, a fact which is noticed with a **Hard Spot Hidden** [**DIFFICULTY 8 SENSE TROUBLE**] roll. A **First Aid** or **Medicine** roll [**MEDICINE**] deduces that they must be badly injured, or possibly suffering from frostbite.

The two men who exited the party are 20 feet in front of the investigators, and have stopped moving. They appear to be staring at the oncoming marchers. The classical-sounding music suddenly spikes in volume and drowns out the sound of the party. Everyone needs to make a **Luck** [**DIFFICULTY 4 ATHLETICS OR FLEEING**] check; those who fail are hit or grazed by a bullet, for 1D4 [**1 HEALTH**] points of damage, as the oncoming marchers open fire on the two men directly in front of the investigators.

Both Hellfighters dive for cover, and then open fire on their unknown assailants. One of the men is behind one of the many snow-covered cars on the street, while the other sprints to hide behind the tenement building. If the investigators did not follow the men outside, a successful **Listen** [**DIFFICULTY 3 FIREARMS OR SENSE TROUBLE**] roll notices the sound of gunfire coming from outside. Each round after the first grants the investigators a bonus die to the roll, as the battle rages on and Hans' forces advance. Each round, Hans' troops move five feet closer.

If the investigators and the Hellfighters get the upper hand, a number of partygoers come outside, or the police sirens are heard close by, Hans retreats while still playing the Ethereal Hümmechen—and does so until he is out of sight. He then reaches out to his Klan contacts for assistance.

A few moments after Hans has fled, three police patrols arrive and exit their cars with weapons drawn. The six policemen get everyone down on the ground quickly and brutally, pushing everyone facedown in the snow, and demand to know what is going on. What is your name? (The two Hellfighters respond with: Pvt. Charleston West and Pvt. James Smithson.) Why are you shooting up the area? They force most of the partygoers back into the house.

A **Credit Rating**, **Charm**, or **Fast Talk** success [**CREDIT RATING 4+ OR COP TALK**] ends with the police releasing the investigators with a warning, confiscating all of their weapons, and levying a hefty five-dollar fine payable to the 30th Precinct. A quick use of legal knowledge through **Law** [**COP TALK OR LAW**] dissuades the police from issuing a fine, and allows the investigators to retrieve their weapons tomorrow once they have “sobered up.”

If arrested, the police call in a patrol wagon for all of the prisoners. Four of the officers walk into the party and break it up, sending people home. It takes more than an hour for the patrol wagon to arrive and the prisoners are told to be quiet or else. If anyone speaks, they are given a swift kick for **1D2 points of damage** until quiet. The 30th Precinct patrol wagon arrives, along with a patrol car from the 32nd Precinct.

The prisoners watch the four officers, two from the 30th Precinct and two from the 32nd Precinct, huddled together talking. Every so often, one of the officers from the 32nd Precinct points over at the group of them. A **Hard Listen** [**DIFFICULTY 4 SENSE TROUBLE**] roll [**CORE CLUE: POLICE STATION BLUES**] picks up snippets of the conversation.

“You can’t take them. They are our arrests, and it is illegal for us to turn them over to you...really...the...okay.”

The two officers from the 32nd Precinct put the two Hellfighters into their patrol car and leave. The investigators are loaded into the patrol wagon. Over the next two hours, they are processed and tossed into a cell in the bottom of the 30th Precinct Police station. If the investigators fight or protest at all, they endure a long night of brutal treatment from the police, costing each **1D4 SAN** [**THE CHARACTERS RISK A 2-POINT STABILITY LOSS**] and **1D4 hit points** [**1 HEALTH**].

Around 9:30 in the morning, the investigators are released and given back all of their belongings other than any weapons or illegal items. Once outside the station, a waiting Ralph Bleecher is leaning against a battered Model T. He smiles at them wearily.

“Damn. Those pounders were all over like they were rug cutters. I felt bad for you all, as you were just helping out some war vets and unlikely you got pinched with reefer. I called in my last favor with a guy I know and paid your bail.” He looks around for a minute with a quizzical look on his face. “Where are Jimmy and Charlie?” No matter what the investigators say, Ralph asks them to continue to help out the Hellfighters as he has helped them, but he is late for work, and has

gotta boogie. “Maybe Tom helped them out? He owns an auto shop on 151st street?” [ALTERNATE CLUE: BLOODY BUSINESS] “Cool, you hep cats?”

If the investigators return to the apartments during the day to investigate the crime scene, a few clues and questions await them.

A Hard **Spot Hidden** check [EVIDENCE COLLECTION] notices multiple holes on the side of the snow-covered building, but no amount of searching will uncover any bullets.

If any of the people in the area are questioned with a successful **Fast Talk** or **Persuade** roll [FLATTERY, ORAL HISTORY, OR REASSURANCE], they comment on hearing some strange music but nothing that sounded like a machine gun being fired. More than likely, it was just a new instrument the band was using.

POLICE STATION BLUES

Scene type: Core

Lead-in: Rent Parties...Rat-a-Tat-Tat

Lead-outs: In Tesla’s Footsteps, Blood Business, Touring the Armory

If the investigators decide to try to track down the Harlem Hellfighters, they learn that the two men have been taken to the 32nd Precinct. A **Law** roll [LAW] notes that is unusual, as the incident occurred in West Harlem, and it was impossible for any meeting of police chiefs to have occurred since the time of arrest.

The 32nd Precinct is a French Second Empire-style brick building at 135th Street and Edgecomb in Sugar Hill, constructed in 1871. The rooftop crenellation, brownstone interlocked with concrete slabs on the corners, is overlaid with brick. The precinct has an attached building serving as a stable for horses, and a garage for the few police cars and wagons the department owns. The jail cells are located in the bottom of the station, making it nearly impossible for prisoners to escape or be accessed without being properly documented or passing a station full of armed police officers.

When they arrive at the 32nd Precinct, a rail-thin desk sergeant, John Garrett, is under orders to stop anyone from talking to the prisoners of last night’s “incident.” Garrett is an honest cop, just trying to make a living while keeping his honor, and doesn’t want to lose his job. Prohibition is in full swing, and he knows a number of cops on the take, all of whom have been trying to break him. He has five mouths to feed, at home; his only hope is to follow any orders he’s given by the

night watch Captain. He tells the investigators that the prisoners have been moved to another precinct.

The investigators must make a **Psychology** roll [ASSESS HONESTY] to detect the lie, but cannot tell why Garrett is doing it. A Hard success notes that he doesn’t want to be lying, but seems to be under duress. A reasonable story with a **Charm, Fast Talk,** or **Persuade** roll [COP TALK OR 1 POINT LAW SPEND] gets the investigators past Garrett and down into the jail without an additional interference [an extra point Law spend has Garrett warn them about the impending next shift and their checks on the cells]. A **Law** or Hard **INT** roll [BUREAUCRACY OR 1-POINT LAW SPEND] deduces that the shift captain or highest person in the chain of command must have put the word out to not let anyone talk to the prisoners.

Garrett escorts the investigators into the bowels of the station, passing multiple officers and locked doors, and then goes back up to his desk saying “Make it quick.”

Cells stretch down both sides of the long, dank hallway that bends into a corner some 50 yards away. All the cells are empty, save one that holds two battered African American men. The two men are in the smallest cell available in the otherwise-empty underground jail. Both men look weathered; their clothes are covered in dirt and dried blood, and they have multiple wounds.

A **First Aid** or **Medicine** roll [MEDICINE] indicates both men have fresh wounds on top of any wounds from the previous evening. A Hard **First Aid** [1 POINT MEDICINE SPEND] observes that from the nature of the wounds, they were inflicted mere minutes ago, and by some blunt force object.

Unless the investigators are former soldiers or aided the men last night in the gun battle, neither man is very motivated to speak to the investigators. Mentioning that the investigators could arrange a lawyer with a **Law** check [LAW] or a Hard **Fast Talk** or **Persuasion** roll [REASSURANCE] gets the duo talking. Once the two Harlem Hellfighters feel the investigators are there to help, they explain their current plight.

Both men, while badly beaten, are still athletic and stand with a silent dignity. The two were out drinking last night at a rent house club, The Doxy. The music was good, the dancing was fast, and the booze was flowing. Each remembers hearing a weird buzzing sound, and they stepped outside to clear their heads. Even then, though the music was pouring out of the two apartments next door, they could hear a classical music sound over the jazz.



MOPERY

Mopery (to mope—wander aimlessly) is a minor offense, and a vague charge that police mostly used to arrest vagrants. But it was frequently used to bring people into the station for whatever reason the officers needed them.

If asked, both men can provide the following information.

- Once outside, the bullets started flying and they ducked for cover. Then they fired back at their barely-seen attackers.
- Each swears they hit at least three of the gunmen in the chest and head, but the targets seemed to keep advancing slowly, with no concern about cover. They finally dropped one of them, but he seemed to take four or five bullets.
- Each Hellfighter swears that the attackers wore some kind of uniform. They could almost make it out as they got closer.
- Their attackers were at a distance, and they could not fully make them out, but the guns seemed to fire a lot of bullets. One of them had to have a machine gun. A Hard **Firearm (Rifle)** [DIFFICULTY 3 **FIREARMS**] roll notes that from the description of the automatic fire, the attackers were not using a Tommy gun.
- The crazy thing? They could still hear that eerie music over the haul of bullets. The duo attempt to imitate the sound, as best as they can.
- An **Art (Music)** roll [ART (MUSIC)] notes that it is some type of musical instrument, and likely in the wind family. A Hard **Art (Music)** [1 POINT ART (MUSIC) SPEND] deduces that no known wind instrument could be heard over gunfire and a band playing, while an **Extreme Art (Music)** [2 POINT ART (MUSIC) SPEND] it is some type of unusual or rare music instrument, and not one normally found in the States.
- Doesn't Moore's kid play an instrument? Maybe they might know something. [ALTERNATE CLUE: BLOODY BUSINESS]
- Maybe Wright knows something? Not sure where he is working these days. [ALTERNATE CLUE: TOURING THE ARMORY]
- It is likely for the best that their friend, Fred "Bex" Williams, did not make it out to the club last night—otherwise he would be in here with them. Weird though, as he lived close by to the party, and is the one who invited them. [CORE CLUE: IN TESLA'S FOOTSTEPS]

Toward the end of interview of the two prisoners, the investigators make a **Listen** [DIFFICULTY 5 (3 IF WARNED) **SENSE TROUBLE**] roll to hear the heavy footfalls and whispers of two approaching police officers. If failed, the officers turn the corner quickly and hear the last questions the investigators ask. Officers Mathews and Ostertag demand that the investigators leave before they toss them in the same cell for instigating the prisoners—visiting hours are over. A **Psychology** roll [ASSESS HONESTY] instantly recognizes that as a lie. Any investigators trained in **Law** [COP TALK OR LAW] know that they could easily be arrested on any charges these officers want to make and will be held for at least a day. More than likely, it would be on a Mopery charge.

A **Spot Hidden** [DIFFICULTY 4 **SENSE TROUBLE**] roll along with an **Occult** or **History** [HISTORY, OCCULT, OR THEOLOGY] roll notices the tattoo on each policeman's arm, and realizes that it is the emblem of the Ku Klux Klan. As the investigators leave, they see one of the officers pull out his billy club and start tapping at the cell door, and hear him laughing. A Hard **Listen** [DIFFICULTY 5 **SENSE TROUBLE**] roll picks up one word...noose.

Unbeknownst to the investigators, both imprisoned Hellfighters are dead men unless they are released within 48 hours of their arrest. The two men

continue to be beaten regularly over the two days, and each will have **1D4 hit points** [**1 HEALTH**] remaining the night of their crucifixion.

Jerimiah Burton, captain of the 32nd Precinct station, has assigned two of his trusted men to deal with the Hellfighters. Carl met with him days ago, and paid the man off in German gold for his assistance. Burton is taking this opportunity to make a good deal of money for himself while proving white supremacy to his brother by killing two American heroes.

At 10:30 on the night of December 23, Officers Mathews and Ostertag load the two Hellfighters into the back of police wagon #6. The men are transported to St. Philip's Protestant Episcopal Church, the wealthiest church in Harlem, at West 134th Street. A group of fifteen hooded Klan members are gathered there and waiting. A ring of six trucks with lights pointed inward spotlight two massive crosses, gasoline-soaked and ready to be kindled. The Klansmen tie the two men to the crosses.

Captain Burton leads the ceremony. He rants about how the "New Negro" has lost his way and should be compliant to obey Jim Crow, and how these men set an example for their weak-willed kin. He then lights the kindle ablaze. This grisly scene plays out over the course of an hour. Anyone witnessing it must make a **SAN 1/1D4 roll** [**1 STABILITY**].

Once the sadistic execution is over, Hans chants the words to rip the Harmonic energy from their bodies, thereby releasing it, much how he did with Jean Wolfe after digging up his grave. (**SAN 0/1**)

A number of ways exist for the investigators to save the two men. The first is through legal means, by protesting their transfer from the local precinct (which may have been overheard the night of the arrest); this would require the investigators to either succeed on a **Law roll** [**1 POINT LAW SPEND**] or to hire a local lawyer [**1 POINT CREDIT RATING SPEND**]. It is unlikely that a white lawyer would take this kind of case for any blacks. In addition to the standard Racial Modifiers, an additional penalty die would apply. Another legal option is to have the charges thrown out, or prove that their arrest was unjustified. While this won't free the men in time, it'll place a spotlight on them, and make them harder to transport.

The investigators could also rally the local neighborhood and lead a peaceful march on the police station. Once the march is underway, a successful **Luck roll** [**1 POINT COP TALK SPEND**] from the investigators keeps the police from attacking the crowd and prevents a riot. If

the roll fails, a riot breaks out, causing **1D4 hit points** of damage to the investigators. This also does not free the prisoners, but makes it nearly impossible to transport them, as they now have such a high public profile.

The investigators may attempt to break them out of prison. This would be a difficult and possibly lethal task to undertake.

If the investigators save the two Hellfighters, grant each **1D6 sanity** on the spot for their accomplishment. If they fail to save the two men, the Hellfighters' bodies are discovered the following day, and their killers go unpunished. Call for **sanity rolls (SAN 2/1D6)** [**1 STABILITY**].

BLOODY BUSINESS

Scene type: Alternate

Lead-in: Police Station Blues, Touring the Armory

Lead-outs: In Tesla's Footsteps, Touring the Armory

Thomas Moore started Moore's Auto Repair, at 151st Street and Bradhurst Avenue, before going to war. The business was left in the capable hands of his wife and his stepbrother. The small auto shop is spacious enough to house three cars, and has one gas pump outside. The family lives above the auto shop in a two-bedroom abode with a small kitchenette, working toilet, and den.

The shop is closed when the investigators arrive. All of the blinds have been closed, everything is locked, and a hastily-written note hangs in the window: "Visiting Family in Georgia." A **Psychology roll** [**ART (WRITING) OR LANGUAGE**] notes from the letters that the handwriting looks like someone was in a hurry, and possibly under duress. An **INT roll** [**ANTHROPOLOGY, HISTORY, OR LAW**] knows that is unlikely; anyone from the Great Migration would not go back down South.

The door to the shop is fairly sturdy, and requires a **Hard Strength (HEALTH)** or **Locksmith roll** [**LOCKSMITH**] to get in. A **Mechanical Repair** [**DIFFICULTY 4 MECHANICAL REPAIR**] roll could remove the door in an hour, but would leave the investigators exposed on the street for the entire time.

Once inside the auto shop, it becomes apparent with a light source that something horrible has happened here. A trail of blood leads from the apartment stairs toward one of the cars on the far side of the shop.

If the investigators follow, the blood trail leads to a 1917 Detroit Touring roadster (**SAN 1/1D4**) [**1/0 STABILITY**].

On the left side of the car, the investigators discover a mangled victim whose head has been crushed repeatedly with the metal door. A dried pool of dark brown

blood and brains cover the floor and car. A **First Aid** or **Medicine** roll [**MEDICINE**] quickly notes the man was stabbed multiple times, at least twenty, in non-vital locations. The victim was dragged down to the car while he was still alive, and his head was crushed. From the impact, remains, and state of the body, he was alive for at least the first three or four hits with the metallic door.

As the investigators move upstairs, the mild stench of the dead fills the air. Their first sight is of a woman sprawled out onto the kitchen table, as if her body was a sack tossed aside with little care. The woman has been stabbed repeatedly in a similar fashion to the man downstairs, in non-vital locations, as if to slow her down and make her suffer before death; it is obvious that she bled out. Her dried blood cakes the table and the floor around her (**SAN 1/1D4**) [0/1 **STABILITY**]. You notice a blood-stained violin case in the corner, which is cracked open; closer inspection reveals the shattered remains of the Moores' child shoved inside the case (**SAN 1/1D4**) [0/1 **STABILITY**].

In the master bedroom lies the last victim, former Sergeant Thomas Moore. His body reeks of death, as a man who died years ago, and is twisted and gnarled into an impossible shape of bones that is sickening to view. The body is nearly physically painful to look at (**SAN 1/1D6**) [2 **STABILITY**]. The skin seems to have erupted from all sides, and yet the flesh looks fresh. A closer inspection of the rotting corpse notices it has one stab wound in the center of its back, likely an instantly fatal hit.

A **Spot Hidden** [**EVIDENCE COLLECTION**] roll notices that the bathroom window has been forced open; the lock is broken, and the wall has scuff marks. A Hard **Spot Hidden** [**EVIDENCE COLLECTION**] locates brittle blonde hairs around the window, and finds more throughout the apartment.

A search of the apartment and auto shop reveals that they appear untouched, as if the assaulter was not looking for anything, and had only one purpose. The cash register is still locked, the keys to the cars are still on their nail on the wall, none of the tools have been stolen, and even Moore's double-barrel shotgun rests in a case. Beside the gun hangs a picture of Phoenix Squad from the Great War. The picture shows a squad of five men, all smiling aboard a boat bound for France. A Hard **Spot Hidden** [1 POINT **EVIDENCE COLLECTION SPEND**] notes the names on the uniforms: Wright, Williams, Moore, West, and Smithson. [**ALTERNATE CLUES: IN TESLA'S FOOTSTEPS** and **TOURING THE ARMORY**]

IN TESLA'S FOOTSTEPS

Scene type: Core

Lead-in: Police Station Blues, Flowers for Rocco, Touring the Armory

Lead-outs: Ten-Pound Brain in a One-Pound Case

Frederick "Bex" Williams was a brilliant young man, and was one of the lucky African Americans able to attend college for a few years. Bex lived in apartment 709 of the same building, 151st Street and Macombs Place, as Ease May and Ralph. Bex invited his two friends to the rent party to share his discovery. Most of the people in the building called him "Professor" because he had a college degree, and was always reading.

Bex was the radio operator for his unit during the war. Shortly after the Battle of Belleau Wood, he noticed that the radio was always static-filled when he would use it. No amount of repairs and no new radio would fix the issues. He suffered through the rest of the war under this handicap, but a curiosity about the cause stayed with him, and he linked it to that brutal fight.

He spent the last few years researching wavelengths, signal transmissions, and radio technology to such an extent that he lost his job at the university. Bex now survives on the last of his savings, and is forced to live in tenement housing.

A little more than six months ago, Bex was reading a book on radiation, and everything seemed to fall into place. Somehow every member of the squad was washed in some sort of German radiation experiment from the explosion, and it saturated them. Obviously it is not deadly, or they would have all died by now. With this information, he built a device that could track the vibration of that particular radiation, which he called the Bex Box; he has plans to have it patented, but for some reason it only works on him or other members of the Hellfighters.

Bex finished testing the device just days before his death, and was going to tell the others about it at the rent party. Alas, Hans found Bex on the night of the 20th. The young inventor was awakened by the sound of the Bex Box going off, and the last thing he saw was the man who killed him.

If the investigators look into Bex and discover his apartment on the seventh floor, the door is locked. A **Spot Hidden** roll with a penalty die notices that the door seems to be slightly ajar but somehow still locked. A **Locksmith** roll [**LOCKSMITH**] easily bypasses the lock, but then requires a **Luck** [**DIFFICULTY 7 SENSE TROUBLE, IF**

SUCCESSFUL DIFFICULTY 4 EXPLOSIVE, IF FAIL DIFFICULTY 8 EXPLOSIVE] roll from whoever opens the door to have the grenade trap left by Hans to be a dud grenade. Otherwise each person within ten feet loses **2D6+2 HP [5 HEALTH]**, as does the interior of the apartment. Hans recognized that there were a lot of technical devices in the room, but could not destroy them without being discovered.

If the Bex Box survives the blast, it is heavily damaged but still functions at a reduced range of 30 feet. A **Mechanical [DIFFICULTY 5]** and **Electrical Repair [DIFFICULTY 6]** roll can repair the device, and an **Extreme** success enhances the range to 150 feet. Williams has enough supplies for one repair attempt, and it takes four hours per attempt. If functioning, it takes half a day, but can lead the investigators to Metzger's hotel. **[LEVERAGE CLUE: TEN-POUND BRAIN IN A ONE-POUND CASE]**

William's body reeks of death, as a man who died years ago, and is twisted and gnarled into an impossible shape of bones that is sickening to view. The body is nearly physically painful to look at (**SAN 1/1D6**) **[5/4 STABILITY]**. The skin seems to have erupted from all sides, and yet the flesh looks fresh; dried blood stains the bedsheets. The sheets are also singed and blackened where the body lays, almost as if they had been near a fire. The man also has one stab wound in the neck.

If the trap does not explode, the investigators now have a World War I German stick grenade Model 24. A **History** roll **[HISTORY OR LANGUAGE]** notes that this type of trap is a German tactic frequently used in the Great War, when Allied soldiers were retaking German occupied territories. Obviously, whoever the killer is, he is either a studied tactician or a veteran, and is very dangerous.

A **Spot Hidden** roll **[EVIDENCE COLLECTION]** turns up a number of brittle blonde hairs scattered throughout the apartment, and dozens upon dozens of books lining the walls, on topics from radio repair to physics to radiation. If the hairs are found as well as the books on radiation, they spark an idea in anyone with **Medicine, Science (Biology)**, or an Extreme **Knowledge** roll **[MEDICINE, PHYSICS, OR FORENSICS WITH A LAB]** that the killer has suffered high levels of radiation exposure and should be trackable.

A Hard **Spot Hidden [1 POINT EVIDENCE COLLECTION SPEND]** notes a strange, sticky, brittle substance. If taken to a lab and examined with a **Chemistry** roll **[CHEMISTRY]**, the organic compound can't be identified. But based on the rate of degeneration, it must have been as strong as steel at one time for the investigators to have found the sample now. A few hours later it crumbles to dust.

THE BEX BOX

The Bex Box is a shoebox-sized wooden box that has a number of mechanical components cobbled together. It functions as a rudimentary Geiger counter attuned to the radiation signature of the Harmonic Resonance. It only detects those items and people bathed in radiation from the Battle of Belleau Wood, as that was the baseline of all Williams' work. The Bex Box has a range of 100 feet, and makes a clicking noise that increases in proportion to the strength of the radiation signature.

ARMOR 2

HIT POINTS 10



FLOWERS FOR ROCCO

Scene type: Alternate

Lead-in: Touring the Armory

Lead-outs: In Tesla's Footsteps

Private Rocco Mastroianni is being cared for by his widowed mother, Gia. The small one-story house at East 110th Street and First Avenue is weathered and dirty. Gia spends most of her days at the bakery down the street, to make enough money to feed herself and Rocco. The Army has promised a stipend that starts in 30 days, but that does not help them right now. There is a 30% chance that she is home during the day, if the investigators visit. If she is not home, the door is locked, and looking through the windows spots the young soldier sitting on the couch unmoving and looking directly ahead.

If the investigators visit at night, Gia is very worried about her son, and not will let just anyone see him. A Hard **Persuade** roll [**REASSURANCE**] grants them access to Rocco, or if they have served in the Army, or if they offer to help her financially during this difficult time with at least two dollars. She stays in the room at all times.

Rocco is completely insane. He fell into a catatonic state after witnessing the attack on the recruiter's office. His condition will not improve without proper treatment; a **Psychoanalysis** [**DIFFICULTY 4 HYPNOSIS OR PSYCHOANALYSIS**] roll or Hard **Persuade** [**1 POINT REASSURANCE OR 2 POINT RELIGION SPEND**] brings him to a conversational state for a few minutes.

Rocco knows the following:

- He mentions that Bex had left hours before, and had been coming to the base for the past two months. [**IN TESLA'S FOOTSTEPS**]
- He was doing his patrol of the building at 2300 hours and had a quiet night.
- Then he heard the sound of gunfire and music.
- He saw the other two men gunned down by dead German Soldiers.
- It was like being back in the trenches—he fired multiple shots, but they kept coming.
- “I could smell the rot of them, and that music... I can never forget the music.”
- “I could hear the music over the gunfire.”
- “I saw the balding piper play.”

After he shares this information, he slumps back down and remains unmoving, no matter what the investigators do. **First Aid** [**Biology or Medicine**] notices that the man is looking thin and likely has not eaten since the incident. If questioned, Gia confirms he won't eat, but she doesn't know what to do and can't afford medical care.

TEN-POUND BRAIN IN A ONE-POUND CASE

Scene type: Alternate

Lead-in: In Tesla's Footsteps (if Bex Box is working)

Lead-outs: Hell's Legion (once Sam issues the challenge)

The Summer Set Hotel, on East 125th Street and First Avenue, is a three-story stone rat's nest—but it is cheap and out of the way. It has a large *No Colored or Irish* sign in the front window. The building is not up to fire code standards; the metal fire escapes are rusty tetanus traps awaiting someone brave enough to use them. A heavy sheet of snow coats the fire escapes and they sway slightly under the weight. Anyone on a fire escape needs to make a **Luck** roll [**DIFFICULTY 5 ATHLETICS**]; it becomes more dangerous each round, imposing one additional penalty die per round, up to a maximum of two.

The hotel is fully staffed with 33 personnel who work there in three shifts of 11, with the owner, Mason Willis, constantly lurking around. The each shift is composed of one concierge, two bellhops, a cook, three security guards, two wait staff, and two maids. One of the three guards are stationed on the ground floor, while the other two patrol the building. Anyone sneaking around the building must pass a **Luck** [**DIFFICULTY 6 SENSE TROUBLE**] roll to avoid them. Willis is an aged man in his late 60s, and a miser. He will call the police the moment anyone crosses him or ignores his orders.

Hans and Carl are currently staying on the second floor in Room 5. The door is always locked and the curtains are always closed. Anyone passing by the room may notice a faint green glow from under the door with a **Spot Hidden** [**DIFFICULTY 3 SENSE TROUBLE**] roll, and may note that no other rooms have that glow.

The investigators could discover the existence of Metzger and this location in a number of ways. If they deduced from the hair or notes at Fred Williams' apartment that whoever has been killing the Hellfighters and French Officers has radiation poisoning, it could be traceable with the Bex Box.

Second, the investigators could inquire with the Customs Department with a successful **Credit Rating** roll [**BUREAUCRACY OR CREDIT RATING**]. A young woman named Doris happily provides them with Hans' name, description, and the location of his first hotel stay. Doris mentions that her brother died in the Great War, and all those Germans are the same. With that information, a successful **Charm, Fast Talk, or Persuade** roll [**FLATTERY OR ORAL HISTORY**] or talking about the Great War eventually, in 2D6 hours, points the investigators to the Summer Set Hotel.

Room 205 is a spacious, if crumbling, space. The hotel room has a parlor with a large steam trunk on its side against the far wall. At the top of the trunk is Metzger in all of his glory, inside the brain cylinder. His pinkish mass floats in the cylinder in some greenish glowing liquid substance that provides the only light for room. The golden metallic cylinder seems to undulate in rhythm with each pulse of the brain inside (**SAN 1/2**) [4/1 **STABILITY**]. A successful **Cthulhu Mythos** roll [**CTHULHU MYTHOS**] instantly recognizes the Mi-Go brain cylinder and what it means. A successful **Medicine** roll [**MEDICINE**] notes that the brain is still fresh, and seems to be alive (**SAN 1**) [1 **STABILITY**].

The rest of the room is empty, other than a radio pouring out static. At the end of the room is an open door into what is likely a dark bedroom. Metzger does not directly engage the investigators; he waits to hear what they have to say, observing if they make any moves toward him or recognize what the brain cylinder is.

If the investigators ignore Metzger, he lets them search the empty room and move into the bedroom. The moment the investigators entered the room, he animated his skeletal remains, which are located in the bedroom closet to surprise attack the first investigator who enters. Grant the skeletal remains a bonus die [+2 TO ROLL] for its first round of attacks.

Once the investigators are in combat with the skeleton, Metzger casts Dominate on the most rear investigator or the one with the largest weapon, and then orders them to attack another investigator. He then moves to casting Wrack or Dominate as needed. Call for a **Sanity** check **1/1D3** [1 **STABILITY**], as Metzger shouts the spells through the speakers on the brain cylinder, and his metallic voice echoes through the room.

Metzger can be forced to talk with an Hard **Intimidate** roll [1 POINT **INTERROGATION SPEND** OR 2 POINT **INTIMIDATE SPEND**], if taken alive. If the investigators are all African Americans, apply a penalty die [REQUIRES AN EXTRA POINT SPEND] to the attempt. While Metzger is dedicated to his cause, he doesn't want to die; he knows that if he dies, the cause is lost. Even if captured, one day he can turn the tide. Any obvious threats to his being, such as holding him out of the window, removes the penalty dice. Each hour spent intimidating Metzger lowers the difficulty of the **Intimidate** or **Persuade** roll [**INTERROGATION OR INTIMIDATION**] by one level until it becomes automatic within five hours. This is also part of his plan, as it gives Hans more time to complete the mission or to return and save him.

Unfortunately for the investigators, Hans did not fully understand the process of putting Metzger into the brain cylinder—and each hour the investigators spend in the room, they must make a **Constitution** [**HEALTH**]

CHAIN OF COMMAND

The Hellfighters are likely tougher and more experienced than the PCs, and could totally overshadow them in terms of combat ability. The Keeper should note that there aren't very many Hellfighters, and a group of four or five heavily-armed PCs have a serious effect on the battle. Given the PCs' knowledge of the situation, the Hellfighters accept orders from them, as if they were officers, unless the orders are obviously suicidal in nature. While that runs counter to the military, the soldiers are all retired and fighting an unknown enemy, making the PCs the most knowledgeable combatants in the scene.

Every order issued requires an action and a **Firearms, Persuade, or POW** roll. A **Psychology** roll indicates the current status of the troops, and whether the Mythos horror is about to break their ranks. A Extreme **Psychoanalysis** [**DIFFICULTY 8 PSYCHOANALYSIS**] roll allows the Hellfighters to keep fighting for one more round.

LOCAL KNOWLEDGE

The owner of the hotel has offered free meals and coffee to all policemen. This usually means that at least one cop is on-site 24/7, and is wandering around downstairs.



check. Nothing happens right away, but if any investigator fails three checks, they have low-level radiation poisoning, and find their hair slowly falling out the next day.

If Hans returns during the interrogation of Metzger, he rallies the three security guards to charge into the room (use the stats for the Klan members found at the end of the scenario). After he calls the police, he then attempts to rush into the room only to save Metzger. Once he has the brain cylinder, he flees. If that fails, he fights to the death for his cause.

A search of the room uncovers the African American service records, a list of Klan members they are working with, a steamer trunk with six ingots of German gold remaining (each ingot is worth 100 dollars if someone can be found who would take German gold), a number of weathered clothes, and a few well-read romance novels.

TOURING THE ARMORY

Scene type: Alternate

Lead-in: Police Station Blues, Bloody Business, In Tesla's Footsteps, Flowers for Rocco

Lead-outs: Bloody Business

The 369th Regiment Armory occupies half a block bound by West 142nd Street and West 143rd Street just off the Harlem River. It is one of the first complexes built strictly to accommodate motorized transport, and was the largest armory in New York in the 1920s. The armory is composed of two buildings built by two different architectural firms in two different decades. The Art Deco-style administration building was built from 1930 to 1933, and attached to the medieval-inspired drill shed which was constructed in 1920. Both buildings are made of brick, and together measure more than 50,000 square feet.

The drill shed is a two-and-a-half-story building that features three tiers of balconies on all four sides, with seating for 7,000 soldiers. The rectangular administration building is three-and-a-half stories, featuring terra cotta parapets, chevron designs, and stylized eagles.

The armory is currently understaffed, with only six soldiers on active duty. They work in shifts of two for eight hours each. The armory is open from 1000 to 1600 daily. If the investigators come during duty hours, they are greeted by the friendly and young Lt. Lance, in charge of operations, who helps them in whatever way he can.

A **Credit Rating**, **Persuade**, or **History** [**CREDIT RATING**, **FLATTERY**, **HISTORY**, OR **FIREARMS**] check with talks of warfare grants the investigators fully supervised access to the armory. The armory morgue has copies of Player Handouts 1, 2, and 3. Lt. Lance also has access to all of the addresses of the Hellfighters currently in Harlem, though he warns they are from more than a year ago, and some may be out of date. Only Bex Williams and Thomas Moore's addresses are correct for the Phoenix squad.

HELL'S LEGION

Scene type: Conclusion

Lead-in: Player Handout 4

Lead-outs: Valor on the Homefront

FINALE

There are two possible finales for this scenario. The first happens on the fourth day, when Hans and Samuel Wright have a showdown at the armory. The second ending occurs if the investigators discover Metzger and confront the scientist in his hotel room.

The finale is written following the line of logic that the investigators and Samuel track down Hans and his legion.

If Samuel Wright has any idea what is going on either through the deaths of one of the Hellfighters or through questioning by the investigators, and if the investigators cannot convince him to join them, he goes underground. There is only a 20% chance daily to encounter him. If encountered, he is either going to or leaving a meeting with some of the other Hellfighters in town who were not part of his old unit. He is collecting manpower for a final plan.

If asked to leave or hide out for an extended period of time, Samuel refuses to leave Harlem and give up the fight. He tells the investigators that the 369th never retreated. If needed, he has called together a number of troops—but fears that with the recent Klan activity, it is now or never, to take a stand.

On the morning of December 24, 1920 there is an article in each paper, under the obituary section. The article is written in German (**PLAYER HANDOUT 4**). Samuel has issued a challenge to whomever the killer is, to put an end to all of this at midnight tonight at the 369th Armory.

Samuel has recruited all of the available men he could on such short notice; **(2d10+2)** [4D6] arrive at the armory at 2100 that night, and take up positions around the building, armed with pistols and rifles. At least one soldier is located in each of the cardinal directions and on the upper floors to provide snipers. Samuel himself is on the ground floor moving from squad to squad until the battle starts. A **Psychology** check [**ASSESS HONESTY**] knows that the men are almost excited about the prospect of a battle—not for the fight itself, but for a chance to take some control of their situation.

Hans gleefully accepts the challenge to honor this last kill. He dons the web armor and starts playing the Ethereal Hümmelchen blocks away, summoning as large a force as possible. He enters the battle with only 3 Magic Points remaining, after using ten to bring forth his army. He walks in the back of the marching dead army, and the sound of the Hümmelchen can be heard in the distance through the falling snow and the shambling of the dead.

Call for a **Sanity** roll from anyone witnessing the army of the dead marching forward (**SAN 1/1D10**) [**THE CHARACTERS RISK 3 STABILITY AND 1 SANITY LOSS**].

Hans does not stop until he has killed Samuel and completed his mission. After this, he returns to Metzger, and the two leave Harlem that night with everything in place for the ritual to work.

VALOR ON THE HOMEFRONT

Scene type: Denouement

Lead-in: Hell's Legion

Lead-outs: N/A

If the investigators recover and return the military records of the African American soldiers, they each receive **1D4 SAN**, ten dollars, and the eternal gratitude of the Hellfighters [**GAIN 2 BUILD POINTS**]. While their records do not reflect all their accomplishments, finding and returning the records is still a landmark victory that should be remembered.

For defeating Hans, each investigator receives **1D6 SAN**.

If the investigators discover and defeat Carl, they each receive **1D4 SAN**.

If the investigators find a way to aid Rocco and Gia, they receive **1D4 SAN** and a place to stay when in Italian Harlem.

ETHEREAL HÜMMELCHEN

The Ethereal Hümmelchen is a Mi-go-infused horn that was created days before the assault of Belleau Wood. Now when the horn is properly played and the musician expends 1 **Magic point**, it summons a random squad (3-8) of dead German soldiers from the battlefield. The soldiers appear with whatever equipment they had in life, and follow the simple mental command of the musician. The musician can summon another squad for every two rounds that the horn is played, for an additional **Magic point** spend. Anyone who witnesses the reality rip, and the squad of soldiers stumble out, instantly loses 1 **SAN** point.

The soldiers remain for as long as the musician plays the Hümmelchen. If stopped for any reason, the soldiers and anything they are holding vanish back into the void one round later. The musician must start playing anew to summon a new squad, and it requires an additional **Magic point** spend.

It is imperative that the summoned soldiers hear the music; otherwise, they vanish back to the void. It is possible for a rival musician to outplay the summoner. For each round that the summoner is outdone, one of the soldiers vanishes into the void, and the others remain unmoving. It is also possible that a louder sound (i.e. a big band with speakers) can drown out the summoner, and cause all of the soldiers to vanish if the musician does not make a **HARD Art (Hümmelchen)** roll [1 point **ART spend**] for each round in that situation. If the musician moves closer, it becomes an **Extreme Art (Hümmelchen)** roll [2 point **ART spend**], and add a penalty die if the musician is directly next to the sound. A larger band may apply penalty dice as the Keeper sees fit without being directly next to it.

ETHEREAL HÜMMELCHEN

ARMOR: 10

HIT POINTS: 10

APPENDIX A: CHARACTERS

VIZEFELDWEBEL HANS WÄCHTER

AGE 36, AWOL

Vizefeldwebel (Staff Sergeant) Hans Wächter is loyal to his commanding officer, and will do everything in his power to fulfill their last mission. He knows the war is lost, but believes they are working for an even higher cause. Hans is also suffering from severe radiation poisoning. His hair is falling out, his face is hollowed, and most people remember seeing him, if questioned. The continued exposure to the bio-web chemical mixture has kept him from degrading more and dying.

STR 80 **CON** 80 **SIZ** 70 **DEX** 55 **INT** 55
APP 55 **POW** 6 **EDU** 30 **SAN** - **HP** 15
DB +1D4 **Build** 1 **Move** 5 **MP** 13

Brawl: 47% (23/9), damage 1D3+1D4

Luger: 63% (31/12), damage 1D10

Dodge: 42% (21/8)

Armor: Degraded bio-web armor (wears under heavy coat) 6 – Kept in chemical mixture to retain AR

Skills: Art/Craft: Hümmelchen 72%, Climb 33%, First Aid 70%, Mechanical Repair 58%, Occult 23%, Language (English) 23%, Language (French) 37%, Language (German) 55%, Spot Hidden 68%, Stealth 73%, Survival 11%, Throw 57%

Equipment: Luger, web vest, Ethereal Hümmelchen, grenade

BACKSTORY

- **Description:** Tall, muscular, aging man with missing hair and burns over his body
- **Trait:** Brawny

DEAD GERMAN SOLDIERS

These rotting corpses are infused with the will of the summoner. They continue to fight until hacked to pieces or sent back to the void from which they came.

STR 85 **CON** - **SIZ** 65 **DEX** 50 **INT** -
APP - **POW** 5 **EDU** - **SAN** - **HP** 14
DB +1D4 **Build** 1 **Move** 6 **MP** 1

Brawl: 40% (20/8), damage 1D4+1D4

Weapon: 55%, damage varies based on what they died using; see *Zombie Squad Weapons* table (page 133)

Dodge: They do not dodge, and walk toward their target relentlessly

Armor: Major wounds delivered to the body result in loss of a limb; otherwise, ignore damage except to the head (one penalty die on rolls to target the head)

SAN Loss: 0/1D8 Sanity points to see a zombie

OBERSTLEUTNANT CARL METZGER IN BRAIN CYLINDER

AGE 57, AWOL

Oberstleutnant (Lieutenant Colonel) Carl Metzger was a handsome, brilliant scientist and occultist who believed in the Axis' cause. Even after the death of his body, that crazed belief has kept him stable and focused. The brain cylinder is slowly releasing low levels of traceable radiation. Carl knows this will eventually kill Hans, but is sure he can dominate someone else to his service, when the time comes.

STR - **CON** - **SIZ** 1 **DEX** - **INT** 85
APP - **POW** 80 **EDU** 22 **SAN** - **HP** 2
DB - **Build** - **Move** - **MP** 16

Spells: Animate Self, Cloud Memory, Dominate, Wrack

Control Animated Corpse: 80% (1 MP per Hour)

Armor: 15 (Brain Cylinder)

Skills: Anthropology 33%, Cthulhu Mythos 21%, History 67%, Library Use 72%, Persuade 83%, Occult 71%

Equipment: Mi-o brain cylinder

BACKSTORY

- **Description:** Carl is little more than a 3-pound mass of brilliance
- **Trait:** Genius

HANS WÄCHTER

Art (Music) 4, Athletics 6, Firearms 8, Scuffling 5, Stealth 5, Stability 5, Sanity 0, Health 11

ALERTNESS MODIFIER: +1

STEALTH MODIFIER: +2

WEAPON: - 2 (Fist), 1 (Pistol)

ARMOR: 5 (Bio-Web Armor)

STABILITY LOSS: +1 (when in armor)

DEAD GERMAN SOLDIERS

Firearms 4, Scuffling 4, Weapons 4, Health 7

WEAPON: -2 (Fist), 1 (Pistol)

3 (Machine Gun)

ARMOR: 3 (major wounds delivered to the body result in loss of a limb)

STABILITY LOSS: 0

CARL METZGER

Cthulhu Mythos 7, Occult 14, Health 1

ARMOR: 5 (Brain Cylinder)

SPELLS: see above

ZOMBIE SQUAD WEAPONS

NAME	SKILL	DAMAGE	ATTACKS PER ROUND
Imperial Artillery Sabre	Sabre	1D8+DB	1
Model P08 Luger	Firearms (Handgun)	1D1	1 (3)
Mauser Gewehr 98	Firearms (Rifle)	2D6+4	1
Maschinenpistole 18i	Firearms (SMG)	1D10	1 (3)
Schwarzlose	Firearms (Machine Gun)	2D6+4	1 or Full auto
Wechselapparat	Firearms (Flamethrower)	2D6+BURN	1

ANIMATED BODY/ HANS IN ARMOR

Athletics 2, Scuffling 5, Stealth 3,
Health *

ALERTNESS: +1

STEALTH: +2

WEAPON: - 1 (Claws) x2

ARMOR: * Immune to impaling
weapons; any hit that does more
than 5 points shatters it

STABILITY LOSS: +1

SAMUEL WRIGHT

Assess Honesty 2,
Athletics 6, Cthulhu Mythos 1,
Locksmith 2, Reassurance 3,
Weapon 6, Mechanical Repair 8,
Sense Trouble 6, Stability 6,
Sanity 7, Health 8

ALERTNESS: +1

STEALTH: +1

WEAPON: +0 (Saber - ignores armor)

ANIMATED BODY OF CARL METZGER

The animated body of Carl Metzger has been casually placed in the corner of the room like it's part of the furniture. Carl animates it whenever Waechter goes out. The skeleton has been stripped clean; it is bone-white, and both arms are little more than jagged, sharpened points.

STR 50 **CON** - **SIZ** 65 **DEX** 50 **INT** -
APP - **POW** - **EDU** - **SAN** - **HP** N/A
DB none **Build** 0 **Move** 7 **MP** -

Brawl: 70% (35/14), damage 1D6 (2)

Dodge: 40% (20/8)

Armor: Resistant to harm (see below)

Resistant to harm: Dried bones are fairly brittle, snapping and splintering easily from a heavy blow; however, no area of a skeleton is more vulnerable than any other. Any blow striking a skeleton has a chance of destroying it, equal to or less than the damage done x 5 (as rolled on 1D100).

For example, if an axe hits a skeleton and does 8 points damage, there is a 40% chance of destroying the skeleton by shattering it. Unless the skeleton shatters, it remains totally undamaged.

Apply one penalty die on attacks made with an impaling weapon (including bullets), since much of the target is simply air.

SAN Loss: 0/1D6 Sanity points to see an animated skeleton

SAMUEL K. WRIGHT, CAPT. (R) AGE 26, LEADER OF KNIGHTS OF OUROBOUROS

Captain Samuel J. Wright has seen the horrors of war, and learned things man was not meant to know. Rather than snap, he has dedicated his life to protecting humanity, even though it persecutes him and other African Americans.

STR 65 **CON** 80 **SIZ** 60 **DEX** 80 **INT** 65
APP 65 **POW** 85 **EDU** 55 **SAN** 75 **HP** 14
DB +1D4 **Build** +1 **Move** 8 **MP** 17 **Luck** 55

Brawl: 41% (20/8) damage: 1D3+1+1D4

Enchanted Cavalry Saber: 58% (29/11) damage: 1D8+1+1D4

Luger: 67% (34/13), Damage 1D10 per round 1 (3)

Dodge: 63% (31/12)

Armor: World War I flak jacket 6 (kept in his apartment)

Skills: Credit Rating 33%, Cthulhu Mythos 17%, Demolitions 62%, Dodge 63%, Electrical Repair 59%, Library Use 43%, Listen 45%, Locksmith 43%, Mechanical Repair 51%, Psychology 63%, Sleight of Hand 71%, Spot Hidden 64%, Stealth 37%, Language (Own - English) 55%, Language (French) 47%, Language (German) 51%

Equipment: Blessed World War I cavalier saber (blade ignores all armor and harms any creature), Ouroboros medallion (enables Samuel to spend **Luck** to buy off damage at a 2-for-1 cost—e.g., it would cost 18 **Luck** to buy off 9 points of damage), box of 50 9mm ammo

BACKSTORY

- **Description:** Military bearing and intelligent eyes
- **Trait:** Tactical

PRIVATE CHARLESTON WEST

Charleston was a star runner in school, until he was forced to go to work in a factory. When the chance to fight for his country came, he jumped at the chance.

STR 45 **CON** 50 **SIZ** 40 **DEX** 80 **INT** 70
APP 55 **POW** 65 **EDU** 40 **SAN** 65 **HP** 9
DB 0 **Build** 0 **Move** 10 **MP** 13

Brawl: 20% (10/4)

Pistol: 45% (23/9), damage 1D10 1 (2)

Dodge: 85% (43/17) **Armor:** N/A

Skills: History 42%, Language (Own - English) 40%, Language (German) 30%, Locksmith 60%, Sleight of Hand 42%

Equipment: Swanky suit, pistol

BACKSTORY

- **Description:** Slim and elegant
- **Trait:** Friendly

PRIVATE JAMES SMITHSON

James Smithson is a towering wall of a man who served his country with honor. He returned home and went right back to working on the docks, loading crates.

STR 70 **CON** 55 **SIZ** 75 **DEX** 50 **INT** 50
APP 55 **POW** 55 **EDU** 60 **SAN** 53 **HP** 12
DB +1D4 **Build** 1 **Move** 7 **MP** 11

Brawl: 50% (25/10), damage 1D3+1D4

Knife: 68% (34/15), damage 1D6+2+1D4

Dodge: 24% (12/4) **Armor:** N/A

Skills: Art (Harmonica) 22%, Charm 47%, First Aid 52%, Language (Own - English) 60%, Survival 37%

Equipment: Elegant tux, fighting knife, harmonica

BACKSTORY

- **Description:** Burly man in a tight suit, with a warm smile
- **Trait:** Gentle giant

CHARLESTON WEST

Athletics 8, History 1, Locksmith 2, Firearm 6, Stealth 6, Stability 7, Sanity 6, Health 7

ALERTNESS: +1

STEALTH: +1

WEAPON: +1 (Pistol)

JAMES SMITHSON

Art (Music) 2, Flattery 1, Medicine 1, Scuffling 4, Weapon 5, Stealth 2, Stability 7, Sanity 6, Health 7

ALERTNESS: +1

STEALTH: +1

WEAPON: +1 (Pistol), +0 (Knife)

MATTHEWS AND OSTERTAG

Intimidate 2, Firearms 3, Weapon 2, Sense Trouble 3, Stability 5, Sanity 5, Health 6

STEALTH MODIFIER: +1

ARMOR: 2 (Vest)

WEAPON: +1 (Pistol), +0 (Nightstick)

KLAN THUGS

Flee 3, Firearms 3, Weapon 2, Stability 4, Sanity 4, Health 5

STEALTH MODIFIER: +1

ARMOR: 2 (Vest)

WEAPON: +1 (Pistol), +0 (Nightstick)

KU KLUX KLAN POLICE OFFICERS TERRY MATTHEWS AND FRANK OSTERTAG

STR 55 **CON** 50 **SIZ** 60 **DEX** 55 **INT** 55
APP 45 **POW** 55 **EDU** 60 **SAN** 55 **HP** 11
DB 0 **Build** 0 **Move** 7 **MP** 10

Brawl: 41% (20/8)

.38 Special Revolver: 55% (27/11), damage 1D8, attacks per round 1 (3)

Dodge: 37% (18/7)

Armor: Bullet-proof vest 6 (in trunk of patrol car)

Skills: First Aid 37%, Intimidate 55%, Psychology 42%, Spot Hidden 60%, Stealth 33%

Equipment: Service revolver, police uniform, flashlight, Klan uniform (hidden in locker or trunk of patrol car)

BACKSTORY

- **Description:** Burly
- **Trait:** Threatening

KU KLUX KLAN THUGS

These white men are usually in their late 30s to 50s, established and with no concern for the life of African Americans or anyone else they believe threatens their supremacy.

STR 50 **CON** 55 **SIZ** 50 **DEX** 50 **INT** 50
APP 45 **POW** 50 **EDU** 50 **SAN** 40 **HP** 10
DB 0 **Build** 0 **Move** 7 **MP** 10

Brawl: 33% (16/6), damage 1D3

Shotgun or Improvised Weapon: 35% (17/7) damage 2D6 or 1D6 club

Dodge: 41% (20/8) **Armor:** N/A

Skills: Intimidate 45%, Spot Hidden 40%

Equipment: Truck, rope, torches, shotguns

BACKSTORY

- **Description:** Usually in white hoods
- **Trait:** Racist and violent

RETIRED HARLEM HELLFIGHTERS

All of these retired African American soldiers are good men who will come to the aid of an old war buddy if called. They range from early 20s to early 30s; all are in excellent shape from the war, and from doing mostly manual labor upon their return to the States.

STR 65 **CON** 60 **SIZ** 50 **DEX** 60 **INT** 60
APP 55 **POW** 55 **EDU** 40 **SAN** 63 **HP** 11
DB 0 **Build** 0 **Move** 9 **MP** 11

Brawl: 58% (29/11) damage 1D3

Improvised Weapons: 48% (24/9) damage based on weapon, likely a heavy table leg, 1D8

Dodge: 56% (28/11) **Armor:** N/A

Service Pistol: 44% (22/8) damage 1d10 attacks per round 1 (3)

Skills: Climb 37%, First Aid 42%, Mechanical Repair 33%, Language (Own—English) 40%, Language (German) 14%, Language (French) 29%, Rifle 67%, Spot Hidden 58%, Stealth 53%, Swim 47%, Survival 41%

Equipment: Work clothes (range from oily overalls to cheap suits), dress clothes (always to-the-nines, the best they can afford, and sometimes more than they could afford)

BACKSTORY

- **Description:** Athletic; dressed in work clothes or dress clothes for clubbing in the evening.
- **Trait:** Honorable

RETIRED HELLFIGHTERS

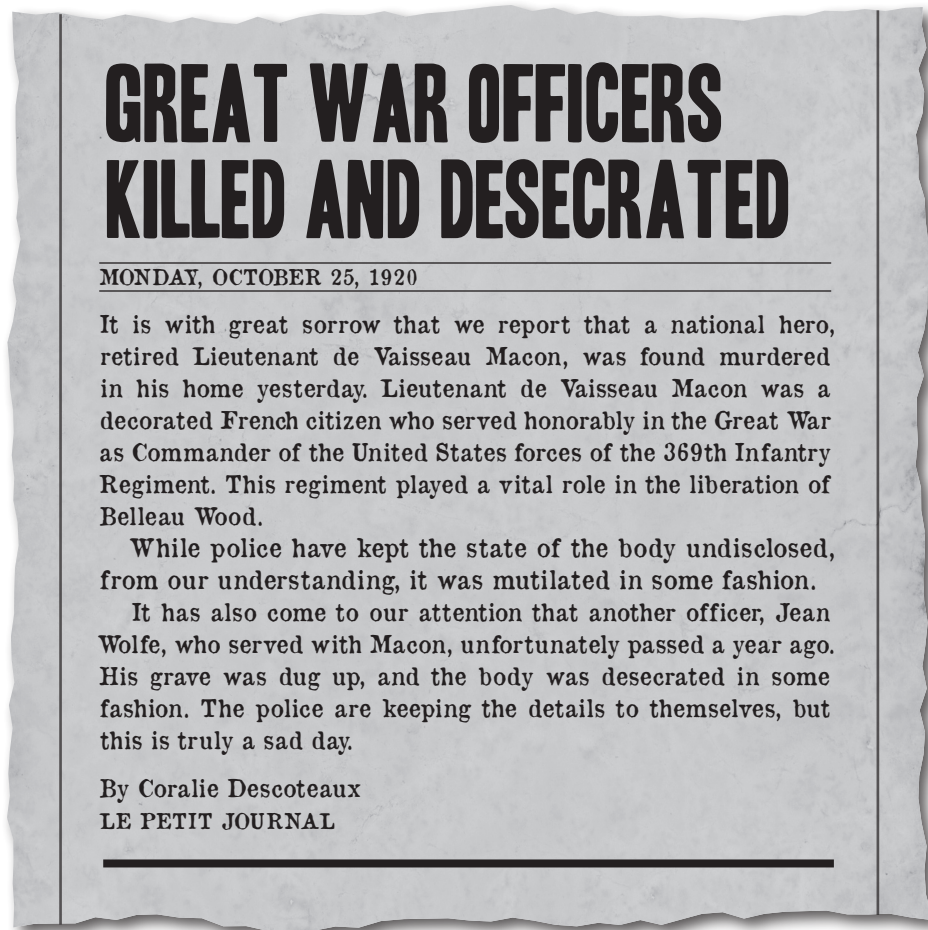
Athletics 6, Mechanical Repair 4, Firearms 6, Scuffling 4, Stealth 2, Weapons 4, Stability 6, Sanity 6, Health 6

ALERTNESS MODIFIER: +1

STEALTH MODIFIER: + 0

WEAPON: +1 (Pistol), +0 (Table Leg)

APPENDIX B: INVESTIGATOR HANDOUTS



PLAYER HANDOUT 1: Attacks on French Officers (newspaper article, translated from French)

Printable PDFs of all handouts can be downloaded from our website at www.darkerhuestudios.com.

ATTACK ON RECRUITMENT OFFICE

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 17, 1920

A terror that reminded people of the Red Summer of the Great War struck last night! An army recruitment office close to the New York Harbor was brutally attacked by what can only be called a team of gangsters. These Tommy gun-wielding mad men assaulted the station in the dead of night, killing two of the three servicemen guarding the building.

The one lucky surviving soldier has been placed on leave, and sent home to his mother in Italian Harlem. It was only thanks to that young man's bravery that the gangsters did not take anything of value. According to police reports, they only stole some records of the blacks that dug ditches in the Great War.

Thank you, Private Rocco Mastroianni, for your service.

By Tobin Harris
NEW YORK TRIBUNE

PLAYER HANDOUT 2: Recruitment Office Attack
(newspaper article)

MORE BLACK VETERAN TROUBLE IN HARLEM

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 22, 1920

Yes, dear readers, yet again those troublesome colored veterans are causing a ruckus. It looks like we have a couple of those "Men of Bronze" shooting up a neighborhood after being thrown out of a party. Fortunately, the police of the 30th Precinct were on hand to quell this unrest before it grew into another riot. May justice be swift and their jail sentences lengthy.

By Keith Blaine
NEW YORK TIMES

PLAYER HANDOUT 3: More Black Veteran Trouble in Harlem
(newspaper article)

"DON'T TREAD ON ME"

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 24, 1920

I am Captain Samuel J. Wright (Ret.), of Phoenix Squad of the 369th Infantry, and I am calling you out, you racist son of a bitch. I did not run during the war, and am not running now. Let's end this like men, if you can even call yourself that, tonight at midnight at the 369th Infantry Armory, 2360 5th Ave, New York, NY 10037.

PLAYER HANDOUT 4: Message in Harlem Papers
(newspaper clipping, translated from German) [CORE CLUE]



HARLEM (K)NIGHTS

*“We wear the mask that grins and lies,
It hides our cheeks and shades our eyes,
This debt we pay to human guile;
With torn and bleeding hearts we smile
And mouth with myriad subtleties.*

-Paul Laurence Dunbar, *The Lyrics of Lowly Life*

INTRODUCTION

The scenario opens in March of 1921, with Prohibition in full swing—bootlegging is high, and the Great Migration is causing increased tension in the city as African Americans flee the oppressive South for greener pastures. Harlem is a powder keg ready to ignite.

An ancient evil banished by the Wappinger band of the Leni Lenape waited for centuries to return, as it cannot die—and has at last found a suitable servant and a vessel for its plans.

The scenario is presented as multiple locations under different cardinal directions, and NPCs possess a number of clues to be discovered. There is no linear path for the investigators to follow, and each group that plays may approach it differently. Some may discover all of the clues or make perfect leaps of logic and solve the mystery.

Keepers are encouraged to read the scenario a few times before running it, taking note of all the sidebars. A few sidebars are dedicated to knowledge that locals or out-of-towners have.

AUTHOR'S NOTE:

The scenario is aimed to highlight Harlem herself, the various power players, and will fully entrench the players into the city. The Keeper may want to focus on how each area of Harlem is different, identifying the smells, the type of work the people are doing, and the police presence. A few Local Knowledge bars pop up to assist, but Keepers should sprinkle in additional information from the Souls and Harlem Herself chapters.

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

DECEMBER 31, 1920	Arturo is first touched by Zathog, and the dreams begin.
JANUARY 7, 1921	Arturo kills Antonietta, and disposes of her carpet-wrapped body in the bay.
JANUARY 8, 1921	Arturo becomes the high priest of Zathog, and begins his scheme.
JANUARY 9, 1921	Antonietta's butchered body is discovered and taken to Harlem Hospital. Due to the gruesome manner of death, it is still an open case with the Harlem Police Department.
JANUARY 15, 1921	Arturo casts Cause Disease on his nephew Orsino.
JANUARY 17, 1921	Arturo claims he was appointed the new Don by Orsino.
JANUARY 25, 1921	There is a noticeable increase in mob activity and violence.
JANUARY 27, 1921	Both second-in-commands are killed.
MARCH 13, 1921	Jack Johnson is arrested.
MARCH 15, 1921	The first of the two wards are destroyed and symbol created.
MARCH 29, 1921	The scenario begins with either Option 1 or 2.
MARCH 30, 1921	Players investigate clues from the initial location.
MARCH 31, 1921	The second ward is destroyed and symbol created. The investigators likely have first encounter with Arturo.
APRIL 1, 1921	The ritual to empower the vessel with Zathog.
APRIL 2, 1921	Albert Einstein's speech.

BACKGROUND

WHAT HAS TRANSPIRED

Zathog, the Great Old One, empowered an avatar to discover resources in the never-ending struggle to free itself and its brethren. The avatar traveled through time and arrived in 1553, in the area that would become Harlem. The Wappinger band of the Lenni Lenape battled the beast and bested it, at a high cost of lives. This battle reduced their population considerably and weakened their hold on the region, which allowed the Dutch to overtake them in a century's time.

The Wappinger destroyed the body of the beast, but it would not die. The wisest of the shamans understood what had to be done, and formed a circle with other mystics. The circle of shamans bound the avatar's essence into the earth, and then warded the region with two sacred sites. As long as the wards remained active, Zathog's influence and the avatar's essence—a voluminous, dense, incorporeal fog—would slowly decay and fade into nothing over the centuries. The shattered fragments of the avatar's consciousness could only send faint dreams to those filled with vengeance. The Great Old One waited. Never dying. Never resting. Ever vengeful.

Arturo Giovanni is an angry and bitter man, having spent his life in the shadow of others. His twin brother received all of their parents' love, as well as the family business and the woman of Arturo's dreams—and had the son, Orsino, Arturo thought he should have had. Arturo left to attend the University of Cagliari in Italy and discovered he had a talent for chemistry and numbers, only to have to return home to work for his brother. One day, Arturo accidentally poisoned one of the staff, and quickly covered up the murder. When no one discovered what he had done, a sense of power surged through him, slowly fading for a time—only to awaken into a desire to poison again and again.

Eventually he lost the battle with his hatred for his twin, and poisoned his brother, who had previously sent his young son Orsino Giovanni to America for a better life. Shortly after the murder, Arturo married his brother's wife—his true love—but she could sense the evil in him, and regretted it every moment. A decade later, his nephew became head of a breakaway gang from the Morello family, and ruled parts of Harlem. Orsino made arrangements to move the family to the States after Arturo had run the family business into the ground.

Arturo loved America; it was a land of opportunity, and he was a man who knew he wanted better—better for himself and his wife. He sensed it was his destiny. After a number of failed businesses, his wife urged him to ask Orsino for help. Orsino took pity on his uncle, and allowed him to become an accountant on his staff. Arturo struggled within himself daily, watching his nephew's unbridled success. His hatred grew, and he wanted the bounty of the younger man's life—but knew he could never take it, even if he killed Orsino. Arturo did not have the ability to lead, much less hold the gang under his sway, alone.

One evening, his wife Antonietta tried to comfort him—but in his rage, he struck her. She told him he was half the man his brother was. Arturo's hate overtook him, and he repeatedly stabbed her with a knife. As the woman he loved slumped to the floor, her blood soaking the carpet, he called out to any God listening.

He disposed of her body and the carpet down at the docks. Then the dreams started, again. The distant echo of a hate-filled voice offering vengeance for a life neglected: Arturo's sacrifice of his love and vengeance for life to prove his worth. The next night, Arturo dreamed of the Great Old One Zathog. He felt tentacles wrap themselves around his mind, and the knowledge burn its way through him. He understood the language of the Great Old Ones, and knew what must be done. His new master required a vessel for its return. It takes time for Zathog to extinguish the magics the shamans used to banish him. For the first time in as long as he could remember, Arturo felt happy.

Zathog's avatar would have a new vessel: Orsino was strong like his father, and would require two months to be prepared for the ritual. Over the two next months, Arturo, using the knowledge granted by Zathog's avatar, cast Cause Disease on his nephew, incapacitating him and placing the young man under his care. The corrupted uncle quickly formed a small cabal of cultists that he masqueraded as nurses for Orsino.

Now with his nephew under his sway, Arturo assumed control of the Italian gang in less than a week. Both seconds-in-command opposed him, but each was found dead in his home, little more than a charred husk. The question of why Orsino would place his uncle in charge died with the two men, and Arturo's two new bodyguards did not let anyone close to him. The twin guards never spoke, towering over even the tallest gang member.

Within three weeks, his control of the Italian gang was unquestionable. The knowledge burned into Arturo's mind informed him that he needed to destroy the two Wappinger wards, and discover the location of the essence for the final ritual. The time draws near, and the stars are right. He managed to destroy one ward, and left the symbol of Zathog at the site until the last ritual is completed.

The scenario opens on Tuesday, March 29, with the investigators being called in. Keepers can change the dates without serious impact to the game, and need only make a few minor changes, including the loss of police presence for the final ritual to account for a possible increased number of investigators or skill level.

KEY LOCATIONS

Location 1: Club Deluxe

Location 2: Harlem Hospital

Location 3: Hawthorne Rowhouse

Location 4: Chabad Synagogue

Location 5: Mongoose Construction Company

Location 6: Tanner Warehouse

Location 7: Hotel Reale

Location 8: Mount Morris Park

Location 9: New York Amsterdam News

Location 10: College of the City of New York

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

ARTURO GIOVANNI

Arturo is the power-hungry uncle of Orsino, and plans to perform the ritual of Zathog's avatar. He is always dressed in a fresh and pressed \$200 suit since incapacitating his nephew with the disease and taking control of the business. The instant he took charge, he brought in a small cabal of his people (the cultists) for various roles, and then began using the gang in an unusual manner for scouting sites.

ORSINO GIOVANNI

Orsino is a strikingly attractive young man who has taken life for all it has to offer. He started out on the docks and worked his way up the organization, The Black Hand, through scheming, luck, and a willingness to kill anyone who stood in his way. His men knew he was cold, but loyal to those who are loyal to him. He is doomed to become an avatar of the Great Old One unless rescued by the investigators.

SAMUEL WRIGHT

Former Captain Samuel Wright served with the 93rd Division in France during the Great War. While in the trenches, he discovered horrors that man was not meant to know. Scarred by what he saw, he made a promise to himself in that blood-soaked trench that mankind would not succumb to madness. Upon returning home, he got a job at the hospital and established the Knights of Ouroboros, a group dedicated to combating the Mythos, with fifteen members currently scattered through Harlem. He is the self-proclaimed protector of Harlem, and a potential friend of the investigators.

GEOFF AMOS SILVERSTEIN

Rabbi Silverstein has lived in Harlem since 1897, and is proud to be one of the longest-living members of the community. While he was not excited about the Great Migration, he has known a number of Ethiopian Jews, and welcomed a chance to discuss religion with the African-American ministers. He is a knowledgeable man who is worried about his people; he is also a potential ally.

DOMINIC VESPUCCI

Dominic was Orsino's right-hand-man. He knew of Orsino's dislike for his uncle Arturo, and that he would never have appointed the older man to rule in his stead. Dominic is more of a doer than a thinker, but doesn't want to get killed, so he is waiting for a chance to act.

JACK JOHNSON

Jack is the (former) first African-American Heavyweight Boxing Champion, now the owner of Club Deluxe North Harlem. Jack is a larger-than-life figure who is still famous for his time in the ring, his generous nature with money, and his obsession with women, much to his wife Lucille's dismay.

ALICIA SMITH

Alicia was a part of the Great Migration, and learned a bit of the old-world magic from her grandmother while learning nursing from a Southern plantation owner's wife. The conjure woman is very loyal to Jack, and knows that anything that goes on at Club Deluxe stays at Club Deluxe. She takes a lot of pride in the success of the club, claiming it is because of a blessing she cast on Jack.

CARL "MOUSE" JENKINS

One of the best horn men in New York, Mouse works at Club Deluxe, and is currently insane after witnessing a sacrifice.

SCOTT "FLIP" WILMORE

An attractive blond-haired journalist at *The Messenger Press*, Flip was flat-footed and could not fight for his country, so he turned all of his talents to exposing the truth.

CAMPUS SECURITY

These men work in shifts around the campus, and may help or hamper the investigators during the last act of the scenario.

CULTISTS

Julie, Charles, Eric, and William serve Arturo and Zathog.

FLORA TARVER

Flora works at *The New York Amsterdam News* and is frequently the first face any visitor sees. She takes her job seriously—too seriously, some people believe.

SHAMUS "NAPOLEON" DOYLE

Head of College of the City of New York library and a bit of a history buff, Napoleon is always ready to share a bit of trivia.

INVESTIGATORS

This scenario can be used to bring a new group of investigators together, or easily involve an existing group, or add a new member to an existing group. The Keeper should determine which of the following two options best suits their players, or if a combination of the two are required.

INVESTIGATORS OPTION ONE: LOCALS

The scenario is best-suited for investigators who are residents of Harlem and have experienced the increased mob violence first- or second-hand. They have seen the numerous gun battles spilling all over Harlem, the lack of actual police interference, and maybe an investigator's friends, loved ones, or themselves could have been at one of the attacks—barely escaping, or seeing a loved one injured or killed.

Harlemites receive a letter (Player Handout 1) from Alain Locke.

INVESTIGATORS OPTION TWO: OUT-OF-TOWNERS

There are numerous ways to involve out-of-towners in the scenario. The easiest way involves Adam Avery from *The Messenger Press* calling the investigators to his cramped and overly warm office on this wintry day. The short, squat man is in his late 40s but looks to be in his early 70s, with yellowed teeth to greet the investigators as they sit.

Avery quickly starts his rant. “Look. I’ll keep this short, and you can ask me any questions you want afterward. One of my journalists, Scott ‘Flip’ Wilmore, has gone missing. I am not sure what happened to him, but the police don’t have any ideas—and the coloreds don’t talk to them. My assumption is, he got in some trouble and is hiding out, too afraid to do anything. After all, he didn’t even fight in the war.”

Avery continues. “I need some people to go down to Harlem, ask around, and bring the scaredy cat back.

The rest of my team”—here he points a beefy finger to the small press room with three reporters typing away—“won’t go down there unless they know he is fine, which means *The Messenger* is missing out on a lot of juicy stories. Juicy stories sell papers!” He shouts, as he looks toward the reporters, who don’t look up.

“I can pay you five dollars plus one dollar a day each for a week, with a five-dollar bonus once you return him. Besides, if it takes longer than that, no one sees him again—he probably skipped town. He was looking into that stolen truck thing. He had a crazy idea it was mob related, after he got some tip. The truck was stolen from Mongoose Construction Company, and ended up at Tanner Warehouse before being returned.”

Avery does not know a lot, but answers any questions he can.

- “Flip has not been to his home in days. The police and I went through it, but found nothing. Unfortunately, the flophouse manager has already rented it out to someone else, because Flip was two weeks behind on rent.”
- Flip does not have any family, but has some colored friends at the hospital.
- Detective Charles Wisk has the case, but is unable to provide any additional information to the investigators; he tells them the police are no longer looking into it.

A few additional options for the Keeper include having Rabbi Silverstein contact one of the investigators, if Jewish. The rabbi (East Harlem) is concerned about the community, and the death of the Cantor has him worried. Another option is to have Samuel Wright send a few enticing newspaper clippings to the investigators about the deaths, from the hospital’s address. Arturo has paid off the desk clerk of the 25th Police Precinct; it is always possible that an honest cop or federal agent would want to look into the murders and bootlegging. And any of the newspapers may send journalists for their next scoop!

LOCAL KNOWLEDGE

Locals know that North Harlem is primarily considered Black Harlem, and has mostly African American-run businesses and people, plus an increased police presence. Club Deluxe has all kinds of people in attendance: famous bankers and politicians, and the mayor is there nightly. Jack has had some problems with the police and increased mob interference.

DOCTOR WRIGHT?

Anyone asking the staff about Doctor Wright receives a number of shrugs and strange looks. A **Charm** roll [**BUREAUCRACY OR ORAL HISTORY**] or description of “Doctor” Wright is enough for one of the staff to realize the investigators are asking about Sammy. “Janitor” is the title given by any white staff member. Any black staff member corrects them, saying that he is an electrician and has a room next to the morgue.

LOCAL KNOWLEDGE

Once spotted, an **Education** or **Luck** roll [**LAW OR ORAL HISTORY**] has the PC remember seeing Samuel in an African-American paper a few years ago, as returning war hero and Captain in the Harlem Hellfighters. A **Hard History** or **Law** roll [**LAW OR 1 POINT ORAL HISTORY SPEND**] also notes he spent a couple of days in jail a few months ago, after some late-night fight around the Armory. But no evidence was ever presented, and he was released.

NORTH HARLEM

SONGS OF THE DEPARTED

Scene Type: Core

Lead-In: Alternate Introduction

Lead-Outs: A Party Every Night, Gabriel’s Light, Bootlegging It, Paper-Chasing Horrors

Harlem Hospital, at 136th Street and Lenox Avenue, is a 390-bed-capacity hospital. It is primarily white-staffed, with only a handful of African-American employees, yet only a third of the patients are white. This public institution is woefully insufficient for the needs of the community.

If the investigators arrive between 6 a.m.–6 p.m., they are led to Samuel Wright, who is working on an open fusebox on the second floor. Unless they mention either of the killings, Flip Wilmore, or something of the occult, Samuel simply smiles and waits for them to leave before getting back to work. If they say something of interest, he leads them down to the morgue, saying “We can’t talk here.” He has been following the killings through the newspaper, has heard rumors on the street, and has overheard doctors talking about the bodies.

Once Samuel knows of the investigators and their purpose, he stalks them around town to keep an eye on them, or pays a group of shoeshine boys to keep tabs on the investigators and update him daily. His preference is to use the shoeshine boys, which draws less attention and avoids placing the boys directly in danger. The leader of the shoeshine boys is “Skinny” Wilson; he is 12 years old and has average stats except for **Stealth** 75% [**DIFFICULTY 10 FLEEING**]. If spotted, he flees to avoid capture, and uses his knowledge of the streets to lose pursuers. If captured, he breaks with a **Persuasion** or **Hard Intimidate** roll [**REASSURANCE OR 1 POINT INTIMIDATE SPEND**]. Skinny tells the investigators that a war veteran who works at the hospital asked him to keep tabs on them. He doesn’t know Samuel’s name; all the boys call Samuel “General,” and he has some of them watching Club Deluxe [**CORE CLUE: A PARTY EVERY NIGHT**].

Once Samuel believes the investigators are trying to solve the problem, he comes forward—or if noticed and detained by the investigators, he tells them what he knows, assuming they seem competent and concerned for the people of Harlem. Otherwise, it requires a **Hard Intimidate** or **Hard Persuasion** roll [**1 POINT INTIMIDATE OR 1 POINT REASSURANCE SPEND**]. Wright won’t reveal any information about the Knights of Ouroboros until he trusts the investigators. The group currently has fifteen members spread throughout Harlem in various occupations (minus any that may have died in *Harlem Hellfighters Never Die*). A **Psychology** roll [**ASSESS HONESTY**] confirms he is telling the truth, or what he genuinely believes to be the truth, and has Harlem’s best interests in mind. An **Extreme Psychology** success [**1 POINT ASSESS HONESTY SPEND**] notes he is holding something back that could be useful—but if pushed, you could lose his support.

WHAT SAMUEL KNOWS

Samuel knows that Carl “Mouse” Jenkins has been rattled, and won’t talk to anyone about something that happened at the Club Deluxe [**CORE CLUE: A PARTY EVERY NIGHT**] more than a week ago [**CORE CLUE: GABRIEL’S LIGHT**].

Samuel may share the rest, if he feels the players can help. Mouse is a trumpet player for the house band—probably the best one in New York. Samuel has pictures of one of the mutilated victims, and has linked that person to one of the kidnapped victims from the newspaper, which no one else has. He can also sneak the investigators into the morgue, if they want to see any of the victims who have died in gang violence. Lastly, Samuel has deduced that the ritualistic killings started two months ago. Someone tried to hide a female stabbing victim in the bay during the winter, but it was discovered due to an unusually warm winter day. The woman had been stabbed more than twenty times, and then hacked apart. No one has been able to identify the body. He has not been able to get back to *The New York Amsterdam News*, but their morgue has been useful [**ALTERNATE CLUE: PAPER-CHASING HORRORS**].

“BODIES IN THE MORGUE”

Sam mentions, if not asked, that he actually contacted a journalist, Flip Wilmore, at *The Messenger Press* about the murder—but the man only wanted to talk about some truck [**LEVERAGE CLUE: BOOTLEGGING IT**] and the Italian gang. All he knows is that the Deluxe Club owner has had a couple of issues lately. After that, the guy bolted.

Sam has a number of jumbled pictures in a sealed folder which is taped to the underside of the mortician’s table, which he may share with the players. The black war hero slowly shows each picture to the investigators, and tries to gauge their response.

PICTURES: The grainy images display a mutilated body hacked into parts, but no blood; some symbol has been carved into the body parts (**SAN LOSS 0/1D3**) [**1 STABILITY**]. If the players have discovered the symbol in Club Deluxe, the carved markings look similar. A **Cthulhu Mythos** or **Hard Occult** roll [**1 POINT OCCULT SPEND OR CTHULHU MYTHOS**] knows that the soul has been used to fuel something, and each one magnifies the power of whatever the ritual is.

BODIES: The bodies in the morgue reveal more details for the investigators. Currently, two bodies remain. Each has been hacked into two-foot chunks, with the skin peeled back revealing the veins. No blood (dried or otherwise) is apparent, and the flaying is almost mesmerizing with its neatness; each torso displays a charred symbol (**SAN LOSS 2/1D6**) [**6/2 STABILITY**].

A successful **Occult** roll [**OCCULT**] reveals that the symbol is linked to some kind of inverted resurrection magic, also matching the symbol hidden at Club Deluxe. A **Hard Anthropology** or an **Extreme History** or **Other Language (Algonquin)** check [**ANTHROPOLOGY, 1 POINT HISTORY OR LANGUAGE SPEND**] recognizes that some of the symbols are an altered version of the Eastern Algonquian language. A **Medicine** roll [**MEDICINE**] reveals that such precision in the way the bodies have been mutilated and dissected is rare, and would take exceptionally high skill. A **Hard Medicine**

THE WRIGHT TIME IS NOW

Samuel volunteers to go with them, even though it will likely lead to him being fired from the hospital. If the investigators decline, he may still show up during any battle when it looks dire for the investigators; a **Luck** [**DIFFICULTY 6 SENSE TROUBLE**] roll from the investigator with the lowest **Luck** [**SENSE TROUBLE**] has Samuel and any remaining Hellfighters alive arriving with guns blazing. This should not be used to remove the spotlight from the players, and is merely meant to aid them if needed, like something as simple as distracting an enemy for a round or two, giving the investigators time to rally.

Samuel is an excellent soldier with a keen tactical acumen who will order everyone to retreat if needed. All of the Hellfighters follow the motto “Leave no man behind.” If previously saved by the investigators, the soldiers will lay down their lives to save them in return.



YAD

A *yad* is a sacred Jewish tool crafted to resemble a hand. As the words of the Torah scroll are not to be touched by an actual hand, the *yad* is secured at the end of a rod and used to help guide the reader of the holy Torah.

THE MANN ACT

A federal law passed on June 25, 1910 made it a felony to engage in interstate or foreign transport of “any girl or woman for purpose of prostitution, debauchery, or immoral intent.” Its primary focus, of course, was to address prostitution. But due to the vague language of the law, “immoral” was frequently used to criminalize sexual behavior between two consenting adults, especially the few brave souls who engaged in interracial relationships. One such example was Jack Johnson, who was arrested multiple times in violation of the Mann Act, even after he was married to Lucille.

success [1 POINT **MEDICINE SPEND**] deduces that the way the cuts were done, the accuracy is beyond human capacity. The apparent lack of blood is also disquieting, which along with the way the bodies have been flayed, shows a skill far beyond that of the average surgeon.

A PARTY EVERY NIGHT

Scene Type: Introduction

Lead-In: Songs of the Departed, Gabriel's Light

Lead-Outs: Faith and Fury, Into the Fire, Bootlegging It

Club Deluxe, at 142nd Street and Lenox Avenue, will become the Cotton Club in a few years time—but at the moment it is owned by Jack Johnson, the first African-American Heavyweight Boxing Champion-turned-entrepreneur. This exquisite club is a premier showplace of Harlem, and seats 400 patrons. The music is always loud, the drinks are always fresh, and the crowd is always wealthy.

ZATHOG'S WARD

Arturo needs to create a symbol of Zathog after he has destroyed the Wappinger Ward in the basement of Club Deluxe. The simple destruction of the ward is not enough to empower Zathog. Arturo arranged for Jack to be arrested and then cast Dominate on Willy Smith, forcing the man to obey his every command. With three followers (the fourth remaining with Orsino), Arturo sacrificed the Cantor and two other Jewish congregants in the basement, to destroy the first ward. While their “holy” blood means nothing to Zathog or the Mythos, it brought the former Catholic a sick pleasure to empower the site and align it with Zathog. Arturo kidnapped Willy, as he makes an excellent victim for the next site.

The symbol of the Great Old One is etched into the floor over the old Wappinger ward, and slowly draws **Magic Points** [mental energy leaving victims irritable and tired] from anyone in the club for an extended period of time. Every hour, the symbol collects one Magic Point from 4D20 random people from sunset to sunrise. Zathog's symbol is now under six crates of bathtub gin, and can be found with an Extreme **Spot Hidden** roll [2 POINT **OCCULT SPEND OR DIFFICULTY 10 SENSE TROUBLE**]. A **Spot Hidden** roll [**EVIDENCE COLLECTION**] discovers a bloody yad [**CORE CLUE: FAITH AND FURY**]. An Extreme **Education**, **Hard History**, or **Hard Occult** roll [**RELIGION OR 1 POINT OCCULT SPEND**] identifies it as a yad and finds what it means.

A LITTLE NIGHT LIFE

The club is only open to the public at night; the investigator with the lowest **Luck** (if locals, use the highest **Luck**) needs to make a roll for the party, and then any investigator can make a **Credit Rating** roll [1 POINT **BARGAIN SPEND OR CREDIT RATING 3+**] to be allowed entry into the hot spot. For every ten dollars spent to bribe the bouncer, grant the **Credit Rating** roll a Bonus die up to 30 dollars, allowing instant access. If an investigator is known to the bouncer or any employees, they may be allowed in through the side door and given a free round of drinks.

When the investigators walk in at night, a rail-thin African-American crooner, Smooth Williams, warbles away on the stage as the house band plays “Avalon.”

Across the club they see Jack Johnson tossing two white goons in cheap suits out the back door, each obviously packing heat, before he makes a quip about “corduroy suits not bein’ meant for nightclubs.” The patrons around him laugh as he makes his way across the dance floor. A cry echoes out from a few of the richer white patrons, “We never saw you fight, but would pay a pretty penny just to see a round or two!” Jack smiles at them, returning to his duties, saying “You boys missed the bus.”

It is highly unlikely that the investigators have a chance to talk to Jack on such a busy night, without a plan. An Idea roll suggests that making themselves appear as high rollers, or as former boxers themselves, may grant them an audience. An **Art (Acting)** or **Hard Credit Rating** roll [ART, 1 POINT CREDIT RATING SPEND, OR CREDIT RATING 4+] draws the former heavyweight over to them for a few minutes.

If they return during the day, any day other than Sunday, they are admitted by the doorman, Deuce, with a successful **Fast Talk** or **Credit Rating** roll [CREDIT RATING OR ORAL HISTORY]. Jack is open to people from all walks of life, and treats everyone fairly regardless of race, culture, or profession. The investigators need to persuade Jack with a successful **Charm**, **Persuade**, or **Fast Talk** [FLATTERY, ORAL HISTORY, OR REASSURANCE] to share his information. Any reference to his former boxing status, beautiful wife, or remarkable nightclub has the playboy take a shine to the investigators, granting them a Bonus die on either a **Charm** or **Persuade** skill check. He takes them up to his office before discussing anything.

Once in his office, he offers everyone a drink or cigar before sitting behind his luxurious wooden desk. The office is immaculately clean while filled with papers and awards from his former glory days, along with a dozen pictures of his wife. A **Hard Spot Hidden** roll [ACCOUNTING] notes the stacks of unpaid bills. If asked, Jack just smiles, “I’ll get to it. Too much going on to worry about the paperwork.”

WHAT JACK KNOWS

Orsino Giovanni was a boxing fan, and always gave Jack a discount on “tea” (whiskey). They would make weekly deliveries [ALTERNATE CLUE: INTO THE FIRE]. But since his uncle took over (Jack does not know why), his orders cost more, and the tea seems weaker every shipment. Maybe Tanner is dipping his fingers in it [LEVERAGE CLUE: BOOTLEGGING IT]. For some reason, Dominic—Orsino’s incredibly loyal right-hand man—was nowhere to be seen. Arturo tried to rent the club

for a day, some three weeks ago, but Jack refused. Jack soon found himself in jail on false charges for violating the Mann Act for a couple of days. “The cops love me... sort-of.”

If asked how the club stayed open or whether anything else has happened, Jack continues his story, talking about Willy, his stagehand. Willy had to run the club in his absence for a couple of days, with Lucille keeping an eye on everything. But Willy seems to have gone missing before Jack’s return. That was two weeks ago.

A FAVOR FOR A FAVOR

The former-boxer-turned-shrewd-businessman smiles at the investigators as he finishes answering any questions. “You all heard the guys downstairs, right?” He points out the massive glass window overlooking the club to the gentlemen who offered to pay to see him fight.

“Any of you boys up for making a little money, and getting my club a little more nightly action?” He looks at the toughest- (highest **Build**) [HEALTH] or strongest- (highest **Strength**) [SCUFFLING] looking investigator, then glances to the boxing gloves across from his desk. If no one has a **Build** or **DB**, he offers to have two of them fight him.

He continues before anyone can speak. “It’s damn simple. The band goes on break in ten minutes. I have a couple of the boys clear away four tables, and put up some makeshift ring. We have a little fight, we earn a wad of cash that we split 50/50, and everyone thinks that any night old Jack might put on a show. That means more business for me, you get a payoff, and if you’re good, I have a little extra for you and we discuss it after. What do you say?”

If the investigators refuse, he shakes his head and laughs. “Maybe next time.” If they accept, in less than fifteen minutes, participating investigators find themselves in a quickly assembled boxing ring, a cheering crowd all around them, and the rules: Three rounds, and whoever is standing at the end wins. Jack is not going to take it easy on them; he has missed the ring, and a good fight will boost his club’s revenue for months.

If the investigators beat Jack, he quickly gets to his feet after the bout, smiling. “Looks like old guys like me need to leave the fighting alone and keep drinking! FREE DRINKS all around!” The crowd cheers, and he is the wounded star of the evening. If Jack wins, he helps the investigators up and the crowd is cheering his name.

LOCAL KNOWLEDGE

Locals know that East Harlem is primarily considered Italian Harlem, and they act accordingly. Of late, Italian Harlem has daily gun battles (20% chance for every hour the investigators spend in the area), some of which have spilled out into other areas of Harlem. There is a lower police presence in this area, almost like they are actively avoiding getting involved.

NEW SPELL: CREATE GOLEM

Cost: 40 Magic Points; 1D4 POW; 1D6 SAN
Casting Time: Six Hours

The ritual requires constant chanting for six hours while the caster molds the clay/sand/substance into a vaguely humanoid shape. Once the construct has been shaped, a silver Shem (coin with any one of the Names of God on it) must be placed into its mouth; when placing this coin, the caster and any aides must expend 40 Magic Points, or the ritual fails and destroys the materials used.

He disappears into the crowd telling stories of some of his greatest fights and how this was a cakewalk, but those kids have heart.

Either way, at the end of the night, the former champ gives the investigators their cut, minus any for damages to the building. He hands the group a wad of \$20s equaling \$500. Jack likes the investigators if they did him a favor, and takes them downstairs. He introduces them to Alice Smith, and offers her medical skills if they get in a jam in the future. She treats any injuries anyone has from the fight; if needed, she calls on her mystic skills. Alicia has a strong understanding of various cults, and could offer some insights if the investigators need assistance.

ALICIA SMITH — CONJURE WOMAN

Jack has a conjure woman, a mix of medical doctor and spiritual healer, working at the club in case of any accidents that should not draw any attention from the authorities, or to stitch up any of his employees.

GABRIEL'S LIGHT

Scene Type: Core

Lead-In: Songs of the Departed

Lead-Outs: A Party Every Night, Unraveling the Past, Forbidden Knowledge

Hawthorn Rowhouses, at 149th Street and Macomb Place, has seen better days—it is packed beyond capacity, and the tenants sleep in shifts, splitting the overpriced cost of the rooms. The ten-story building is home to Carl Jenkins, who has not left it in five days; his money has run out, and the other two people sharing the single room have had to move to another floor due to his disturbing behavior.

The investigators can ask anyone in the building about Carl, and they point upstairs toward the eighth floor. Once they reach Carl's small apartment room, the door is locked and he does not come to the door, but the other tenants assure them he is home. Any **Locksmith** [**LOCKSMITH**] attempt successfully opens the cheap lock, and any attempt to break down the door automatically succeeds but draws the ire of every tenant on the eighth floor. If the investigators are all white, it leads to a riot and them being tossed out into the street; each investigator would take 1D4 [**1 HEALTH**] points of damage. A Hard **Fast Talk** roll [**1 POINT REASSURANCE SPEND**] temporarily eases the tenants. While the investigators can stay to question Mouse, a couple of other tenants are always a few feet behind them. If the investigators try anything other than asking questions, they act.

Once inside, they see the young man sitting on the bed, unshaven and unmoving, covered in his own filth. A successful **Psychology** roll [**MEDICINE**] reveals that he is nearly catatonic. A successful **Psychoanalysis** or a Hard **Psychology** [**DIFFICULTY 6 PSYCHOANALYSIS**] roll comforts Carl enough to talk to the investigators for a while, after which he withdraws into himself and holds his trumpet for comfort, not saying anything. A successful **Art (Music)** roll [**ART (MUSIC), 1 POINT REASSURANCE SPEND, OR DIFFICULTY 5 HYPNOSIS**] snaps him out of his stupor for a short while; as his life has been dedicated to music, it steels him against the horror long enough to answer the investigators' questions.

CARL JENKINS

Carl worked with the band at the Club Deluxe [**CORE CLUE: A PARTY EVERY NIGHT**] since it opened, and is one of the best trumpet players in New York. He snuck downstairs one night to have a little fling with Lea, one of the chorus girls. Everyone in the club knows about Carl and Lea, but turns a blind eye to the duo. If anyone in the club is asked about Lea, they note that she has not come to work in days. Maybe she and Carl have finally run off together.

WHAT CARL KNOWS

Carl and Lea had finished playing sweet music together in a closet in the basement, and had moved toward the main room to go back upstairs, when they saw it. The duo watched four figures in long robes flaying a young woman while chanting loudly, but the words were being drowned out by the band playing upstairs. Two enormous azure-skinned humanoid things each held another victim, and Willy stood watching—Willy who could not even watch the cook prepare fresh steak. A gray-haired man said Willy’s “time would come in the park” [**CORE CLUE: UNRAVELING THE PAST**] and then “the college” [**LEVERAGE CLUE: FORBIDDEN KNOWLEDGE**].

As if alive, the blood from the victims appeared to spiral out of their bodies and shatter a small circular space in the basement floor. The ritual seemed to last forever, and then Carl heard Lea scream from what they saw before she tried to flee. The azure thing struck her once with its massive fist, and her body seemed to snap like a twig. Mouse went catatonic, and that is likely the only thing that saved him. His senses returned sometime later, and he fled to his apartment—but the echoes of Lea’s screams, and the vivid images of the flaying, never left his now-shattered mind.

EAST HARLEM

FAITH AND FURY

Scene Type: Core

Lead-In: A Party Every Night

Lead-Outs: Leads in the Strangest Places, Bootlegging It, Forbidden Knowledge

Rabbi Silverstein leads the congregation at the Chabad Synagogue, 118th Street and Manhattan Avenue. He has lived in Harlem since 1897, and is proud to be one of the longest-living members of the community. While he was not excited about the Great Migration, he has known a number of Ethiopian Jews, and welcomed a chance to discuss religion with the African-American ministers. That opinion changed three weeks ago when his Cantor and two members went missing in North Harlem, or Black Harlem, as a number of locals call it. Since then, a dozen people have been cut down in gun battles on the street. He has prayed for guidance, and remembers ancient stories of a protector of the Jewish people. He consulted the Talmud and has learned how to create a Golem.

Rabbi Silverstein has spent the last two weeks attempting to create a Golem to protect his people, but has failed each time. He requested three devotees steal him rich clay from Mongoose Construction Company. The aged scholar is sure it is the material he needs to use, and that it should work.

BETA ISRAEL (ETHIOPIAN JEWS)

Ethiopian Jews lived for centuries in the area that was the Kingdom of Aksum, dating back to the 10th century B.C. Queen Sheba of Ethiopia and King Solomon of Israel conceived a son, Menelik I, during her visit to meet the King. Queen Sheba returned to Ethiopia and gave birth to Prince Menelik, who in adulthood would steal the Ark of the Covenant from his father and return to Ethiopia with the holiest of objects. Menelik I eventually became Emperor of Ethiopia, and made Judaism the official religion of the Empire. It remained so until King Ezana of Axum converted to Christianity in 327 A.D. and changed the official religion of the empire. Pockets of people claiming descent from Menelik still remained.

During a 50-year span not long ago, a number of key events occurred. A Beta Israel, Daniel Ben Hamdya, traveled to Jerusalem in 1855 for a conference with a number of rabbis. A decade later, Azriel Hildesheimer, the Rabbi of Eisenstadt, Germany, pleaded with the Jewish press for the Ethiopian Jews to be spiritually rescued.

The first recorded European Jew to travel to the Beta Israel, Professor Joseph Halevy, became their staunch advocate going forward. In 1904 one of Halevy’s students, Jacques Faitovitch, dedicated his life to reconnect the community. He created the first “pro-Beta Israel” committees in the United States, Britain, and Palestine (under the control of the Ottoman Empire) and took the first Ethiopian Jewish students to Europe and Israel to increase their Jewish education. By 1908, rabbis from 44 countries proclaimed Ethiopian Jews to be authentic Jews.

It wasn’t until the early 1980s, however, that the Israeli government and religious leaders recognized the Beta Israel as Jews.

OPTIONAL ACTION SCENE

During his sermons, Rabbi Silverstein has been very vocal about his concern over the recent increase in gun violence, and has asked his congregants to push the police to act. A number of the police are on the take, and may let Arturo know about the vocal rabbi.

If so, Arturo sends a few thugs to rough up the old man; they break his arm and may threaten to hurt some people. The players may intervene, or the Golem may respond to the attack on Rabbi Silverstein and come charging into the fray.

The three men (Ian, Josh, and Richard) stole a truck full of the rich clay and witnessed the Rabbi bring the clay to life in the form of a silent guardian for their community. Ian's family was killed two days ago during a heated gun battle between law enforcement and the Italian mafia. He dropped off the stolen construction company truck in front of the Tanner Warehouse, knowing it was used for bootlegging. He hoped it would force the police to act. Unbeknownst to Ian, Danny "Irish" Conner spotted him leaving on his way home. Rabbi Silverstein is nervous about the Golem and keeps it locked in the basement of the synagogue, while concerned about all the loss of innocent life in the community. An inability to trust the ritual's success, as well as memories of the tale of a Golem causing more harm than good, have stayed his hand in using the creature. He does not know about the recent string of disappearances and grisly murders. The police were very vague about the state of the bodies they had recovered. If the rabbi finds out about them, he sends the Golem out every night. If the investigators seem like competent and intelligent people, Rabbi Silverstein is friendly and offers to help them; he may even use the Golem to protect them. If not, he is curt and asks them to leave, as he has sick people to visit.

If questioned about the robbery of a truck from Mongoose Construction Company [**ALTERNATE CLUE: LEADS IN THE STRANGEST PLACES**], a **Psychology** roll [**ASSESS HONESTY**] reveals he is hiding something. If pressed, a successful **Charm**, Hard **Credit Rating**, or **Persuade** roll [**CREDIT RATING 4+, INSPIRATION, OR ORAL HISTORY**] gets the rabbi to tell the investigators that three of his congregants did something foolish, and asks for the investigators to please let it go. He provides them the location of the three men if another successful roll is made. His only request is to not judge them, and of course, please don't tell anyone.

CAR THIEVES

Investigators have the chance to spot a red Model A between 10 a.m.–2 p.m. with a Hard **Spot Hidden** skill check [**1 POINT EVIDENCE COLLECTION SPEND**] on any day except Saturday (Shabbat). The words "Greenberg's Groceries" are painted on both sides of the vehicle in bright green paint. Richard uses it to deliver groceries for his father, who owns Greenberg's Groceries (see Harlem Herself).

IAN SILVER

Ian has been hiding since dropping off the truck. He noticed that a number of Italian goon-looking types have been visiting City College recently [**LEVERAGE CLUE: FORBIDDEN KNOWLEDGE**]. Yesterday, Ian heard that someone saw them at the Physics building. He hopes they don't do anything to mess up Albert Einstein's visit on April 2 (Players Handout 6). He may try to sneak onto campus anyway.

JOSHUA WOLFOWITZ

Joshua knows nothing other than Ian's address.

RICHARD GREENBERG

Greenberg's Groceries is a large store located at 146th Street and Macomb Place, and the family lives above the store. An older Jewish couple, Shmuel and Celia, own the store and are very questioning of any non-Jewish shoppers. The couple refuse to help any African Americans who fail a **Credit Rating** check [**CREDIT RATING 2+**], and may call the police if they don't leave. Richard is usually upstairs reading, if not working downstairs. If questioned, he knows nothing other than Ian's address and that it was his plan.

LEADS IN THE STRANGEST PLACES

Scene Type: Alternate Introduction

Lead-In: Bootlegging It

Lead-Outs: Songs of the Departed, Faith and Fury

Mongoose Construction is a mid-sized construction company that is in a downward spiral at the moment. With the construction boom in Harlem fluctuating, the company located at 110th Street and Macomb Place has laid off a number of workers. This has created an uneasy feeling and aggression toward anyone who appears to be well-off, with a **Credit Rating** of 50 or higher [**CREDIT RATING 2+ OR ORAL HISTORY**]. If questioned about Flip Wilmore, one person admits to the journalist asking questions, but no one talked—and he mentioned something about Harlem Hospital and Wright...Doctor...Wright? [**CORE CLUE: SONGS OF THE DEPARTED**]

No one knows anything about the robbery, other than that a truck was stolen and returned about a week later. With a **Charm**, **Fast Talk** or Hard **Persuade** roll [**BARGAIN, FLATTERY, OR LAW**], they let the investigators see the truck. A Hard **Spot Hidden** roll [**EVIDENCE COLLECTION**] uncovers a bulletin for the Chabad Synagogue food drive stuck between the seats [**CORE CLUE: FAITH AND FURY**]. A Geology or Hard **Spot Hidden** roll [**GEOLOGY** or

EVIDENCE COLLECTION] and inspection of the back of the truck notes clumps of red clay.

BOOTLEGGING IT

Scene Type: Alternate Introduction, Core

Lead-In: A Party Every Night, Songs of the Departed

Lead-Outs: Faith and Fury, Forbidden Knowledge, Leads in the Strangest Places

This massive, grayish warehouse at 122nd Street and Pleasant Avenue is located next to the docks. There is always a line of trucks coming and going from the building, with a dozen workers on the property at all times. Most of the workers won't talk to anyone, but Danny "Irish" Conner can be convinced to talk for a dollar or a swig of gin after hours and away from the others. If the investigators make a nuisance of themselves, they are threatened and then attacked if they don't leave with the designated guards. A sign hangs over the warehouse: "No Coloreds."

DANNY "IRISH" CONNER

"Irish," as everyone calls him, since he is the only Irishman working at the warehouse, was hired a year ago. He is trying to earn enough money to have his family sent over from Ireland. He doesn't want to lose his job, but has been reading the newspapers, and doesn't want to feel responsible for what is happening. He has read about the all of the gang violence and knows the warehouse is run by them.

WHAT IRISH KNOWS

A guy speaking Yiddish [**CORE CLUE: FAITH AND FURY**], like his roommate, dumped a construction truck here a few nights back. Irish saw it happen, but before he could say anything, the guy jumped into a battered Model A with two other men. The police came by, and the foreman spoke to them and handed them an envelope of some kind. Then Mongoose Construction Company came and got the truck a day later. He can describe Ian in great detail.

Irish correctly describes Ian as 5 feet, 5 inches and about 155 pounds, with sandy brown hair, black brick-like glasses, and a college jacket. It has some sort of large rat on it. Make a successful **Natural World** or **Hard Education** skill check [**OUTDOORSMAN**] to know that it is a beaver, and a successful **Intelligence** roll [**ART HISTORY, ORAL HISTORY, OR 1 POINT OUTDOORSMAN SPEND**] deduces that is the mascot of College of the City of New York [**CORE CLUE: FORBIDDEN KNOWLEDGE**].

INTO THE FIRE

Scene Type: Alternate

Lead-In: A Party Every Night, Unraveling the Past

Lead-Outs: Unraveling the Past, Forbidden Knowledge, The Stars Are Right

The Hotel Reale is a glamorous fifteen-story building at 116th Street and Park Avenue hosts a casino on the ground floor. The hotel prides itself on saying "Every room is a suite made for Italian royalty."

Arturo strived to keep the cult and the gang separate. The gang is used for muscle, and to scout out locations that the cult thinks have the Wappinger wards.

While fruitful, this management style has been very costly, as the gang was forced to explore rival gang territories; multiple heated gun battles have followed. This violence has led to increased press coverage and police presence, and is costing thousands of dollars daily. The gang is very upset about the loss of money, lives, and respect from the community. They know it is only a matter of time before all-out war.

Slightly fearful for his life due to the unrest, Arturo is constantly surrounded by his twin bodyguards and is rarely, if ever, at the penthouse. He has taken to staying outside of Harlem until he is needed. The twin bodyguards are actually Zarrs, wearing unusual azure necklaces around their necks. The necklaces generate an illusion, making them appear as Italian twin brothers. Neither speaks, as the necklaces do not mask their voices. Arturo has been spying on the other families, and plotting—he knows that he only needs to last until Zathog is here. Then Arturo will rule all of New York, while the Great Old One rules the world.

KNOCKAROUND GUYS

If investigators start asking questions around the hotel, or make themselves known, it is possible (have the investigator with the lowest **Luck** roll [**CREDIT RATING**]) that a disgruntled goon tracks them down. The goon talks to them with a successful **Charm** or **Fast Talk** roll [**DIFFICULTY 4 SENSE TROUBLE AVOIDS HIM OR 1 POINT STREETWISE SPEND** gets him to back off]. He does not know much other than that a power struggle is going on, it used to be better under Orsino, and Dominic should step up. While he won't suggest it, for \$10 he would arrange a meeting with Dominic.

DOMINIC VESPUCCI, POWER PLAYER

Dominic's multiple attempts to see Orsino have all failed, and the doctors won't let him near the man. He tried to have Arturo's bodyguard killed, but the six men he sent never came back. He is biding his time, but helps the investigators if someone can get him access to Orsino or help to kill Arturo.

WHAT DOMINIC KNOWS

Orsino is in the penthouse of the Hotel Reale. The two goons guarding Arturo, and the medical staff looking after Orsino, are new. Dominic has a key to the penthouse, but has not been able to get close enough to use it. He needs assistance, but is not sure who he can trust. The room is always guarded, and no one is allowed access. The two guards outside the door have kept everyone away except for Dominic, who has met a doctor who forced him to leave before seeing inside the room. The man smelled of burnt motor oil or something similar.

A number of the key players in the gang still seem to obey Dominic without hesitation. Dominic also knows the name of the two police officers who were paid off at the warehouse, and can assure the investigators they don't know anything, other than that they found a receipt for a Jewish grocery store. A Hard **Charm** or **Fast Talk** roll [1 POINT SPEND OR **INSPIRATION**] yields the two police officers' names (Mike Donald and Chard Arder) and a warning against getting involved with them. Lastly, Dominic overheard one of the penthouse guards talking about Mount Morris Park and College of the City of New York [**ALTERNATE CLUE: FORBIDDEN KNOWLEDGE**]. If the investigators can persuade him that they want to help Orsino, Dominic would make a powerful and deadly ally. He readily provides them with handguns, if the investigators seem eager to directly confront the guards.

If asked about Flip Wilmore, he confirms the journalist was here, and was turned over to Arturo.

PENTHOUSE OF HOTEL REALE

A pair of exquisite and strong dark oak doors cloaks the interior of the penthouse in privacy, as two men in excellent black suits with obvious gun-shaped bulges guard the entrance. The room is always guarded, and no one is allowed access. Arturo's four cultists take six-hour shifts directing the silent, ever-vigilant twin nurses, and intercept anyone trying to see Orsino. A flyer for the College of the City of New York, advertising Albert Einstein's visit, is on the floor (Player Handout 6) and can be located with a **Spot Hidden** roll

[**EVIDENCE COLLECTION**]. The Physics building is circled on the campus map [**CORE CLUE: THE STARS ARE RIGHT**].

If the investigators can get past the duo at the door, they are greeted by the site of a once-gorgeous hotel room that has fallen into squalor. The luxurious multi-room penthouse has the heavy odor of oil and burning wires, which can be smelled faintly over the scent of the burning lavender candles that line the apartment. The plush silk purple curtains are all drawn closed, as floodlights illuminate the room in a pulsating, mind-numbing azure color. All of the furniture has been moved, and only a single couch remains; it appears to be a makeshift bed with a naked man lying on top of it.

Arturo, having heard that Dominic almost forced his way into the room, knew that the cultists masquerading as medical staff would not be enough to stop his former right-hand man. Arturo had his twin bodyguards use the last of their technical equipment to create protection for the man who would become Zathog's vessel. The Zarr crafted a pair of guardians who appear to be nurses.

The nurses never leave the room.

MASTER BEDROOM

SCOTT "FLIP" WILMORE

Flip is tied up in a corner of the room, and is in a catatonic state from the horrors he has seen during the past few days. A Hard **Psychology** or **Psychoanalysis** [**DIFFICULTY 5 PSYCHOANALYSIS**] roll notes he requires months of therapy, and even then, he may never recover.

Arturo's gang scooped up the nosy reporter when he was asking questions around the hotel. As he was alone, it was easy to do. Arturo has decided that Flip is the sacrifice for the final ritual, a bonus tribute to his dark lord.

ORSINO GIOVANNI

Orsino is currently stripped naked, with arcane symbols carved all over his body. A **Cthulhu Mythos** roll [**CTHULHU MYTHOS**] recognizes the symbols as part of a transference ritual that must be cast within the next week, and the victim can't be awakened until after it is complete. A cascade of candles burns constantly in the room, filling it with the scent of lavender. The man's skin is dry to the touch; the disease cast on him by his uncle has been cured, and the freshly carved symbols are caked with a purple ointment. He lays as still as death. A successful **First Aid** or **Medicine** roll [**MEDICINE**] reveals that he is in a deep coma, but there is no known way to wake him.

PLOT TWIST

If the investigators can rescue Orsino before the ritual, it changes Arturo's plans. He abandons all of that pretense to find his missing nephew before the ritual date. He tells the cult that a rival gang of Jews or blacks have stolen Orsino as a power play, and the streets burn until Arturo has him back. He uses his police contacts, destroying relationships if needed. He has no idea what happens if he does not perform the ritual.

The investigators have to hide Orsino for an unknown amount of time, unless they have found the book from College of the City of New York that outlines the lunar cycle needed to free the avatar. They will not be safe in Harlem, New York, or anywhere within 200 miles.

CENTRAL HARLEM

UNRAVELING THE PAST

Scene Type: Core

Lead-In: Into the Fire, Gabriel's Light

Lead-Outs: The Stars Are Right, Into the Fire

A number of rowhouses rise near the park. The lush green park stands out as a reminder of a time before industrialization. The second Wappinger ward is located in Mount Morris Park, 123rd Street and Madison Avenue.

Arturo has spent the last two months hunting for each site before the moon aligns. His cultists located the second site for the ward on the morning of March 30. With little time left, Arturo has arranged for a large tent to be placed around the ward, and has posted signs to indicate it is a new construction site for Taylor and Sons Construction.

If the investigators call on the operator or use the phonebook, they learn that no such company exists and no permits have been obtained. With a **Bureaucracy** or **Credit Rating** roll [**BUREAUCRACY, CREDIT RATING 3+, OR 1 POINT REASSURANCE SPEND**], a young receptionist at the city planner's office confirms that Taylor and Sons does not have a permit for any construction.

Arturo has four goons, who are unaware of what will transpire tonight, posted at each cardinal entrance into the park to frighten off unwanted visitors. All they know is that the boss is having a "party" and wants to be left alone with his guests for a few hours.

TENT IN CENTER OF PARK

The entire tent is lined with lavender candles whose flames billow slightly when the tarp is raised. A six-foot area of dirt has been brushed aside to reveal the Wappinger ward, which exudes a slight greenish glow whenever Arturo, the Zarr, or cultists are near. They must destroy the Wappinger ward.

The crafting ritual for Zathog's symbol requires thirty minutes, and must be started at midnight. The three African-American victims, one of which is Willy Smith from Club Deluxe, are all bound, gagged, and drugged. Arturo uses the blood of a freed people who battled for their freedom to shatter the second ward, and then recrafts the symbol of the resurrection of Zathog's avatar. The crafted symbol siphons 1D3 **POW** [**1 STABILITY**] from everyone

LOCAL KNOWLEDGE

Locals know that Central Harlem is a contested area with heavy police presence. Businesses are owned by various ethnicities, and a number of people have died in recent mob-on-mob violence. For each hour the investigators spend here, they have a 30% chance to encounter rival gangs battling each other, the police, or both. The battles should be small-scaled, three to ten people in different cars. The police actively stop and question any strange behavior they see.

MOUNT MORRIS PARK

Before European invaders came, this land was used by the indigenous people as a strategic lookout and military station. On December 1, 1840, Mount Morris Square was officially opened to the public. Music has been a part of the park's history since its beginning. For more than two decades, 1872-1893, the Parks Department promoted performances there; by 1900, a refreshment booth opened at the 120th Street entrance.

The 20-acre park will eventually become Marcus Garvey Park.

in a three-block area every twelve hours, storing the energy until the time of the freeing ritual in two days. The symbol is in the open and pulses slightly, unnerving anyone who sees it (**SAN LOSS** 0/1) [1 **STABILITY**]. A **Cthulhu Mythos** roll [CTHULHU Mythos] identifies it as a mystical power source useful for casting spells.

The two Zarr bodyguards, masked as twins, stand watch as four cultists chant, peel away the flesh of the victims, and then hack the bodies apart while Arturo battles the power of the ward. Only one chanter needs to chant continuously as each victim dies; their blood flows out and into a pool that at the end of the ceremony destroys the ancient Indian ward.

It is possible for the investigators to disrupt the destruction of the second ward, if they are quick on their toes. There are a few ways to disrupt the ceremony:

- Stop all of the chanting for more than one round.
- Discover and use the Wappinger scroll from the College of the City of New York. The scroll enables the caster to engage in a **POW** vs. **POW** [**DIFFICULTY 7 STABILITY TEST**] battle during the ritual. Or it costs 1D6 **Magic Points** [2 **STABILITY**] to shield the ward from sunset to sunrise, and additional 1D6 **Magic** [1 **STABILITY**] is needed to shield it from sunrise to sunset. Each casting must be done moments before sunrise or sunset.
- The more grisly alternative is to kill the victims before they can be sacrificed. This costs 1D8 **SAN** [3 **STABILITY POINTS**, IF **STABILITY 6 TEST FAILED**].

If successfully thwarted, this won't stop Arturo from being able to summon the avatar, though it diminishes Zathog's power by a third (see stats at end of the adventure) and limits Arturo's access to Magic Points. If hurt, Arturo casts Mists of Releh and flees to a waiting getaway car.

If one of the cultists is killed and searched, the investigators discover the wallet of Flip Wilmore containing a folded-up flyer for Einstein's talk (Player Handout 6), with a date and time scrawled on it [**CORE CLUE: THE STARS ARE RIGHT**] and a matchbook (Player Handout 5) to the Reale Hotel [**ALTERNATE CLUE: INTO THE FIRE**].

PAPER-CHASING HORRORS

Scene Type: Alternate

Lead-In: Songs of the Departed

Lead-Outs: Any

The New York Amsterdam News, one of two weekly African-American newspapers in Harlem, resides in a small, two-story stone building that is in excellent condition. The paper publishes every Wednesday, and there is a never a dull moment there. Its few employees are constantly hunting for stories, editing stories, or getting ready to print. If the investigators make a **Hard Charm**, **Fast Talk**, or **Persuade** roll [1 **POINT FLATTERY SPEND** or **REASSURANCE**], Flora Tarver, a terse woman in her late 60s, offers them limited assistance. If the investigators have met or befriended Zora Neale Hurston a few months ago, during Harlem Hellfighters, Flora actively assists them granting a bonus die on all **Library Use** rolls [**GAIN A CONTACT**]. Flora is friendly to any published journalist or writer investigators.

Flora can provide them access to the newspaper's morgue for two cents an hour, and will answer a few questions about the neighborhood and the best places to eat in a three-block radius. The newspaper morgue keeps papers going back three years, and then transfers them to a warehouse. With each a successful **Library Use** roll [**LIBRARY USE**], and each roll requiring four hours, one of the following articles can be located:

CLUES

- See Player Handout 3
- See Player Handout 4
- See Player Handout 7

FORBIDDEN KNOWLEDGE

Scene Type: Core

Lead-In: Gabriel's Light, Faith and Fury, Into the Fire

Lead-Outs: The Stars Are Right

The College of the City of New York, at 130th Street and Convent Avenue, is a Collegiate Gothic-style 35-acre campus that sits on a hill overlooking Harlem. This prestigious university moved to its current location in 1907; in 1929, some eight years after the events of this scenario, it changed its name to City College of New York. Within a few years, the Jewish community of Harlem fully embraced the college, its members composing roughly 80 to 90 percent of the student body.

Two major points of interest for the investigators are at the College of the City of New York. The first, which can

be deduced with a successful **Education** roll [**HISTORY**], is that the all-male school has the closest and most comprehensive library in Harlem. Secondly, the Physics building is the location of the final ritual that Arturo must perform at the height of the moon on the night of April 1. The essence of Zathog's avatar rests under the state-of-the-art Physics building, dreaming.

The university is abuzz with gossip and signs about the mayor's guest, Albert Einstein, who is to give his first lecture in America on April 2. The city has dedicated twelve policemen, working in two shifts, to patrol the campus in addition to the normal campus security; at all times from March 30 until April 3, six police officers walk the campus in patrols of two. The campus employees' eight campus security guards work in two-man shifts, for eight hours each.

Any sound of battle draws the attention of the police, and if the investigators stay on the scene for any period of time, they need to explain during downtime what has transpired. It is unlikely that the police chief, in the pocket of the Giovannis, is happy that his meal ticket has been killed. The mayor would also likely not be pleased that this violent display happened hours before Albert Einstein was supposed to arrive. This could lead to a number of very lengthy jail sentences.

LIBRARY

This Gothic two-story library is on the upper floors of the cathedral, and has an exquisite spiral staircase leading up to the second floor which contains most of their rare books in a small wing. The library is for students, alumni, and staff. The library is staffed by one librarian, Napoleon Doyle, and two student workers. Shamus "Napoleon" Doyle is a well-traveled, middle-aged Irishman who excels at history. His knowledge of Napoleon impressed the dean and earned him his current job.

If investigators can make a **Charm**, **Hard Persuade**, or **History** roll [**BUREAUCRACY, FLATTERY, OR REASSURANCE**], Napoleon allows them access to the stacks. On an Extreme success [**1 POINT FLATTERY SPEND**], Napoleon takes a shine to the investigators; he offers them one of his aides to assist, reducing the time of each **Library Use** roll to two hours instead of four [**2 FREE SKILL SPENDS TO USE IN THE LIBRARY**]. The library contains the following clues for investigators:

The Lost History of the Wappinger of the Lenape. This book takes three hours to read, and has a vague story of a sky demon who was bound into the earth with mystical wards. The two most significant entries in the book describe the stage of the moon that must be present to free the sky demon, and a description of where it was bound. A successful **Science (Astronomy)** skill check [**ASTRONOMY**] confirms that the time is now, and a Hard success [**1 POINT ASTRONOMY SPEND**] knows that the alignment occurs annually. A **Natural World**, **Hard History**, or **Hard Occult** skill check [**GEOLOGY, 1 POINT HISTORY OR OCCULT SPEND**] identifies the college as the location mentioned in the book [**CORE CLUE: THE STARS ARE RIGHT**]. Increase **History** and **Occult** skills by 2% [**GAIN 1 FREE SPEND FOR HISTORY AND OCCULT**].

An Extreme **Library Use** success [**1 POINT LIBRARY USE SPEND**] uncovers a Wappinger scroll crafted in deer hide. A successful **Language (Algonquian)** roll [**LANGUAGE**] lets the investigators read that it is a ritual to strengthen the Wappinger ward against evil. The ritual must be chanted at every sunset and sunrise; while it does not cost sanity, it does require 1D6 **Magic Points** [**3 STABILITY**] to perform. If no investigators speak the language, a **Hard Persuade** [**1 POINT FLATTERY OR INSPIRATION SPEND**] convinces Napoleon to help. He remembers a student, Nir, who has studied the language and culture, and can translate the scrolls in six hours' time.

PHYSICS LAB

The main lab of the Physics Department is a massive room filled from side to side with stone-topped tables for students with various chemicals, Bunsen burners, and lab kits. A number of electrical wires run the length of the room to supply additional energy to the lab. A successful **Science (Chemistry)** roll [**CHEMISTRY**] notes that many of the chemicals can easily be mixed together into a potent makeshift chemical "bomb" with a one-foot radius. It would simply require half an action to mix them. The "chemical bombs" would do 3d6 points of damage to a target. A successful **Electrical Repair**, **Mechanical Repair**, or **Science (Physics)** roll [**1 POINT PHYSICS SPEND, DIFFICULTY 4 ELECTRICAL OR MECHANICAL REPAIR**] hints that the power cables could be used as live-wire weapons for 2D6+1 points of damage, if gloves (**Luck** roll) [**DIFFICULTY 3 PREPAREDNESS**] are worn and the wires are handled properly. Otherwise the user suffers 1D4 hit points [**1 HEALTH**] per round.

THE STARS ARE RISING

Scene Type: Conclusion

Lead-In: Forbidden Knowledge, Unraveling the Past, Into the Fire

Lead-Outs: Closing Time

Arturo knows that the resurrection ritual must begin promptly at midnight and last for one hour. With the heavy police presence on campus, he has left all of his goons behind, and is only using those loyal to Zathog. A locked classroom near the Physics Lab contains the essence of power he needs to transfer into his nephew.

The four cultists prepare Orsino by strapping him to one of the stone-top lab tables, ritualistically placing hundreds of tiny pins a half-inch deep into every area of exposed skin on the young man. The pins vibrate from side to side for no apparent reason (**SAN LOSS 0/1**) [**4/1 STABILITY**].

The two Zarr guards and nurse robots appear in their true forms to greet their master. The Zarr guards stand seven feet tall in thick azure armor, and each is armed with a metallic backpack-mounted weapon. The azure metallic skin of the two six-foot-tall nurse robots seems to reflect the candlelight. They are ready to strike any intruders; the quartet has been ordered to kill anyone who enters the room. Flip Wilmore rests next to the altar, still catatonic and awaiting his fate.

During the ritual, the four cultists each stand at the cardinal points of Orsino, who is strapped to a four-foot-high table above the essence. All the cultists chant in unison as they slowly carve the symbol of Zathog into their arms, the blood flowing into a pool below the table. As each minute passes, crimson tentacles weave their way upward from the earth, filling every one of Orsino's orifices, and then begin to pulse an unholy ichor into him (**SAN LOSS 1/1D6**) [**1 SANITY**].

Arturo stands close to the group, focusing the power from the other two Zathog symbols around the city. Zathog burned the rhythm of the shamanistic dance into his mind, and he must do each movement backwards, peeling away protection. The ritual costs 20 **Magic Points** [**20 STABILITY**] to perform and can come from anyone involved in the ceremony or the "holy" sites that have been prepared. At any time, Arturo is able to focus his attention on any investigator every three rounds, and then continue performing the ceremony. He only uses the power from the symbols for the ritual, but will use all of his personal **Magic Points**.

If successful, Orsino's body bolts upright, ripping itself free of the bonds, and his eyes glow a deep azure for a few minutes as hundreds of blood tentacles flail around him, and then slowly recede into his body; he has become the avatar (**SAN LOSS 1/1D8**) [**3 SANITY**]. Zathog's avatar turns its full attention to the captured Wilmore. The journalist screams in pain as he catches fire, and the room begins to reek of burning flesh; the journalist is reduced to a pile of azure dust (**SAN LOSS 2/1D6**) [**1 SANITY**]. The avatar then directs its full attention to any investigator foolish enough to remain in the room. Once it finishes killing any investigators in the room, it returns to the penthouse with all of the knowledge its victims possessed, and prepares to reacquire all of its lost knowledge and eventually conquer Harlem with Arturo at his side. First Harlem, then New York, the United States, and the Earth. The process takes time, resources, and manpower—until then, Harlem will have a new kingpin.



CLOSING TIME

Scene Type: Denouement

Lead-In: The Stars Are Right

Lead-Outs: N/A

If the investigators thwart Arturo's plan to awaken the avatar of Zathog, they have saved Harlem, New York, and the world from becoming the plaything of the Great Old One. His vengeance has only been delayed as the ancient Wappinger wards have been destroyed, and his symbol has been placed at two points of power.

REWARDS

For stopping the awakening of Zathog's avatar, every investigator receives 1D8 **SAN** [2 **BUILD POINTS**]. If Arturo Giovanni is sent to prison, each investigator earns 1D4 **SAN** and a \$50 reward [1 **CREDIT RATING**]. If Arturo is killed, each investigator gains 1 **SAN**.

If the investigators fail to stop Arturo, or if he escapes, they lose 1D4 **SAN** [1 **STABILITY**] per week as multiple newspapers describe a rash of slayings similar to the awakening rituals—or they find piles of charred

remains, similar to those left behind by the touch of Zathog, until stopped.

Doctor Locke will uphold his promise if the investigators have managed to curb the violence or have provided the police with enough information to do so, and sends the investigators a letter of introduction to Alelia Walker. The patron of the arts is welcoming, and she invites the investigators to a number of functions. Increase investigators' **Renaissance** by 5% [1 **POINT RENAISSANCE**] and list her as a contact.

If the investigators met with Jack, Samuel, Rabbi Silverstein, or Dominic or if they saved Orsino, they may have earned a few favors or friends. Orsino, if saved, remembers them and considers them trusted allies to call on in the future, or lends aid if requested and if he can profit from it. At the same time, if they have killed anyone or caused a number of deaths (directly or indirectly), Rabbi Silverstein and Samuel Wright make their lives as difficult as possible.

JACK JOHNSON

Athletics 6, Credit Rating 4,
Intimidate 2, Oral History 3,
Reassurance 3, Scuffling 13,
Sense Trouble 5

Stability 6, Sanity 5, Health 10

ALERTNESS: +1

WEAPON: -1 (Fist)

ALICIA SMITH

Aura Reading 2, Cthulhu Mythos 3,
Medicine 4, Language 3, Occult 5,
Oral History 3

Stability 5, Sanity 3, Health 6

WEAPON: -2 (Fist)

SPELLS: See spell list on right

AURA READING

To those with the sight to see, every living organism is surrounded by a nimbus of energy. By studying the color and movement of this energy, you gain insight into people and animals. When you read a person's aura, you can:

Examine the subject's general emotional state, determining which of the following adjectives best fits his current condition: joyful, depressed, angry, amused, confused, frightened, or relaxed (costs 1 **STABILITY** per attempt).

Tell whether the subject is healthy, or determine if the subject is under the influence of a spirit or other supernatural being (costs 2 **STABILITY** per attempt).

APPENDIX A:

CHARACTERS

JOHN ARTHUR "JACK" JOHNSON

AGE 43, CLUB OWNER

(RETIRED HEAVYWEIGHT BOXING CHAMPION)

John Johnson is a man who loves life and the privilege that his fame has granted him. He has not forgotten where he came from, and is not afraid to get his hands dirty to protect what is his.

STR 85 **CON** 70 **SIZ** 80 **DEX** 80 **INT** 65
APP 60 **POW** 55 **EDU** 50 **SAN** 55 **HP** 16
DB + 1D6 **Build** 2 **Move** 7 **MP** 11

Brawl: 93% (47/19), damage 1D3 + 1D6, attacks per round 2

Dodge: 83% (42/17)

Armor: None

Skills: Charm 75%, Credit Rating 75%, Fast Talk 58%, Intimidate 47%, Language (Own - English) 50%, Persuade 64%, Psychology 39%, Sleight of Hand 67%, Spot Hidden 57%

Equipment: Massive wad of cash, which he spends generously

BACKSTORY

- **Description:** A large, muscular man who is always dressed in an exceptional black suit
- **Trait:** Powerful

ALICIA SMITH

AGE 24, CONJURE WOMAN

Alicia knows that the Mythos exists, and that it will one day end all human life. She must try to learn how to harness that power, and any chance to understand it must be explored.

STR 40 **CON** 55 **SIZ** 55 **DEX** 65 **INT** 70
APP 65 **POW** 75 **EDU** 70 **SAN** 67 **HP** 11
DB 0 **Build** 0 **Move** 8 **MP** 15

.22 Automatic: 47% (23/8), damage 1D6, attacks per round 1 (3)

Dodge: 52% (26/10)

Armor: 10 points Flesh Ward

Skills: Cthulhu Mythos 18%, Credit Rating 24%, First Aid 45%, Language (Own - English) 70%, Language (Creole) 57%, Medicine 67%, History 47%, Library Use 59%, Natural World 43%, Occult 65%, Psychoanalysis 67%

Equipment: Doctor's Kit and two grimoires (Keeper's Choice)

Spells: Create Zombie, Flesh Ward, Find Gate, Healing, Send Dreams, Wrack

BACKSTORY

- **Description:** Rail-thin
- **Trait:** Knowledgeable

SAMUEL K. WRIGHT, CAPT. (R)

AGE 26, LEADER OF KNIGHTS OF OUROBOROS

Captain Samuel J. Wright has seen the horrors of war, and learned things man was not meant to know. Rather than snap, he has dedicated his life to protecting humanity, even though it hates him.

STR 65 **CON** 80 **SIZ** 60 **DEX** 80 **INT** 65
APP 65 **POW** 85 **EDU** 55 **SAN** 75 **HP** 14
DB + 1D4 **Build** +1 **Move** 8 **MP** 17

Brawl: 41% (20/8), damage 1D3 + 1 + 1D4

Enchanted Cavalry Saber: 58% (29/11), damage 1D8 + 1 + 1D4

Luger: 67% (34/13), damage 1D10, attacks per round 1 (3)

Dodge: 63% (31/12)

Armor: World War I flak jacket 6 (kept in his apartment)

Skills: Credit Rating 33%, Cthulhu Mythos 17%, Demolitions 62%, Dodge 63%, Electrical Repair 59%, Library Use 43%, Listen 45%, Locksmith 43%, Mechanical Repair 51%, Psychology 63%, Sleight of Hand 71%, Spot Hidden 64%, Stealth 37%, Language (Own - English) 55%, Language (French) 47%, Language (German) 51%

Equipment: Blessed World War 1 cavalry saber (blade ignores all armor and harms any creature), Ouroboros medallion (enables Samuel to spend

Luck to buy off damage at a 2-for-1 cost—e.g., it would cost 18 **Luck** to buy off 9 points of damage), box of 50 9mm ammo

BACKSTORY

- **Description:** Handsome, with eyes that reflect an old soul
- **Trait:** Tactical

CARL "MOUSE" JENKINS

AGE 23, TERRIFIED HORNMAN

STR 40 **CON** 85 **SIZ** 40 **DEX** 75 **INT** 60
APP 70 **POW** 50 **EDU** 50 **SAN** 28 **HP** 13
DB -1 **Build** -1 **Move** 8 **MP** 10

Brawl: 29% (14/5), damage 1D3 - 1

Dodge: 33% (16/6)

Armor: None

Skills: Art (Trumpet) 93%, Art (Musical Theory) 67%, Craft (Trumpet) 82%, Language (Own - English) 50%, Listen 63%, Sleight of Hand 47%

Equipment: Trumpet

BACKSTORY

- **Description:** Currently covered in his own filth, and nearly starved to death
- **Trait:** Jittery

SAMUEL WRIGHT

Assess Honesty 3, Athletics 4, Cthulhu Mythos 1, Locksmith 2, Reassurance 3, Weapon 4, Mechanical Repair 4, Sense Trouble 4

Stability 6, Sanity 7, Health 8

ALERTNESS MODIFIER: +1

STEALTH MODIFIER: +1

WEAPON: +0 (Saber—ignores armor)

MOUSE

Art (Music) 8, Art History 3, Flee 6

Stability 1, Sanity 2, Health 7

WEAPON: -2 (Fist)

NEW SPELL: CREATE GOLEM

Cost: 40 Magic Points, 1D6 Sanity

Casting Time: six hours

The ritual requires constant chanting for six hours while the caster molds the clay/sand/substance into a vaguely humanoid shape. Once the construct has been shaped, a silver Shem (coin with any one of the Names of God on it) must be placed into its mouth; when placing this coin, the caster and any aides must expend 40 Magic Points, or the ritual fails and destroys the materials used.

RABBI SILVERSTEIN

Assess Honesty 7, Language 3, Oral History 6, Reassurance 5, Theology 11

Stability 4, Sanity 4, Health 6

GOLEM

Athletics 8, Health 20, Scuffling 20

HIT THRESHOLD: 4 (Large but fast)

ALERTNESS MODIFIER: +1

STRENGTH MODIFIER: +2

STEALTH MODIFIER: + 2

WEAPON: +2 (Fist)

ARMOR: 3 (Thick clay; most firearms do only 1 point of damage; regenerates 2 Health/round)

STABILITY LOSS: +1

GEOFF AMOS SILVERSTEIN

AGE 63, RABBI

Geoff is a deeply religious man, taking his duties seriously, and remembers fleeing to the US. He spends time trying to treat veterans of the Great War, and is always available to his congregation.

STR 25 **CON** 50 **SIZ** 80 **DEX** 50 **INT** 80
APP 60 **POW** 60 **EDU** 85 **SAN** 55 **HP** 13
DB -1 **Build** 0 **Move** 5 **MP** 12

Brawl: 15% (7/3), damage 1D3 - 1

Dodge: 23% (12/4)

Armor: None

Skills: Accounting 33%, Anthropology 39%, Art (Sermon) 78%, Charm 47%, Credit Rating 39%, Cthulhu Mythos 3%, Dodge 33%, First Aid 63%, History 75%, Language (Hebrew) 85%, Language (English) 67%, Language (German) 75%, Language (Polish) 47%, Language (Yiddish) 80%, Library Use 47%, Listen 59%, Occult 29%, Persuade 82%, Psychology 67%, Psychoanalysis 35%

Equipment: Journal, Kippah, pocket watch

Spells: Create Golem, Cast Out Devil, Elder Sign

BACKSTORY

- **Description:** Weathered, appears frail
- **Trait:** Religious

GOLEM

SILENT GUARDIAN AND RELENTLESS HUNTER

An eight-foot-tall humanoid shape of clay, with rough features.

STR 150 **CON** 110 **SIZ** 150 **DEX** 25 **INT** 25
APP - **POW** (75) **EDU** - **SAN** - **HP** 26
DB+ 3D6 **Build** 4 **Move** 5 **MP** -

Crush: 70% (35/14), damage 1D8 + 3D6, attacks per round 2

Armor: 5 (deactivated if amulet is removed from its mouth); takes minimum damage from firearms

Skills: Bodyguard 70%, Relentless Pursue Prey 85%

Language (Understand only): Hebrew and Yiddish

SAN Loss: 1/1D8

DANNY "IRISH" CONNER

AGE 27, GOOD GUY IN NEED OF CASH

STR 70 **CON** 65 **SIZ** 50 **DEX** 55 **INT** 50
APP 75 **POW** 50 **EDU** 45 **SAN** 50 **HP** 12
DB 0 **Build** 0 **Move** 8 **MP** 10

Brawl: 33% (16/6), damage 1D3

Dodge: 40% (20/8)

Armor: None

Skills: Language (Own - English) 45%, Language (Yiddish) 12%, Operate Heavy Machine 65%, Spot Hidden 65%

Equipment: Cigarettes and matches

BACKSTORY

- **Description:** Wiry
- **Trait:** Caring

WAREHOUSE GOONS

HIRED MUSCLE

STR 65 **CON** 60 **SIZ** 60 **DEX** 50 **INT** 50
APP 55 **POW** 45 **EDU** 40 **SAN** 45* **HP** 12
DB +1D4 **Build** 1 **Move** 7 **MP** 9

***Special:** Immune to **SAN Loss** from violence

Shotgun (Sawed Off): 50% (25/10), damage 4D6/1D6

Brawl: 53% (26/10), damage 1D3 + 1D4

Dodge: 33% (16/6)

Armor: None

Skills: Intimidate 41%, Language (Own - Italian) 40%, Language (English) 30%

Equipment: Sawed-off shotgun, brass knuckles, a fifth of bourbon

IRISH

Assess Honesty 3, Flattery 4,
Languages 3, Streetwise 4
Stability 6, Sanity 6, Health 6

GOONS

Firearms 4, Intimate 5, Scuffling 7
Stability 6, Sanity 3, Health 8

ALERTNESS MODIFIER: +1

WEAPON: +2 (Shotgun)

ARTURO GIOVANNI

Accounting 7, Assess Honesty 5, Cthulhu Mythos 5, Occult 4, Reassurance 8, Weapon 8

Stability 12, Sanity 0, Health 8

ALERTNESS MODIFIER: +2

STEALTH MODIFIER: +1

WEAPON: +0 (Ritual dagger)

SPELLS: Same as previous stats

ZARR ART DECO ROBOTS (2)

Acting 2, Athletics 4, Reassurance 3, Scuffling 10

Health 10

ALERTNESS MODIFIER: +2

STEALTH MODIFIER: +1

HIT THRESHOLD: 5 (Fast and lithe)

ARMOR: 10 (The first attack destroys the pseudo-skin)

WEAPON: -2 (Fist)

ARTURO GIOVANNI

AGE 55, POWER-OBSESSED UNCLE

Since taking over for his nephew, Arturo is always dressed in a fresh and pressed \$200 suit. He is constantly surrounded by his twin bodyguards and is rarely, if ever, at the penthouse. He has taken to staying outside of Harlem until he is needed. He has been spying on the other families, and plotting. Once Zathog is here, they could rule all of New York.

STR 50 **CON** 70 **SIZ** 45 **DEX** 65 **INT** 75

APP 55 **POW** 75 **EDU** 80 **SAN** 0 **HP** 12

DB 0 **Build** 0 **Move** 7 **MP** 15 (30)

.41 Revolver: 39% (18/7), damage 1D10, attacks per round 1 (3)

Ritual Knife: 67% (37/13), damage 1D4 + 2

Dodge: 66% (33/13)

Armor: He casts Flesh Ward on himself every morning when he wakes, spending 3 to 6 Magic Points depending on whether he has to interact with the gang that day. He knows they follow his orders, but he does not trust them.

Skills: Accounting 67%, Appraise 43%, Credit Rating 61%, Cthulhu Mythos 21%, Fast Talk 67%, History 58%, Language (Italian) 80%, Language (English) 70%, Language (Latin) 70%, Library Use 47%, Occult 38%, Science (Chemistry) 73%, Science (Botany) 59%, Science (Pharmacy) 75%, Sneak 79%

Equipment: Necklace of Zathog (grants Arturo 15 Magic Points, plus access to the Magic Points collected at Zathog sites)

Spells: Awaken Avatar [Zathog], Cause/Cure Disease, Clutch of Nyogtha, Contact Zathog, Dominate, Flesh Ward, Shrivelling

BACKSTORY

- **Description:** Balding weasel of a businessman
- **Trait:** Vengeful

ZARR ART DECO ROBOTS (2)

NURSES

Each is coated in a pinkish pseudo-skin, which is rough to the touch but passable at a distance. If hit, the skin falls away in wet patches, sloshing to the ground to reveal the azure Art Deco automaton beneath it.

STR 175 **CON** N/A **SIZ** 100 **DEX** 50 **INT** 50

APP (40) **POW** - **EDU** - **SAN** - **HP** 30

DB + 2D6 **Build** 3 **Move** 7 **MP** -

Brawl: 35% (17/7), damage 1D4 + 2D6, attacks per round 1

Armor: 20 (the first attack destroys the pseudo-skin and reveals their true blue metallic forms)

Skills: Art (Acting) 45%, Art (Ritual Carving) 45%

Equipment: None

SAN Loss: 0 (True form 1/1D6)

ZARR (2) BODYGUARDS

Each wears an unusual azure necklace around its neck. The necklaces generate an illusion, making them appear as Italian twin brothers. Neither speaks, as the necklaces do not mask their voices.

STR 125 **CON** 100 **SIZ** 100 **DEX** 65 **INT** 60
APP (40) **DEX** 50 **EDU** - **SAN** - **HP** 20
DB + 2D6 **Build** 3 **Move** 7 **MP** 10

Blue Flame Gun: 35% (17/7), damage 2D6 + 6 (ignores armor)

Brawl: 45% (22/9), damage 1D3 + 2D6

Armor: 6

Skills: Electrical Repair 75%, Language (Own - Zarr) 80%, Language (Understand English) 75%, Listen 30%, Mechanical Repair 75%, Operate Heavy Machinery 50%, Sneak 35%, Spot Hidden 35%

Equipment: Blue Flame Gun, Visualizer

Armor: Blue Metal Armor 6 (no protection vs. electrical, chemical, or magic)

Visualizer: An azure necklace which requires 1 Magic Point per hour to generate a visual image of one human form

SAN Loss: 0 (True form 0/1D6)

ZARR

Intimidate 8, Firearms 8, Electrical Repair 5, Mechanical Repair 5, Weapon 8

Health 15

ALERTNESS MODIFIER: +1

WEAPON: +1 (Blue flame guns ignore armor and fry the victims alive)

ARMOR: 4 (Vulnerable to electrical, chemical, and magic)

STABILITY LOSS: +2

CULTISTS

Cthulhu Mythos 2, Occult 5,
Weapon 4

Stability 6, Sanity 7, Health 8

STEALTH MODIFIER: +1

SPELLS: See list

DOMINIC VESPUCCI

Assess Honesty 4, Athletics 8,
Firearms 8, Intimidate 6, Scuffling 8

Stability 6, Sanity 7, Health 10

ALERTNESS MODIFIER: +1

STEALTH MODIFIER: +1

WEAPONS: +2 (Tommy Gun), +1
(Heavy Pistol)

CULTISTS (4)

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

Ritual Dagger: 40% (20/8), damage 1D4 + 2

Dodge: 41% (20/8)

Armor: None

Skills: Charm 57%, Cthulhu Mythos 13%, First Aid 43%,
Language (Own - English) 67%, Language (Latin) 35%,
Language (Greek) 30%, Occult 47%, Spot Hidden 40%

Equipment: Ritual Dagger

SPELLS

1st Cultist: Contact Ghoul, Mindblast

2nd Cultist: Fist of Yog-Sothoth

3rd Cultist: Create Barrier of Naach-Tith, Wither Limb

4th Cultist: Create Zombie, Wrack

DOMINIC VESPUCCI

AGE 30, FORMER FIRST LIEUTENANT TO ORSINO

Dominic has seen the true underworld, and did not blink. He made his way through the ranks with Orsino, and will work with anyone to save his boss.

STR 60	CON 85	SIZ 85	DEX 70	INT 50
APP 55	POW 45	EDU 50	SAN 45*	HP 17
DB + 1D4	Build 1	Move 7	MP 9	

***Special:** Immune to **SAN Loss** from blood and violence

Tommy Gun: 75 (37/15), damage 1D10 + 2, attacks per round 1 or Full Auto

.45 Auto: 55% (27/11), damage 1D10 + 2, attacks per round 1 or 2

Knife: 45% (22/9), damage 1D4 + 1D4

Dodge: 58% (29/11)

Armor: 3 (bullet-proof vest sewn into suit)

Skills: Drive Auto 49%, Fast Talk 37%, Intimidate 59%,
Language (Own - English) 70%, Language (Italian) 40%,
Listen 50%, Psychology 69%

Equipment: Key to penthouse, .45 automatic pistol

BACKSTORY

- **Description:** Beef wall of attitude
- **Trait:** Loyal

POLICE OFFICER (12)

WORK IN PATROLS OF TWO (MAX OF SIX AT ANY ONE TIME)

STR 60 **CON** 60 **SIZ** 60 **DEX** 65 **INT** 60
APP 50 **POW** 55 **EDU** 50 **SAN** 55 **HP** 12
DB 0 **Build** 0 **Move** 7 **MP** 11

.38 Revolver: 60% (30/12), damage 1D8, attacks per round 1 (3)

Dodge: 50% (25/10)

Brawl: 40% (20/8), damage 1D3

Armor: 1

Skills: Drive Auto 58%, First Aid 40%, Persuade 43%,
Language (Own - English) 65%, Law 23%, Psychology 49%,
Spot Hidden 61%

Equipment: Heavy coat (Armor 1), flashlight, whistle, badge,
12 extra bullets), 0 (Nightstick)

CAMPUS SECURITY (8)

THERE ARE ONLY TWO ON CAMPUS AT ANY ONE TIME

STR 60 **CON** 60 **SIZ** 70 **DEX** 45 **INT** 50
APP 50 **POW** 40 **EDU** 55 **SAN** 40 **HP** 12
DB 0 **Build** 0 **Move** 6 **MP** 8

Nightstick: 40% (20/8), damage 1D8

Armor: None

Skills: Fast Talk 47%, Language (Own - English) 55%, Listen 41%,
Ride 43%, Sneak 40%

Equipment: Campus map, campus master keys, flashlight

POLICE OFFICER

Assess Honesty 4, Flee 4, Firearms
4, Law 2, Weapon 4

Stability 4, Sanity 4, Health 4

ALERTNESS MODIFIER: +1

WEAPONS: +1 (Pistol)

ARMOR: 1

CAMPUS SECURITY

Assess Honesty 3, Flee 4, Firearms
3, Weapon 3

Stability 4, Sanity 4, Health 4

ALERTNESS MODIFIER: +1

WEAPON: +0 (Nightstick)

ORSINO GIOVANNI (HUMAN)

Athletics 8, Credit Rating 10, Oral History 4, Flattery 7, Firearms 4, Intimidate 6, Scuffling 3

Stability 8, Sanity 4, Health 13

ALERTNESS MODIFIER: +1

STEALTH MODIFIER: +1

WEAPON: +1 (Pistol)

ARMOR: 3 (Bullet-proof vest sewn into suit)

ORSINO GIOVANNI (WEAKENED AVATAR)

Athletics 8, Credit Rating 10, Oral History 8, Flattery 10, Firearms 4, Intimidate 12, Scuffling 8

Health 22

ALERTNESS MODIFIER: +1

STEALTH MODIFIER: + 1

WEAPONS: -2 (Fist), +3 (Touch of Zathog - burns target alive, dealing Health and Stability damage)

ARMOR: 8 (regenerates 3 Health/round)

NOTE: Abilities increase monthly, and can learn spells

ORSINO GIOVANNI

AGE 28, MAFIA BOSS (SOON TO BE AVATAR OF ZATHOG)

Orsino has always been a golden boy; everything he has ever done seems to work out in his favor. Or if it did not, he just took the rewards anyway.

STR 70 **CON** 90 **SIZ** 70 **DEX** 75 **INT** 60

APP 85 **POW** 60 **EDU** 70 **SAN** 60 **HP** 14

DB + 1D4 **Build** 2 **Move** 10 **MP** 12

.45 Auto: 65% (27/13), damage 1D10 + 2, attacks per round 1 (3)

Brawl: 40% (20/8), damage 1D3 + 1D4

Dodge: 77% (37/15)

Armor: 3 (bullet-proof vest sewn into suit)

Skills: Charm 70%, Credit Rating 76%, Fighting (Brawl) 45%, Firearms (Handgun) 80%, Intimate 57%, Language (Own - Italian) 75%, Language (English) 55%, Law 37%, Locksmith 53%, Persuade 70%, Psychology 91%, Sleight of Hand 60%, Spot Hidden 58%, Sneak 67%, Throw 55%

Equipment: Wad of cash, .45 automatic pistol

BACKSTORY

- **Description:** Handsome, with cruel eyes
- **Trait:** Greedy

ORSINO GIOVANNI

AGE 28, MAFIA BOSS AND WEAKENED AVATAR OF ZATHOG

Orsino's body is covered in the carved runes, and he appears much as he did in life.

STR 105 **CON** 180 **SIZ** 70 **DEX** 75 **INT** 60

APP 85 **POW** 180 **EDU** 70 **SAN** - **HP** 25

DB+ 1D6 **Build** 2 **Move** 8 **MP** 36

Brawl: 57% (28/11), damage 1D3 + 1D6

Touch of Zathog: 40% (20/8), damage 3D6 fire and Magic Points

Armor: 20 (regenerates 5 hit points per round)

Skills: Charm 50%, Cthulhu Mythos 41%, Credit Rating 76%, Fighting (Brawl) 45%, Firearms (Handgun) 80%, Intimidate 77%, Language (Own - Italian) 75%, Language (English) 55%, Law 37%, Locksmith 53%, Occult 34%, Persuade 70%, Psychology 91%, Sleight of Hand 60%, Spot Hidden 78%, Sneak 77%, Throw 65%

Equipment: None

Spell: None due to resurrection, but wants to reacquire the knowledge

BACKSTORY

- **Description:** Stunning
- **Trait:** Unnatural

ORSINO GIOVANNI

AGELESS, MAFIA BOSS AND AVATAR OF ZATHOG

What little humanity Orsino once had has been burned away, and he nearly shines with power. The carved markings fade, and his presence draws all attention to him.

STR 140 **CON** 270 **SIZ** 70 **DEX** 75 **INT** 60
APP 85 **POW** 300 **EDU** 70 **SAN** - **HP** 34
DB + 2D6 **Build** 3 **Move** 10 **MP** 60

Brawl: 67% (33/11), damage 1D3 + 2D6

Touch of Zathog: 80% (40/16), disintegrate and absorb all Magic Points

Armor: None (immune to all normal weapons)

Skills: Charm 50%, Cthulhu Mythos 67%, Credit Rating 76%, Fighting (Brawl) 45%, Firearms (Handgun) 80%, Intimidate 87%, Language (English) 80%, Language (Italian) 80%, Language (Aklo) 57%, Law 37%, Locksmith 53%, Occult 54%, Persuade 70%, Psychology 91%, Sleight of Hand 60%, Spot Hidden 78%, Sneak 77%, Throw 75%

Equipment: None

Spell: None due to resurrection, but wants to reacquire the knowledge

BACKSTORY

- **Description:** Magnificent and stunning
- **Trait:** Unnatural and powerful

ORSINO GIOVANNI (AVATAR)

Athletics 14, Credit Rating 10, Oral History 13, Flattery 15, Firearms 4, Intimidate 16, Scuffling 20

Health 45

ALERTNESS MODIFIER: +1

STEALTH MODIFIER: + 1

WEAPON: -2 (Fist), +5 (Touch of Zathog - burns target alive, dealing Health and Stability damage)

ARMOR: Immune to all physical damage

NOTE: Abilities increase daily, and can learn spells

APPENDIX B: PLAYER HANDOUTS

Greetings Fellow Harlemites:

You may or may not have heard of me, but I have heard of you, and believe you could aid our poor city. That is why I write to you all today, for the task is not one that can be done alone—and I do not possess the skills or presence at the location to do so.

Harlem is the Mecca of the New Negro, and must be protected for us to thrive as a people. I implore you to step forward and secure the peace of our Mecca, to do what the police seem unwilling to do, or perhaps lack the conviction to do for the darker man.

The mob violence has increased. I am not asking you to battle these crazed gunmen, but to investigate. To see what has caused this, reach a conclusion, and turn that information over to the police. Maybe that will motivate them. It will show them that we stand as one people, and that Harlem is not something to be feared, but to be embraced.

For this valuable assistance, I can provide you a formal introduction to A'elia Walker, patron of the arts—and you will also have my eternal gratitude.

Doctor Alain Locke

*Howard University
Washington, DC*

PLAYER HANDOUT 1: Introductions (letter)

POLICE CORRUPTION

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 9, 1921

Another three individuals have been gunned down in our streets by brazen criminals who continue to elude 25th Precinct police. These criminals remain at large, and the police seem uninterested in pursuing them. Possible police corruption? This reporter thinks so.

A number of eyewitnesses living in the Mount Morse Park rowhouses who claim to have seen the gunmen attempted to inform the police, but were turned away. While the police seem incapable of combating the mobsters, maybe they can see their way to catch The Butcher and stop those mutilated bodies from stacking up.

By Lawrence Wright
THE NEW YORK
AMSTERDAM NEWS

HARLEM SLAYINGS

MONDAY, MARCH 21, 1921

Trouble continues to plague our sister borough as crime spikes in the foreign tenements of Harlem. The Head Detective of the 25th Precinct, located in East Harlem, has no comment at this time. Gun-related violence has steadily been on the rise over the past decade. While the area remains unlivable for civilized folks by day, it still boasts the best nightlife in all of New York.

By Charles Whitmore
THE NEW YORK TIMES

PLAYER HANDOUT 3: Harlem Slayings (newspaper article)

KIDNAPPING AND CLUES MYSTIFY FLATFOOTS

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 23, 1921

According to police, multiple individuals have gone missing over the past month in Harlem. The victims range from a cantor at Chabad Synagogue to three veterans of the Great War at the Hawthorn tenements. To date, the police have no leads on the four missing victims, other than a description of one man with a tattoo of the Eiffel Tower on his left arm. We here at The New York Amsterdam News send our thoughts out to the missing victims' families.

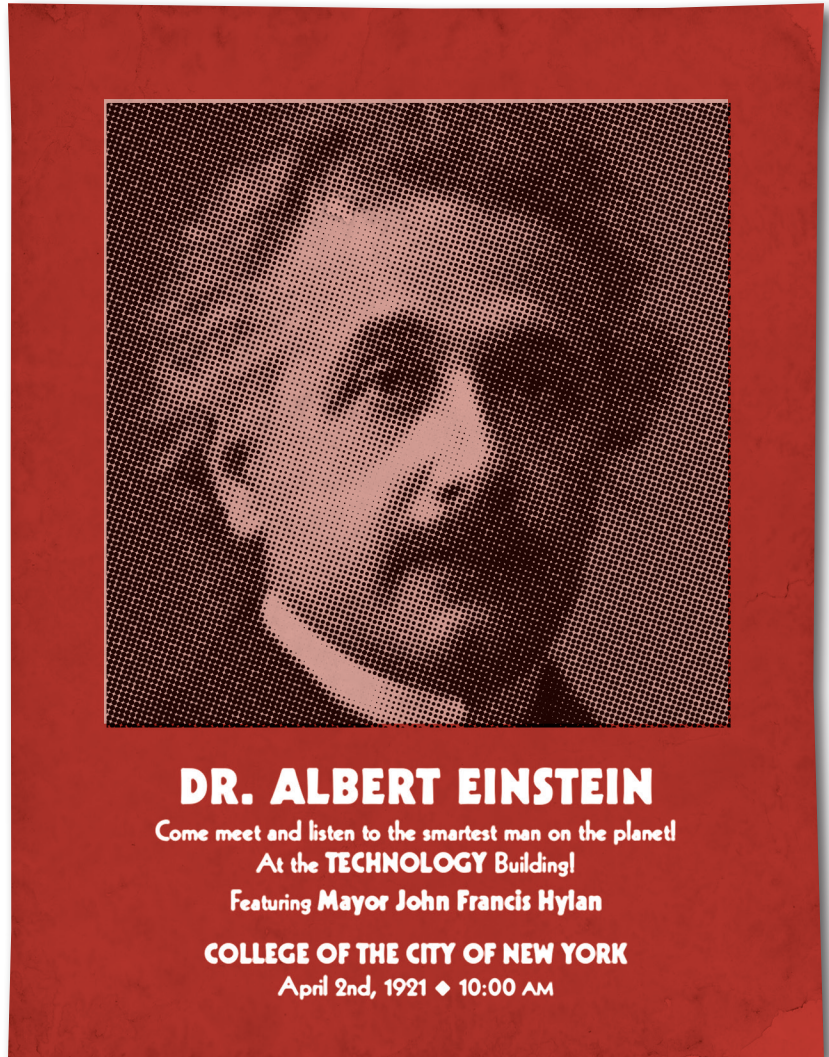
By Lawrence Wright
THE NEW YORK AMSTERDAM NEWS

PLAYER HANDOUT 4: Kidnapping and Clues Mystify Flatfoots (newspaper article)

PLAYER HANDOUT 5: Reale Match Book



PLAYER HANDOUT 6: Flyer for Albert Einstein Speech (one-page flyer)



MOBSTERS DIE IN FLAMES

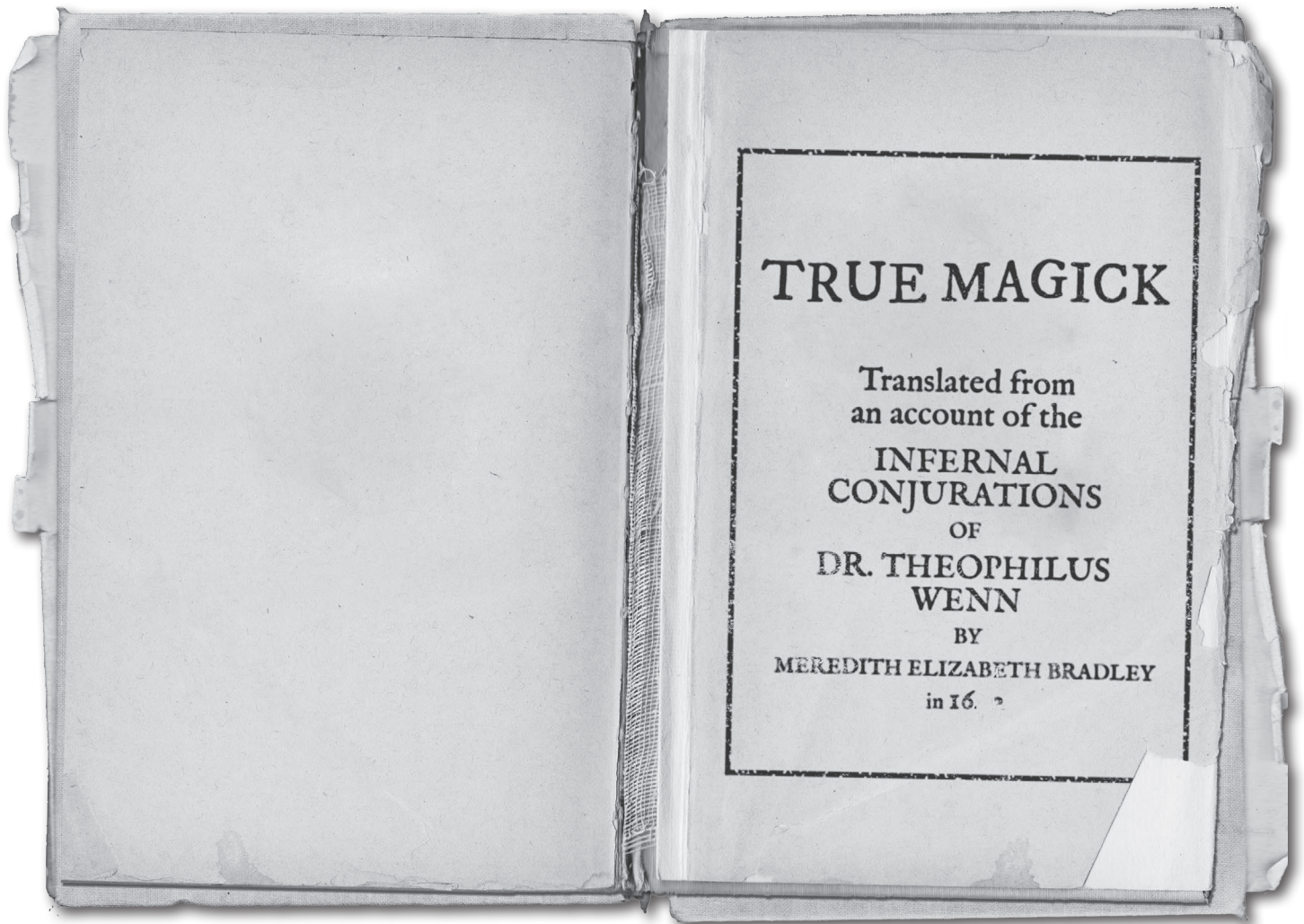
FRIDAY, JANUARY 28, 1921

Shocking news, dear readers. It looks like a few local mafia bigwigs, Cid Margion and Lucius Cartizu, met an untimely demise last night. Each man died after his home was engulfed in flames. This reporter interviewed the firefighters on the scene, who claimed the flames were blue in color. The blue fire seemed to reach to the sky, and took hours to extinguish.

While these men were known killers, it pains me to report that their families also died in the strange accidents. May prayers see them on their way.

By Brad Henderson
THE NEW YORK TIMES

PLAYER HANDOUT 7:
Mobsters Die in Flames (newspaper article)



PLAYER HANDOUT 8: TRUE MAGICK (BOOK)

True Magick

English, by Theophilus Wenn, 17th century

Description: A small and crumbling hand-bound manuscript, nonetheless describable as a veritable encyclopedia of Devil's lore.

SAN Loss: 1D8

Cthulhu Mythos: +2% / +4%

Mythos Rating: 18

Study: 24 weeks

Spells: Call for Spirit of the Air (Summon/Bind Star Vampire), Call Forth the One (Summon/Bind Servitor of the Outer Gods), Call Forth the Winged One (Summon/Bind Byakhee), Speak with the Dark One (Contact Deity/Nyogtha)



THE CONTENDER: A LOVE STORY

*There is a rose in Spanish Harlem
A red rose up in Spanish Harlem
He's going to pick that rose*

BB KING, Spanish Harlem

INTRODUCTION

STEFANO ROSSI IS A DECENT FIGHTER and a decent man. He has made his way in life as best as he can—as a boxer, soldier, husband, and father. He has worked hard, and it seems that at last, he is getting his break. However, unlike the other residents of Harlem, for whom there is hope, Stefano bears an inescapable curse that dooms him and threatens those around him. In the very essence of his being, Rossi bears the strain of the terrible Deep Ones—and unbeknownst to him, he is already changing.

BACKGROUND

Our story begins not in the crowded streets of Harlem, but in a seaside community in New England.

AN INNSMOUTH LOVE STORY

In 1887, Nunzio Rossi, a Sicilian laborer down on his luck and desperate for work, found his way to an out-of-the-way seaside community called Innsmouth. There, he found work in a fish-packing factory owned by the Eliot family. A handsome, robust man, Rossi attracted the eye of Rhoda Eliot, the naïve, sheltered daughter of the patriarch Meshach Eliot.

Having been raised by a very protective father, Rhoda found the rough Nunzio very intriguing, and the two began meeting in secret. This went on for some time, but before long, their liaison was discovered. Nunzio was apprehended by Rhoda's brother and father, and the pair were taking him to the Esoteric Order of Dagon

when he broke free. Nunzio pummeled both of his captors and escaped from Innsmouth. Compounding this embarrassment, a few days later Rhoda slipped away and fled Innsmouth to meet her love.

Nunzio and Rhoda eventually found their way to New York City, where they married and settled into life in Harlem. After two years, the couple welcomed a child who they named Stefano, after Nunzio's father. The child completed the family, and despite being relatively poor, they were happy.

Alas, this happiness did not continue for long. Rhoda developed a strange skin ailment, along with other maladies that belied medical explanation, which caused both her and her husband great concern. Nunzio did not deal with this development well at all, and turned to drink. His rapid descent into alcoholism, Rhoda's illnesses, and the stresses of raising a child drove a divisive wedge into their marriage. The situation grew steadily worse, and finally Nunzio left, taking Stefano with him.

Nunzio raised the boy on his own, with some help from his family. He lost contact with Rhoda, whose illness grew steadily worse. After not seeing her for several months, he assumed she succumbed to the disease which was consuming her. Nunzio was not a good father, as his drinking was a constant problem. Stefano, against all odds, has grown into a good man. While Stefano was overseas during the Great War, Nunzio died. As far as Stefano knows, his mother is dead.

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

The scenario is set in 1923, and the majority of the investigation consists of interviews with those associated with the fighters. The timing is constrained by the fact that Rossi's fight with Jimmy Harris is on Friday, and the investigation begins on Monday night.

JULY 15, 1922	Nahum and Joab Eliot arrive in Harlem
AUGUST 1922	Eliots rejected by criminal organizations and bet the last of their money on a boxing match
SEPTEMBER 1922	Eliots use their winnings to start small-time operation
OCTOBER 1922	Eliots become Stefano's managers and move closer to him
MARCH 5, 1923	Investigators meet with Jack Johnson
MARCH 5-9, 1923	Explore the Lenox Athletic Club and interview people
MARCH 5, 1923	Speak to Rossi
MARCH 5, 1923	Possible Widow encounter
MARCH 6, 1923	Speak to the Eliots
MARCH 6, 1923	Follow either of the Eliots
MARCH 7, 1923	Possible Widow encounter
MARCH 7, 1923	Break into Nahum Eliot's apartment
MARCH 8, 1923	Widow encounter
MARCH 9, 1923	During the day, conduct additional investigations and have second, explosive encounter with the Widow
MARCH 9, 1923	Fight night
MARCH 9, 1923	Conclusion

THE ELIOT FAMILY IN INNSMOUTH

The dark history of the town of Innsmouth is well-chronicled, and best explained, in H.P. Lovecraft's novella *A Shadow over Innsmouth*. The author of this scenario assumes that keepers are familiar with the story. If you are not familiar, please read it post-haste.

During Innsmouth's halcyon days, the Eliots were considered—along with the Waites, Gilmans, and Marshes—to be pillars of the community, contributing much to the town's economic and cultural growth.

However, when turbulent times befell the town, the Eliots—represented by Captain Marsh's first mate Matthew—saw their fortunes fall. Matthew Eliot vocally opposed Marsh's radical plans, the least of which was the subsuming of the Innsmouth Masonic Lodge into the Hall of the Esoteric Order of Dagon. When Matthew disappeared shortly after publicly denouncing this plan, the rest of the family was left scrambling to mend fences and salvage their standing in the face of stern opposition. This effort has been laborious and plagued with setbacks.

Matthew's wife Myrna was a pretty girl, born into a middling family. She was a shameless social climber, and was proud of marrying into one of Innsmouth's finest families. When her husband's views led to his disappearance (as is widely presumed to be the case), she was far more concerned with preventing a collapse in the Eliot family's social standing than with Matthew's safe return.

Myrna eagerly took the first and second oaths of Dagon, but her pride and vanity balked at the noisome third oath. Her efforts slowed but did not stop the decline in the family's fortunes. It was her son, Meshach, who managed to arrest the decline. He did this by marrying a hybrid girl, and fathering two children with her. These children were Absalom and Rhoda.

Absalom was his father's son, and aspired to elevate the family in his every action. He was involved in business and given a great amount of responsibility. His sister, on the other hand, was sheltered and pandered to, and even kept in the dark about Innsmouth's secrets and her own true nature. This bred resentment between the two siblings, each jealous of the other's treatment by their parents.

NAHUM AND JOAB ELIOT

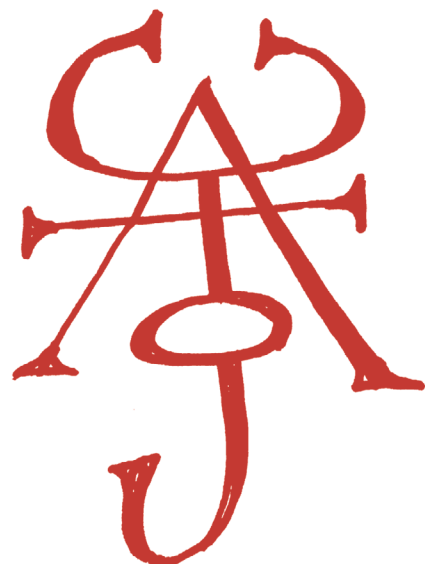
Nahum and Joab are Absalom's sons, and the boys were in trouble when their telegrams to their father requesting more money went unanswered. Having some experience in petty crime and no morals to speak of, the pair presented themselves to the lieutenants of every crime organization they could find, in the hopes of scraping together some income.

After rejection by all of the crime families, the brothers decided working for humans would be foolish anyway, and with the last of their money they established a small gang of their own. During this time, the brothers visited O'Brien's Gym. They conducted their business there, and as they were leaving, happened to see Stefano Rossi.

Sensing a kinship with the fighter from their shared inhuman heritage, the brothers approached Rossi, and after talking to him for a while, making inquiries about his "people," they realized they had stumbled onto their cousin—and that Rossi was unaware of his breeding and his fate. The brothers realized this acquaintance could be beneficial to them; they could tell that Rossi was beginning to undergo certain physiological changes, and soon these would be accompanied by urges which presaged his return to the sea. If they could insinuate themselves into Rossi's life, they could steer him back to Innsmouth. This reunion would greatly please their father, and allow the brothers back into his graces.

In addition to this long-term plan, the brothers concocted a more immediate plan which would net them some cash. They would assume management of the journeyman fighter. The Innsmouth natives, so familiar with the effects of their peculiar heritage, knew that Rossi would continue to evolve into a physical specimen who no normal man could beat. Eventually this change would be impossible to disguise, but for now, it would be thought of as an unlikely late-career surge.

The Eliots took action to execute their scheme. Using magical coercion, they managed to wrest control of Rossi's boxing career from his manager. Since then, they have changed the course of his career. He has fought six times for them, winning all of his bouts by knockout. During each bout, the Eliots bet all of their money, and instantly increase their small gang's influence with each win.



THE THREE OATHS OF DAGON

- The first is an oath of secrecy.
- The second is an oath of loyalty.
- The third is an oath to bear or sire a Deep One child.

INVESTIGATORS

The investigators are called into the case by Jack Johnson.

KEY LOCATIONS

Location 1: Cotton Club

Location 2: Lenox Athletic Club

Location 3: Rossi Apartment

Location 4: O'Brien's Gym

Location 5: The Widow's Lair

Location 6: Commonwealth Casino

Location 7: Morningside Teahouse

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

NAHUM ELIOT

Nahum is the elder of the Eliot brothers. He is surly and quiet, which often leads people to think him less intelligent than his more garrulous brother. The truth is that he is quite intelligent, an amateur scholar, and a capable sorcerer.

JOAB ELIOT

Joab is the younger of the Eliot brothers. He is chatty and considers himself quite the charmer, though most people find him disingenuous at best, and unctuous at worst.

JACK JOHNSON

Johnson is the former heavyweight boxing champion and friend of the deceased Rawls.

"SIR" LANCE RAWLS

Rawls was a promising fighter who was snuffed out before his time.

RHODA (ELIOT) ROSSI

The long-vanished and believed-dead mother of Stefano.

STEFANO ROSSI

The Contender—a man with tainted blood, living on borrowed time.

JUANITA ROSSI

Stefano's wife and likely ally of the investigators.

ATTICUS "THE ABACUS" LEWIS

Dilettantish bookmaker with a talent for figures.

BUTLER JONES

Rawls' manager, now at his wit's end. Jones is a small, fiery man who is never still.

JIMMY HARRIS

Former and future opponent of Rossi.

VALENTINO CHERISI

Rossi's former manager.

MARK MORTON

Rawls' trainer.

TUBBY SIMMONS

Rossi's grizzled trainer.

ANDRES OTERO

Nahum's apartment manager.

CARY TIERNEY

Waiter from the Lenox Athletics Club.

SCENES

SPARRING WITH THE CHAMP

SCENE TYPE: Introduction

LEAD-IN: N/A

LEAD-OUTS: Getting Into the Ring, Dead Boxer Waiting, Sorrow by Any Other Name, License or Arrest

It's a busy Monday night at the Cotton Club. The band is in full swing, and everyone is having a great time. Everyone that is, except for Jack Johnson. The former heavyweight champion is upset, and has contacted the investigators for assistance.

When they arrive, the doorman recognizes them based on a description given by Johnson, and waves them in. He tells them not to mess around with the paying customers, and to go directly to the manager's office. He doesn't elaborate, telling them the boss is not happy and is waiting. If pressed, he says "The boss ain't mad at you, yet. Keep him stewing and he will be."

Inside, the club is busy; the white crowd is enjoying the dancing and the music. The booze is flowing freely, people barely acknowledging prohibition. Whether arriving singly or in a group, the maître d' smoothly ushers them into Johnson's office. Curious glances from the patrician crowd follow their movement through the busy, noisy club.

Johnson's office is not large, and once everyone arrives, it is crowded. The former champion, a giant of a man, sits behind the desk. His broad shoulders are hunched with tension, and he continually clenches and unclenches his big hands; it is difficult to put the thought of the damage they could do out of one's mind. In the office with Johnson is another man. A Hard **Education** roll [**ORAL HISTORY**] identifies him as Butler Jones, a boxing manager.

When everyone Johnson invited arrives, he begins his explanation. Johnson's anger is palpable, and he is easily annoyed if anyone shows up late—and unless everyone arrives together, he considers the last investigator to be late. He berates this person mercilessly, unless calmed with a Hard **Fast Talk** or **Persuade** success [1 POINT **FLATTERY SPEND OR REASSURANCE**]. Then he gets down to business. If the players have met Johnson before, they know the normally jovial man is not usually so angry. Johnson's anger stems from guilt over the death of the promising young fighter who he treated like a son: "Sir" Lance Rawls. Johnson liked him and encouraged him in his career, giving him advice on both the technical and business sides of boxing. Johnson attended Rawls' last fight, and was disturbed by what he saw.

His bad mood increases before starting his tale, and by the end he is seething with rage.

"You ever heard of the boxer, Sir Lance Rawls? He was an up and comer, a boy with a real chance. He was fast and strong—not as big as me, but quicker, I'll give him that. He was moving up the ranks. Then he got in the ring with Stefano Rossi, that no-good, cheating dago. That bum had no chance against Rawls. He was a washed-up loser, but somehow he won. And he didn't just win, he murdered that boy! [**CORE CLUE: GETTING TO ROSSI**] Sir fell down in his dressing room, and he never got back up. Never woke up.

"Now this dirty, cheating son of a bitch is going to be fighting that dumb ox, hayseed Jimmy Harris. I can't have Rossi killing another fighter, especially since Jimmy works for me and is a damn fine man."

Too frustrated, he hurls a number of articles (Player Handout 1) [**ALTERNATE CLUE: LICENSE TO DIE**] onto the table in front of the investigators. As they read the clips, Butler Jones introduces himself. Jones is absolutely incensed by Rawls' death. Rawls was one of the best fighters Jones has ever seen.

What Jones knows:

- He signed Rawls shortly after the young fighter won an amateur tournament.
- He was impressed by Rawls' natural ability and his work ethic. He immediately assigned his top trainer, Mack Morton [**ALTERNATE CLUE: SORROW BY ANY OTHER NAME**], to train him.
- Rawls was fast, strong, and tough. He could have been a top contender—and with training and dedication, possibly even the heavyweight champion of the world.
- Normally he wouldn't have taken a fight with Rossi, since everyone knew that his old manager was crooked.
- Rossi had been looking good lately, and not taking dives since the two New Englanders started managing him [**CORE CLUE: GETTING TO ROSSI**].

LOCAL KNOWLEDGE

Locals know that Jones has represented many fighters over the years, and is passionate about the sport. He cares about boxing, and is pretty much its prime expert in Harlem. He's a good man who does his best for his fighters and helps keep them out of danger.

If asked, Jones can provide dozens of examples of fighters who will vouch for him.

*I know the dark delight of
being strange,*

*The penalty of difference
in the crowd,*

*The loneliness of wisdom
among fools,*

*Yet never have I felt but
very proud,*

*Though I have suffered the
agonies of hell*

Claude McKay, "My House"

- It was good for Rawls since Rossi was a known figure who had been winning lately, and a victory would be a great notch in Rawls' belt.
- But now, Jones can't believe that Rossi beat Rawls so badly, and thinks his new managers may be even worse than his old one.
- Neither Jones nor Johnson saw anything strange during the fight. They cannot point to anything specific as the cause of the loss.

A **Persuade** roll [**REASSURANCE**] has Johnson open to sharing his vast store of boxing experience, and he cannot fathom a way in which an aging, slow, flabby-looking, flat-footed shuffler like Rossi could ever beat Rawls.

Johnson doesn't care where the investigators begin, but wants answers. If they want to talk money, he pulls out a roll of cash and disgustedly flings three ten-dollar bills at them, berating them for money-grubbing when they should want to do this for free. He says they will get more cash when they bring him results. He requests they regularly report in to him, informing him of their progress.

GETTING INTO THE RING

SCENE TYPE: Core

LEAD-IN: Sparring with the Champ

LEAD-OUTS: Going the Distance, A Bum Rap, A Night Out, A Night In, Breeding the Future

If the investigators visit the Lenox Athletic Club, their reception depends on their occupation and/or the credibility of their cover story. Journalists are welcome, but other investigators, especially PIs or police officers, are coolly received. A **Credit Rating** roll (granting a bonus die for advantageous occupations) [**CREDIT RATING**] opens the way for the investigators. The integrated club is largely operated by white managers and all of the staff are black.

The Lenox Athletic Club, at 135th Street and Lenox Avenue, is a small, members-only boxing gym catering to professionals and serious amateurs who seek an environment for intense training and fight preparation. A small bar and restaurant open only to members and special guests is attached to the gym.

The well-maintained and fashionable club features a reception, dining area, and bar with dark mahogany wood polished to a shine. Its gaslight fixtures are artfully modified to accommodate electric lighting, and other modern conveniences are likewise incorporated.

The building's lower level houses the modern boxing gym. The locker rooms are clean and staffed. Each member has a locker, with a keyed lock, assigned to him. The attendant takes the key when the member leaves the locker room.

The gym lacks the aesthetics of the bar, as it is designed for functionality. The gym holds a 16' sparring ring. Areas for shadow boxing, heavy bag work, and other aspects of the sport are situated strategically. In all, the space is small, but carefully arranged so as not to be crowded.

The gym is noisy and busy. There are a number of fighters working at the various stations. Some have dedicated trainers working with them one-on-one; these are the professional fighters preparing for upcoming fights. Also present are others—either amateurs or fighters—working to maintain their condition.

The staff is protective of the fighters, especially the professionals, and will not readily permit them to be bothered. The amateurs are easier to access and can be a good source of knowledge about the fight game, but have no insight into the business operations of the Eliots or the other relevant aspects of the investigation.

If the investigators want to speak with Stefano Rossi himself, they find only roadblocks. No matter when they ask about Rossi, he is never "present," but his former trainer is pointed out to them.

TUBBY'S STATEMENT

Rossi is trained by a former lightweight fighter, Arnold "Tubby" Simmons, called Tubby since he was overweight as a child. His skill has transcended race, a miraculous feat in this time, with black and white fighters both seeking him out for his expertise and experience. Even though he is in his early fifties, Simmons is in excellent condition and looks like he could easily go 10 rounds.

Simmons is very proud of his fighter, Rossi. He considers him a marvel. He has worked with Stefano for years, but never really thought much of him until recently. A successful **Psychology** check [**ASSESS HONESTY**] notes a wistful tone in his voice. If asked about it, he strongly suspected Rossi of taking dives on the instruction of his former manager Cherisi [**ALTERNATE CLUE: A BUM RAP**], in past bouts. Now, after years of middling performances, Rossi is emerging—he seems to have fully dedicated himself to his craft. He is winning fights now that he would have lost years ago.

A **Fast Talk** or **Persuade** roll [**INSPIRATION, FLATTERY, OR 1 POINT REASSURANCE SPEND**] gets Simmons to open up a bit more about Rossi:

- Rossi's training and fight strategy: Simply fight your fight. Use constant pressure and wear down opponents. Rossi's not graceful, but he can take a hit and dish it out like a freight train.
- He can provide Rossi's address and general schedule [**CORE CLUE: GOING THE DISTANCE**].
- Rossi seems to be stronger than ever, and no one wants to spar with him more than once.
- Simmons sees nothing unnatural in Rossi's recent victories. It's just experience, and heavyweights mature later in life than the lighter classes do. Rossi is just a late bloomer.
- A **Charm** success [**REASSURANCE**] gets Tubby to admit begrudgingly that he doesn't like Rossi's new managers, but they have turned his career around. He owes them.
- Rossi is training harder for fights than he ever has, and he's trying harder in the ring. It's making him a better father. He wants some good paydays for his growing family. Tubby bets Rossi would do anything to keep those kids safe.

INTERVIEWING THE ELIOTS

The Eliots have been working hard to get Rossi a world title shot. His recent string of victories, and especially the recent impressive upset of Sir Lance Rawls, have pushed him up in the rankings. Getting a title fight is a real possibility, and one that would put them on easy street. Nahum has used sorcery to tip the scales toward a foregone conclusion, and they are keeping their fighter close to them.

The Eliots typically do business in late mornings and afternoons, out of the Lenox Athletic Club. The bulk of this work is related to setting up fights for Rossi. The white brothers work well together, with the naturally outgoing Joab doing more of the talking, while the quieter Nahum handles the more serious pieces of work. They occupy a large rear table near the bar. One of the brothers always seems to be talking on the candlestick-style telephone, and routinely will hand it to the other in mid-conversation. A **Listen** check [**ASSESS HONESTY**] allows an investigator to eavesdrop on the mundane call about managing a professional boxer.

The brothers bear a familial resemblance; both are of middle height, a bit paunchy around the middle, with

prematurely receding and thinning greasy-looking black hair. Their complexion is pale, though they do in a certain light appear to have a slightly olive or perhaps jaundiced tint to their skin. (A **Medicine** check [**MEDICINE**] here is vexing. Nothing about the brothers' conditions present as anything specific. However, taken in total, it is suggestive of something that the observer cannot quite discern.) They have weak chins, slightly protuberant eyes, and thin lips on a wide mouth. Their teeth are small and narrow. The elder, Nahum, has a wispy, barely visible mustache and dresses in a simple though well-tailored black and white suit. Joab is far more flamboyant. One of his front teeth is gold, and he dresses in loudly colored suits which he cannot afford, but purchases anyway. Speaking with the Eliots is an unpleasant experience. Every word they utter seems to be laced with sarcasm, irony, or condescension.

When the investigators arrive and ask about the Eliots, the brothers will be curious about the visitors, but not curious enough to stop their conversation (unless the investigators have a **Credit Rating** of 70+ [**CREDIT RATING 4+**]. If so, grant a bonus die [**1 POINT CREDIT RATING REFRESH**] for the first interpersonal skill), and gesture for them to take a seat at the large table. As he hands the phone off to Nahum, Joab will ask the investigators if they're going to be buying his brother and him food or drinks. A **Psychology** roll (with a bonus die from Joab's obvious implication) [**ASSESS HONESTY**] suggests that Joab is gauging how serious the investigators are about the conversation. Should this be refused, the brothers make new calls and ignore the investigators unless a Hard **Persuade** [**1 POINT ORAL HISTORY OR FLATTERY SPEND**] is made.

If the investigators buy food or drink, the brothers speak with them. (A Hard **Credit Rating** roll [**1 POINT CREDIT RATING SPEND**] persuades the brothers.) While they assume the PCs are there to arrange a fight or something, they entertain other topics. They happily discuss Stefano and their personal and professional relationship with him. The Eliots say they met their cousin by sheer chance.

They have always been big fight fans, and turned it into a family business.

A **Fast Talk** or **Persuade** check [**INSPIRATION OR REASSURANCE**] gets the brothers to admit to starting their own gang and having a couple of cops in their pockets. That's why you're enjoying a Prohibition-free zone. Harlem is a land of promise.

If the investigators ask about joining, Joab says they aren't "one of our people." Nahum jokingly says "...small town folks." A **Psychology** success [**ASSESS HONESTY**] detects the lie wrapped in truth.

Both brothers say Rossi's going to be a real contender very soon. Under them, he's giving every fight his all, and nobody can stand in there with him.

They insist vehemently that this would not have happened with his old manager. That "dago piece of shit" was holding him back, making him take dives against bums he could have destroyed. [**ALTERNATE CLUE: A BUM RAP**]

Asked about the Rawls fight, they show no sympathy for the dead man. A **Psychology** check [**ASSESS HONESTY**] detects a total lack of concern over human life. A Hard or Extreme result senses a chill down the investigators' spines; lose 1 **Sanity** point [**1 STABILITY**]. Nahum especially seems unconcerned, saying it was not their fighter's fault. He says Rossi did what he needed to win, and that's that. In fact, both think the death is actually a good thing; it has really given Rossi's reputation an edge it lacked before. Their sociopathic callousness regarding human life borders on the inhuman.

If asked about their past, the brothers are evasive. A **Charm** or **Persuade** roll [**ORAL HISTORY**] gets them to admit they're from New England, but they don't say where exactly. Instead, they talk about fishing and wanting to get to the big city. If this line of questioning continues too far, it will annoy them, and could lead them to halting the conversation and having the investigators thrown out.

Any mention of Jack Johnson or the Cotton Club has Joab interested. He will say he's been meaning to visit there. He'd love to meet Johnson, and asks if the investigators could introduce them. He asks this no matter how the conversation has gone.

As the investigators leave, a **Listen** check [**STREETWISE**] notices Joab ask Nahum if he is going to the Sugar Shack tonight [**ALTERNATE CLUE: A NIGHT OUT**]. Nahum gives his usual steely glare and shakes his head no, saying it's back to the apartment for him [**ALTERNATE CLUE: A NIGHT IN**].

The club employs a few bouncers; most of them are amateur or semi-pro boxers working for free access to the gym. These men are always nearby, and will intervene quickly and violently if an argument between the investigators and the Eliots becomes serious.

A HELPFUL TIP

Once their business is concluded and they are leaving the club, the investigators are approached by a slim man whom they recognize as the waiter who served them during their conversation with the Eliots. Cary Tierney introduces himself and says he overheard their conversation. Tierney is disgusted by the brothers' boorish behavior, vile habits, and reluctance to tip adequately. He insinuates blatantly that if he is given some cash, he can share what he knows about them (Tierney wants no less than \$20 for this; a **Bargain** check [**BARGAIN**] gets him down to \$10).

If paid, Tierney eagerly shares what he's overheard and witnessed about the pair. They are small-time crooks who depend on every win their cousin makes to fund their operations. That is why they are so desperate to get more bouts—they've made a bundle betting on their cousin. Nobody expected him to win the Rawls fight, but the brothers were certain of it, and bet every cent they had on him. It's like they had some insider knowledge.

Tierney continues: The Eliots have some strange habits. During the day, the brothers are always together—but at night, they often split up. The older one (Nahum) seldom goes out; he's very much the homebody [**ALTERNATE CLUE: A NIGHT IN**]. He stays in his apartment all the time, like a hermit. The younger one is just the opposite. Joab stays out all night, going all over Harlem, up and down, from the best places to the worst [**ALTERNATE CLUE: A NIGHT OUT**]. There is a rumor around that he likes professional girls, and that he gets them from Bruno Greco [**ALTERNATE CLUE: BREEDING THE FUTURE**], a notorious pimp and former member of the Giovanni gang who left after some incident at the college a few years ago. If it seems like the investigators plan to talk to Greco, Tierney warns them that he is violent and unpredictable. Tierney promises to let the investigators know if anything else develops.

GOING THE DISTANCE

SCENE TYPE: Core

LEAD-IN: Getting Into the Ring

LEAD-OUTS: Chasing Down a Dream, Guardian Angel's Plight, A Night Out

Though he is very friendly, Rossi can be tricky to interview. As he has recently been enjoying a considerable amount of success as a boxer, he has quit his job as a stevedore. He now splits his time between his home, a fourth-floor apartment (#403) at 114th and Lexington,

and O'Brien's Gym. He leaves his apartment before dawn and runs for an hour, ending up at the Lenox Athletic Club. He eats breakfast there and trains until 4 or 5 p.m., then runs for another hour, ending up at his home. While at the gym, he is insulated by the staff and his trainers. Pesky investigators drive the ire of the staff and are shown the door. Investigators can catch Rossi on his morning or afternoon run between his home and the club with a successful **Luck** roll [**DIFFICULTY 5 PREPAREDNESS**].

The investigators can try to speak with Rossi when he's on one of his daily runs, but he's pretty serious about these, and won't want to stop to chat. The PCs can make a Hard **Charm** or **Persuade** roll [**1 POINT INSPIRATION SPEND OR ORAL HISTORY**]; if they fail, he'll suggest they come by the gym—otherwise, he invites them to his home.

The Rossi apartment is a much more welcoming environment than the gym.

THE ROSSI HOME

114th Street and Lexington, Apartment 403

Stefano lives in a fourth-floor apartment with his wife, Juanita, and their three children. The apartment is small, but clean and comfortable. The parents share a small bedroom, and the children all pile onto a Murphy bed in the main living area at night. The kitchen is redolent of the Caribbean and Italian cuisine that the happy couple prepares together. The family dines around a battered old table in the living room.

Juanita is a Dominican immigrant and speaks English with a charming, melodic accent. She is quite striking, and Stefano positively beams when speaking of her. He says they met when he was working on the docks, and that she was the only thing he ever stole from there. Juanita shushes him and explains that they did meet shortly after she arrived in this country. She says she felt bad for him, and needed someone to open jars and get things off of high shelves, so she took him in. This sort of playful banter goes back and forth between the couple.

The children are ages seven (Alberto), five (Anthony), and three (Ava). They are darling children, very well behaved and cherubic. Alberto is a very serious young man, and helps look after the younger children. Anthony is energetic and imitates his father, striking a boxer's stance and shuffling forward while swinging his skinny arms in a comical fashion. Little Ava is a beautiful child who is every bit the lady. She has her father wrapped around her little finger, and is by his side nearly every waking moment.

Visitors are graciously welcomed into the home. It's a chaotic scene. The thrilled children entertain visitors and chatter away, climbing onto laps and asking endless questions. Juanita insists on feeding the PCs, no matter what time of day they drop in. Stefano makes them all feel at home, inviting them to take seats around the dining table. The hospitality is a little overwhelming, and utterly genuine; a **Psychology** check with a bonus die [**ASSESS HONESTY**] confirms this. The atmosphere is so calming and pleasant in fact, that spending an evening with the family allows the investigators to regain 1 point **Sanity** [**1 STABILITY**].

ROSSI'S METAMORPHOSIS

Though they are born appearing to all the world as normal humans, Deep One hybrids inevitably transform, over time, into utterly inhuman creatures. The end result may be the same, but the course each one travels is unique to the individual. In Rossi's case, he is transforming slowly, and his initial changes are largely internal. His bones are growing denser, while his muscle tissues have taken on alien properties, making him stronger and increasing his stamina.

As of yet, these are the only changes—but he is only a matter of weeks away from outward changes. He'll begin to lose his hair, and he will develop patches of dry and scaly skin. However, his mind will alter even more rapidly than his body. Soon he will begin to hear the call of the sea, and his dreams will become terribly haunted.

A **Biology** or Hard **Medicine** success [**BIOLOGY OR 1 POINT MEDICINE SPEND**] notes the hair loss, the lumbered step, and the idea that something is not quite right. Noting the slowed walking pace grants a bonus die for any **Fight** check against the boxer.

LOCAL KNOWLEDGE

Locals of Harlem know that a large number of Puerto Rican and Latin Americans have been migrating to Harlem since the Great War. They have mostly taken up residency in the western part of East Harlem (or Italian Harlem) around 110th and Lexington Ave. (In two to three decades, Italian Harlem will become Spanish Harlem, and slowly spread out.) The rent is cheap, few people ask questions, and it has the protection of the Italian gangs.

Stefano happily talks with the PCs. He knows the basic story of his parents' romance, but does not have specific details. He only knows they met when his father was a working in a little New England town. Of his mother, Stefano remembers little. She was kind and beautiful, as all mothers are to their children, but she got sick—and then he and his father moved away. Here, the normally ebullient Stefano becomes wistful, saying that he wishes his father had not left but had instead stuck by her side. It's clear that Stefano is not close to his father. If churlish PCs push this further, Stefano hints that his father did not approve of his marriage to Juanita. A **Psychology** [ASSESS HONESTY] check confirms this suspicion.

Regarding his boxing career, Stefano says that he began boxing in his teens because he was a fat kid and was being bullied. He started boxing to get in shape and learn to defend himself. He admits that he never really took it that seriously.

Stefano enjoyed some success as an amateur, and lacking any other real prospects, decided to start boxing professionally in 1912 when he was 22. He was moderately successful as a fighter, attaining a record of 24 wins, 4 losses, and 13 knockouts by 1916. When the United States entered the Great War, Stefano enlisted in the Army and served overseas in a non-combat role. He returned in 1919 and resumed his career.

Although he did not experience combat directly while overseas, he saw much suffering during the war, after which Stefano had lost much of his killer instinct—and his career suffered. A Hard **Fast Talk** or Hard **Persuade** check [1 POINT FLATTERY, ORAL HISTORY, OR REASSURANCE SPEND] gets him to confess with some shame that at this point in his career, he began taking dives at the instruction of his then-manager, Valentino Cherisi. During this stage of the discussion, a successful **Psychology** roll [ASSESS HONESTY] notes his hesitancy to talk about this. His post-war record was a poor 4 wins and 9 losses.

His boxing career was going nowhere, and Juanita wanted him to quit. He strongly considered it. Then two fellows happened to walk into O'Brien's Gym and struck up a conversation with him. It was clear that they were looking to change their situation, just like he was—however, this was the least of their connections. In what Stefano sees as an amazing coincidence, they were also related! These two men, who introduced themselves as Joab and Nahum Eliot, were his cousins on his mother's side.

The Eliots explained that they had been cut loose by their father, and had been making their way the best they could. They were doing well, but were hungry for more. Stefano talked to them about his stagnant career, and his cousins were very sympathetic. They were also very encouraging. They said they knew he could do better, and that he just needed a change, just like they did. One thing led to another; soon Stefano left his old manager, and the Eliots began managing him.

This arrangement has been going on now for months. Stefano's career has turned around, and he's gone 6-0 with 6 knockouts since he's been with them.

If asked what has changed, Stefano replies that he's not sure. The brothers kept his old trainer at his insistence. Rossi expresses regret that he hadn't always trained as hard as he could have, and had let his trainer down. Now he's fully committed, and is doing everything his trainer asks. Essentially, the advice he's given is to fight his fight, put constant pressure on his opponent, and wear them down. He readily admits that he's not a polished boxer, but is a mauler—so this strategy plays to all Stefano's strengths, and has worked brilliantly so far.

If asked about the Rawls fight, Stefano doesn't want to talk about it. A Hard **Persuade** [1 POINT REASSURANCE SPEND], or mentioning that talking about it helps him be a better man for his family, gets him to open up. His story coincides with the fight report and newspaper articles.

- He admired Rawls. The man was very fast and looked great.
- Rawls didn't hit very hard (an **Idea** roll [MEDICINE] suggests that this seems unlikely, as Rawls had 20 knockouts in 22 fights) but was an accurate puncher.
- Rossi readily admits he was losing every round going into the tenth. However, Rawls was starting to tire, and Rossi was catching up with him.
- Rossi speaks very highly of Rawls, saying he had incredible heart. Going into the 15th round, Rossi knew he had him—Rawls had nothing left, and was standing on will alone.
- “Once he was backed into the corner and I unloaded on him—I tried to take it easy, but I had a job to do.” Stefano thinks that if Rawls had finished the fight, he'd have won instead of Rossi.

A **Psychology** roll [**ASSESS HONESTY**] notes he is hiding something. A Hard **Fast Talk** or **Persuade** [1 POINT **ASSESS HONESTY SPEND** OR 2 POINT **REASSURANCE SPEND**] with a penalty die gets him to open up a bit. “In the last couple of fights, I have felt stronger. Around the fifth round, a burst of adrenaline hits me and stays until the end of the fight. All I can see is a reddish-green haze.”

By the end of his story, Rossi is clearly emotional and upset. He deeply regrets what happened. He didn’t want to hurt Rawls, and feels his opponent’s corner should have stopped the fight earlier. For a while, he thought about quitting—but he has a family to feed, and he’s a real contender now.

He and his family light candles for Rawls at the Church of St. Mark the Evangelist. They will continue to pray for him, and if Rossi wins the title, he vows to dedicate the fight to Rawls. In addition to this, he says he’ll make sure that Rawls’ family is taken care of.

A **Psychology** roll with a bonus die [**ASSESS HONESTY**] is sure of the sincerity. He is being completely honest with the investigators. He regrets Rawls’ death, but does not feel particularly responsible, attributing the bulk of the blame to Rawls’ handlers. A Hard **Psychology** success [**ASSESS HONESTY**] detects a level of deflection. He certainly had no malice towards Rawls, nor did he want to hurt him. If any insinuations are made about Rossi cheating, he’ll attribute this to the investigator’s ignorance of the fight game. If treated in a rude or belligerent manner, he’ll (honestly) deny any wrongdoing and warn them, once. If pressed again, he tosses them out of his home, and won’t talk to them at the gym.

Rossi has an upcoming fight, a rematch with Jimmy Harris [**ALTERNATE CLUE: DEAD BOXER WAITING**]. He fought Jimmy in 1920 and lost a decision—his first loss after coming back from the war. It was a tough fight, a decision loss, and Rossi feels it marked a downturn in his career. The rematch is a stay-busy fight for him; for the first time in a long time, he’s heavily favored. He’s very confident he’ll win and avenge the loss. If asked if he plans on doing anything differently after what happened in the Rawls fight, he says no. He has no ill will against Harris; a **Psychology** roll [**ASSESS HONESTY**] notes that is mostly accurate, but detects a little joy at the possibility of settling an old score.

If he’s asked about his new management, Rossi speaks highly of them. In a short time, they’ve really turned his career around. They seem to know what they’re doing and have managed to book him some good fights. They

treat him better than Cherisi did, as well, expecting him to win fights and not asking him to take dives. Rossi will admit that his cousins are a bit wild, but that is his only criticism. **Spot Hidden** [**ASSESS HONESTY**] sees that Juanita can be seen scowling disapprovingly, as Rossi praises the Eliots. She won’t say anything in front of Stefano, but if someone goes into the kitchen with her and makes a **Fast Talk** or **Persuade** roll [**REASSURANCE**], she speaks freely.

Juanita does not like the Eliots very much. She does not deny that they have been good to her husband, and that he’s much happier fighting for them than he was for Cherisi. However, they are strange men; they don’t seem anything at all like her husband. They are college-educated and from New England, but it’s more than just that which separates them from Stefano. It vexes Juanita that she cannot put her finger on what exactly bothers her about the two, but she finds them unpleasant, and stays away from them.

As the encounter progresses, the children play in and around the adults. Anthony and Ava clamor for attention from the visitors from time to time. One of these instances involves Ava giving one of the investigators a drawing. She explains that it is a picture of their family, so the PCs will be able to remember them when they leave. All of the Rossi family is represented in her child-like rendition. In addition to her parents and siblings, there is a shadowy figure in the background. If the investigators ask about this, she’ll explain that it is her “guardian angel” [**CORE CLUE: GUARDIAN ANGEL’S PLIGHT**]. Ava goes on to say that she sees her guardian angel at church, and that it follows her sometimes. The parents are at a loss to explain this, and dismiss it as a figment of her imagination; her brothers say that Ava is a dumb-dumb head. If this escalates, they will be sent to bed early. (The player who receives this drawing rolls **Spot Hidden** with a bonus die [**DIFFICULTY 3 SENSE TROUBLE**] for the Widow [**ALTERNATE CLUE: CHASING DOWN A DREAM**].)

The Rossis are fine hosts, and entertain the investigators until it is time for the children to go to bed. Upon departing, unless the investigators acted rude, they are invited to stop by again. Stefano promises to get them ringside seats for the Harris fight [**CORE CLUE: FIGHT NIGHT**]. If asked about the Eliots, he tells them Joab frequents the Sugar Shack [**ALTERNATE CLUE: A NIGHT OUT**].

THE WIDOW

Rhoda (Eliot) Rossi is still alive—and contrary to what her son thinks, has not abandoned him. When Stefano was still a young boy, Rhoda began to undergo physiological changes. These caused her great discomfort, and nothing her doctors said could do her any good.

Rhoda has spent years by herself, wandering the streets of Harlem. During this time she has had countless hours to think about the whispered rumors she sometimes overheard, despite her protective father's best efforts. Rhoda knows something is bad about Innsmouth—something terrible, evil, and alien. As her body has changed, this vile, wormy thought has gnawed at her sanity. Very little of the kind, happy girl who ran away from her family is left and its unavoidable legacy remains. As of late, she has been filled with a nearly irresistible urge to take to the sea and swim back to the coast of Innsmouth. These feelings have left her filled with frustration and violent tendencies, some of which she cannot resist.

Rhoda haunts the streets of Harlem. She frequents the areas where her son and family live. She often follows the children to and from school, watching them from afar. She does not interact with them, but occasionally waves at the youngest of the children.

While the children are at school, Rhoda often visits the St. Mark the Evangelist Church. When she and Nunzio arrived in Harlem, she happily adopted his Roman Catholic faith. As the years have passed, although Rhoda has become less and less human, she still attends Mass. She is considered quite odd, but is generally accepted by the diverse and multicultural parish community, even if she steadfastly maintains an understandably aloof presence.

Rhoda appears as a large, bulky, vaguely feminine figure. She is swathed in black clothes from head to toe, though whether this tint is from dye or innumerable layers of grime, it is impossible to tell. She wears a large, decrepit Easter bonnet, fitted with a filthy opaque veil, atop her misshapen head. Her gait is an unsteady, shuffling limp. Only rarely does she speak, and then only in a low, croaking whisper; the tone is so unpleasant and alien that listeners seldom recall her words.

Though she is routinely glimpsed in Harlem, she is an anonymous derelict—those seeing her find it more comforting to quickly forget her than to ponder what dreadful circumstances could bring someone to such a sorry state. When the Widow, as she is commonly

called, is spoken of, it is brief, uncomfortable, and tinged with an indistinct sense of shame and guilt. The conversation often includes statements like “someone should do something to help her,” before moving on to easier topics.

MEETING THE WIDOW

The two encounters with Rhoda are floating events, one alternate and the other a core scene, which should escalate as the investigation progresses. They serve to reveal the horrible fate which awaits Stefano Rossi.

The first encounter should happen soon after the investigation begins, after the players have visited a location Stefano Rossi or his family frequents, such as the Lenox Athletic Club, Rossi's usual running route, or the Rossi apartment.

The second encounter serves to fully illustrate the doom posed by Rossi's heritage. Once the investigators encounter Rhoda, they have a much better understanding of his awful fate. This encounter should occur on Thursday night, as the investigators have gathered sufficient evidence to understand Rossi's destiny, and should serve to drive the scenario to its conclusion.

CHASING DOWN A DREAM

SCENE TYPE: Alternate

LEAD-IN: Going the Distance

LEAD-OUTS: N/A

As the investigators are leaving from their current interview site, anyone making a **Spot Hidden** roll [DIFFICULTY 4 **SENSE TROUBLE**] notices a shadowy, veiled figure across the street who appears to be watching them. Upon seeing this figure, the investigators recall that this is not the first time they have noticed it. In fact, the investigators now remember seeing it at least one other time, at another location: in Ava's drawing. As this realization dawns, the strange individual moves back into an alley, squeezing in between the wall and a large delivery truck parked there. By the time the investigators cross the street, it has vanished. A Track or Hard **Spot Hidden** [**OUTDOORSMAN** OR 1 POINT **EVIDENCE COLLECTION SPEND**] notice a slime trail leading toward the alley.

The dead-end alley does not have many areas in which to hide. A 1920 Dodge Delivery truck, stacked high with boxes of produce, seems the most likely place. A **Stealth** roll [DIFFICULTY 4 **STEALTH**] is required to do so quietly; otherwise, they disturb the driver who is napping in the front seat. The white driver, Butch

Piazza, is none too happy about this; he confronts the interlopers, assuming they are trying to make off with fresh produce. A **Fast Talk** or **Intimidate** roll [INTIMIDATE OR 1 POINT REASSURANCE SPEND] gets the man to leave the investigators alone. Otherwise he shouts and rants until the police arrive, believing the investigators are thieves. Piazza also looks the other way, if given two dollars and none of his produce is stolen.

Once this situation has been dealt with through stealth or otherwise, the search of the truck is disappointing. With a cargo of produce, the truck contains nothing suspicious. Whoever was watching the investigators and ducked into the alley did not hide in the truck.

Scouring the alley for other hiding spots reveals a few possible places. There are a couple of doors into adjoining buildings, but these are all locked; a cursory (no roll needed) search suggests—from accumulated dirt, debris, and other such evidence—that these doors have not been opened recently. The walls of the surrounding buildings are some three stories tall, and climbing would prove challenging. That leaves a single manhole cover as a possible escape route. A **Spot Hidden** roll [EVIDENCE COLLECTION] notices the finger-sized claw marks on the edges of the manhole cover.

Lifting up the heavy cover requires a Hard **STR** roll [DIFFICULTY 6 HEALTH CHECK]. Once removed, the investigators stare into a shadowy abyss of dark, swirling storm water coursing through the large drainpipe at some velocity. The foul-smelling water, reeking of rotting sewage and other unpleasant aromas, is not inviting.

Climbing into this nearly full, churning sewer pipe is madness and suicidal. A **CON** check [DIFFICULTY 5 HEALTH CHECK] stops the investigator from vomiting from the stench. Looking in the tunnel, in the direction surging stormwater is coming from, the observer sees a black scrap of cloth caught on a hanging piece of wire grating. The cloth can be recovered using a reasonable tool and a Hard **DEX** check [DIFFICULTY 5 ATHLETICS CHECK]. **Swimming** to retrieve it is impossible, and if someone is foolish enough to try, they must make a Hard **Swim** roll [DIFFICULTY 7 ATHLETICS CHECK] to avoid being swept off the ladder. Failing that, they will be swept into the foul, polluted stormwaters on a nightmare journey of the Harlem sewers for 1/1D4+1 **Sanity** loss [DIFFICULTY 5 STABILITY CHECK] and 2D4 **Hit Points** [3 HEALTH].

Once retrieved, the cloth is a simple, threadbare black shawl, such as those worn by widows. If sufficient care was demonstrated in recovering the shawl, a large fish

scale can be found tangled in it. Examining the scale with a **Biology** check [BIOLOGY] notes its enormous size, flexibility, and tactile strength. This scale defies classification and quickly deteriorates. The figure, who presumably disappeared into the drain, did appear to be wearing this shawl—and furthermore, looks it like what the figure in Ava’s drawing is wearing. The fact that it was found upstream from the manhole, thus implying that the figure swam against the fetid current, is nearly unbelievable, despite the evidence.

A GUARDIAN ANGEL’S PLIGHT

SCENE TYPE: Core

LEAD-IN: Going the Distance

LEAD-OUTS: Fight Night

The timing of this event is left to the keeper’s discretion. It should occur at night, after considerable investigation, and serves to demonstrate the inevitability of the situation. Rhoda has been watching, from dark alleys and street-side sewer drains, as the investigators look into her son’s life. She senses they are trying to help him, and she knows that her time to do the same is running short. Out of utter desperation, she attempts to contact the investigators.

The investigators see the now-familiar black-clad, bulky form standing a short distance away, as they are transitioning from one location to another. This time, instead of fleeing, the form beckons to them, moving its arm in an unnaturally awkward motion. It then reaches down and with one hand, picks up a manhole cover and drops down into the hole. The ease with which the one-hundred-pound manhole cover is moved is startling (0/1 **Sanity** loss [STABILITY CHECK]).

Assuming the investigators are curious and follow after the strange figure, they find upon looking down into the open sewer that it is nowhere to be seen. This sewer is not flooded, though there is a small amount of water and a terrible stench. A sturdy metal ladder provides access to the tunnel. Upon descending, a **CON** check [DIFFICULTY 5 HEALTH CHECK] stops the investigator from vomiting; the investigators see the figure standing 10 yards away. It beckons them to follow. Should the investigators tarry and seem unwilling to enter the tunnel or climb down, the figure returns and beckons them once again.

The figure leads them a short distance, perhaps no more than a block or two, to a small chamber at the junction of four other tunnels. Here it has set up its home. A filthy, partially broken rocking chair sits along one wall.

Opposite it is a heap of blankets atop a stinking, rotting, sewer water-sodden mattress. Next to the mattress is a pile of garbage. Terrible things are in the garbage, but before the investigators can begin exploring it, the figure speaks.

In a muffled, croaking, inhuman voice, the figure introduces herself as Rhoda Rossi, Stefano's mother. She says she is sick, and has been for a very long time. She continues, saying that she lies down every night thinking she will die, but she never does. Her illness, she explains, is the result of a curse. Her father was a very wicked man who sold his soul to the devil, and she carries the taint of his wickedness within her. In turn, she passed this curse to Stefano, who has passed it along to his children. She also says that she herself is a terrible sinner.

Her descriptions of these events are vague, rambling, ill-defined, and addled. Her explanations are heavily tinged with elements of her adopted Catholic faith, but illogical, and theologically unsound. She becomes progressively agitated as she speaks, pacing restlessly about, glancing often at the pile of refuse, especially when she speaks of her own sins. While this is going, her garments become displaced and her veil slips aside revealing a horrible patch of mottled, grayish-green skin (0/1 **Sanity** loss [**STABILITY**]). If the investigators do nothing to intervene, she eventually loses steam, her shoulders slump, and she flops down on the repulsive mattress and begins to gurgle and weep.

During the course of Rhoda's confession, the investigators can better examine her dwelling. Besides the sad accoutrements readily visible, the most notable things can be discovered if one chooses to dig through the refuse pile. This heap of nauseating trash appears to be full of empty tin cans, broken bottles, bits of rags, and unidentifiable rotting matter, but hides the true horror lurking within the mound. After a few moments of digging, a section of debris gives way—sliding down to reveal the decaying corpse of a woman, her naked skull grinning horribly, and the partially eaten body of an infant. The **Sanity** loss for this terrible sight is 1/1D4+1 [**STABILITY**].

When this reveal occurs, Rhoda howls, charges over, shoves the investigator aside, and pulls garbage over the corpses. As she does this, her Easter bonnet falls off, revealing her awful visage. She is almost entirely bald, except for a few patches of long, scraggly gray hair. The skin is the pale, mottled white of a frog's belly. Her face is covered with a rotting mask of human skin taken

from the corpse of the woman in the garbage heap. It is loosely strung around her head, sagging in places, and exposing a mouth far too wide, eyes too far separated, and teeth too numerous and sharp to belong to any human. The **Sanity** loss for seeing Rhoda unveiled is 1/1D6 [**STABILITY**].

The situation quickly escalates if the investigators have lost sanity and are visibly shocked by the recent discoveries. Rhoda simply goes berserk, losing the last echoes of her sanity and humanity, as she lashes out violently at the investigators. The combat should start out with her attacking in a frothy rage, but after a short while the threat goes out of her attack and it continues only to entice the investigators to end her tortured existence.

INVESTIGATING THE ELIOTS

The investigators are likely be frustrated after speaking with the slippery Eliots. While they are highly suspicious, there is little to incriminate the brothers. Additional information—some plainly incriminating, some damning, and some highly disturbing—can be discovered by observing their behavior, trailing them, and scouring their dwellings.

Once the business day is done, the brothers go their separate ways. Nahum retires to his apartment. Joab begins a night on the town. Neither brother drives, so they can be easily tailed. The address to Nahum's apartment can be learned from Tierney, but he doesn't know where Joab lives.

A NIGHT OUT

SCENE TYPE: Alternate

LEAD-IN: Going the Distance, Getting Into the Ring

LEAD-OUTS: Breeding the Future

When the brothers' daily affairs have concluded, typically in the early evening, Joab changes into an even more garish outfit at the club, and retires to his newest favorite speakeasy. Joab is a vexing guest and frequently wears out his welcome with loud obnoxious behavior, frequent fondling of female guests, and indifferent attention to bar tabs. He has not yet ascended to the level of society at the more upscale establishments like the Cotton Club, though he is eager to do so. He is persona non grata at many places, so he must now travel far afield to get a drink and enjoy himself. His latest establishment is a middling Harlem location known as the Sugar Shack.

The Sugar Shack is a few blocks away from the Lenox Athletic Club, and it is clearly declining in terms of reputation and glamor. Set in a basement, a handmade wooden sign displays the name of the bar, and beneath that is scrawled the legend “Members Only.” Joab enters without difficulty. The investigators will be stopped by the doorman, a burly, bearded man named Omar. A **Charm** roll [**CREDIT RATING**] gets them inside for fifty cents; otherwise a five-dollar bribe grants them temporary member status.

Compared to the excellent décor of the Cotton Club, the Sugar Shack is cheap and tawdry. Some effort has been made to elevate it above the status of a common neighborhood bar, such as a small area for a band and an uneven dance floor. These additions have proven only moderately successful, and now the bar’s patrons are a mix of hard drinkers there after a long day’s toil, and ill-informed poseurs trying to take in some of the good times they’ve heard so much about. Joab tends to gravitate towards the latter, and avoid the unwelcoming grunts and hard stares of the former.

If he sees the investigators and has made their acquaintance previously, he calls out to them, greeting them as old friends. He does this unless a fight occurred with them at the Lenox Athletic Club. Joab refuses to talk of anything of substance unless the players succeed in a Hard **Persuade** roll [**1 POINT FLATTERY SPEND**], but instead tries to get the investigators to buy him drinks; he comes on to any females in the group with all the subtlety of a bull in a china shop. Should he be rebuffed, he quickly loses interest, and then begins to ogle females in the bar and describe his intentions in lurid detail. In short, he’s a horrible, unctuous person and the worst company imaginable. Determined investigators, after much suffering, can only get him to repeat what they already heard from him.

If this is the first meeting with Joab, they can speak with him and learn what was described in the section Interviewing the Eliots. If the investigators prefer to avoid interacting with Joab, they can easily observe his behavior in the crowded bar.

After some time spent drinking and carousing, Joab makes a phone call, and then leaves. If he’s asked where he is off to, he giddily says that he is going to see his pimp about a fresh whore. **Psychology** [**ASSESS HONESTY**] notes he is not lying.

Following his phone call, Joab leaves the bar and briskly walks away. He can be followed easily or even accompanied.

BREEDING THE FUTURE

SCENE TYPE: Alternate

LEAD-IN: Getting Into the Ring, A Night Out

LEAD-OUTS: N/A

Joab does not mind the company, but makes it known that he is not into sharing. He travels south to an area sometimes referred to colloquially as “the Market.” After looking around at this seedy morass of human misery, he spies a tall, Italian man: Bruno Greco. Beside Bruno stands a young Latina dressed in a cheap, provocative style. A **Psychology** check [**ASSESS HONESTY**] with a bonus die sees the fear in her eyes, and senses that she doesn’t want to be here.

As mentioned by Cary Tierney, Bruno is not a well-adjusted individual. If the investigators are accompanying Joab, he warns them that Bruno is leery. He’ll introduce them as his friends, but Bruno still glares at them with unconcealed suspicion. Any attempt to interfere with Bruno and Joab’s transaction elicits a violent reaction. Bruno offers the investigators a single warning, which if unheeded results in him pulling a .45 revolver, grabbing the girl to use as a human shield (imposing a penalty die on investigators), and opening fire. It’s a swift, sudden, and apparently practiced maneuver. Joab flees the instant that violence ensues.

If the encounter proceeds peacefully, they get to business and exchange hushed words, which are difficult to overhear in the noisy streets; a Hard Listen check [**ASSESS HONESTY**] is required. The matter at hand is the procurement of services from the young girl who Bruno calls Alice. She is, in his words, a “fresh young filly.” Joab is giddy at this description, and willingly gives Bruno a handful of bills. Their business concluded, Bruno gestures with a flourish to the girl beside him. Alice does not appear to be particularly young, nor fresh, but Joab does not seem to care. He takes her hand and dashes away to rent a room in a seedy hotel that charges by the hour and does not provide turndown service, nor mints on pillows.

Once Alice and Joab have departed and he has been paid, Bruno is much happier and is willing to talk with the investigators. He speaks openly about his enterprise and does his entrepreneurial best to convert the investigators into customers. A Hard **Persuade** [**1 POINT**

REASSURANCE SPEND] gets him to open up about about anything he knows.

The story Bruno tells paints a personally, if not criminally, damning portrait of Joab Eliot. They met a year or so ago, and Bruno has been providing women to him ever since. He tried to arrange some for Nahum, but the older brother was not interested. Joab, however, has an insatiable appetite, and has easily made up for his brother's lack.

Laughing, almost off-handed, Bruno says that Joab is a peculiar fellow with some peculiar tastes. It seems that Joab wants to be a father.

A **Intimidate** or Hard **Charm** success [**INTIMIDATE**] gets him to spill the beans. Joab paid Bruno to allow him to impregnate some aging prostitutes. Joab is paying for these women's room and board, as well as a stipend to Bruno. He callously mentions that prior to this arrangement, he was getting ready to cut the women loose, due to their declining ability to earn.

A Hard **Intimidate** success [**1 POINT INTIMIDATE SPEND**] or **6 Hit Points** [**3 HEALTH**] forces Bruno to reluctantly part with the address where the the women are staying, a tiny room in a tenement a few blocks from the Market.

At this point, Bruno abruptly ends the conversation, stating that he has business to attend. He turns to leave without further ado. He reacts violently to any attempt to prevent him from leaving.

If Bruno is killed before talking, the investigators may be able to locate Joab's unknowing victims from a set of keys with an address to an apartment a few blocks away.

JOAB'S FAMILY

Following Bruno's directions (or the keys found on his body) leads the investigators to a sagging, decrepit tenement of the lowest order. It is as if all of the foul, rotting offal on the entire isle of Manhattan has drained into this spot. Behind crumbling doors, wails and gurgles ring out, bespeaking terrible misery. The trip up the three flights of stairs feels more like a descent into a primordial Tartarus. Finally arriving at the apartment, the investigators have the opportunity to meet Joab's lady friends.

Knocks are eventually answered by Hazel, a middle-aged woman. Standing behind her a short distance away is a middle-aged white woman named Lula. Both women are pregnant, shabbily dressed, smoking cigarettes, and

seething with barely contained fury. It appears at least two other women also live in the tiny apartment.

As the door opens, a miasma of tobacco smoke floods out into the hall. This blends with a charge of other smells coming from the filthy apartment—greasy burnt food, human sweat, and raw sewage from clogged and overflowing toilets. It is a staggering sensory assault. The investigators barely have time to recover from this when the two women unleash a profane verbal barrage. They rudely demand to know who the investigators are, and what they want. Once they hear mention of Joab or Bruno, they launch a fresh salvo of complaints. These are numerous and range from money for food, cigarettes, and booze to fixing the toilet and buying them new clothes. Every moment spent speaking with them is agony.

A **Charm** with a penalty die, **Fast Talk**, or **Persuade** roll [**REASSURANCE**] eases the tension long enough to garner a few snippets of information.

Joab paid good money to Bruno to get them pregnant; he pays for their expenses, and visits them occasionally. "That no-good bastard has promised us \$50 when our kids are born, and then we are out. Nine months for 50 bucks...who wouldn't take that deal." A **Psychology** success [**ASSESS HONESTY**] detects their sincerity.

A **Medicine** success [**MEDICINE**] can see that they have not had any prenatal care, and don't seem to care—neither do they care what happens to the children after birth. Any medically oriented investigator can convince the women to be examined with a **Persuade** success [**REASSURANCE**]. Gain 1 **Sanity** [**1 STABILITY**].

If confronted, Joab only says he's compelled to do it. It's his part-alien Deep One physiology manifestations magnifying his own undeniable compulsion to procreate. This arrangement has allowed him to satisfy his paralyzing obsession, and let him function in the other areas of his terrible life.

A NIGHT IN

SCENE TYPE: Alternate

LEAD-IN: Getting Into the Ring

LEAD-OUTS: N/A

Compared to his brother, Nahum is monkish. He wakes mid-morning, takes his meals at the club, and then returns home. On occasion, he visits a library or bookseller, but he is currently occupied in a scholarly pursuit above all other pursuits. For the purposes of the scenario, if Nahum is not attending to business, he

is either at his apartment already, or on the way to or from there.

Nahum's apartment is a small efficiency located in what will become Spanish Harlem in a few decades' time, having moved to be closer to his cousin (and cash flow). He lives on the third floor. He does not answer the door if an unexpected visitor knocks. A **Listen** check [DIFFICULTY 4 **SENSE TROUBLE**] detects him. A **Language (Spanish)** check [LANGUAGE] has his neighbors saying they don't see him much, and have no comments. A **Psychology** check [ASSESS HONESTY] senses the fear and concern about saying anything, as they close their doors on the investigators.

The apartment manager, a Puerto Rican man named Andres Otero, lives on the first floor; he has nothing bad to say about Nahum. Eliot pays his rent on time, does not cause problems, and does not complain about leaking pipes or bad heating. Otero will not let the investigators into the apartment unless they have a legitimate or convincing-looking warrant (**Art (Forgery)**) [ART OR DIFFICULTY 6 **PREPAREDNESS**], or if they succeed in a Hard **Persuade** roll [2 POINT **REASSURANCE SPEND**]. An honest man, Otero refuses and is offended by bribe attempts.

Should the investigators wish to break into the apartment, they can most readily attempt this during the day. At that time, most of the residents of the building are either at work or sleeping after having worked all night. If a break-in is attempted during the day, a **Luck** roll determines if anyone is around or awake; if successful, grant the investigators a bonus die for the break-in. A **Stealth** roll [STEALTH] gets them up the stairs or fire escape unnoticed by Otero. If spotted, the apartment manager calls the police, who arrive in ten minutes. Unless he or his tenants are threatened, he lets the cops handle the issues, knowing anything else could have the police close down the building on some trumped-up charges.

A **Locksmith** success [LOCKSMITH] unlocks either the door or the window. A **STR** check can break the door or window but makes a lot of noise, likely alerting Otero without a **Luck** success [DIFFICULTY 5 **SENSE TROUBLE**]. Breaking in at night is much more challenging, with Nahum at home and the building itself full of people coming and going.

Nahum Eliot's apartment is free of decoration. All of the meager, cheap furnishings are simple, functional, and ill-matched. It is the abode of an indifferent bachelor. It

is tidy but not overly clean, with a foul scent lingering in the air.

In the main living area, the bulk of the space is occupied by a large, shoddy dining table. This table is given over to study, and is littered with stacks of paper and several books. It's apparent that Nahum spends his free time here, engaged in his study of the occult, especially as it relates to the situation in Innsmouth. His current project is an exhaustive reading of his yellowed and crumbling copy of the Ponape Scripture (Player Handout 2). He is carefully annotating the work, and has completed about one quarter of it. The **Sanity** loss is 1/1D4 [2 **STABILITY**].

WORKING OUT THE DETAILS

DEAD BOXER WAITING

SCENE TYPE: Alternate

LEAD-IN: Sparring with the Champ

LEAD-OUTS: N/A

As Jimmy Harris has a fight scheduled against Rossi, the investigators may want to speak to him. Harris is employed by Jack Johnson at the Cotton Club. He works during the day, cleaning up and performing other menial tasks. He trains, as much as he can, around his work schedule. In the morning, he runs for an hour before his shift begins; in the afternoon, he goes to O'Brien's Gym and trains there for a couple of hours before heading home to his dismally small apartment. Harris is a bachelor.

The easygoing Harris, who speaks with a pronounced Southern accent owing to a childhood spent in Mississippi, is very willing to speak with the investigators. If they mention they were sent by Jack Johnson, he is very respectful in his tone and manners. Otherwise, Harris exudes a relaxed, good-natured Southern charm. Standing 6'2" and weighing 210 pounds, Harris is a good-sized heavyweight. He's a journeyman fighter who is desperate for a payday. He is not afraid of Rossi, nor is he overly concerned about the events of the Rawls fight being repeated. He understands that the fight game is a dangerous business; he genuinely likes Rossi, and insists he is a decent man.

Harris fought Rossi years ago and beat him. Harris says Rossi is not a real hard puncher, but he is strong. Harris describes how he once boxed a bear at a carnival, and how the bear wasn't strong like a man, but had an animal strength. That's what Stefano Rossi was like in the ring.

LOCAL KNOWLEDGE

Cherisi is heavily involved in organized crime and is a notorious fight fixer.



A BUM RAP

SCENE TYPE: Alternate

LEAD-IN: Sparring with the Champ

LEAD-OUTS: N/A

Rossi's former manager, second-generation Italian immigrant Valentino Cherisi, has an upstairs office in the same building as O'Brien's Gym. From here he recruits naïve young fighters, and cagily manages the careers of hopeless veteran boxers.

A former middleweight boxer, the scrappy Cherisi is tough and unsympathetic. He feels superior to the fighters he manages, since he was smart enough to leave the fight game; now his charges take the beatings, while he reaps the rewards. Cherisi is the former manager of Stefano Rossi. He discovered Rossi, and noting his impressive size, encouraged him to take up boxing. He guided Rossi's early career, but became disillusioned after his fighter suffered a few losses. As Rossi's toughness and endurance have become more prominent, Cherisi has used this to preordain exactly when the fighter would take a fall. This has proven very lucrative in the past.

Cherisi was approached by the Eliots, who inquired about buying Rossi's contract. Initially, he refused this out of hand, not wanting to part with such a lucrative asset. Later, and for reasons he cannot explain, he changed his mind and released Rossi from his contract. An **Occult** check [**OCULT**] notes the missing memories and the way his eyes glaze over when describing it, as some form of sorcery. He is troubled by this, but plays it off. A **Psychology** roll [**ASSESS HONESTY**] detects his false bravado, and a Hard **Persuade**, **Charm**, or **Intimidate** roll [**1 POINT INTIMIDATE OR REASSURANCE SPEND**] gets him talking.

What Cherisi has no way of knowing is that Nahum Eliot cast Dominate on him, and used this spell to coerce him into signing away Rossi. Cherisi foggily recalls talking at length with the little Eliot brother, while the older one stared at him with his dead fish eyes.

He claims he is through with Rossi, and doesn't care what he does now. This is an obvious lie.

SORROW BY ANY OTHER NAME

SCENE TYPE: Alternate

LEAD-IN: Sparring with the Champ

LEAD-OUTS: N/A

Butler Jones provides the address of Rawls' trainer Mack Morton, adding that he's seen Mack since the fatal fight. A Hard **Persuade** check [**REASSURANCE**] gets Mack to talk through his drunken haze.

Morton, a long-time boxing trainer, has helped dozens of fighters learn their trade. For the past ten years, he has worked with Butler Jones' stable of fighters, and was specifically assigned to Sir Lance Rawls. Morton considered Rawls among the most promising fighters he ever worked with, felt great about Rawls' chances as a pro, and was absolutely devastated by the tragic result of the Rossi fight. Morton is a tall, wiry, lightly complected black man with a perpetual hangdog expression, marked even more as of late by his drinking and depression at the death of his charge.

Morton believes himself responsible for Rawls' death, and has been drinking heavily since it occurred. He has not been at any of his usual haunts, remaining sequestered in his small apartment. Morton only emerges to buy more booze from the corner store.

LICENSE OR ARREST

SCENE TYPE: Alternate

LEAD-IN: Sparring with the Champ

LEAD-OUTS: N/A

A brave band of investigators can venture down to the Office of Chief Medical Examiner to ask the clerk for a copy of Rawls' death certificate. Most of them know that a group of black investigators asking questions, or generally being black, can draw a deadly response from the police. A Hard **Charm** or Hard **Fast Talk** roll [**COP TALK OR 1 POINT BUREAUCRACY SPEND**] with attempts to **Bargain** or **Intimidate** [**INTIMIDATE**] the clerk causes him to call the police immediately; four cops arrive in 1D6 rounds. Proper legal credentials grant a bonus die for the roll.

Once obtained, the death certificate is frustratingly unhelpful. It lists Rawls' cause of death as "blunt force trauma sustained in a sanctioned boxing match." No autopsy was performed, as the cause of death was obvious and witnessed by hundreds of people.

FIGHT NIGHT

SCENE TYPE: Core

LEAD-IN: Going the Distance

LEAD-OUTS: Tea with Atticus, The Main Event

On Friday, the scheduled bout between Stefano Rossi and Jimmy Harris occurs at the Commonwealth Casino, E. 135th Street, a small sports venue in Harlem. The Rossi-Harris boxing match is the main event, and tonight there will be a packed house. Rossi's upset win over Rawls has earned him a considerable number of followers, and the tragic end of that bout has attracted morbid members of the press who hope to cover another brutal beating. Rossi's now a four-to-one favorite over the journeyman Harris.

This scenario assumes that the investigators have met with Rossi, and if they have not befriended the ill-fated fellow, then at least they bear him no ill will. Furthermore, the assumption is that the investigators

share their findings with Rossi to some degree or another. The delivery and scope of information related could vary significantly. What is described in this section should be considered the result of full and complete disclosure of Rossi's condition and its ultimate disposition.

Confronted by the investigators and told the truth of his hideous lineage, Rossi is reluctant to believe it, and slips quickly into a state of denial. A **Charm**, **Fast Talk**, or **Persuade** roll [**ORAL HISTORY OR REASSURANCE**] shatters his catatonic state of disbelief. Presented with evidence (such as the Ponape Scripture or his mother's decaying remains, or if his own unlikely physical prowess is discussed adroitly), Rossi comes to realize the truth instantly, with great anguish.

He asks if his children are infected like he is. If this sad truth is confirmed, he is devastated to his core, and utterly wracked with grief. A **Psychology** roll [**ASSESS HONESTY**] detects that the man is on the verge of a mental break and may never recover. His despair crescendos and he weeps loudly, crying out against his fate. After some time, he pulls himself together.

After he composes himself, Rossi asks the investigators for a favor. He explains that going into the fight, he's a four-to-one favorite. He walks over to a cabinet and pulls out a battered cigar box. He hands it to them; it is full of cash, around \$500. He asks them to put it all on Harris. "I'm through fighting. I'm not going to hurt anybody else. Jimmy's going to win this fight. I want to earn a real good payday for Juanita."

He asks the investigators to go to a bookmaker he met when he was fighting for Valentino Cherisi, Atticus "the Abacus" Lewis at the Morningside Teahouse [**ALTERNATE CLUE: TEA WITH ATTICUS**], and make the bet for him. Lewis would never accept it directly from Rossi, and if he tried, the cagey bookie would quickly spread the word that the fix was in. He asks if the investigators can collect his winnings after the fight, and meet him at the apartment. If he has not done so already, Rossi provides them with good tickets to the fight [**CORE CLUE: THE MAIN EVENT**], if they want to be in attendance. He then says he has things to do, and promises to meet them after the match.

LOCAL KNOWLEDGE

The Morningside Teahouse is a small shop. In the front by the entrance is a set of two large plush chairs. There is a counter with four stools. Atticus “the Abacus” Lewis enjoys the comfortable chairs and a well-brewed cup. He is a well-known figure in Harlem, and it is quite possible that resident investigators may know him.

Gain a bonus die for knowing the customs of the teahouse.

TEA WITH ATTICUS

SCENE TYPE: Alternate

LEAD-IN: Fight Night

LEAD-OUTS: The Main Event

Morningside Teahouse

123rd Street and Morningside Avenue

Without a steady stream of customers coming in to do things other than drink a cup or browse the extensive and aromatic selections of teas, this little shop would have shut its doors years ago. Along the opposite wall are shelves and small barrels, all filled with loose-leaf tea. A West Indian man greets visitors warmly.

Arriving during business hours, the investigators find the plush chairs occupied. Lewis is in his forties, dressed in a finely tailored suit, and is speaking quietly with another man who is making his bet. This exchange concludes moments after the investigators arrive, and the next man at the counter gets up, taking the now-vacated seat next to Lewis. A **Bureaucracy** or **Hard Intelligence** check [**BUREAUCRACY** OR **STREETWISE**] detects the customs and knows not to break them. Investigators should get in line at the counter, and purchase a cup of tea.

When the investigators’ turn comes up, presuming they do not commit the faux pas of jumping ahead in line (revealing themselves to be novices), Lewis gestures to the single chair. He possesses a keen mathematical intellect, and is a good judge of character. As the weekend looms, with its usual assortment of sporting events, Lewis is very busy. When the investigators place their hefty wager on Harris, Lewis asks them if they know something he does not. An **Accounting**, **Hard Fast Talk** or **Extreme Persuade** roll [**FLATTERY** OR **1 POINT REASSURANCE SPEND**] convinces him they are on the square. Lewis is an experienced bookmaker, and is not really concerned; this bet will not make any sizable impact on his operation. Lewis explains that if they get lucky, they can come by the Teahouse after the fight and collect their winnings.

THE MAIN EVENT

SCENE TYPE: Core

LEAD-IN: Fight Night, Tea with Atticus

LEAD-OUTS: Twice for Tea, A Volatile Reunion

The Commonwealth Casino doors open for the event at 7:00 p.m., and at that time, the crowd is sparse. The first two fights on the card feature out-of-town fighters. They are competitive fights; McGowan wins by fourth-round knockout, and Smith wins by split decision. By the time these bouts conclude, the small casino is packed. The next fight on the card is a big local rivalry. Supporters of each fighter clamor for their man as they walk to the ring.

The event has brought out Harlem luminaries. Drinks are served, and the cheers of the crowd almost drown out the sound of the boxers' thudding punches. The last stragglers take their seats just as Kane lands a lightning-bolt right cross, dropping Lybrook for the full count. The uproar is deafening, as the victor's supporters celebrate.

The exciting ending to the penultimate bout has left the throng eager for more excitement at the top of the card. The night's final fighters make their way to the ring from their dressing rooms. The house lights go dim, leaving only the ring lit, as the announcer calls out the particulars of the bout:

Ladies and Gentlemen, welcome to the Commonwealth Casino. Robert Winston Enterprises, in association with the Eliot Brothers, presents the featured bout of the evening.

Ten rounds in the Heavyweight division.

Fighting out of the red corner, weighing in at 204 pounds, hailing from Scooba, Mississippi, with a record of twenty-four wins against six losses, with 10 victories coming inside the distance, Jimmy Harris.

And his opponent, fighting out of the blue corner, he weighed in at a ready 223 pounds. This boxer trains out of the Lenox Athletic Club. He has a record of thirty-four wins, thirteen losses, and nineteen big wins by knockout. The fighting pride of Harlem, Stefano Rossi!

Following the introductions, the referee gives final instructions, and the fighters walk back to their corners. Harris is focused and ready; he is in decent shape, and looks ready to fight. Rossi walks back to his corner

woodenly; his eyes are red and vacant. When the bell rings, Harris steps out quickly. Rossi trudges forward, his hands instinctively raising into a guard. The fight begins.

Harris starts fast and lands well. Rossi is doing very little to fight back, other than to throw an occasional jab. He's a slow starter, so this not surprising—however as the fight progresses, he fails to pick up the pace. In his corner, trainer Tubby Simmons begs Rossi to let his hands go. The Eliots, plainly visible at ringside, are unconcerned about the fight, exuding an aura of supreme confidence. Nahum appears to be reading a magazine, while Joab is drinking heavily and talking, loudly, to no one in particular.

The rounds progress, and Harris builds on his lead. He's landing at a prodigious rate, but his punches seem to have no effect. Rossi is barely throwing anything, but there's a mouse (a boxing term describing localized swelling) over Harris' right eye. It's clear that Rossi is much stronger than Harris; during clinches, he moves him around with ease. In between rounds, Simmons is apoplectic, screaming at Rossi to pick up the pace. Rossi stares ahead, eyes dead, indifferent to his long-time trainer's urgings.

A **Psychology** roll [**ASSESS HONESTY**] notes Rossi's change in demeanor. A **Fighting** success [**STREETWISE**] sees his stance weakening, and knows what that means. The fifth round begins, and the boxers go to the center ring. Harris leads the action again, his punches leading well, but to seemingly little effect. Then Rossi, standing on the outside, throws a huge, heavy-handed uppercut with his left hand. It is a rookie mistake as it leaves his guard down and his chin exposed. Harris fires a straight right hand which lands solidly. Rossi goes down, and the crowd erupts.

As the referee begins his count, the Eliots overcome their initial confusion, come to their feet, and begin to scream at Rossi to get up. Rossi lies on the mat, propped up on one elbow. A **First Aid** success [**MEDICINE**] sees that he is lucid, but he makes no effort to get up until the count reaches eight. At this point, the frothing Eliots have made it to the ring apron and are hurling invectives at Rossi, who stares at them as the referee completes his count. An Extreme Listen check [**DIFFICULTY 6 SENSE TROUBLE**] picks up Nahum mumbling, as his brother shouts at Rossi. If made, a Hard Occult success [**1 POINT OCCULT SPEND**] can tell it's some sort of tracking ritual being placed on the downed fighter. The fight is over, and Jimmy Harris is declared the winner.

The scene in the ring is bedlam, as the Harris corner celebrates. The winner is joined by a jubilant Jack Johnson, who raises his hand in victory. Simmons, honestly concerned, sees to Rossi; the Eliots, stunned and enraged, continue to scream at him. As soon as Simmons has cut off his gloves, Rossi shoves his way through the throng in the ring and makes contact with the investigators.

After his listless performance, he's suddenly full of energy, showing no signs of his supposed knockout. He tells the investigators to meet him back at the apartment and asks them if they can get him a cup of tea, clearly implying a visit to the Morningside Teahouse. He then turns away and wades out of the ring, Simmons and the Eliots trailing behind.

The crowd heads for the doors, and the discussion on everyone's lips is about the shocking knockout. Some claim that Harris just has Rossi's number. Others say that he landed a perfect shot that Rossi never saw coming. Some contend that old habits die hard, and that Rossi took another dive.

A Hard **Luck** roll [**DIFFICULTY 6 SHADOWING**] gets the investigators to Rossi's dressing room as they are mistakenly considered part of his entourage. Neither he nor the Eliots are amenable to discussion. Rossi again urges them to go to Morningside Teahouse, and then meet him at the apartment. He tries to be subtle, but becomes increasingly blunt if the investigators fail to take the hint. The Eliots, by and large, ignore the investigators unless they interject themselves into the discussion.

In Rossi's dressing room, the Eliots scream at the fighter, and harangue him. They demand to know what happened. Simmons is completely bewildered by the events. The normally ebullient Rossi is surly and uncommunicative. He dresses quickly, and leaves with the Eliots still screaming at him. Shortly after he leaves, the true magnitude of the loss settles on the brothers.

They had become convinced that due to his singular physiology, Rossi could not lose. To that end, the brothers became more and more bold. They felt that betting on him was a sure thing, so they wagered everything they had on him. They have lost everything—all the considerable wealth they'd amassed through gambling on him is gone, and they are now as poor as they were when they arrived in Harlem. The brothers are now once again destitute and seething with rage...a deadly combination.

TWICE FOR TEA

SCENE TYPE: Alternate

LEAD-IN: The Main Event

LEAD-OUTS: A Volatile Reunion

Morningside Teahouse

The teahouse is open well after its posted closing time. The scene is much the same, but this time Lewis recognizes them and waves them over, allowing them to cut in front of the other waiting men. This is greeted with some amazement.

Lewis congratulates them on picking the winner and stares at them, almost weighing their souls. A Hard **Charm** or Extreme **Fast Talk** check [**INSPIRATION OR 1 POINT REASSURANCE SPEND**] gets him to smile; he goes on to say that not everyone was so lucky, especially the Eliots. They lost a considerable sum on this fight, or so he has heard—an amount so significant that it may very well have...ramifications. As Lewis gives them a satchel containing their winnings (around \$2500), he tells them that this advice is free.

Assuming success, Lewis adds before they leave the brothers may not have an extensive network of hired muscle, but the Haragan are former military, and quite bloodthirsty. If the investigators failed the roll, he wishes them luck but advises they never come back. Atticus Lewis has permanently closed the books for them.

A VOLATILE REUNION

SCENE TYPE: Core

LEAD-IN: The Main Event

LEAD-OUTS: Waiting for Jack

Rossi has returned home, knowing that the clock is ticking. The Eliots have a number of connections; it is only a matter of time before they learn of his wager, and more critically, his betrayal of them. They will be out for blood, and look to take his winnings to help recoup their losses. At this point, the fighter is resigned to his fate, his fraying sanity has snapped, and he is careening toward the abyss.

When the investigators arrive, Rossi and his wife Juanita are in the middle of an argument. Juanita wants to know where the children are, and why she has to leave the apartment in the middle of the night. None of her questions or concerns will be soothed when the investigators present Rossi with a satchel full of cash. Incapable of dealing with the situation, Rossi asks the investigators to speak to his distraught wife.

Juanita is an intelligent and rational woman, but she's under a tremendous amount of stress in the current situation. She is not apt to believe any supernatural explanation, but she can be reasoned with through a **Charm**, Extreme **Intimidate**, Hard **Fast Talk**, or **Persuade** roll [**REASSURANCE**]. Particularly good or bad supporting reasons should merit a bonus or penalty die.

The immediate threat and recent events can easily be presented to Juanita, and quickly resolved. She is canny enough to know that by double-crossing the Eliots, her husband has brought trouble to their door. Flight seems an appropriate and prudent response. However, the matter of her missing children is of greater concern. Up to this point, the absence of the children may have gone unnoticed by the investigators, and they might very well share her concern.

The matter of the missing children aligns the inquiries of the investigators and the very distraught Juanita towards Stefano Rossi. He never states directly what happened to the children. He obfuscates, saying things like “they’re safe now” or “nothing can hurt them now.” If the investigators confronted Rhoda and told Rossi about this, he says that the children are with their grandmother. He says this more to the investigators than to Juanita.

Once this scene has generated sufficient tension, the Eliots, accompanied by the Haragan clan, arrive. If the investigators have posted a lookout, they see two 1922 Lincoln Sedans pull up to the curb, and six men (including the Eliots) get out, the four gunmen wearing stolen and battered Dayfield body shields. Some are carrying handguns, others carry shotguns. The gunmen are rough-looking men who seem accustomed to violent actions.

If no one was paying attention to the windows, call for **Listen** rolls [**DIFFICULTY 5 SENSE TROUBLE**]. Success indicates that the investigators have heard footsteps on the stairs suggestive of unusual numbers and rapid ascent. The footsteps are accompanied by harsh voices which utter crude oaths, and speak of rough business soon to be perpetrated. The time for discussion is over.

AUTHOR'S NOTE: STAGING THIS SCENE

After the investigators told Rossi about his Deep One heritage, he snapped. He doesn't want to be a monster, and he doesn't want his kids to be monsters. He'll go full Deep One in the near future, and years from now, so will his kids. Rossi decides to prevent his kids from suffering this fate by—well, there's no easy way to say this—murdering them. Yes, it's extreme, but he's insane by this point, and feels there is no other way out. This author subscribes to Lovecraft Nihilism and encourages Keepers to run it in that fashion. As that style may not suit everyone, a few alternatives have been provided below.

1) The investigators may have noticed Rossi's strange behavior after discovering the truth. Keepers can stress his concern over his kids being infected, and take precautions ranging from not leaving him alone, half of the group going to his home before/during the fight, or calling Juanita and convincing her of Rossi's precarious mental state.

2) Juanita is a smart and strong woman, so it is unlikely that she would let her distraught husband take their children anywhere. This alternative could have the couple arguing over the kids up until the Eliots arrive. Then the investigators would have the added pressure of keeping them safe. Or she may have taken the children to a neighbor's apartment, while she and Stefano argue.

3) Juanita wanted to surprise her husband on his big night. She brought the kids to the bout, leaving a note for Rossi in case they miss him; she is stunned at his loss and is late getting home, having had to make it through the roiling crowd. She and the children arrive moments after the Eliots' encounter.

If you play it as written, this scene should be charged with emotion. Rossi is grief-stricken, and plans to die very shortly at the hands of the Eliots. He just wants the investigators to get his wife to safety; he doesn't care about himself in the slightest.

DAYFIELD BODY SHIELD

This 4-lb. armor is composed of metal plates inserted between fabric layers, and could be worn over or under a service jacket. It works well against low-velocity missile weapons, and provides a modicum of protection for high-speed weapons.

Rossi urges the investigators to take Juanita down the fire escape and get her to safety. He states plainly that he will stay behind and hold off the attackers. The choice to stay or go rests with the investigators; they have one minute to decide. Rossi stands in front of the door, in a boxer's fighting stance, and waits.

Rossi begs the investigators to leave, up until the moment the door bursts open. Once this occurs, he leaps forward with wild abandon, and with little regard for his own safety. The doorway creates a natural chokepoint, and under ideal circumstances, would give the advantage to those defending from within the apartment. However, Rossi's mad charge momentarily robs the investigators of this, causing all **Firearms** rolls to suffer a penalty die [+1 **DIFFICULTY FIREARMS**]. For good or ill, this situation only lasts an instant, as Rossi's suicidal charge accomplishes its goal—after a crescendo of deafening gunfire, the boxer lies in a spreading pool of blood, just inside the door. Depending on their proximity to the action, the investigators may need to roll **Luck** or **Dodge** [**DIFFICULTY 5 ATHLETICS** OR **DIFFICULTY 3 SENSE TROUBLE**] to avoid losing 1D4 **Hit Points** [2 **HEALTH**] from the spray of buckshot.

Unless she's been spirited away, Juanita howls in anguish. From the hallway, the unctuous voice of Joab Eliot will call out, "We got half of what we came here for—now give us the money, and nobody else has to die." The choice to stay and fight or flee rests with the investigators. If they toss the satchel into the hallway, the gunmen will collect it and leave.

If the children are present and the investigators are actively trying to keep them safe, impose a penalty die for all actions [+2 **DIFFICULTY**]. Otherwise, have the player with the lowest **Luck** roll every other round [**DIFFICULTY 6 SENSE TROUBLE**] to see if the children are safe. The Eliots engage in combat alongside the gunmen, but their tactics are very different. Joab fires on the investigators with a sawed-off shotgun. Nahum uses sorcery to attack the investigators.

If the investigators choose to retreat prior to the altercation, they can climb down the fire escape easily enough. No roll is required, unless the investigators tarry. As they are reaching the street, they'll hear the sounds of the door being breached, followed by the sounds of a violent physical altercation, all of which culminates in the thundering sound of shotguns being fired. Upon

reaching the surface, they can flee or attempt to hide in the shadowy alley (a bonus die on **Stealth** roll [**DIFFICULTY 4 STEALTH**]). The assailants look out the window to see if there's anyone in the alley; make **Spot Hidden** rolls [**DIFFICULTY 5 SENSE TROUBLE**] for the antagonists. Only two shooters can look out the window at any given time.

If the investigators flee, on foot or in a vehicle, they can easily escape pursuit. Should they dally, then the encounter can devolve into a foot chase, a wicked game of hide and seek, or outright combat.

REQUIEM FOR A HEAVYWEIGHT

Once the conflict has been resolved, whether through retreat or otherwise, the investigators can revisit the apartment. As the smell of gunpowder fades, and terrified neighbors cautiously peek out of partially opened doors, the investigators can survey the tragic scene that has forever shattered the Rossi home. Stefano Rossi, possibly some investigators, one or both of the Eliots, and their hired gunmen, litter the apartment. Juanita, if she is present and unharmed, will rush over, cradling her dead husband in her arms.

Among the many loose ends is the matter of the Rossi children. If not saved by the investigators—if the investigators confronted the monstrous Rhoda Rossi, and in turn told Stefano about this—the investigators may feel compelled to follow up on Rossi's comment about the children being safe with their grandmother.

They can return to the site of the confrontation in the sewers, which is much the same as the first time they visited. However, almost immediately, the investigators notice a mostly clean blanket draped across the rotting mattress. The contour of the blanket is marked by three child shaped lumps. Lifting the blanket will reveal the peaceful but clearly dead faces of Alberto, Anthony, and Ava Rossi. Seeing this costs 1D3/1D8 **Sanity** loss [**DIFFICULTY 6 STABILITY** check]; any temporary madness induced should be punctuated by terrible grief, considering the loss of innocent lives, even though they may have been cursed by their terrible lineage.

Thorough (if ghoulish) investigators can examine the bodies to determine the cause of death. A **Medicine** roll [**MEDICINE**] indicates that they were smothered.



WAITING FOR JACK

Scene type: Denouement

Lead-in: A Volatile Reunion

Lead-outs: N/A

The final matter will have them return to where the scenario began, the Cotton Club, likely on Saturday. Jack Johnson is too busy in the evening to meet with them, so they need to come by during the day. When they arrive, the Cotton Club is relatively quiet. Harris has the day off, and a skeletally thin man will be pushing a broom in his stead. Johnson's at the bar, his bow tie undone. He is enjoying a 30-year-old bourbon, listening to the plaintive crooning of a bluesman auditioning to perform at the club.

Assuming the investigators intervened and prevented harm from befalling Jimmy Harris, Johnson greets them with a nod. He'll treat them to a drink on the house, and ask them to fill him in the details of their work. He accepts nearly any story; if they share strange tales of the supernatural, he raises an eyebrow but does not comment. Told of the sad fate of Rossi (and his children), Johnson concludes the conversation by saying "Not everybody gets a happy ending in Harlem."

The investigators are likely to emerge from this scenario frayed, mentally and physically. If they have taken care of Juanita (and the children) and seen to her needs, then they have earned the cold comfort of 1D6 (1D10) **Sanity** [3 **BUILD POINTS**].

NAHUM ELIOT

Accounting, Cthulhu Mythos, Library Use, Occult, Fleeing 4, Firearms 2, Sense Trouble 3

Health 6

ALERTNESS MODIFIER: +2

WEAPON: -2 (Fist), +0 (Pistol)

SPELLS: See list at right

JOAB ELIOT

Accounting, Assess Honesty 3, Intimidation 4, Streetwise 3, Athletics 7, Filch 4, Firearms 5, Shadowing 4

Health 9

STEALTH MODIFIER: +1

WEAPON: -2 (Fist), +2 (Shotgun)

APPENDIX A: CHARACTERS

NAHUM ELIOT

AGE 25, THE QUIET ONE

STR 55 **CON** 65 **SIZ** 55 **DEX** 65 **INT** 65
APP 30 **POW** 85 **EDU** 60 **SAN** - **HP** 12
DB 0 **Build** 0 **Move** 8/8* **MP:** 17

*Swimming

Brawl: 33% (16/6), damage 1D3

Luger: 43% (21/8), damage 1D10, attacks per round 1 (3)

Dodge: 30% (15/6)

Armor: None

Skills: Accounting 60%, Anthropology 31%, Cthulhu Mythos 50%, History 48%, Language (Pnakotic) 40%, Library Use 53%, Occult 70%, Stealth 30%, Swim 50%

Spells: Breath of the Deep, Chant of Thoth, Clutch of Nyogtha, Deflect Harm, Dominate

BACKSTORY

- **Description:** Appears late 40s with bulging eyes
- **Trait:** Bookish and standoffish

JOAB ELIOT

AGE 23, THE ROWDY ONE

STR 70 **CON** 70 **SIZ** 80 **DEX** 45 **INT** 45
APP 40 **POW** 55 **EDU** 40 **SAN** - **HP** 15
DB +1D4 **Build** 1 **Move** 8/8* **MP** 11

*Swimming

Brawl: 53% (26/10), damage 1D3 + 1D4

Sawed-Off Shotgun: 43% (21/8), damage 4D6/1D6 (5/10 yds), attacks per round 1 or 2

Dodge: 46% (23/9)

Armor: 1 point of fat and rough skin

Skills: Accounting 41%, Art (Acting) 43%, Fast Talk 57%, Intimidate 68%, Listen 33%, Psychology 80%, Sleight of Hand 57%, Spot Hidden 62%, Stealth 48%, Swim 65%

Equipment: Sawed-off double-barrel shotgun, wads of cash, bottle of gin

BACKSTORY

- **Description:** Rippling mounds of pale flesh tucked into a suit
- **Trait:** Diabolical hedonist

STEFANO ROSSI

AGE 33, THE CONTENDER AND DOOMED MAN

Rossi is a boxer, a man who has been in with some tough customers and held his own, but never before has he shown the wherewithal to become a real contender. He loves his family above all else, and knows this is his shot.

STR 90 **CON** 80 **SIZ** 90 **DEX** 45 **INT** 50
APP 55 **POW** 30 **EDU** 35 **SAN** 23 **HP** 17
DB+ 1D6 **Build** 2 **Move** 8 **MP** 6

Brawl: 65% (37/12), damage 1D3 + 1 + 1D6

Dodge: 37% (18/7)

Armor: 2-point leathery skin and muscle

Skills: Charm 50%, Climb 43%, Firearms (Rifle) 40%, Listen 55%, Stealth 43%, Swim 47%, Survival 40%, Throw 50%

Equipment: Workout clothes

BACKSTORY

- **Description:** Beefy wall of a man
- **Trait:** Downward spiral

ATTICUS "THE ABACUS" LEWIS

AGE 29, NUMBERS MAN

Atticus "the Abacus" Lewis is a tall, rail-thin man with eyes burning with an intelligence that surpasses everyone around him. He quickly weighs every option before speaking or acting.

STR 35 **CON** 60 **SIZ** 45 **DEX** 60 **INT** 85
APP 60 **POW** 55 **EDU** 75 **SAN** 75 **HP** 10
DB -1 **Build** -1 **Move** 8 **MP** 12

Sword Cane: 60% (30/12), damage 1D6 - 1

Dodge: 53% (25/10)

Armor: None

Skills: Accounting 75%, Appraise 45%, Charm 50%, Credit Rating 65%, Library Use 63%, Locksmith 55%, Psychology 60%

Equipment: Glasses (doesn't need them but people expect it), jeweled sword cane, cash

BACKSTORY

- **Description:** Smart and stylish
- **Trait:** Good with numbers

STEFANO ROSSI

Assess Honesty 2, Athletics 4, Scuffling 8, Sense Trouble 4
Stability 6, Sanity 3, Health 13

WEAPON: -1 (Fist)

ATTICUS "THE ABACUS" LEWIS

Accounting 4, Credit Rating 4, Flattery 4, Weaponry 4

Stability 9, Sanity 4, Health 5

ALERTNESS MODIFIER: +1

WEAPON: +0 (Sword Cane)

THE WIDOW

Athletics 8/12, Scuffling 8/12

Health 9

HIT THRESHOLD: 4/5

ALERTNESS MODIFIER: +1

STEALTH MODIFIER: +1

WEAPON: +1 (Claw)

ARMOR: -1 vs any (scales and skin)

STABILITY LOSS: +0

BRUNO GRECO

Intimidate 4, Scuffling 6, Sense Trouble 3

Stability 5, Sanity 5, Health 9

ALERTNESS MODIFIER: +1

WEAPON: +1 (Pistol)

RHODA ROSSI

AGE 60, THE WIDOW

Most of her features are covered in a tatter of rotting, filthy clothes. Her hunched form, haggard breathing, and unnatural movements are disturbing to witness.

STR 80 **CON** 60 **SIZ** 100 **DEX** 65 **INT** 65
APP - **POW** 70 **EDU** - **SAN** - **HP** 16
DB +1D6 **Build** 2 **Move** 8/10* **MP** 14

*Swimming

Special: Breathe Underwater: Dwelling under the sea, Deep Ones require no external help to breathe underwater, and are equally capable of breathing on land.

Spells: None

Brawl: 45% (22/9), damage claws 1D6 + 1D4, attacks per round 1

Dodge: 25% (12/5)

Armor: 1-point skin and scales

Skills: Climb 55%, Jump 70%, Stealth 60%, Swim 99%, Track 45%, Throw 55%

Equipment: Tattered clothes and shroud

BACKSTORY

- **Description:** Horrific creature under tattered robes
- **Trait:** Loyal to her family

SAN Loss: 0/1d6

BRUNO GRECO

AGE 31, FLESH PEDDLER

Once a loyal member and enforcer of the Giovanni gang, Bruno bolted after the incident in the library, after which Orsino was never the same. A thin man with no moral compass, marketable skills and concern for humanity. He did what came naturally...

STR 50 **CON** 60 **SIZ** 50 **DEX** 75 **INT** 55
APP 60 **POW** 50 **EDU** 40 **SAN** 38 **HP** 11
DB 0 **Build** 0 **Move** 8 **MP** 10

Brawl: 41% (20/8), damage 1D3

.45 Auto: 63% (31/12), damage 1D10 + 3, attacks per round 1 (3)

Dodge: 46% (23/9) **Armor:** None

Skills: Fast Talk 40%, Intimidate 70%, Psychology 50%, Spot Hidden 53%

Equipment: .45 auto, flask of gin, wad of cash, ring of keys to different seedy apartments

BACKSTORY

- **Description:** Corrupt enforcer turned pimp
- **Trait:** Weaselly

LENOX ATHLETIC CLUB BOXERS

STR 65 **CON** 60 **SIZ** 60 **DEX** 55 **INT** 55
APP 50 **POW** 50 **EDU** 65 **SAN** 55 **HP** 12
DB + 1D4 **Build** 1 **Move** 8 **MP** 10

Brawl: 43% (21/8), damage 1D3 + 1 + 1D4

Dodge: 43% (21/8)

Armor: None

Skills: Intimidate 35%, Listen 40%, Spot Hidden 45%

Equipment: Boxing gloves, water bottle

BACKSTORY

- **Description:** Amateurs looking for their shot
- **Trait:** Tough

HARAGAN GOONS (4)

These four white men are cousins from the Haragan clan. They are silent, grim, and work for whoever is paying them; currently that's the Eliots. The foursome's former military training is obvious to anyone who has served. The group's weapons breakdown includes one tommy gun, one shotgun, and two pistols.

STR 45 **CON** 55 **SIZ** 45 **DEX** 55 **INT** 40
APP 50 **POW** 50 **EDU** 55 **SAN** 50 **HP** 10
DB 0 **Build** 0 **Move** 8 **MP** 10

Brawl: 26% (13/5), damage 1D3

Tommy Gun: 45% (27/9), damage 1D10 + 2, attacks per round 1 or Full Auto

Luger: 55% (27/11), damage 1D10, attacks per round 1 (3)

16-gauge Shotgun: 60% (30/12), damage 2D6 + 2 / 1D6 + 1, attacks per round 1 or 2

Dodge: 40% (20/8)

Armor: 6 Dayfield body shield (in the trunk of the car)

Skills: Climb 45%, Stealth 55%, Survival 45%, Tactics 60%

Equipment: Corduroy suits, fedoras, bullets, and guns

BACKSTORY

- **Description:** Battered and shattered by the war
- **Trait:** Bloodthirsty

LENOX AMATEUR BOXERS

Intimidate 4, Scuffling 6,
Sense Trouble 3

Stability 5, Sanity 5, Health 9

WEAPON: -1 (Fist)

HARAGAN GOONS (4)

Athletics 3, Firearms 6

Stability 5, Sanity 4, Health 7

ARMOR: 3 (In trunk)

WEAPON: +1 (Pistol), +2 (Shotgun),
+3 (Tommy Gun)

APPENDIX B: PLAYER HANDOUTS

BLOW-BY-BLOW OF RAWLS VS. ROSSI

The fifteen-round fight started out well for Rawls. He was clearly much quicker than Rossi, and his punches seemed to have more snap to them. Rossi's punches were slower, and he lumbered around the ring. However, he was bigger than his opponent, and appeared to be much stronger. Rossi also seemed to have very "heavy hands" (a boxing term used to describe a fighter whose punches, while not being visually impressive, do considerable damage to his opponent).

As the fight wore on, Rossi did not appear to tire at all. He continued at the same steady pace throughout, and did not seem bothered by any punishment he took. Rawls, on the other hand, was taking hard damage—and was slowing down as the bout wore on, leading to him take more and more punches from the plodding Rossi. At the end of the fourteenth round, Rossi looked completely fresh and unfazed. Rawls was exhausted, badly beaten, and scarcely able to stand—however, he was clearly leading on points, and if he finished on his feet, would win the fight.

His corner urged Rawls to "get on his bicycle" (a boxing term advising a fighter to stay away from his opponent). Despite his best efforts, the young fighter was simply too tired, and Rossi caught up with him. Rawls was trapped in a corner, and Rossi unloaded a ten-punch combination, each hit landing with a heavy thud. Rawls went down, and the fight was stopped. He later collapsed in his dressing room, never recovered consciousness, and died a few days later.

Player Handout 1: Newspaper Clippings of the Rawls Fight

A stack of clippings from various newspapers, black and white, relay information gleaned from interviews of people at the fight. The event was not filmed.

The information imparted after the reading tells of the journey of Captain Abner Ezekiel Hoag to a South Pacific island where he encountered a group of people who worshipped a strange sea god. Hoag stayed with these folk for some time, and recorded many of their bizarre and terrible rites. He also described how the people interbred with the sea-dwelling denizens of this god. The offspring from these unholy couplings would appear fully human at birth, but over time, would grow more and more like their undersea parent. Eventually, they would be wholly consumed by the unknowable, unfathomable, and inhuman compulsions of these beings, and be drawn to the sea.

The mental anguish for gaining this knowledge, especially as it pertains to the fate of Stefano Rossi and his children, is terrible.

Player Handout 2:
Excerpt from Ponape Scripture

**STEFANO ROSSI
vs. JIMMY HARRIS**

10 ROUNDS (HEAVYWEIGHT)

**FRAZIER KANE
vs. LASHER LYBROO**

10 ROUNDS (HEAVYWEIGHT)

**MIGUEL MENDEZ
vs. JACK SMITH**

8 ROUNDS (WELTERWEIGHT)

**PATRICK MCGOWAN
vs. RENALDO MIRANDA**

6 ROUNDS (BANTAMWEIGHT)

COMMONWEALTH CASINO

Robert Winston Enterprises,
in association with the Eliot Brothers

Player Handout 3: Fight Card



DREAMS AND BROKEN WINGS

“She wished to find out about this hazardous business of ‘passing,’ this breaking away from all that was familiar and friendly to take one’s chance in another environment, not entirely strange, perhaps, but certainly not entirely friendly.”

Nella Larsen, *Passing*

INTRODUCTION

DREAMS AND BROKEN WINGS takes place in the fall of 1927. The Harlem Renaissance is in full swing; for the last year, Aaron Douglas and his wife Alta have gathered around them the group of artists and creators who form the nucleus of the movement. *The Crisis* and *Opportunity Journal*, publications which serve as the literary backbone of the movement, are publishing creative work and writing by many who seek to change the narrative of the African American in American culture.

This adventure is designed for a party of 3-4 beginning-level investigators. If you wish to play with fewer investigators, you may wish to adjust the number of adversaries downward. Doing so shouldn't affect gameplay.

BACKGROUND

Clayton Morris is dead.

You're probably wondering what happened to him, and how he ended up rotting at the bottom of the Hudson River with two .45 caliber bullets lodged in his brain. I could start way back...tell you all about his childhood. About the father who beat his wife and kept his children in a perpetual state of fear. About the mother's death (tuberculosis, in case you were curious). I could tell you about the years Clayton and his sister Pearl spent languishing in a Harlem orphanage.

But honestly, the best place to start this story... is the dreams.

Dreams are funny things. Some people are inspired by their dreams, and look to them as a source of aspiration. Others are haunted by phantasmal reminders of bad decisions and regret. For Clayton, dreams were something else entirely. For Clayton, dreams were a realm to be explored. Perhaps it was Clayton's way of dealing with the harsh realities of his waking life. Who can say with any certainty why the Dreamlands opens its doors to any of the select few who cross over. But cross over, he did.

The other thing I should probably tell you about Clayton Morris is that he possessed prodigious artistic talent. Ultimately, it is the combination of these two things—his ability to enter the realm of dreams, and his skill at capturing what he saw there on canvas—that led him to his death.

But Morris' artistic talents weren't merely focused on the wanderings of his subconscious mind. He also had an eye for the beauty of daily life. And just as the former would eventually bring him darkness and ruin, the latter brought him happiness...and love.

Lena Thoreau was a songbird whose voice was so pure, so golden, it could carry you to the gates of Heaven itself. Clayton and Lena fell into each other's orbits in early 1924, and they each knew they had found their other half. Clayton and Lena's creative spirits made for natural chemistry—in many ways, they became each other's muses, driving one another to creative heights neither could achieve alone. They were married less than a year later, and moved into a modest apartment in Lower Harlem. Despite Clayton's love for Lena, however,

he never told her about the Dreamlands. In truth, as his love for Lena grew, he found his dreams becoming increasingly earthbound, tied to the beauty and warmth of her soul. She saw the paintings, of course—but she never suspected the true source of their inspiration.

1926 saw Morris gaining a foothold in the Harlem art scene, the movement which would later be called the Harlem Renaissance. In that year, he came to the attention of Aaron Douglas and a number of other artists who gathered at the Douglas household. As for Lena, her own talents began to pay dividends with regular gigs at the Cotton Club and other popular establishments. Their happiness wouldn't last.

In January 1927, almost three years to the day since they met, Lena Thoreau's life was cut short in the midst of a petty crime. The bullet that took Lena's life tore a gaping wound in Clayton's soul.

It was later that year that death came calling for Morris too, in the form of Ronald Stewart. Stewart didn't look like much—a heavyset, balding man whose bearing spoke of inherited wealth and a taste for spending it. Just another one of those rich uptown white men who came to Harlem seeking thrills, and throwing their money around like it meant something. But Stewart knew a thing or two about art. He also knew a thing or two about the Dreamlands, which took Morris quite by surprise. Stewart was drawn to Morris' paintings—and not the ones Morris showed the usual crowd. Stewart liked the other work—the stranger stuff.

Morris thought Stewart was pulling his leg, at first. Who would ever have suspected some shit-slinging rich man could know? But he did. And he knew a few things Morris didn't. Not parlor tricks, mind you—but real magic.

Stewart said he had been studying something called a dream battery, an artifact that could manifest your desires—your dreams—and bring them to life. Stewart's offer was pregnant with insinuation. “Why Clayton, don't you see? With a device such as this, you could do anything—even, say, bring a lost loved one back to life.”

What was he supposed to do? You can hardly blame Morris for entering into that pact. All Stewart asked was for Morris to use his ability to walk in the Dreamlands to find the design for the vessel, which had thus far eluded Stewart. Clayton should have been more cautious—he should have realized what was in Stewart's

heart. But he was blinded by grief, and by the hope that he could be reunited with his Lena, his songbird.

So he did it.

Clayton ventured into the Dreamlands, and found the design Stewart required. It was an arduous task; it took months of wandering the Dreamlands, carried him across the Cerenerian Sea, to the foothills of Ooth-Nargai, into pacts with ghouls and nightgaunts. Fortunately, the strange laws which govern the Dreamlands meant that mere days on Earth had passed in the time Morris took to locate the plans for the dream battery. Stewart took Morris' plans and commissioned a sculptor named Cecil Dreyfuss to bring them to life.

A week later, Morris was surprised when the pompous lump returned with a completed dream battery. Stewart instructed Morris in its use; the battery should be placed in his apartment, and allowed to charge for several days. After reaching full capacity, a ritual could be performed which would create an area of “dreamspace” around the battery, which could then be shaped to the user's whim. Surely a dreamer of Morris' capabilities should find such a thing easy to do, Stewart reassured him. And Stewart himself would also be attempting some manifestation, with the second device Dreyfuss created, kept for himself.

Morris was skeptical, but accepted the battery, and received instruction to perform the ritual. He placed the battery in a niche under his bed, and waited the allotted time. Two days later, Morris tapped into the reservoir of arcane energy now stored in the dream battery. He spent two more days bending reality to his will, according to the ritual—and from his desperation, from his love and loss, from every memory still lingering in his mind and soul, he brought Lena Thoreau back into being. She would be with him forever.

At first, it was idyllic. Though a creation of pure dream energy, Morris' conjuration of his dead lover was an emotionally pure representation of everything he remembered about her. Once again, her gorgeous voice filled his apartment. It was so wonderful, so perfect, that he almost took no notice of the changes occurring in those around him. People were becoming sullen and depressed. Even the children who played outside in the summer months were listless and sapped of energy, their childlike glee snuffed out. Morris then realized what price was paid to salve his grief: the battery consumed dreams, the very source of all hope and aspiration, and converted them into the energy that gave

his Lena new life. And there was another dream battery out there...somewhere. To what end did Stewart, that pompous toad whose interest in others clearly extended only as far as he could extract something useful from them, wish to put his own battery?

Morris tried to contact Stewart, but to no avail. He tracked down the sculptor who Stewart hired to produce the batteries, Cecil Dreyfuss. Stewart had been in a week ago, to commission three more sculptures. Morris pleaded with Dreyfuss to not complete the work, but it was too late—they were finished, and in Stewart's hands.

Three more batteries—each with the power to drain an apartment building full of innocent people, to sap their hopes and dreams so that they may be bent to another's whim. Morris, filled with rage, set out with a .38 revolver and a desire to put things right.

Through Dreyfuss, Morris managed to get a message to Stewart. They met at Morris' studio. An argument ensued. Stewart, who saw all of life as a series of transactions in which you either came out ahead or behind, asked Morris if he had not gotten what he wanted. Morris—enraged by Stewart's indifference to the harm he was causing—demanded to know what Stewart had planned. Stewart was more than happy to show him. Stewart's driver brought them to an abandoned theater in the heart of Harlem's artistic center—and Clayton's heart sank, thinking of all those dreams, all the beauty and creativity that would be pulled into the maw of Stewart's void and crushed. What terrible scheme could Stewart have in mind, that required the sacrifice of all these hopes and dreams?

It turns out his desire was simple: pleasure. Raw, uninhibited pleasure. Morris learned, to his horror, that Stewart wasn't alone—that he represented a cabal of rich hedonists, the Temple of Leviathan, whose only desire was to empower themselves by any means necessary for the sole purpose of feeding their insatiable hunger for power and physical pleasure. With four batteries feeding off the dreams of hundreds, the Temple could create and sustain an entire borough of New York devoted to satisfying their every carnal desire. Freed from the constraints of the waking world, the only limit was the bounds of their perverse imaginations.

Morris, in his anger, took one wild shot at Stewart before being subdued by the other members of the Temple. In the end, Morris' efforts succeeded only in pushing Stewart and the Temple to commit murder. Wealth and corruption being natural bedfellows, one of the Temple

members, a criminal attorney named Morgan Pierce, had connections with the local mob. To keep his own hands clean, Pierce hired some thugs working for a local Italian gangster named Theo Spinelli.

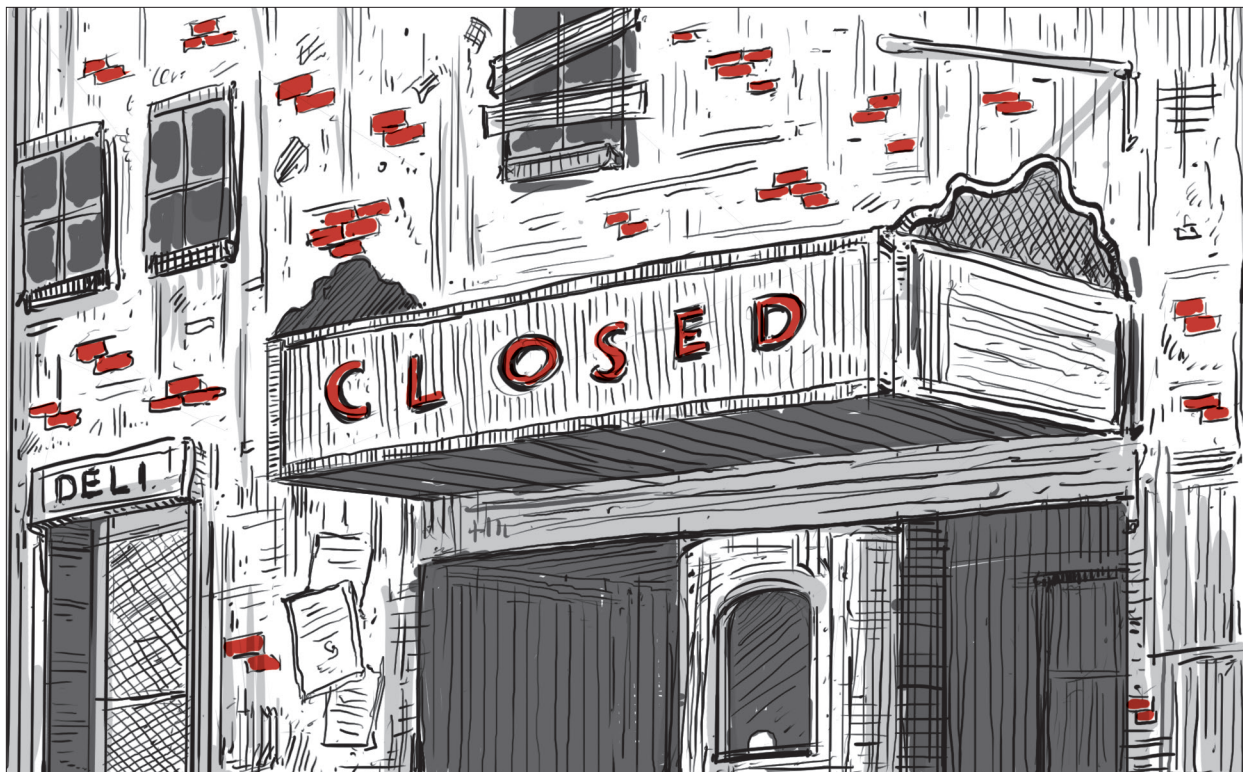
Spinelli runs a numbers racket out of the back of a butcher shop in East Harlem, for Giuseppe "The Clutch Hand" Morello and the Morello crime family. Plenty of money crosses his palms every day, but very little of it makes it into Spinelli's pocket. So who's to care if ol' Theo makes a little on the side? The muscle is there; nobody is dumb enough to take a shot at one of Morello's operations, so the boys just sit around twiddling their thumbs most of the time. Why not take on a little under-the-table side work, and split the profits 50/50? Spinelli gets a call offering good money. Easy money. Just rub out some meddling spook. A garbage run.

So Spinelli sends a few of the boys. It's a short night's work to drag him out to the waterfront, put a couple of bullets in him and throw his body in the Hudson River. Oh, and while you're at it, send someone over to the guy's apartment with an envelope...just slip it under the landlady's door, and make sure he isn't seen. Pay Morris' rent for a few months, make it look like he decided to take an unscheduled vacation.

That should have been the end of it. Stewart and the Temple activated the dream batteries, placed them in locations around the neighborhood, and waited for them to accumulate enough energy to finalize their plans.

But before he died, Morris had one last card up his sleeve. It wouldn't save him...but it might be enough to bring attention to the Temple and their plans. Summoning all his will, Morris projected himself into the one thing he had left in the world: his art. Each painting, every last one, was a piece of his soul made manifest. His dreams made real. He may not be able to walk into the Dreamlands during the day, but he might be able to imprint himself onto a canvas produced by his own hand. As he was dragged out of the trunk of the car and laid out on the riverbank, Morris' anguish and despair reached out across space—and for the briefest of moments, he felt his face bathed in the summer sunlight captured in a painting he gave his sister, years ago.

It would be the last thing Clayton Morris ever felt.



THE TEMPLE OF LEVIATHAN

The Temple of Leviathan was, until five years ago, merely a weekly poker game attended by five of New York City's scions.

It was Morgan Pierce, a prominent East Coast attorney, who first introduced the group to esoteric knowledge through some old tomes his grandfather left in his care. Morgan brought them to have a lark with the rest of the group. Thinking them to be silly fictions, Morgan left them in Ronald Stewart's care. Most of the books were harmless ephemera, but hidden amongst the drivel was a modicum of useful occult lore. Stewart—whose wealth was only matched by his capacity for boredom—spent the next few weeks immersed in their study. When Stewart suggested the group engage in some blasphemous fun, none of them took him seriously, but they uniformly enjoyed the notion of indulging his maniacal suggestion.

They were somewhat startled when Stewart guided them to one of the city's numerous morgues. Where the group had expected a silly evening romp among the tombstones of a local graveyard, they were instead treated to the badly decomposed body of a suicide victim. The poor soul, Stewart explained, had been

found in his apartment with wrists slashed, stewing in a cold broth of blood and bathwater. He reassured them that the policemen on duty had been duly compensated for their inattention, and would not interfere with their evening's festivities.

Giving them each a part to play, Stewart led the group through the ritual. After the necessary ministrations, they breathlessly awaited a response from the corpse—and when none was forthcoming, they left a very dejected Ronald Stewart fuming in the morgue. Two days later, Stewart attended the group's weekly card game with the deceased man as his invited guest. The group was aghast, and accused him of base trickery. Before they could storm out, however, Burgess recited an incantation, reducing the corpse to a pile of dust—then just as quickly, reversed the process.

After that astonishing display, the other members took Stewart's newfound obsession quite seriously. Over the next few years the group, which now came to call itself the Temple of Leviathan, slowly accumulated lore and increased their ability to wield their newfound talents. It is perhaps fortunate that the group was less power-hungry than hedonistic. To feed the group's need for

knowledge-bearing artifacts and tomes, Stewart began using his resources to delve into the art trade. It was here that he began to pull the threads that would eventually lead him to his obsession with the Dreamlands. As he accumulated example after example of surreal art, he pursued each new acquisition with an eye toward unlocking the mystery and power of dreams. It was inevitable that Stewart would stumble upon the work of Clayton Morris, and in the young artist's work, he knew he had found the dreamer he required to bring to fruition a plan he'd been forming for the past year.

The Temple of Leviathan consists of five members. The identity of each member, and their place in New York's social strata, is as follows:

Ronald Stewart (43): Effectively a millionaire playboy who spends his inheritance for a living. Currently indulges an interest in art collecting.

Reginald Thurston (25): The youngest member of the group. Serves as an executive with his father's shipping firm, Thurston Oceanic.

Morgan Pierce (51): Attorney, Criminal Law. Part of private law practice Pierce, Watterson, and Lowe.

Hayden Callows Grayson III (42): Owner of Grayson Industries, a chemical manufacturing company.

Leigh Burgess (39): Heiress of the Burgess family fortune, with holdings in numerous business interests around the globe.

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

JANUARY 8	Lena Thoreau killed.
OCTOBER 1	Ronald Stewart approaches Clayton Morris.
OCTOBER 4	Morris begins his Dreamlands journey to retrieve plans for battery.
OCTOBER 8	Morris delivers battery design to Stewart.
OCTOBER 14	Morris receives his battery and conducts ritual.
OCTOBER 25	Morris meets Stewart at his studio.
OCTOBER 26	Clayton Morris killed.
OCTOBER 2	Morris fails to show at gathering at the household of Aaron and Alta Douglas.
OCTOBER 29	Pearl Wilkins goes to Morris' apartment.
OCTOBER 31	Batteries placed by Temple.
NOVEMBER 3	Pearl is horrified after seeing Clayton's face in a painting he gave her a year ago.
NOVEMBER 5	Investigators meet Pearl Wilkins. Investigators visit Morris' apartment. Temple begins dreamspace ritual.
NOVEMBER 6	Investigators possibly visit Morris' studio. Temple murders Cecil Dreyfuss. Investigators possibly visit Dreyfuss' workshop.
NOVEMBER 7	Investigators possibly visit East Harlem Policy Office. Investigators possibly visit Madame Yonday. Confrontation with the Temple of Leviathan.

INVESTIGATORS

The easiest way to get the investigators involved in the scenario is if they know Pearl Wilkins in some way, or are “friends of friends” who can be called in to investigate. They may have met Clayton Morris at one of the Douglasses’ parties, or if the Douglasses ask them to look in on him.

THE SPINE

DAY ONE: NOVEMBER 5, 1927

- Investigators arrive at Pearl Wilkins’ request.
- Investigate Clayton Morris’ apartment.

DAY TWO: NOVEMBER 6, 1927

- Temple murders Cecil Dreyfuss.
- Investigate Clayton Morris’ studio.
- Investigate Cecil Dreyfuss’ workshop.

DAY THREE: NOVEMBER 7, 1927

- Investigate East Harlem Policy Office.
- Possibly visit Madame Yonday.
- Confrontation at Temple Sanctuary.

KEY LOCATIONS

Location 1: Pearl Wilkins’ apartment

Location 2: Clayton Morris’ apartment

Location 3: Clayton Morris’ studio

Location 4: Cecil Dreyfuss’ workshop

Location 5: East Harlem Policy Office

Location 6: Madame Yonday’s

Location 7: Temple Sanctuary

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

CLAYTON MORRIS

Morris was a talented artist and painter whose work was gaining prominence. His lingering shadow is the only hope to stop the Temple of Leviathan.

LENA THOREAU

Clayton Morris’ deceased wife. Thoreau, a vivacious beauty and talented singer, lost her life when she was caught in the midst of a petty crime. She has since been brought back, in conjured form, thanks to the dream battery.

RONALD STEWART

Stewart is prototypically “rich for a living.” His father, Archibald Stewart, emigrated to the United States three decades ago, and spent the better part of the time since building and maintaining a fortune in the construction industry. Much to Archibald’s chagrin, Ronald hasn’t done much other than avail himself of his father’s fortune. He’s done no better as an occultist, using what knowledge he amasses in the service of personal gratification. Together with his cohorts in the Temple of Leviathan, Ronald has dedicated himself to using his powers to facilitate his hedonism.

PEARL WILKINS

Clayton Morris’ sister. Clayton and Pearl were separated at a young age when Pearl left the orphanage in the company of adoptive parents, leaving her brother to grow to adulthood on his own. Despite this, the siblings remained close following Clayton’s release from the orphanage. Pearl is employed as a nurse at Harlem Hospital.

MAXWELL GADDIS

It was Gaddis’ bullet that killed Lena Thoreau. Gaddis was on his way from his factory job earlier this year when a mugger threatened him at knifepoint. Gaddis, who habitually carried a revolver, drew his gun in defense and fired three shots. One injured the mugger (who was subsequently apprehended), one embedded itself in a brick wall, and the last punched a hole in Lena Thoreau’s heart, killing her instantly. Gaddis was deemed to have acted in self defense, and received only a minor charge.

THADDEUS OWEN

Thaddeus is a developmentally disabled man whom Clayton Morris befriended. Owen is also the last person to have seen Morris alive.

THEO SPINELLI

Theo is a low-ranking member of the Morello crime family. He operates a numbers racket office in East Harlem, and has been renting out Giuseppe “The Clutch Hand” Morello’s muscle, without Morello’s knowledge.

BLAKE KURZWEIL

Kurzweil is Spinelli’s most trusted gunman. A veteran of the Great War, Kurzweil began doing odd jobs for the Morello family upon his return. He is cold and efficient, and also fiercely loyal to Spinelli, whom he served alongside in the War. Kurzweil is currently infested with a portion of mucus from a Formless Spawn, which grants him a measure of supernatural abilities.

SCENES

STILL LIFE

SCENE TYPE: Introduction

LEAD-IN: N/A

LEAD-OUTS: The Woman of His Dreams, The Shooter, Morris' Studio

The adventure begins on Friday, November 5, 1927 at the residence of Clayton Morris' sister, Pearl Wilkins.

Pearl is a vivacious, caring woman in her late 20s who lives alone in a small, one-bedroom apartment on the second floor of a modest building located at the corner of 116th and Lenox. She is on the tall side, and has very distinctive hazel eyes. Her apartment is decorated sparsely but tastefully, the most notable feature being a number of works by artists whose company she keeps. Wilkins is by trade a nurse at Harlem Hospital, meaning she keeps fairly irregular hours.

When the investigators arrive, it is obvious that something is troubling her. She is friendly in tone, but also somewhat reserved. She offers the investigators a light snack and beverages (sandwiches and coffee), before explaining her reason for the summons.

Pearl is concerned for the safety of her brother, an artist named Clayton Morris. Wilkins relates the facts known to her about Clayton's disappearance, divulging that in recent weeks, her brother's behavior has been uncharacteristically erratic. Clayton, she says, has been in a deep depression since the loss of his wife Lena in January. Sometime in mid-October, his spirits suddenly lifted—but toward the end of the month, he became short-tempered, at times even anguished. She hasn't been around to his apartment to see him in quite a while, and the one time she offered to visit, he rebuffed her—explaining that he was doing well, but was too busy to see her. A week ago, he was supposed to attend a gathering at the home of Aaron Douglas and his wife Alta Sawyer. When he didn't arrive, it raised few eyebrows—the meetings are informal, and people tend to come or not, as they please.

At first, Pearl chalked up Clayton's failure to show at the Douglasses' gathering to his workload, but when he stopped answering her calls altogether, she grew suspicious. Two days after the gathering, she dropped by his apartment—but he wasn't home, and the neighbors seemed uniquely unhelpful. Pearl inquired about Clayton's absence with his landlady, Lillian Baumann; Ms. Baumann informed her that his rent had been paid several months in advance, with an explanation that he had been called out of town on sudden business.

At this point, Pearl grows quiet, as if she is suddenly disturbed by a painful memory. She explains that she was cleaning the apartment a few days after visiting Clayton's place when she saw something that deeply frightened her. She begs a moment to collect herself, then instead of explaining, she directs the investigators toward a painting hanging beside the doorway to the front hall. At first, nothing about the painting seems out of sorts. It's an idyllic summer scene of a street corner, familiar to anyone who knows Harlem. Couples strolling the sidewalk hand-in-hand, while locals sitting

AARON DOUGLAS AND THE HARLEM RENAISSANCE

Originally from Topeka, Kansas, Aaron Douglas would rise to prominence after the publication of Alain LeRoy Locke's *The New Negro*, Douglas' first major artistic commission. Often called "the father of African American Art," Douglas' graphic design work featured prominently in publications such as *The Crisis* (published by the NAACP under the stewardship of W.E.B. Du Bois, among others) and *Opportunity Journal* (published by the National Urban League) as well as *Harper's* and *Vanity Fair*. The Harlem household of Aaron and Alta Douglas was a gathering point for many of the movement's most prominent contributors.

Like many artists who were part of the Harlem Renaissance, Douglas' work played a huge role in shifting perceptions of African Americans away from caricature and stereotype. Taking cues from traditional African art, and combining it with his own modernist sensibilities, Douglas transformed the way the world saw Black America.

Douglas left Harlem in 1940 and settled in Nashville, Tennessee where he taught art for nearly three decades. He died in 1979 at the age of 79.

on the front stoop of an apartment building exchange gossip. A clutch of nearby children are being chased by a dog. The scene is beautifully rendered in Clayton's impressionist brushstrokes; broad, bold dabs of paint bring the canvas to life. An **Art and Crafts (Fine Arts)** or Hard **Spot Hidden** roll [**1 POINT EVIDENCE COLLECTION SPEND OR ART (PAINTING)**] makes plain the image of a forlorn man staring out a third floor window overlooking the scene. His eyes are drawn deep in the sockets, and his mouth is agape as if trying to scream at the people below. It's not immediately noticeable, but once seen, it's the only thing the eye is drawn to, when viewing the painting.

Once the investigators have noticed this oddity, Pearl exclaims—clearly knowing how insane it must sound—that the face in the window is Clayton's, and that she is absolutely certain it was not there before his disappearance. Upon this revelation, each investigator is subject to a 1 **Sanity** loss [**1 STABILITY**].

An **Art and Crafts (Fine Arts)** roll [**ART (PAINTING)**] affirms that Clayton's image in the window does seem consistent with the rest of the painting. A **Spot Hidden** roll [**EVIDENCE COLLECTION**] likewise confirms that the painting has not been moved in quite some time, as a thin layer of dust covers its surface, and cobwebs lie between the painting and the wall. Whatever happened to the painting, it's obvious that it hasn't been removed from the wall, painted, then replaced.

Pearl goes on to say that when Clayton gave her the painting a year ago, it was exactly as the investigators see it, minus the harrowing image of Morris screaming from the upper-story window. She goes on to say that she knows something terrible has happened to her brother, and that he's in trouble.

Pearl then grows silent and asks the investigators if there's anything they can do.

Pearl knows the following information, if asked:

- Clayton's apartment is located on 122nd Street, a few blocks from the Alhambra Club.
- Morris' rent was paid via a cash-filled envelope slipped under Ms. Baumann's door, the evening before his absence was noted at the gathering at the Douglasses' home. She did not ask to see the envelope, nor is she aware whether this is how he normally paid rent.
- There was something odd about his apartment building [**CORE CLUE: THE WOMAN OF HIS DREAMS**]. She can't quite describe it, but she says Ms. Baumann seemed more surly than usual, and the atmosphere

there was disturbing. Asked to describe what she means, she can relate the pale, sickly appearance of the few people she met, including Ms. Baumann. A First Aid or Medicine roll [**MEDICINE**] hints that at the very least, these people are probably suffering from extreme exhaustion.

- Morris hasn't been the same since his wife Lena died in January. She was killed by a stray bullet fired by a mugging victim. If the investigators look into the shooting, either by researching newspaper accounts or public records with a **Library Use** or **Law** roll [**BUREAUCRACY**], they can uncover Lena Thoreau's obituary (Player Handout 2) and a newspaper report (Player Handout 1) detailing the incident [**ALTERNATE CLUE: THE SHOOTER**].

Morris has a small studio a couple of blocks from his apartment. [**CORE CLUE: MORRIS' STUDIO**].

Pearl can't imagine what kind of business would call Clayton away at the last moment. They have no extended family to speak of, and all of their social circles exist entirely within Harlem and parts of New York.

THE WOMAN OF HIS DREAMS

SCENE TYPE: Core

LEAD-IN: Still Life

LEAD-OUTS: Morris' Studio

Clayton Morris lives in a modest six-story apartment building at 273 West 122nd Street. The building is home to twenty-four families, and is owned by a young woman by the name of Lillian Baumann. At 24, Baumann is fairly young to own and maintain a property of this size—but was left the building's steward after her parents died in a boating accident two years earlier. Since then, she has run the property, and most residents agree that she's done a terrific job. Baumann is usually polite, if a little reserved—but the effect the dream battery is having on Morris' apartment is taking its toll on her, along with the rest of the residents.

When approaching (or leaving) Morris' apartment, for the first time, a successful **Spot Hidden** roll [**DIFFICULTY 5 SENSE TROUBLE**] reveals a shadowy figure rapidly turning a corner at the end of the alley behind the apartment building. This is Blake Kurzweil, a petty thug in the employ of Theo Spinelli. Paranoid that someone might follow up on Morris' disappearance, Spinelli asked Kurzweil to keep an eye on the place for a couple of days. Kurzweil won't stick around long enough to get into a tussle with the investigators; rather, he'll report to Spinelli that there are some strangers poking around

Morris' place. For now, Spinelli plays it cool. Roughing up interlopers only attracts attention at this point. If the investigators try to pursue Kurzweil, he has long disappeared by the time they turn the corner. Following this discovery, a Hard **Spot Hidden** or **INT** roll [1 POINT EVIDENCE COLLECTION OR CHEMISTRY SPEND] uncovers a few droplets of a mucus-like substance on the ground where the figure was spotted. It is acidic, and anyone touching it takes 1D2 **Hit Points** of damage [1 HEALTH].

A sullen depression has settled on the families in these units, causing them endless nights of restless sleep, and sapping them of energy during their waking hours. The resulting malaise has caused more than a little tension among the residents, and there has been a recent spike in calls to the police from incidents arising in and around the building, as a **Bureaucracy** or **Law** roll [COP TALK OR LAW] shows. The pall of despair which hangs over the building is noticeable to non-residents, even anyone unfamiliar with the area. The residents themselves won't comment on it (they've been rendered so dull and insensate that they're almost completely unaware of the effect), but questioning the neighbors bears some fruit. Spending 1D3 hours and a successful **Charm** or **Persuade** roll [FLATTERY OR REASSURANCE] gets someone to tell the investigators that they first noticed something weird about three weeks ago, and in fact, one of the children in the building became uncharacteristically hostile around that time, and attacked one of their playmates. The police weren't called to intervene, but it stunned and frightened a few of the neighbors, who have been reticent to let their children play in front of the property ever since. A Hard **Persuade** roll [1 POINT INSPIRATION SPEND OR REASSURANCE] brings forth a witness who says the day before Morris' disappearance, he was seen leaving the apartment in a huff, cursing to himself, and headed somewhere on foot in a very excitable state.

The pervasive depression becomes increasingly noticeable once one enters the building, and becomes increasingly palpable as one approaches the fourth floor. Spending any time whatsoever on the fourth floor proves to be deeply unsettling, as one feels deep in the grip of an icy emptiness. All investigators suffer 2/1D6 **Sanity** loss [1 STABILITY] once they reach the fourth floor. Despite the building's heat being in perfect working order, an inescapable chill permeates the structure.

If the investigators wish to speak to Ms. Baumann, they'll find her in Unit 1A on the ground floor, as indicated on the mailboxes. Answering to a knock on her door, Baumann is quite a sight. Her naturally pale complexion

is deathly white, and her eyes are ringed with red and couched in dark circles. A **First Aid** or **Medicine** roll [MEDICINE] tells the investigators that she is clearly suffering, at the very least, from serious exhaustion or sleep deprivation. She can barely keep her thoughts together, and her speech is slurred. Without taking her in to see a specialist, all that can be ascertained is that she looks spectacularly unwell.

Gaining information from Baumann proves difficult. She's barely in her right mind, and is highly irritable to boot. Unless brought to reason with a **Psychoanalysis** or Hard **Charm** roll [DIFFICULTY 4 PSYCHOANALYSIS OR REASSURANCE], she simply mutters incoherently about not wanting to be bothered, and tries to retreat into her apartment. If calmed, she confirms that yes, Morris did take a leave of absence of some sort. Baumann does not know what the nature of this absence was. Yes, he did pay his rent several months in advance. She complains loudly about having answered these questions to the woman who showed up a few days ago, and is in no mood to be pestered again.

Getting anything more from her requires a Hard **Persuade** or Hard **Fast Talk** success [1 POINT REASSURANCE SPEND], which persuades her to give the investigators the envelope that had contained Morris' rent money. The investigators can compare the envelope bearing Ms. Baumann's name and a date in blue ink to a sample of Morris' handwriting, either using items in his apartment or via Pearl; upon doing that, a **Language (English)** or Hard **Intelligence** roll [LANGUAGE OR EVIDENCE COLLECTION] easily shows that the handwriting on the envelope does not match other samples of Morris' handwriting. Asking to be let into Morris' apartment is met with some consternation on Baumann's part, although she can be plied with a Hard **Charm** roll or Hard **Credit Rating** roll [BARGAIN OR 1 POINT REASSURANCE SPEND] to give them the key—or five dollars gets them a supervised tour.

Morris' unit is 4D, on the fourth floor at the far end of the hallway, on the right. If the investigators have collected the key to Morris' apartment, it's a pretty simple matter of letting themselves in. Otherwise they'll have to pick the lock, requiring a **Locksmith** roll [LOCKSMITH], or force it open with a successful **Strength** roll [DIFFICULTY 3 HEALTH], drawing the attention of neighboring apartments. Alternately, they may use the fire escape on front of the building, which leads directly to Morris' apartment—that route is probably noticed by the neighbors, unless the investigators do the smart thing and send one person up

to open the window with a **Locksmith** roll [**LOCKSMITH**], to let the others in from the inside. Scaling the fire escape stealthily requires a **Stealth** roll [**DIFFICULTY 3 STEALTH**]. If they ascend as a group, only a Hard **Luck** roll [**DIFFICULTY 5 SENSE TROUBLE—THIS CAN BE PIGGYBACKED**] allows them to do so without attracting attention. Should the neighbors take notice, the police are notified, and a squad car arrives in 2d6+6 minutes to respond to the call.

If the investigators approach the apartment from the hallway, a **Listen** roll [**DIFFICULTY 4 SENSE TROUBLE**] alerts the investigators to the presence of a faint but noticeable voice—a girl’s voice, muttering in a haphazard manner. This is five-year-old Margaret Ashton, from unit 4B. She is sitting cross-legged in the left alcove, scribbling on the wall beside the window. Like all the residents of the building, Margaret is afflicted by the dream battery’s vampiric nature. Her skin is ashen gray, and her hair is a matted mess of knots. Margaret’s eyes are weary, red-ringed orbs peering from black pits. Her drawings are a mess of scribbles, aimless and without any form or meaning. She is a child without dreams or imagination. Any artist, or **Art and Crafts (Fine Arts)** roll [**ART (DRAWING)**], can tell that her artistic efforts have been reduced to mechanical nonsense, completely devoid of creative thought.

If the investigators have already spoken to Ms. Baumann downstairs, it is clear that Margaret suffers from the same condition as Lillian. The girl barely registers the investigators, answering their questions to the best of her ability without even bothering to turn around, instead focusing on her scribbling the whole time. Laying eyes on Margaret incurs a 1/1D4 **Sanity** loss [**1 STABILITY**].

Margaret is blissfully unaware of what’s been happening in the apartment building. If asked about any comings and goings regarding Morris, she’ll reply, in as articulate a manner as you would expect from a five-year-old, that she knows who Morris is (referring to him as “Mr. Morris”)—but all she can really express is that she finds Morris “nice.” She also tells the investigators that she likes to hear the pretty lady in Mr. Morris’ apartment sing at night.

After engaging with Margaret for a minute or two, Margaret’s father Michael emerges from their apartment, and storms down the hall towards the investigators. He’ll demand to know what they want from his child. Michael is clearly not well either, displaying similar physical symptoms to everyone else they’ve seen in the building. Clutching Margaret and shuffling her into the apartment, Michael then proceeds to confront the

investigators. Michael’s exhaustion and weariness have brought him to the brink of rage. Michael can be talked down with a successful Hard **Fast Talk**, **Intimidate**, or **Persuade** roll [**INTIMIDATION OR 1 POINT REASSURANCE SPEND**], but otherwise he’ll proceed to take out his frustrations on the investigators. Despite his bulk, Michael is in no condition to take on a group of competent investigators; his attacks are hampered with weariness, and after a few moments of shouting, he retreats into his apartment, slamming the door behind him.

Once the investigators have entered Morris’ apartment, they are effectively inside his dreamspace—and are subject to the strange laws imposed here by the ritual (see sidebar on next page for details). The first thing the investigators notice is that the oppressive pall of despair, which has pulled at them from the moment they set foot in the apartment building, abruptly ceases to exist. Crossing the threshold back into the hallway brings the cold emptiness back like a shroud.

The second thing they’ll be aware of is of a beautiful voice echoing from the bedroom, singing Bessie Smith’s “I Ain’t Got Nobody.” Not just any woman’s voice, in fact—but someone who for all intents and purposes appears to be Morris’ deceased wife Lena. They may not know her by appearance, but a cursory examination of some of the apartment’s effects confirm that this is in fact her—or someone who looks very much like her. It’s possible that one or more of the investigators who have a **Art and Crafts (Singing)** at 60% or greater [**1 POINT ART (MUSIC)** spend] have seen Lena Thoreau perform in one of the neighborhood’s many clubs, in which case the voice and face are recognized as unmistakably hers.

Lena is, of course, a figment of the dreamspace—a shade created from Morris’ memories and affection for his dead wife. Speaking to Lena, knowing she’s been murdered, is fairly disturbing and incurs a 1/1d4 **Sanity** loss [**1 STABILITY**]. Lena can converse with the investigators in very much the same way as any other sentient being would; she can answer on any subject they care to ask. However, she is unaware that she is a walking fiction. Likewise, she knows nothing of the dream battery, nor of Morris’ activities related to its creation. She speaks of Clayton with incandescent affection, and expresses how much she misses him. If asked, she tells them that he’s been gone for several months (in Dreamlands time, that is), and she wants nothing more than to feel his arms around her again. Lena won’t stop the investigators from searching the apartment, and if they hint that something untoward might have befallen Clayton, she’ll fall into a deep concern for his safety.

Naturally, Lena cannot leave the apartment. Should the investigators ask her to do so, she'll tell them she can't, with no explanation as to why. If they force her out in some manner, she'll immediately cease to exist, vanishing in an instant as if she'd never been. Witnessing this action incurs a 1/1D4 **Sanity** loss [1 **STABILITY**]. Likewise, Lena is dispelled in an instant if the battery is destroyed or is moved more than a city block away.

The apartment itself is sparsely furnished. Just inside the doorway is a nail in the wall; a handwritten note under the nail reads **STUDIO** but the key is missing. This is because Morris took the key with him to meet Stewart, but never returned to replace it [**CORE CLUE: MORRIS' STUDIO**]. A pair of worn **ARMCHAIRS**, one light brown and the other a faded lime green, flank a modest coffee table. The table hosts an assortment of ephemera, mostly half-read **NEWSPAPERS**, and a couple of **BOOKS** (including T.S. Eliot's *The Wasteland* and W. Somerset Maugham's *The Painted Veil*).

Another long table along the right side wall hosts a radio, a small planter containing an assortment of flowers, and several picture frames containing **PHOTOGRAPHS**: one of Morris at work in his studio standing before a large canvas, another of Morris and his sister Pearl attending a birthday party (it's not clear from the photo whose birthday this is, although if the investigators go to the length of showing Pearl the photo, she'll inform them it was for a co-worker of hers at the hospital), and finally two photographs depicting Morris' wife Lena. In the first of these, Lena is standing with her back to the camera overlooking a body of water, her head turned back towards the photographer. In the other, Lena and Morris are seated on the stoop of an apartment building sharing a private moment; Morris' arm is draped over his wife's shoulder as the couple share a laugh.

Directly across from the door is a small dining/kitchen area with a small refrigerator. Should the investigators open the refrigerator, they find it well-stocked, but any particular item taken from the refrigerator and consumed has a 50% chance of being made of dream-material; it tastes fine and just as filling as the real thing, but once one leaves the apartment, the character no longer feels sated and the food has no actual nutritional benefit. On the other hand, all water fixtures in the apartment are still tied to the city lines, and produce actual water. An opened and half-consumed bottle of beer is on the table.

Finally, a door leads into Morris' bedroom and small bathroom. The bedroom itself contains a queen-size **BED**, and a **NIGHTSTAND** which bears a single **LAMP**. A small closet contains a modest selection of men's **CLOTHES**. On the nightstand is a pair of **SPECTACLES**, some loose **CHANGE**, and a **NOTEBOOK**. Within this Dream Journal are a handful of sketches, mostly depicting daily life in the neighborhood or still-life sketches of small objects. There are also sketches of Lena—some very beautiful, and some betraying a distinct melancholy.

Some of the sketches are quite odd, however—very imaginative and surrealist in nature. Some are even downright disturbing, with images of ghoulish men scuttling about dark caves, bat-winged monstrosities, and dark oceans teeming with alien life. A **Cthulhu Mythos** or Hard **Occult** roll [1 **POINT OCCULT SPEND OR CTHULHU MYTHOS**] reveals that these images are all consistent with places and beings one would encounter in the Dreamlands.

DREAMSCAPE EFFECT

The largest effect that an entry into Morris' dreamscape has on the investigators is that any time spent in that apartment is subject to the properties of the Dreamlands—namely, for every week spent in the apartment, one day passes in the outside world. (If you need an exact accounting, assume that time passes at one-seventh the normal rate.) If the investigators wear timepieces into the apartment, upon departing they see that they lag behind the time outside by a factor of one-seventh—which is apparent to anyone who makes a successful Intelligence [**DIFFICULTY 3 PREPAREDNESS**] roll. Also, many of the items in Morris' apartment are figments of the dreamscape.

Should the dream battery be removed from the area or destroyed, the apartment reverts to its actual state, revealing a space that bears much the same physical layout but with few furnishings. Unless otherwise noted, any objects the players can see and touch are made of Dreamlands material, and fade if removed from the premises. Items which actually exist and can be removed are written in ALL CAPS to make them easier to identify.

LOCAL KNOWLEDGE

Any resident of Harlem recognizes the deceased songbird instantly. Her voice is believed to be able to wake the dead. They read it in the paper a while back. Obviously, it must be a sister or some such.

There also are some handwritten notes, mostly reminders of mundane tasks—some crossed out, some not. There seems to be no rhyme or reason to the contents, almost as if Morris simply pulled the book out of his pocket at a whim and scribbled on whatever page was handy at the moment. Likewise, there are no dates. One useful inscription, however, accompanies a small, hasty pencil sketch of a strange oblong cylinder. The sketch of the cylinder is indistinct, but clearly it is quite different from the other drawings in the notebook.

Finally, with a **Spot Hidden** roll [**EVIDENCE COLLECTION**], the investigators find some marks on the floor near the bed. Lifting the rug, they can find a small niche under some floorboards which contains Morris' dream battery. The battery is 12 inches in length and six in diameter, and is made of a hardened red clay. Inscribed around the perimeter of the cylinder are small, strange markings that a successful Anthropology, Archaeology, or Extreme **Education** roll [**ANTHROPOLOGY, ARCHAEOLOGY, OR 1 POINT HISTORY SPEND**] reveals it doesn't resemble any known terrestrial language. The battery itself radiates a strange aura which makes one feel disconnected from the world around them—holding it in one's hands is deeply unsettling, and anyone doing so for more than a few seconds incurs a 2/1d6 **Sanity** loss [2 **STABILITY**].

THE SHOOTER

SCENE TYPE: Alternate

LEAD-IN: Still Life

LEAD-OUTS: N/A

Should the PCs decide to follow up on Lena's shooting, they find that the man who shot Lena Thoreau is Maxwell Gaddis. Quiet and reserved by nature, Gaddis, a veteran of the Great War, makes a living as a factory worker—and also works a sideline running numbers for one of Theo Spinelli's Policy Offices in Lower Harlem. He won't be particularly thrilled to speak about the shooting; it's been a very traumatic experience for him, and it's not something he relishes bringing up again. He said all he needed to when he was arrested. Convincing him to open up requires a **Persuade** or Hard **Charm** roll [1 POINT **FLATTERY SPEND OR INSPIRATION**].

The shooting, he says through teary eyes, was a terrible circumstance. A man stumbled out of an alley towards him, brandishing a knife—and Gaddis did what he felt was necessary to protect his life. There are days, he says, when he wishes the Lord had taken his life instead of that young girl's.

As for Morris, he says he met the man once. Morris showed up at his doorstep out of the blue several weeks ago, drunk out his mind. Morris said he forgave Gaddis—that everything was going to be okay because “he knew how to bring her back.” Gaddis thought Morris was just plain out of his mind. He invited Morris into his home, but Morris refused and disappeared into the night.

MORRIS' STUDIO

SCENE TYPE: Core

LEAD-IN: Still Life, The Woman of His Dreams

LEAD-OUTS: Dreyfuss' Studio

Morris' studio is a simple below-ground, two-room rented space located at 216 Lenox Avenue. The building above the studio is occupied by the Spallino Funeral Home. A little unsettling, but it stays quiet. Most of the time.

When the investigators arrive, they find the door locked. Morris took the only key with him when he met Stewart just before being taken back to the Temple's Harlem sanctuary, and it now lies at the bottom of the Hudson River, along with Morris. It can be opened with a successful **Locksmith** roll [**LOCKSMITH**].

Lingering outside the studio is a forlorn-looking gentleman by the name of Thaddeus Owen. Owen is developmentally disabled, bearing the mental faculties of a six-year-old. He's also built like a brick shithouse, and could probably tear someone's head from his torso if it struck him as a good idea. It's not likely to, though. Despite his intimidating size, Owen is as sweet-natured a guy as you could imagine. Owen was welcome in Morris' studio, and often helped Morris carry out various tasks around the space. He also happens to be the last person to have seen Morris before he was taken by Stewart.

Owen has been frightened ever since Morris left with Stewart—the last he saw of Morris, the painter was engaged in a heated argument with Stewart. Owen overheard the whole thing, but his impaired cognition makes it pretty hard for him to understand most of what transpired. When the investigators arrive, Owen is watching the studio from an alley across the street.

The investigators are aware of Owen's presence with a successful **Spot Hidden** roll [**DIFFICULTY 3 SENSE TROUBLE**]. Should they try to harm Owen in any way, or threaten him, he'll back away and try to escape—figuring they're more of the same people who took Morris. If a foot

chase ensues...I'll just say it. The investigators catch him. He doesn't run, so much as he lumbers—clumsily flailing his arms, while screaming at the top of his lungs in a very childlike fashion. They should feel properly bad after that.

Interrogating Owen primarily is a matter of convincing him they're not "bad guys." In Owen's mind, everyone is either a "good guy" or a "bad guy." The people who took Morris are "bad guys." A successful **Charm** or **Persuade** roll [**REASSURANCE**] should be plenty to get him to open up.

Owen can tell them the following information:

- He says Morris was very nice to him, brought him food now and then, and let him carry things around the studio.
- Owen says the last time he saw Morris was about two weeks ago—he can't be more specific (the actual date was October 25, the day Stewart met with him at the studio).
- Morris was arguing with someone in the studio—a "bad guy." The bad guy was white and drove a "real nice car."
- Owen says Morris and the "bad guy" were shouting and kept talking about "batteries" or something (the plural is important there—it tells the investigators there are more of those things). Morris seemed angry that the "bad guy" was going to hurt a lot of people.
- After shouting at one another for a little while (Owen can't say how long), Morris and the "bad guy" got in the car. If asked where they went, he just points in the general direction of Upper Harlem.

If the investigators spend some time (1D6 hours) polling the neighborhood, they can corroborate Owen's story—a couple of the other residents saw the altercation, but nobody paid attention to what was being argued about. A **Persuade** or **Charm** roll [**ORAL HISTORY**] turns up one witness who claims to have seen Morris pull a gun out of his pocket and check the cylinder, before entering his studio.

The studio space itself is sparse, featuring nothing in the way of furnishings outside a simple roll-top desk and several easels. Various art supplies—tubes of paint, canvases (some stretched and prepped for painting, others awaiting preparation), and other artists' ephemera lie scattered about. The front room is clearly where Morris did most of his actual painting, and an unfinished piece (featuring, with sad irony, the Hudson River waterfront) stands on an easel. Other work surrounds the space. Morris was clearly not a very organized person, as several dozen paintings and sketches lie around the room on crates and other surfaces.

A single door leads to the storage area, which is full of samples of Morris' work. The paintings are beautiful; glancing at them by date, one can see Morris slowly embracing a more abstract style, perhaps influenced by other members of Harlem's art clique. All in all, the body of work represents a gorgeous slice of Harlem life. However, the works on a set of shelves towards the back of the room represent something else entirely. These paintings document a strange world of alien sights—these are Morris' Dreamland paintings. Despite their subject matter, one feels as if they can almost step into the paintings and into another world.

BACKUP

It's possible that the investigators may want to bring Owen along, for muscle. He's good-natured enough (and morally polarized enough) to accompany them happily, if he believes that saving Morris is part of the plan. His stats are provided in the NPCs section, just in case, but man...that's kind of a cruel thing to do. I mean, Owen's been through enough, don't you think?

A smaller selection of canvases and a set of sketchbooks document something else entirely: Morris' journey to acquire the plans for the dream battery. Here in exquisite detail are his travel notes, transcribed as he remembers them, into four compact sketchbooks. It would take quite a while to digest everything (1D6+6 hours), but a cursory read tells the investigators that Morris undertook the journey to find the battery in the hopes of bringing his wife back from the dead via "magic strange and frightful." It describes the manner of the battery's operation (such as he understood it, before learning the dire effect it would have) as well as allusions to the ritual, which he claims allows one to "bring one's dreams to life."

Finally, lying in a corner of the storage room—almost as if discarded—are a handful of sketches depicting the dream battery. If the investigators have been to Morris' apartment and have seen or retrieved the dream battery there, they recognize it from the sketches, although an **Art and Crafts (Sculptor)** or **Intelligence** roll [**ART (SCULPTURE)**] informs them that these are probably preliminary sketches, as the finished battery differs in a few small respects. In the corner of one of the sketches is a hastily pencilled and mostly erased (but still barely readable) address on West 126th Street. This is the address of Cecil Dreyfuss' workshop [**CORE CLUE: DREYFUSS STUDIO**]. An **Art and Crafts (Sculptor)** roll [**ART (SCULPTURE)**] indicates the investigators are familiar with the name, and remember him as a talented though relatively unrecognized sculptor.

DREYFUSS' STUDIO

SCENE TYPE: Core / Antagonist Reaction

LEAD-IN: Morris' Studio

LEAD-OUTS: A Matter of Policy, Miss Fortune Teller

Following Kurzweil seeing the investigators poking around Morris' place, Stewart and the Temple figure they should cover their tracks by snuffing out the only other person who knows about the batteries, and recover any possible information Dreyfuss has concerning his ties to the Temple.

When the investigators arrive at Dreyfuss' workshop he'll already be dead, and Spinelli's men are lying in wait. The workshop is a modest space located on West 126th Street. Dreyfuss chose it for its isolation from street noise—the only way to access it is through an alley between two apartments which opens up into a courtyard of sorts. Most of the courtyard is walled in by the surrounding apartment buildings, while his space

has a single door which opens into a small three-room structure. The entryway contains a few office items—a desk, chair, and filing cabinet. Although Dreyfuss does no actual paperwork here, he occasionally meets clients for commissions in this area. A wooden door leads from here into a short hallway which adjoins a stock room to the left where Dreyfuss keeps most of his clay, tools, and other supplies. To the right is a small workspace where Dreyfuss does all of his actual work. Simple wooden shelves graced with Dreyfuss' work line the walls four-high. As anyone can tell from seeing the work on display, Dreyfuss is a talented artist with a delicate hand, skilled at capturing the tiniest detail. Much of his body of work is devoted to abstract pieces that resemble sea life, although there are some pieces crafted from human life—busts of models, anatomical pieces, etc.

Alas, Dreyfuss will never again produce another piece of work. He now lies dead on the floor of his workshop, his skin puckered and burned after having been subjected to a deadly acid attack from Blake Kurzweil. When the investigators arrive, Kurzweil and two gunmen in the employ of Theo Spinelli are in the process of tearing apart Dreyfuss' studio to remove any evidence of his dealings with the Temple. One of Spinelli's men is currently keeping watch in the front room; he spots anyone approaching the shop, unless they attempt a stealthy approach requiring a successful **Stealth** [**DIFFICULTY 5 STEALTH**]. If anyone attempts to actually enter the space, Kurzweil and his men set up an ambush in the rear of the workshop.

Kurzweil is interested in finding out who the investigators work for, and does what he can to keep at least one of them alive long enough to interrogate. If a protracted gunfight breaks out, Kurzweil burns the evidence they came for, and attempts to flee through a drainage pipe in the workroom using his Mucus Form ability.

Should the investigators manage to overcome the gunmen, they may interrogate with an **Intimidate** or **Hard Persuade** roll [**INTIMIDATION**]—if any of them are left alive (see below if this happens). If this occurs, the gunmen can tell the investigators the following information:

- They work for Theo Spinelli, a mobster who runs a numbers racket office in East Harlem [**CORE CLUE: A MATTER OF POLICY**]

- They know Morris is dead. One (or more) of them was there when Morris was taken to the Hudson river and executed.
- They don't know why Spinelli—or his client—wanted Morris dead. Spinelli wanted him dead, and they got paid to make him dead. End of story.
- Spinelli was keeping tabs on Morris' apartment in case anyone came poking their nose in.
- Kurzweil was always a cruel bastard, but whatever was done to him made him worse. He wasn't always like that. A **Psychology** success [**ASSESS HONESTY**] notes the men are legitimately terrified of Kurzweil.
- Hard **Intimidation** [**1 POINT INTIMIDATE SPEND**]: They think Spinelli isn't acting on orders from Morello, that he's doing these crazy jobs for someone else. Morello wouldn't be happy if he found out [**LEVERAGE CLUE: A MATTER OF POLICY**].

Additionally, one of the men's pockets contains a set of keys for the car they left parked on the street outside the alley, a black 1923 Earl Sedan. Searching the car, a **Spot Hidden** roll [**EVIDENCE COLLECTION**] uncovers a torn customer receipt from Ricci's Meats, bearing what appears to be a handful of Policy bets [**CORE CLUE: A MATTER OF POLICY**], while the glove box contains a dream book titled *Madame Yonday's Dream Journal*, which promises "Success in Money, Love, and Happiness." Inside the book is a handwritten note from Madame Yonday herself saying "To Clayton, my Beautiful Dreamer" [**ALTERNATE CLUE: MISS FORTUNE TELLER**]. Morris had this on his person when he was taken captive, and one of Spinelli's goons threw it in the glove compartment on a whim.

A MATTER OF POLICY

SCENE TYPE: Core

LEAD-IN: Dreyfuss' Studio

LEAD-OUTS: N/A

The Policy Office on East 121st Street in East Harlem is operated by a low-level gangster named Theo Spinelli. Spinelli is in the employ of Giuseppe "The Clutch Hand" Morello, and all proceeds from the office go directly into Morello's coffers. For a mob operation, it's actually pretty low-key; it is located in the back of a deli and meat shop named Ricci's Meats, which is owned by a delightful Italian couple named Bruno and Rafaella Ricci. The investigators would do well to try the prosciutto—it's some of the best in the city. The

Riccis happily make the space available to Spinelli and his runners, for a cut of the daily take.

Make no mistake, however—this is still a mob operation, and pushing Spinelli around brings some serious heat. If the investigators go in with guns blazing, it probably ends up a suicide mission. Not because the Policy Office is crammed to the walls with gun-toting gangsters—on the contrary, it's pretty lightly staffed (at any given moment, the office contains Spinelli and three gunmen, plus Kurzweil when he's not off taking care of some other business for Spinelli). But Morello doesn't like his shops being targeted. And when he finds out who rubbed out some of his people, he pays them a visit to collect the tab, if you catch my drift. It might not be today, or tomorrow, or next week. But he will do it. (Alternately, if they can hold out until August 15, 1930, Morello is gunned down in East Harlem during the Castellammarese War, thus freeing the investigators from the yoke of their fugitive status. You takes your chances, I guess.)

Here's the lowdown: Spinelli is hiring out his goons without Morello's knowledge. If the investigators have the [**LEVERAGE CLUE**] from Dreyfuss' Studio, it is fairly easy to deduce that Morello isn't likely to take this news well, and Spinelli knows it. Armed with this knowledge, dealing with Spinelli gives the investigators a bonus die in any attempt to persuade him to give them the info they need. They've probably already killed or subdued a number of his guys, and that's something he's going to have to explain to Morello. Spinelli is in deep, and he knows it. Where he was expecting easy money, now he's attracting attention—and that doesn't bode well. The investigators, if they play their cards right, might be able to convince Spinelli to cut ties with the Temple and turn over the information. Plying Spinelli requires a **Charm, Persuade**, or Hard **Intimidate** roll [**INTIMIDATION OR REASSURANCE**].

If the investigators have killed Kurzweil, Spinelli is in no mood to negotiate; all attempts to bargain with him incur a penalty die. Any failure to negotiate with Spinelli results in Spinelli telling the investigators to buzz off, after which Spinelli puts four gunmen on their tail (plus Kurzweil if he's alive), to be ambushed at the first available opportunity.

If the players arrive at Ricci's Meats during the day, business is brisk. Bruno, a heavyset man in his early 50s, is boisterously helping customers up front while his wife does her best to fulfill orders in the back. A steady stream of runners come and go between the back door

HOODOO

Madame Yonday is part of a rich culture of African-American spiritualism called Hoodoo. Also known as “root doctoring,” Hoodoo came to the United States by way of West Africans who arrived in the country via the slave trade. During the 1920s, such practitioners often operated independent businesses offering fortune-telling services, and published so-called “Dream Books” to give readers an edge in the many Policy games in operation at the time. These books usually contained lists of images found in one’s dreams, along with a corresponding number. So if you had a dream about an elephant, and the book lists “elephant = 25,” then you might want to include the number 25 in your Policy bet the following day. For a modern example of what one would think of as a Hoodoo practitioner, one might look toward the late Miss Cleo, whose infomercials graced television screens in the 1990s.

and Spinelli’s cramped office. If they arrive after business hours, the shop is obviously closed. The door is locked but easily bypassed. The back room is empty, save for the Policy wheel (still filled with numbered balls) and stacks of empty betting slips. The daily take, normally kept in the office safe (Hard **Locksmith** [1 POINT **LOCKSMITH SPEND**] to open) is now gone. A wrapped gift (a box containing two rather expensive diamond earrings) sits on the desk, atop a pile of receipts from the deli counter. While the investigators are rifling through the office, Spinelli returns with Kurzweil (if he’s alive). Spinelli forgot his wife’s birthday present. Any negotiations with Spinelli are conducted as above, albeit all skill rolls are now Hard. If the investigators swiped the present, or have opened it, assess a penalty die instead (I mean, c’mon—who does that?).

If the investigators manage to get Spinelli to talk, he tells them that he communicates with a man named Ronald Stewart. He describes Stewart as an “uptown flake”—but says he is someone to be reckoned with. On a successful **Education** roll [**BUREAUCRACY OR CREDIT RATING**], the investigators recall the name—a rich playboy type. An embarrassment to his father. Spinelli can also tell them that he knows Stewart and some of his cronies operate out of a disused theater on 123rd Street [**CORE CLUE: ASSAULT AND BATTERIES**].

MISS FORTUNE TELLER

SCENE TYPE: Alternate

LEAD-IN: Dreyfuss’ Studio

LEAD-OUTS: Assault and Batteries

Should the players follow up with the Dream Journal found in Morris’ apartment, they can find Madame Yonday fairly easily—in addition to publishing *Madame Yonday’s Dream Journal*, she owns and operates a fortune-telling business at 314 West 117th Street, on the corner of 117th and Manhattan. The investigators should have no problem finding it listed in the telephone directory, or by spending a modest amount of time inquiring around town.

Madame Yonday, whose real name is Beatrice Hamilton, opens her doors for business from noon until 2:00 a.m. six days a week. She offers services ranging from crystal ball scrying and palmistry to tarot readings and dream interpretation. It’s this last service that drew Clayton Morris to her several years ago, feeling he needed someone in whom to confide his secret. Yonday accepted his strange tales as fact, and offered him spiritual guidance from time to time. Yonday also publishes an annual Dream Book, which many local Policy players use as a guide to help them interpret their dreams, converting the images to various numerical correspondences in the book that can be played as selections for upcoming number draws.

Yonday is also mildly psychic. The truth is, most of what she doles out to her clients as prognostication is in fact total hogwash, and she knows it—but they pay her rent, and they all go away happy with some guidance for navigating the intricacies of their lives. That said, Yonday does occasionally receive psychic visions from time to time; she is incapable of controlling these visions which arrive in the form of sudden, vivid hallucinatory states during her waking hours. Often she has no understanding what these visions portend—usually they’re benign or inconsequential, but on rare occasions Yonday has received potent images which were borne out in frighteningly

exacting detail shortly thereafter. Yonday has received visions which predicted the stroke suffered by Woodrow Wilson, the 1920 bombing of Wall Street by Italian anarchists, and the death of Harry Houdini (although that last one probably wasn't a huge stretch, given the man's proclivities). Of course, Yonday's visions aren't constrained to the awful and calamitous, but it is those which cause her the most consternation. On the rare occasions she's thought to bring them to someone's attention by way of preventing tragedy, she's been dismissed as having a Cassandra complex. Yonday learned very quickly to keep such things to herself, and to let the world unfold in the manner it was meant to.

Lately, Madame Yonday has been troubled by a series of harrowing impressions that she finds deeply troubling. For the past week, her nights have been haunted by images of people suffering by the hundreds—wracked in torment by an unseen force which feeds on their souls. Unlike most of her other visions, these hallucinations are indistinct, as if something is disturbing the very fabric of reality itself. She is, of course, being affected by the power of the dream batteries which were planted by the Temple of Leviathan, and are now drawing energy from the surrounding populace.

If the investigators arrive during business hours, there is a 2 in 6 chance she'll be with a client. The group is asked to sit in her waiting room while she finishes up. The room is draped in dark maroon velvet curtains, and smells faintly of exotic incense. A successful **Occult** roll [**OCULT**] notes the various mystical implements displayed on the room's shelves. Otherwise, everything appears as cheap trash for the uninitiated.

A row of four rickety wooden chairs sits just inside the front door, while a doorway sectioned off with a beaded curtain leads to the reading room beyond. A single wooden door beside that remains locked; it leads to a staircase up to Yonday's apartment above the shop. While Madame Yonday reads for her client, with a successful **Listen** [**DIFFICULTY 3 SENSE TROUBLE**] roll, the group overhears her advising the young woman about a relationship she's unsure about. A series of questions back and forth between Yonday and the woman results in the madame advising her client to be patient with her young lover, that she can see into the man's heart, and that he is true and kind—but also a bit scared to open up. A few moments later, the woman emerges from the back room, a gentle smile betraying her sense of contentedness.

At this point, Madame Yonday steps into the waiting room and receives her visitors.

Should the investigators arrive after business hours, Yonday is in her residence on the upper floor. The door to the shop is locked (**Locksmith** [**LOCKSMITH**] to break in), but she answers any knock or summons, albeit a little irritated at having been bothered at such an hour. She is quadruply irritated if they've broken in.

If the investigators explain the reason for their presence, Yonday seems deeply disturbed. Her first instinct is to usher them out of her shop as quickly as possible—she's spent a good long time distancing herself from her visions and the implications they hold, and isn't prepared to re-engage now. Overcoming this resistance requires a **Charm** or **Persuade** roll [**FLATTERY OR INSPIRATION**]. Showing her the battery, or a sketch of the battery, automatically overcomes her reticence.

If the investigators convince her to open up, Yonday sighs with resignation and agrees to their questioning. Even so, getting her to tell them about her visions is tricky—she's done so before, and it always ends up with her being dismissed as a crackpot.

- Madame Yonday confirms that she knows Clayton Morris, and describes in vague terms the reason for his visits—essentially saying he was experiencing some “interesting” images on which he wanted some clarification. If pressed, she gives details; a **Cthulhu Mythos** or Hard **Occult** roll [**CTHULHU MYTHOS OR 1 POINT OCCULT SPEND**] (anyone with **Dreamland Lore** instantly) recognizes some of what she describes as Dreamlands imagery.
- She hasn't seen Morris in a while, and is unaware of his disappearance.
- She gave Morris a copy of her dream journal, but as far as she knows, Morris wasn't a Policy player.
- Morris was deeply saddened by the death of his wife Lena, but was reluctant to speak of her. His mood seemed to brighten the last time Yonday saw him, though. She doesn't know why.

If the investigators show Yonday the dream battery or Morris' sketchbook, particularly the image of the battery, Yonday suddenly becomes transfixed, her face aghast. At that moment she knows with certainty that this object is related to her recent horrifying visions. She demands to know where they got it, and tells them that something horrible is occurring. Yonday explains the nature of her visions, and says that there are more batteries out there—and that someone is using them for something terrible. If asked where they can be found, she says her visions have not been that detailed, but

that she might be able to use the battery they possess to hone in on the location of the others. (Should the party not currently have the battery on them, it would be easy enough for her to deduce the same from seeing the sketch, at which point they could fetch it and bring it back to Madame Yonday's. If the investigators have destroyed the battery, she can work from the sketchbook or another work of Morris' depicting the battery, taking an extra two hours of concentration.)

Yonday brings the group into her back room, a small chamber dominated by a single round table. Black velvet curtains ring the room, creating a dark but warmly comforting space. The table is bare save for a crystal ball, a small notepad, several pencils, and an incense burner. The scent of incense is stronger here than in the front room.

Yonday requests the investigators remain silent and lays her hands on the artifact or a sketch. She grows quiet and still. After a minute of complete silence, the air in the room grows cold, and Yonday begins to utter strange, guttural sounds. All investigators present must make a 1/1d3 **Sanity** check [1 **STABILITY**] each hour. Swaying back and forth, Yonday's voice rises to a shrill cry; she falls backwards and begins to violently convulse. In the midst of these convulsions, she reaches desperately for the notepad and pencils on the table. Once provided with writing implements, Yonday begins scribbling a page of notes, as if dumping data out of her mind as quickly as possible.

Tearing a page from the notebook, which gives the address of the Temple's 123rd Street sanctuary, Yonday hands it to the investigators [**ALTERNATE CLUE: ASSAULT AND BATTERIES**] and begs them to leave.

ASSAULT AND BATTERIES

SCENE TYPE: Conclusion

LEAD-IN: A Matter of Policy, Miss Fortune Teller

LEAD-OUTS: Laid to Rest

Following clues in the notebook page drafted by Madame Yonday, or via the scrap of paper in Spinelli's office, the investigators now have the location of the Temple's sanctuary. Additionally, the four batteries commissioned by Ronald Stewart are now installed in four apartment buildings surrounding the sanctuary, and are drawing power to feed the ritual now being performed by the Temple members.

A few generalities about each location. All four locations are apartment buildings. As with Morris' apartment, all of them are currently suffering the effects of the

batteries—the tenants are exhausted nearly to the point of insanity, their minds filled with hopelessness and dread. Generally speaking, they won't give the investigators much grief for poking around—although if they are obvious about their intrusiveness, the neighbors may take notice and inform the authorities.

Again, inquiring with the neighbors makes it clear something is amiss, and entering the building itself fills the investigators with dread in much the same way entering Morris' apartment did. The Temple has rented apartments in each of these buildings specifically for the purpose of housing the batteries.

Figuring out which apartment houses the battery in each building can be achieved in several ways. The investigators can inquire with the rental offices of each building (**Charm** or **Persuade** [**FLATTERY**])—doing so reveals a pattern of the units in question being rented on the same day. They can interview the tenants of each building, a lengthy process which takes 1D6 hours per building and require a **Persuade** roll [**ORAL HISTORY**]**—**they tell them which units had been recently vacated, narrowing down the search considerably, allowing them to deduce the correct unit through a process of elimination.

When the investigators arrive, the ritual is within a day of completion. Destroying a battery diminishes the ritual's power; the ritual can function on a single battery, but the magnitude of the results is significantly impacted. Should this happen, the Temple immediately dispatches two members, Hayden and Reginald, to check the status of the batteries (the ritual can continue with a single member, but is delayed). Removing a battery prevents it from draining anyone at that location, and disrupting the ritual—though it continues to pull in energy from those around it, until it is either destroyed or taken somewhere beyond the reach of sleeping human beings.

The theater itself is boarded up front, sides, and rear, as well as on both above-ground floors. The ritual is being held on the theater's disused stage. The easiest way into the theater is via a short cement stairwell which leads to a locked (Hard **Locksmith** [1 **POINT LOCKSMITH SPEND**]) metal door. Behind this door, the basement is filled with shelves full of dust-covered theater memorabilia and crates; most are empty, but some contain decaying straw which gives the whole room a distinctly unpleasant moldy smell. Navigating the basement is a bit of a trick owing to the shelves and clutter which create a labyrinth of sorts, and requiring a **Luck** [**DIFFICULTY 4 PREPAREDNESS**] roll. Making things even more difficult is the fact that the basement has no working

light source—unless the investigators have one in hand, traversing the room to the staircase at the far end without making a ton of noise (which alerts anyone upstairs) requires a **Stealth** roll with a penalty die [DIFFICULTY 7 **STEALTH** CHECK, OR DIFFICULTY 3 **STEALTH** WITH A LIGHT SOURCE].

Once upstairs, the group can see the five cult members—Stewart, Thurston, Pierce, Grayson, and Burgess (minus Thurston and Grayson if they’ve gone to check the other batteries)—performing the dreamspace ritual. The entire theater is filled with an unearthly howl as the cult twists and bends space; the stage is dominated by a huge amorphous blob of dreamspace that is an affront to the senses. Seeing this image causes an immediate 2/1d6 **Sanity** loss [1 **SANITY**].

The cult members meet violence with violence, attempting to suppress and kill the investigators while one member stays in reserve to maintain the ritual. Stewart casts *Mindblast* and *Wrack* as he is capable, resorting to firearms as necessary. Other cult members take cover behind theater seats (of which there are plenty—assess a penalty die plus 2 points of armor for defenders using them for protection) [-2 TO ATTACKS AND 1 POINT OF ARMOR].

The scene can play out in a number of ways, and a few are listed below:

- The Temple needs six rounds to complete the ritual. If they complete the ritual or defeat the investigators, they may activate the batteries without obstacle. With all four batteries activated, the Temple controls the reality of the entire Manhattan Borough—their every waking desire can be made manifest. They are men who become Dream Gods. But if they defeat their opponents with only one battery remaining, then a single apartment building becomes their domain.
- The investigators can stop this from occurring by dispatching the cultists or destroying all four batteries before the sixth round. The dream matter slowly fades, and the walls that ceased to exist in the dreamspace are solid stone once more.

LAI D TO REST

SCENE TYPE: Denouement

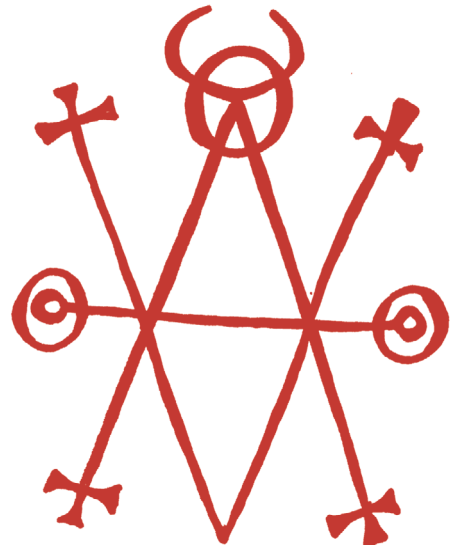
LEAD-IN: Assault and Batteries

LEAD-OUTS: N/A

With the Temple defeated, the investigators probably want to remove and destroy the remaining batteries. Defeating the cult grants each investigator 1D6 **Sanity**—plus an additional 1 **Sanity** for each battery destroyed [3 **BUILD** POINTS]. Eventually all of the victims’ physical health returns.

There remains the untidy business of informing Pearl Wilkins about her brother Clayton’s fate. Informing the police results in a brief search effort, which recovers Morris’ body in one week’s time (gain 1D3 **Sanity**); otherwise, his badly decayed and bloated remains wash to shore a month later.

The disappearance of several of New York’s wealthy elite causes some amount of consternation, as the story makes headlines for several weeks. Should the bodies be found decomposing in an abandoned building (which, it turns out, was owned by Stewart), the mystery passes into urban legend.



HARLEMITES NOTICE

Most Harlemites quickly notice they are allowed to walk around this scene unaccosted, and don’t receive second looks; this is a strange feeling for them. It is something they may point out to their white counterparts, as this odd behavior easily identifies anyone affected by the dream battery.

RONALD STEWART

Athletics 2, Gambling 3, Firearms 2, Hypnosis 4

Stability 4, Sanity 3, Health 5

ALERTNESS MODIFIER: +1

STEALTH MODIFIER: + 0

WEAPON: +0 (Pistol)

SPELLS: See list in other stats

TEMPLE MEMBERS

Flee 2, Firearms 3, Scuffling 3, Stealth 2, Weapons 3

Stability 4, Sanity 4, Health 5

WEAPON: +0 (Pistol)

APPENDIX A: NPCS

RONALD STEWART

AGE 39, THE CORRUPT ELITE

Ronald Stewart is vain and narcissistic, priding himself on wealth he didn't earn and on accomplishments achieved through the sweat of others. Strangely, this knack for self-absorption has allowed him to become a modestly competent sorcerer as he pursues his obsessions with a maniacal passion, heedless of the consequences to others.

STR 50 **CON** 60 **SIZ** 50 **DEX** 70 **INT** 65
APP 50 **POW** 80 **EDU** 40 **SAN** 0 **HP** 11
DB 0 **Build** 0 **Move** 8 **MP** 16

Brawl: 35% (17/8), damage 1D3

.32 Revolver: 43% (21/8), damage 1D8, attacks per round 1(3)

Dodge: 35% (12/7)

Armor: None

Skills: Art (Painting) 45%, Charm 60%, Credit Rating 90%, Cthulhu Mythos 37%, Library Use 53%, Other Language (Akolo) 33%, Occult 47%, Persuade 75%

Equipment: .32 revolver, Temple robes (crimson with gold trim)

Spells: Clutch of Nyogtha, Contact Deity: Tsathoggua, Mindblast, Warding, Wrack

BACKSTORY

- **Description:** Heavysset and balding, condescending demeanor
- **Trait:** Obsessive

TEMPLE OF LEVIATHAN MEMBERS

AGES 40S-60S

STR 40 **CON** 50 **SIZ** 50 **DEX** 40 **INT** 55
APP 50 **POW** 60 **EDU** 55 **SAN** 0 **HP** 10
DB 0 **Build** 0 **Move** 6 **MP** 12

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

.32 Revolver: 37% (21/8), damage 1D8, attacks per round 1(3)

Dodge: 44% (22/8)

Armor: None

Skills: Accounting 33%, Credit Rating 55%, Fast Talk 45%, Listen 40%, Occult 40%, Spot Hidden 40%

Equipment: .32 revolver, cult robes

BACKSTORY

- **Description:** Wealthy and privileged thrill-seekers
- **Trait:** Fanatics

THADDEUS OWEN

AGE 51, FRIENDLY NEIGHBOR

Owen is a well-meaning lunk of a man. Born with a disorder that prevents him from developing mentally past that of a six-year-old child, Owen is friendly and outgoing, and willing to help just about anyone who asks. Over the past year, he and Clayton Morris developed a friendship; Morris would occasionally invite Owen into his studio to act as his painter's assistant, teaching him the basics of stretching and prepping canvases. Owen enjoyed the time he spent with Morris, and misses him greatly.

STR 85 **CON** 75 **SIZ** 85 **DEX** 25 **INT** 25
APP 40 **POW** 35 **EDU** 20 **SAN** 20 **HP** 16
DB +1d6 **Build** +2 **Move** 6 **MP** 7

Brawl: 40% (20/8), damage 1D3 + 1D6

Baseball Bat: 60% (30/12), damage 1D8 + 1D6

Dodge: 20% (10/4) **Armor:** None

Skills: Charm 50%, Climb 45%, Listen 60%, Spot Hidden 35%, Stealth 22%, Throw 43%

Equipment: Baseball bat

BACKSTORY

- **Description:** Child in a man's body, eager to help
- **Trait:** Selfless

THEO SPINELLI

AGE 37, MOVER AND SHAKER

Theo Spinelli is a low-level gangster in the employ of the Morello crime family. He operates a numbers racket shop in East Harlem where he collects bets, pays out winners, and holds the weekly take for Giuseppe "The Clutch Hand" Morello. Spinelli grew up on the streets of Italian Harlem, and has been involved in criminal activity since he could walk. Spinelli befriended his right-hand man Blake Kurzweil in the Great War, and upon discharge, brought Kurzweil to Harlem to assist him in his criminal enterprises. Spinelli isn't a well man; he suffered a mustard gas attack in the war, which scarred his lungs, resulting in a persistent hacking cough.

STR 45 **CON** 45 **SIZ** 35 **DEX** 70 **INT** 65
APP 60 **POW** 40 **EDU** 45 **SAN** 45* **HP** 8
DB 0 **Build** 0 **Move** 9 **MP** 8

***Special:** No **SAN Loss** for violence

Knife: 50% (25/10), damage 1D4 + 1

.45 Auto: 57% (28/11), damage 1D10 + 2, attacks per round 1(3)

Dodge: 62% (31/12) **Armor:** None

Skills: Accounting 64%, Fast Talk 55%, Intimidate 50%, Psychology 53%, Stealth 58%

Equipment: .45 Automatic, expensive suit

BACKSTORY

- **Description:** A sickly crow of a man
- **Trait:** Opportunist

THADDEUS OWEN

Athletics 4, Scuffling 5, Sense Trouble 3, Weapons 4

Stability 5, Sanity 5, Health 9

STEALTH MODIFIER: -1

WEAPON: +0 (Baseball Bat)

THEO SPINELLI

Athletics 3, Business Affairs 3, Driving 2, Explosives 2, Scuffling 4, Stealth 2, Weapons 4

Stability 5, Sanity 5, Health 3

STEALTH MODIFIER: +1

WEAPON: +0 (Pistol)

BLAKE KURZWEIL

Athletics 4, Driving 2, Explosives 2,
Mechanical Repair 3, Scuffling 4,
Stealth 2, Weapons 3

Stability 3, Sanity 3, Health 7

ALERTNESS MODIFIER: +1

WEAPON: +0 (Pistol), +1 (Acid
Attack) burns for 1D6 rounds

BLAKE KURZWEIL

AGE 32, MONSTER IN HUMAN GUISE

Kurzweil is a veteran of the Great War. Already a man predisposed to wanton acts of violence and brutality, the war did him no favors. Kurzweil was nearly brought up on charges after it was discovered he'd been torturing prisoners of war while serving as a guard at an Allied prison camp. It was Theo Spinelli who intervened on his behalf, sparing him a court-martial and prison time. Upon his return to the States, Spinelli rejoined the ranks of the Morello crime family, and brought Kurzweil on board to serve as his right-hand man.

Kurzweil is currently infected with mucus from a Formless Spawn, a privilege for which he volunteered when it was offered by the Temple.

STR 65 **CON** 70 **SIZ** 60 **DEX** 70 **INT** 55
APP 40 **POW** 40 **EDU** 40 **SAN** - **HP** 13
DB +1D4 **Build** +1 **Move** 10* **MP** 8

***Special:** Increased for his fluid body movements

Brawl: 47% (23/9), damage 1D3 + 1D4

.45 Auto: 70% (35/14), damage 1D10 + 2, attacks per round 1(3)

Dodge: 60% (30/12)

Grenade: 42% (21/8), damage 4d10

Armor: 5 (Mucus Form)

Skills: Demolitions 40%, Drive Auto 55%, Fast Talk 32%, Intimidate 65%, Locksmith 47%, Spot Hidden 60%, Stealth 46%, Throw 42%

Equipment: .45 Automatic, grenade

Acid Attack: Kurzweil can project a mass of acidic mucus from his pores. Anyone hit by this attack takes 1D6 + 2 points of damage every round thereafter, for 1D4 + 1 rounds.

Mucus Form: Kurzweil can transform into a blob of mucus, allowing him to squeeze into small spaces. His mucus form also provides 5 points of armor.

BACKSTORY

- **Description:** Lithe and wiry, black hair and blue eyes; always seems to be faintly sweating, owing to the mucus infection; constantly wipes his brow
- **Trait:** Cruel

SPINELLI'S GOONS

STR 50 **CON** 55 **SIZ** 45 **DEX** 40 **INT** 50
APP 35 **POW** 50 **EDU** 40 **SAN** 30* **HP** 11
DB 0 **Build** 0 **Move** 8 **MP** 10

***Special:** No **SAN** LOSS for violence

Brawl: 37% (18/7), damage 1D3

.38 Revolver: 43% (21/8), damage 1D10, attacks per round 1(3)

Dodge: 30% (15/6)

Armor: None

Skills: Drive Auto 40%, Intimidate 35%, Locksmith 40%, Spot Hidden 40%,
Stealth 37%

Equipment: .32 Automatic, cheap suit

BACKSTORY

- **Description:** Spinelli's flunkies
- **Trait:** Footsoldier

SPINELLI'S GOONS

Athletics 3, Driving 2, Scuffling 3,
Weapons 3

Stability 4, Sanity 4, Health 4

ALERTNESS MODIFIER: +1

WEAPON: -2 (Fist), 1 (Pistol)

APPENDIX B: PLAYER HANDOUTS

ANOTHER HARLEM SHOOTING

JANUARY 9, 1927

A fatal shooting occurred last evening near the intersection of 127th and 7th shortly after 11 p.m. The incident is being described as a mugging, although the shooting victim was an innocent bystander and not party to that crime.

The shooter, who has been identified as 32-year-old Maxwell Gaddis, has been taken into custody pending an investigation. Gaddis was not the instigator, however. That individual has been identified as 22-year-old Linden Brown; Gaddis claims that Brown threatened him with a knife, and that the shooting was committed in self-defense

The shooting victim was named as 26-year-old Lena Thoreau, of Harlem.

By Erin Ryan
THE INDEPENDENT

PLAYER HANDOUT 1: Shooting of Lena Thoreau (newspaper article)

LENA D. THOREAU, 26

JANUARY 10, 1927

Lena Delacroix Thoreau, age 26, of Harlem, New York City, tragically passed away on January 8, 1927. Thoreau was beloved and possessed a kind, gentle spirit that touched everyone she knew. Known to her friends as "Songbird," Thoreau brought light and music into the lives of everyone whose life she graced.

Lena leaves behind her husband, Clayton Evers Morris; her mother, Evelyn; and a sister, Linnea of Baton Rouge, Louisiana. A private service will be held on Tuesday, January 11.

PLAYER HANDOUT 2: Lena Thoreau's Obituary in The New York Amsterdam News (newspaper article)





SOULS OF HARLEM

*I wrote my way out
When the world turned its back on me
I was up against the wall
I had no foundation
No friends and no family to catch my fall
Running on empty, with nothing left in me but doubt
I picked up a pen
And wrote my way out (I wrote my way out)*

Nas, Dave East, Lin-Manuel Miranda and Aloe Blacc, Hamilton Mixtape

INTRO TO PEOPLE

Harlem was a Mecca of change for the African American community, but held immigrants and people from all walks of life with three main groups during the Renaissance: the exploding African American community, the receding Jewish community, and the waning Italian community. This mix of people made Harlem an incubator of inspiration, diversity, racism, and opportunities for change.

THE AFRICAN-AMERICAN COMMUNITY

See the Song of Harlem chapter for details on the people, places, and elements of Harlem life during the period of *Harlem Unbound*.

THE JEWISH COMMUNITY

In 1900, 180,000 Jews made Harlem their home. It was the third-largest Jewish community in the world, after Krakow, Poland and New York's Lower East Side, about 8 miles to the south. Most were second-generation German Jews, children of immigrants who had made it in America—families who had grown up on the Lower East Side, yet chose to flee the influx of religious Eastern European Jews into that area at the turn of the 20th century.

Harlem was divided into sections at the turn of the century, and this division held especially true for the Jewish population. Working class Jews lived meagerly, east of Fifth Avenue—while more wealthy Jews inhabited the new brownstones and French flats of West Harlem. According to Irving Howe in *World of Our Fathers*, in 1910, Harlem was called “the aristocratic Jewish neighborhood of New York...but that was true only of the blocks between Lenox and Seventh Avenues, where the better private homes were located, not of the tenements between Fifth and Lenox Avenues” where most of the Eastern European Jews moved.

The German Jews frequently looked down on their Eastern European counterparts who were often less worldly, more Judeo-centric in outlook, and usually impoverished. Jews in the early 20th century were generally seeking to become “Americanized.” Some German Jews came to the U.S. before 1900, and were more assimilated into American society. The recent immigrants, Eastern European Jews, had yet to discard their old-world customs. As more children of these immigrants attended public schools, rather than the Talmud Torah (parochial religious schools for Jewish boys) and yeshivas, the once isolated became more mainstream.

The Jewish community of Harlem flourished between 1900 and 1930, including in the secular Harlem Workmen's Circle (a socialist welfare group for Jews), a Talmud Torah, yeshivas, kosher butchers, and many other Jewish organizations and businesses. The community reflected

the full spectrum of Jewish life from the very Orthodox to secular Jews and even atheists, from entrepreneurs to communists, and from criminals to cops.

In 1907, the College of the City of New York (CCNY) moved to Harlem, and soon 90% of its students were Jewish. Also, the Jewish and Italian organized crime organizations which had started in East Harlem expanded their operations to the rest of Harlem. The new immigrant Jews often frequented Central Park, generally to visit the zoo, but hesitated to venture further south to the museums because they couldn't find them—and didn't know enough English to ask for directions.

Harlem in the '20s and '30s continues to be a place of transition. Just as earlier German Jews moved out when the Eastern European Jews moved in, African Americans and Puerto Ricans are now moving in, and Jews and Italians begin to move out. In 1910, Central Harlem was about 10% black. By 1930, it reaches 70%. In 1910, Greater Harlem was 4% black; by 1930, it is almost 35% black. By World War II, most of the Jews of Harlem will have moved to other areas of New York City such as Washington Heights, the Upper West Side, and Brooklyn; only about 5,000 Jews will remain in Harlem.

The 1920s includes several communities of self-identified black Jews in Harlem. The most prominent group is led by Rabbi Wentworth Matthews. The community follows Sephardic liturgy, observes holidays, practices circumcision, and has its own kosher butcher. Matthews' group is not accepted as part of mainstream Judaism.

THE ITALIAN COMMUNITY

East Harlem becomes home to a large Italian community of more than 150,000 souls escaping poverty in Southern Italy, plus Sicilians and a smaller number of Northern Italians. The first arrive in 1878, settling in around 115th Street, then growing out to encompass 96th through 116th Streets, which became Little Italy or Italian Harlem. These new immigrants were greeted by a mix of Irish, Jewish, and German immigrants and the black residents of Harlem.

By the 1920s, the Italian population of Harlem was more than triple that of Little Italy in lower Manhattan. East Harlem nearly mirrored daily life in Southern Italy, with different blocks representing different regions and villages—for instance, East 107th Street between First Avenue and the East River had villagers from Sarno, near Naples, take up residence. Italians had their own churches, banks, social clubs, and cultural

infrastructure. It wasn't uncommon for blocks of people to know each other's names and businesses.

Little Italy spawned a large number of criminal syndicates into existence, like the 107th Street Gang and the Black Hand. These eventually led to the more organized Italian gang, the Mafia. In 1930, Little Italy reaches its peak with more than 100,000 Italian Americans crammed into small apartments, running the streets, and greeting new neighbors.

HISTORICAL FOLKS

"We're going to let our children know that the only philosophers that lived were not Plato and Aristotle, but W.E.B. Du Bois and Alain Locke came through the universe."

Martin Luther King, Jr.

ACTIVISTS, ENTREPRENEURS, AND INTELLECTUALS

ALAIN LEROY LOCKE PHILOSOPHER, 1885 – 1954

Alain Locke represents the term "Renaissance man" better than most; he advanced the African-American cause in nearly every field including literature, music, theater, art, and politics. He would spend more than five decades, from the 1920s to the 1960s, fighting for racial equality. His work and influence are immeasurable.

The only child of an a distinguished African-American family, Locke's father was a law graduate from Howard University, and his mother was an educator; both provided him a solid foundation in life. Alain graduated magna cum laude from Harvard University in 1907. In quick order, he became the first African-American Rhodes Scholar at Oxford University, before graduating a few years later and attending the University of Berlin with another future distinguished figure from the Harlem Renaissance, W.E.B. Du Bois.

When Alain returned to the United States in 1912, he accepted an assistant professorship in Howard University's English department. Four years later, he returned to Harvard to work toward a Ph.D. and published his first book, *The Race Contacts and Interracial Relations*. Locke earned a Ph.D. in Philosophy in 1918; he returned to Howard as chair of the Philosophy department, and began teaching classes on race relations.

In 1919, Alain Locke turns his full focus to racial and cultural inclusion for blacks as an integrated part of American democracy, rather than as inferior beings under Jim Crow, and becomes the primary intellectual rival of Du Bois. He embraces the concept of the New Negro like Marcus Garvey, and brings forward talented blacks similarly to Du Bois. Alain believes these talented souls can win what he calls the “cultural-citizenship.” He advises these singers, writers, and others to find inspiration from their African and African-American heritage to create enduring works. These works consistently show mastery of form and an undaunted spirit.

While gay, he does not avoid adversity, yet he actively encourages other gay African Americans in the Renaissance. Alain is currently teaching at Howard in Washington D.C.; he is some five years away from being dismissed for his teachings on race, and traveling to Harlem. His influence and reach can still be felt through written words or one of the countless people he has nurtured.

ASA PHILIP RANDOLPH **LABOR RIGHTS LEADER, 1889 – 1979**



Asa Philip Randolph was born in Crescent City, Florida to a Methodist minister father and a seamstress mother. He would become one of the key civil rights movement players who worked for decades to desegregate the American armed forces, support anti-lynching laws, and serve as a union organizer. His minister father taught him that the color of one’s skin is less important than one’s character and morals. His mother taught him the importance of education, and to defend

yourself against those who would hurt you.

In the mid-1910s, Randolph moved to Harlem with his family. He studied social sciences at the College of the City of New York, and read W. E. B. Du Bois’ *The Souls of Black Folk*, a work that won him over to the cause of social equality. In Harlem, he became familiar with socialism and the philosophies of the Industrial Workers of the World.

With these influences, Randolph came to believe that collective action would be an important and effective way for blacks to gain legal and economic equality in the future. In 1919, he becomes president of the National Brotherhood of Workers of America, a union focused on organizing African-American shipyard and dock workers. He founds a magazine called *The Messenger* that initially publishes political and socialist articles; after 1920, *The Messenger* becomes a literary magazine featuring black culture and writers, as socialism fails to take root in Harlem despite Randolph’s efforts to unionize black shipyard workers and elevator operators. This failure leads him to eventually abandon the Socialist Party. The magazine never skyrockets, but launches the careers of some Renaissance writers, and acts as a voice against injustice.

LGBTQ

“You didn’t get on a rooftop and shout, I fucked my wife last night. So why would you get in the road and say, I love prick? You didn’t. You just did what you wanted to do. Nobody was in the closet. There wasn’t any closet.”

Richard Bruce Nugent, Gay Rebel of the Harlem Renaissance

Harlem is not just a black Mecca, it is a gay liberal capital with the somewhat unspoken acceptance of all sexuality. Sexuality oozes out of numerous art forms, from the written word, to paintings, to dedicated night clubs. Freedom of thought is for all walks of life.

That’s not to say there is not oppression waiting to be unleashed. For instance, Augustus Granville Dill, business editor of *The Crisis* and friend of W.E.B. Du Bois, is arrested for soliciting sex in a restroom, and his career is devastated. The looming threat of developing psychiatric institutions also target LGBTQ Harlemites and attempt to lock them away. That is why some choose to keep their private lives to themselves, while others choose to live openly, including many entertainers who build amazing careers as open homosexuals, such as singer Bessie Smith and Alberta Hunter.

Even with those looming terrors, Harlem provides a place to prosper, and a place to meet other people and build a community. Numerous rent parties, hotspots and night-clubs dot the streets of Harlem, and the most popular is the Clam House. But not to be overlooked are Yeah-man, Garden of Joy and the Ubangi. Not only at night clubs, but at numerous businesses, like Gumby’s Bookstore and The Dark Tower, doors are always open and friendly. These hangouts create a zone of safety for people where all sexualities are welcomed.

A number of writers, actors, entertainers and artists are known members of the LGBTQ community: Gladys Bentley, Bessie Smith, Moms Mabley, Countee Cullen, Wallace Thurman, Emily Weld Grimke and Alain Locke.

BROTHERHOOD OF SLEEPING CAR PORTERS

Most of the community of Harlem was estranged from organized labor—the AFL did not officially exclude black workers, but many of its affiliates did. As a result, the labor movement failed to make any advances for many years. This begins to change in the early 1920s, and the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters is the first break in a majority-white union environment. The BSCP receives a charter from the AFL in 1925, making it the first black labor organization to do so.

The BSCP starts when 500 porters meet in Harlem in an effort to organize under the leadership of Asa Philip Randolph. Randolph is not a Pullman employee, a distinction which gives him relative immunity to punishment from the company. Unfortunately, a failed strike in 1933—broken by replacement rumors—destroys confidence in the union, and it nearly dissolves. But the tactics Randolph develops for collective action in this era will later become vital methods for the civil rights movement.

Meanwhile, the Communist Party has been aggressively looking for black leaders to lead the community, and actively recruits along Lenox Avenue—at least, when the police aren't trying to arrest them. The 1928 meeting of the party's Sixth Congress passes a resolution supporting the black cause as an aspect of class issues in America. Communists focus on Harlem in the late 1920s and during the Great Depression in hopes of making advances—but they make enemies in the NAACP and the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, due to their hostility toward the more moderate efforts of those groups.

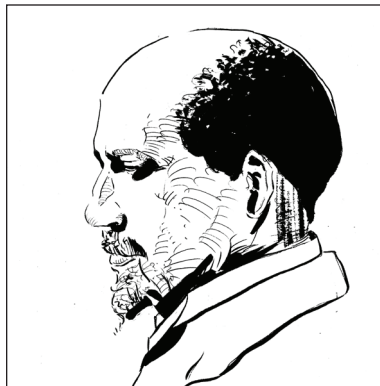
Forming a union is difficult and ugly work, and in the wake of the Great War, it was particularly difficult in the United States. The movement faced the resistance of a federal government that had absolutely no interest in seeing Bolshevism spread from Russia to America after the anarchist bombings of 1919. Because the Socialist Party refuses to recognize the issues of race intersecting with class in America, black workers rightfully hesitate before joining a cause that may not have any interest in addressing their needs. The Brotherhood is one of the few early successes—and even that is a near miss.

HOOK: A proto-union “the Thousand” is making small advances in recruitment on Lenox Avenue, but their ranks are quickly reduced by arrests and violence when they make public appearances. For every one member arrested, it seems a replacement arrives in the next few weeks, to pick up where the other left off. New recruits are snuck into St. Nicholas Park, somehow avoiding regular police patrols, to meet the leaders of the movement in the middle of the night.

Rumors hold that there are three leaders, and the eldest is the only one heard to speak at these meetings. Referenced by the title “Mother,” the leader of this group gives inspirational speeches heavy on metaphor, and calls for the Thousand children to work together to care for their brothers and sisters. Bath tub gin is passed around to members and recruits after speeches, before the new recruits are asked if they wish to join the Mother’s family and fight for the cause of the Thousand brethren. Few recruits seem to remember much of what happens after this, but that may be the gin talking. In reality, “Mother” is Ssssleyitis, a 300-year-old serpent woman.

When asked about the Thousand, the official Communist Party of New York has no knowledge of them, but has expressed concern as well as a very strong interest in paying for any further information about the group.

WILLIAM EDWARD BURGHARDT DU BOIS PAN-AFRICANIST, 1868 – 1963



William Edward Burghardt “W. E. B.” Du Bois co-founded the NAACP in 1910, and moved to Harlem to take a position as the organization’s Director of Publicity and Research. He also founded the NAACP’s magazine, *The Crisis*, to discuss “the causes and impact of racism.” This magazine features literary works as well, and publishes many authors promoting the sentiment of black excellence.

During the early years of the NAACP, Du Bois joined the Socialist Party—though not for long, as he resigned his membership in 1912. In the mid 1920s, Du Bois is invited to Russia to observe the effects of communism in the Soviet Union, an experience which solidifies his support of socialist ideas rather than communist ones. His support of socialist beliefs is based on a pragmatic understanding of society; he believes the fight for full civil rights and increased representation will be led and won by the black intellectual elite, a group he refers to as the Talented Tenth, and that education is key to developing these potential leaders.

While Du Bois is involved with the NAACP, the group provides financial support for legal defenses in an effort to overturn Jim Crow statutes that legalize segregation. The organization raises awareness of black needs and circumstances through *The Crisis*, and documents cases of lynching and racial violence. As editor, Du Bois influences thousands of blacks to look past their harsh treatment and aid the war effort.

The NAACP also assisted with the appeals that led to the Supreme Court decision in *Moore v. Dempsey*, which expanded the federal courts' oversight of state criminal justice systems to prevent juries from passing sentences while under threat of local mobs.

Du Bois supports women's rights, although the failure of the suffragist movement to support the fight against racial injustice makes it difficult for him to publicly support their movement in return.

HOOK: *The Crisis* does take unsolicited submissions, although new writers may wish to speak with Jessie Fauset first to get her input on their work. Investigating topics the NAACP is interested in may even result in an ongoing contract to continue the investigation; the group may even cover bail and legal services, if needed. But reporters should practice caution in their investigations, as the NAACP can't help you if you're dead because you got in over your head. Articles that provide citations and proof of events covered are preferred.

MARCUS GARVEY

POLITICAL LEADER, 1887 – 1940



Marcus Garvey was the youngest of 11 siblings, and of those, one of two to survive childhood in Jamaica under British rule. The island had roughly 15,000 whites ruling over a population of nearly 170,000 racially mixed people and 630,000 blacks. That domination of color and power is something Garvey never forgets.

Garvey founded the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) in Jamaica, in 1914. He traveled to the

United States in 1916 on a lecture and fundraising tour, after building a solid foundation for the organization. Garvey was outspoken about the lack of proper black leadership in the States, and took it upon himself to improve the situation. He moved the UNIA's base from Jamaica to Harlem.

By 1919, the UNIA is 4 million members strong throughout the world with branches in the United States, South America, Central America, and the West Indies. Garvey founds the Negro Factories Corps that produces commodities and provides jobs for thousands of blacks. He launches the most successful newspaper of his entire publishing career, *Negro World*, which runs until 1933. *Negro World* is a weekly newspaper that serves as the voice for the UNIA, and publishes poetry and articles of international interest to black readers. A few of the writers for *The Crisis* also appear in *Negro World*, but most of the authors are international, or live outside of Harlem. Writers local to Harlem include John Edward Bruce, Hubert Harrison, John G. Jackson, Joel Augustus Rogers, Arturo Alfonso Schomburg, and Eric D. Walrond. The year 1919 also sees Garvey's most ambitious business venture: the Black Star Shipping Line.

THE TALENTED TENTH

“Education must not simply teach work—it must teach Life. The Talented Tenth of the Negro race must be made leaders of thought and missionaries of culture among their people.”

W.E.B. Du Bois

The term “the Talented Tenth” was created by Du Bois to describe what he believed to be the top ten percent of the black population who would be educated, affluent, and leaders. This tenth would write, continue their education, and be active in the social change that would benefit their race.

THE CRISIS: A RECORD OF DARKER RACES

Du Bois' magazine began in 1910 as the official magazine of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. The purpose of the magazine was apparent with each issue—to carry on an intellectual discussion about race and to protect, elevate, and teach black people.

The Crisis lives up to its mission, shining a light on the lynching epidemic in America, and providing a stage for talented black creatives and intellectuals. By 1918, it is circulated all across America and bringing in nearly \$60,000 per year.

For the next few months you can pick up a copy for 10 cents, but look out—in December the price jumps to 15 cents.

BLACK STAR SHIPPING LINE

The Black Star Line is a shipping line incorporated in 1919 to transport goods and provide easy and low-cost passage for Marcus Garvey's "Back-to-Africa" movement. The headquarters of the four-ship line is in Harlem, and it is just one of the many businesses that the UNIA helped to establish.

Unfortunately, the shipping line is mismanaged, and reaches a \$500,000 debt in four years' time due to the initial ships' condition being worse than advertised. One sinks within the first year, and another blows a boiler, killing a crewman. Graft is a problem throughout the line, as are the active sabotage efforts of J. Edgar Hoover's Federal Bureau of Investigation. On one occasion, cargo rots in the hold because Garvey insists on making ceremonial stops for political gain, instead of delivering the food goods before they go bad.

Eventually, the Black Star Line results in Hoover charging Garvey with mail fraud, because the ships advertised for the company did not match the ships actually sailing. The Black Star Line ceases sailing in 1922, to an overall loss somewhere between half a million to more than a million dollars.

FROM SLAVERY TO SERVITUDE

While the North offered opportunities and a less harsh reality, the people of the Great Migration did not leave oppression behind when they fled the South. Many employment agencies hiring domestic workers made them sign a contract. These contracts were nearly impossible to break, no matter the conditions of service. The contracts forced travelers to work for a set number of years, working to pay for the move. Breaking the contract would mean losing all of your possessions and money. They may have left slavery, but they sometimes entered into indentured servitude.

Marcus Garvey is an extremely charismatic leader who appeals to many of the West Indies immigrants to Harlem, as well as black veterans of the Great War. He believes in and pushes for the development of Liberia, in the form of colleges and industrial power, as a base for future plans. This receives enough backlash from European interests that he eventually abandons the work.

Garvey takes a hard line against the Communist Party, believing communism would be more beneficial for whites while blocking the success of blacks entirely. In his view, the Communist Party is full of white men who want to manipulate black opinion to their own benefit for control. He shares similar views on socialists as well, believing that separation is the only choice that will secure the future of blacks.

What initially started as a philosophical disagreement in tactics between the NAACP and the UNIA, quickly becomes personal between Du Bois and Garvey. The two men exchange pointed and vicious attacks in public, both verbal and written, and dislike each other intensely. Garvey views Du Bois as a collaborator in the oppression of blacks; Du Bois views Garvey's separatism as a concession to white supremacy, a view he feels is reinforced by the Ku Klux Klan's open support of Garvey's Back-to-Africa movement.

Their tensions escalate as Garvey accuses Du Bois of paying to have the Black Star Line sabotaged, and many black leaders ask for Garvey to be investigated for his fraudulent business actions. This investigation eventually results in Garvey's arrest and conviction, after he chooses to be his own defender in court. After his conviction, Garvey accuses Jewish interests of sabotaging his case. He is deported to Jamaica in 1927.

While Garvey is in prison, his wife Amy takes over the day-to-day running of the UNIA, something she is well prepared for as she is already involved in speechwriting and planning for the group. After the Garveys return to Jamaica in 1927, the UNIA takes a different direction under new leadership which leads to a schism in the group, a significant reduction in the influence of the UNIA, and Garvey's eventual fading from public life.

ARTURO ALFONSO SCHOMBURG ACTIVIST, 1874 – 1938

Arturo Schomburg was born in Santurce, Puerto Rico to Maria Josefa, a freeborn midwife, and Carlos Federico Schomburg, a German merchant. Words from one of his teachers at San Juan's Instituto Popular struck him and became a driving force in his life: "Blacks have no history, no heroes or accomplishments."

Schomburg emigrated to Harlem in 1881, and later worked to untangle African history from the Americas. Confronted with American racism, he joined the Revolutionary Committee of Puerto Rico, and was an advocate for Puerto Rican and Cuban independence from Spain. He became a co-founder of the Negro Society for Historical Research with John Edward Bruce in 1911. In 1912, Schomburg co-edited the *Encyclopedia of the Colored Race*, and in 1916 published *A Bibliographical Checklist of American Negro Poetry*, a collection of black poetry.

Arturo Schomburg is a leading voice of intellectuals in the Harlem Renaissance, and collects literature, art, slave narratives, and materials of African history. In 1925 he publishes his own work, *The Negro Digs Up His Past*; this impressive piece will be included in Alain Locke's *The New Negro*. A year later, Ernestine Rose of the New York Public Library's Harlem Branch buys his voluminous collection of literature, artwork, and more. He then becomes the curator of the Schomburg Collection of Negro Literature and Art.

ERNESTINE ROSE **LIBRARIAN, 1880 – 1961**

Named after 19th-century feminist Ernestine Potowski Rose, this woman followed in those esteemed footsteps, graduating from Wesleyan University in 1904 and beginning work in the New York Public Library. During this time she encountered Russian-Jewish immigrants and their culture, and this influenced her worldview by showing her the inhuman treatment of minorities. As the Great War raged on, she served as the director for the American Library Association.

In 1920, Rose is appointed as the branch librarian at 135th Street, the Harlem Branch. She recognizes that many institutions aren't working with the Renaissance, excluding its creatives and ideology, and she dedicates herself to that task. Her first set of victories are the integration of the library staff, hiring people such as Nella Larsen, and the foundation of a collection of African art.

MARY WHITE OVINGTON **JOURNALIST, 1865 – 1951**

Ovington joined the civil rights movement after hearing Frederick Douglas speak in 1890. Over the next five years she founded and led the Greenpoint Settlement, investigating social issues regarding black employment and housing. This led her to meet W.E.B. Du Bois and eventually A. Philip Randolph, Jack London, and Max Eastman in 1905, as a member of the Socialist Party of America.

In 1910, she aided in the founding of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), and was appointed Executive Secretary. Ovington worked to advance race and women's rights, and was a pacifist opposed to the Great War. After the war, she is the Executive Secretary and Chairperson of the NAACP. She and the NAACP have been engaged in a lengthy legal battle against segregation and racial discrimination since 1915, and are appealing to the Supreme Court.

CYRIL BRIGGS **ACTIVIST, 1888 – 1966**

Cyril Briggs was born on Nevis island in the Caribbean in 1888 to a white plantation overseer father and a Caribbean mother. He emigrated to the United States in 1907, and received his first journalist work with *Amsterdam News* in 1912.

The Crusader, Briggs' own publication, began in 1918 and created the African Blood Brotherhood (ABB). The ABB's mission is to fight racial discrimination, ensure voting rights, and actively combat the enduring horror of lynching. He supported African Americans in the war efforts, as he hoped it would empower President Woodrow Wilson to address voting rights, which it did not. Disillusioned, Briggs joins the Communist Party in 1921 and incorporates Marxist beliefs into the ABB, along with black self-determinism.

Briggs sees racism against blacks as something that won't be solved by adhering to white laws; he preaches that whites consider themselves superior to blacks, marking those with black skin as inferior. His solution is a separate existence of the races, and he subscribes to an "Africa for the Africans" stance. As a Marxist, his beliefs oppose Garvey's nationalist movement, the UNIA, and a rift begins between the two. Garvey files a number of lawsuits against Briggs, believing he wants to take down the government.

The ABB dissolves in 1925, but returns as the American Negro Labor Congress (ANLC), funded by the Communist Party. Briggs serves as the secretary of the ANLC, and remains an active force in the movement.

THOMAS T. FORTUNE **CRUSADING JOURNALIST, 1856 – 1928**

Born into slavery in Florida, Thomas Fortune experienced the racial violence of the Ku Klux Klan under the guise of politics. He would become a crusading writer and editor. Three times over during his long life, he would be pulled back into activism and journalism.

Founded in Alexandria, Virginia in 1876, *The People's Advocate* was Fortune's first newspaper. He moved to New York in 1881 and created a new paper, *The New York Globe*; this paper would undergo a few name changes, survive for eight decades, and become one of the most influential black newspapers in the United States. For two decades, Thomas rallied his paper and investigative skills, uncompromising in a quest to uncover injustices toward African Americans, with a strong eye towards the southern states' treatment of

"THE FATHER OF HARLEM"

Philip A. Payton is considered the "Father of Harlem."

Some considered him a man trying to uplift his race, and others as someone making money off the backs of his people. Either way, without him, Harlem wouldn't exist as the black Mecca of the Renaissance.

Payton moved to New York in 1899 and went through a number of jobs, until he began managing black housing. When two white rival landlords were warring, one of them decided to fill his building full of black people, and hired Payton as the landlord in hopes of running the other man out of business. Instead, his success led to other landlords hiring Payton, and by 1904, he opened his own business: the Afro-American Realty Company.

The business was revolutionary. Local papers cried out about the "negro invasion," but Payton had more than a million dollars in assets in just a few years. All of that came to an end in 1908 from over-extending himself, encountering lawsuits, and coming up against the lasting impact from the depression of 1907. Payton lost the business, but kept working in real estate.

Before his death in 1917, Payton closed a sale worth more than \$1.5 million for black housing. The six apartment buildings were named after prominent African Americans.

blacks. His words were his weapon, and the paper, the delivery system. In 1887, he organized the National Afro-American League to provide some defense to the black community against lynching, riots, and white terrorism.

A rift between Thomas and Booker T. Washington ended his career in ridicule in 1907. He managed a resurrection of his career for a few years, but in 1911 had to step away due to illness. In 1923, Marcus Garvey will pull him out of obscurity and make Fortune the editor of *Negro World* at 67 years old. Fortune will run that paper until his death in 1928.

CHARLES WILLIAM ANDERSON **BUREAUCRAT, 1866 – 1938**

Oxford, Ohio-born Charles William Anderson was a close confidante of Booker T. Washington for more than 20 years. He entered politics in 1886 in Manhattan as a ward heeler, and gained votes for the Republicans in African-American neighborhoods. He quickly became the president of the Young Men's Colored Republican Club of New York County. Washington's relationship with President Theodore Roosevelt facilitated Anderson being appointed as an internal revenue collector for lower Manhattan, including Wall Street. This position made Anderson one of the nation's most powerful officials and lasted for a decade until Woodrow Wilson ousted him, unable to see a black man with such power.

Anderson now serves as Chief of Inspectors for the State Agricultural Department, as Governor Whitman appointed him in 1915.

RUTH LOGAN ROBERTS **SUFFRAGIST, 1891 – 1968**

Daughter of suffragist Adella Hunt Logan, Ruth Roberts was born in 1891 and graduated from the Sargent School of Physical Education in 1911. Her field of study was physical therapy, and she worked at the Tuskegee Institute, where she began her suffrage work in 1913.

With her husband Eugene Percy Roberts, Ruth moved to New York in 1917, where she served on multiple boards as director of the national and local YMCA. She serves on the New York State Board of Social Welfare, and hosts regular salons in her home at 130 West 130th Street in Harlem. The salons host power players of the Renaissance from all fields, ranging from politics to the arts.

WALTER FRANCIS WHITE **ACTIVIST, 1893 – 1955**

White serves the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People for a quarter of a century in different capacities, beginning as an investigator in 1918. His ability to "pass" for white, from his European and African ancestry on both sides, enables him to enter places or engage in activities other blacks can't.

HOOK: Walter White may be friends with the investigators, or turn to one of them for help. A new recruit to the NAACP has gone missing. White would like for them to find the young man, Karl Tempest, as he has to travel down to Georgia on a different case. Investigating Karl uncovers that the young man just moved here from Jamaica, and took up residence in new, cheap tenement housing called Rest for All. The 3-story Rest for All is actually a haunted building that traps its residents after they sign the lease. The landlord, Jim, knows—but he has to do the building’s bidding, or he will be trapped himself.

A’LELIA WALKER (LELIA MCWILLIAMS) MILLIONAIRE AND PATRON, 1885 – 1931

The only child of the self-made millionaire Madam C.J. Walker, A’lelia Walker aided her mother in founding the Madam C.J. Walker Manufacturing Company in 1906. She opens and runs the New York branch of an elite salon. Following her mother’s death in 1919, she becomes the president of the company, but begins to lose interest in running the business. She instead immerses herself into Harlem’s social life, nightlife, and the budding Renaissance movement.

A’lelia Walker lives in Golden Edge, overlooking Central Park near Lenox Avenue. Her position of wealth as an arts patron places her in a position to play hostess to many of the best and brightest of Harlem. An exposure to classical music in her youth leads her to seek out jazz and experimental musicians to play at her elegant parties.

In the late 1920s, Walker converts a floor of her townhouse into “The Dark Tower,” named after Countee Cullen’s magazine column—a permanent salon where visitors can freely share thoughts, creativity, and forbidden interests in privacy. While those familiar with her mother’s charity work may have looked askance at her daughter’s “frivolous” use of money for social gatherings, without the patronage provided by the the Tower, many writers and musicians would not have had opportunities to connect and be heard.

Walker’s salon was integrated, though as hostess she was not unaware of the racial dynamics at play. She was known to play with those lines—on one occasion, serving white guests bathtub gin and chitterlings, and black guests champagne and caviar. Similarly, she was known to be accepting of gay and lesbian performances and guests—an attitude that contributes to her scandalous reputation among Harlem’s more conservative elite, but that also provides a safe environment for networking and fostering personal and artistic relationships.

As a result, the Dark Tower is more than merely a nightclub; visitors come and go at all times of day, by invitation of Mrs. Walker. At any one time, one can find famous writers in attendance including Langston Hughes, Zora Neale Hurston, James Weldon Johnson, and others. With the Great Depression, the salon is forced to close, though private groups may still meet at the Tower after it is sold in 1930.

THE DARK HEIGHTS

Access to the second floor of the Dark Tower is restricted to members of the Dark Heights, an elite group of writers and musicians personally sponsored by A’lelia Walker. While Mrs. Walker herself is not a member, the social club’s focus on writing earns them a secure meeting room at the salon.

Membership in the Dark Heights can be earned by presenting your work to A’lelia or to a member of the Heights, and impressing them with experimental art of written or musical form. Jazz poetry is a popular submission for review, but other art forms are acceptable so long as they are spoken-word or musical in nature. Membership in the Dark Heights often results in immediate and astounding success, though members are sworn to secrecy regarding the social club’s private activities.

Determining who is a member and who is not is difficult at best, but members regularly attend the open salon, so that is the best opportunity to be noticed. Known members include the well-dressed Samuel Haumza—a man who claims to be a wealthy Egyptian, though his accent is...difficult to place. He is often found listening attentively to performers from his regular corner of the Dark Tower, where in his black suit, he nearly blends into the dark background.

Twice a year—at each equinox, in March and September—the Dark Heights holds a sponsored event at the Tower featuring readings, small plays, and extremely experimental music. Along with the mad cackling of the Heights members, the discordant piping of an instrument that sounds like an unholy cross of bagpipe and piccolo can be heard drifting from the meeting chambers down the back stairwell.

PASSING

Set in Harlem during the 1920s, Nella Larsen's novel *Passing* revolves around the reunion of two friends, Clare Kendry and Irene Redfield. Due to Kendry's light skin tone, others may mistake her for a white woman; when she is "passing" for white, Clare finds herself with access and experiences denied to her darker-skinned black friends and family, and comes to consider how race and identity factor into human connections and values.

FIRE!!

Fire!! was born in fire and died in flames. It was a spark of genius by Thurman, Hurston, Douglas, Davis, Nugent, Bennett, Alexander, Cullen, and Hughes. As stars of the Renaissance, they did not adhere to the old mentality, and wished to address African American experiences in a modern and realistic manner.

This magazine is their medium. The publication, a single issue, focuses on the changing attitudes of African Americans and explores interracial relationships, sexuality, racism, color prejudice, and prostitution.

The magazine is met with a range of reactions, from cold indifference to outright disgust. Some fear that it does not show African American sophistication; others are appalled by the blanket expression of ideas and vulgarity. But its publication is a historic moment. The magazine's headquarters burn down after its publication, and thus ends the endeavor.

AUTHORS, JOURNALISTS, AND POETS

LANGSTON HUGHES

WRITER, 1902 – 1967



Born James Mercer, Langston Hughes is the most well-known literary giant of the Harlem Renaissance. Hughes began writing poetry after the death of his grandmother and moving to Cleveland, Ohio where he was introduced to it by a teacher. He embraced writers Carl Sandburg and Walt Whitman. He became a contributor to the literary magazine *The Crisis*, which publishes one of his most influential works in 1921: *The Negro Speaks of Rivers*.

In 1922, Hughes arrives in Harlem after quitting Columbia University due to the racism he experiences. He continues to write poetry and also takes on a number of odd jobs for the first year, eventually serving as a crewman about the S.S. *Malone*.

NELLA LARSEN

NOVELIST, 1891 – 1964

Nella Larsen was born in 1891 to a West Indian father who died when she was two, and a Danish mother. Larsen was raised in all-white environments after the death of her black father, as her mother remarried a Danish man. Her first brush with black people occurred at Fisk University in Tennessee; after graduation, she journeyed to Denmark and stayed for three years. Then she studied nursing in New York before working as a nurse in Alabama from 1915 to 1921.

Larsen moves back to New York in 1922, and serves as a librarian at the New York Public Library before her first novel *Quicksand* is published in 1928. In 1929, her second book *Passing* is published; it wins her the Guggenheim Fellowship a year later, the first time it is ever awarded to a black woman.

WALLACE THURMAN

NOVELIST, 1902 – 1934

Wallace Thurman's earliest memories were of loneliness. He was raised by his grandmother Emma Jackson, abandoned by his father, and ridiculed by his mother for his dark skin. While the dominant religion in Utah was the Church of Latter Day Saints (Mormon), Thurman's grandmother was deeply religious and a member of the Calvary Baptist Missionary, the first black church in Utah. Even with the obstacles he faced, he was recognized in both high school and college for his brilliance.

Thurman arrives in Harlem in 1925, following his friend Arna Bontemps, with whom they ran the black newspaper *The Pacific Defender* and an art journal called *Outlet*. He quickly becomes a cornerstone of the New Negro

Renaissance with Hurston, Hughes, and Nugent. 1926 sees the creation of Thurman's third magazine, *Fire!!*, which is considered by most to be the publication that launches the Harlem Renaissance.

In the next few years, Thurman founds *The Looking Glass*; becomes editor of the *The Messenger*, a socialist magazine led by Randolph; ghost-writes for *True Story*; and becomes the first black reader at Macaulay, a New York publishing company. He is a year away from publishing the first of his own three novels, *The Blacker the Berry: A Novel of Negro Life* in 1929.

(FESTUS) CLAUDE MCKAY **WRITER, 1889 – 1948**

Born in Jamaica, Claude McKay was one of eight children out of eleven in his family to live to adulthood. McKay's schooling began at Mt. Zion Church, and continued under the tutelage of his brother Theodore, who loved literature and introduced Claude to it. Published in 1912, his first two volumes of poetry highlighted his lyrical celebration of black life and political concern for racial prejudice.

The Souls of Black Folk by W.E.B. Du Bois inspired McKay to move to New York in 1914 after a failed marriage; there he entrenched himself in Harlem and Greenwich Village. He embraced a bohemian lifestyle that saw him own a restaurant, and work as a long-shoreman and numerous other jobs.

Shortly afterward, falling in with other writers, he wrote his first American poems, "The Harlem Dancer" and "Invocation" that garnered him instant recognition. In July 1919, during the height of Red Summer, McKay has a two-page piece in the *Liberator*, "If We Must Die," that speaks to whites killing black people in riots. McKay helps Cyril Briggs found the African Blood Brotherhood before moving to Europe.

In 1921, McKay returns as line editor of the *Liberator*. In 1922, he published *Harlem Shadows*, passionately portraying black life in Harlem and infusing it with the racial outcry found in "If We Must Die." McKay is a few years away from his boom.

COUNTEE CULLEN **POET, 1903 – 1946**

Born Coleman Rutherford, Countee took on the last name Cullen in 1918, after being adopted by Rev. Cullen who served as president of the Harlem Branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and was the preacher at Salem Methodist Church. Countee became their son and a ward of the church.

Countee writes poetry throughout his high school and college days that catches the eye of *The Crisis*, and wins national recognition by 1925 when he earns the John Reed Memorial Prize for "The Ballad of a Brown Girl." It is just the first of many prizes he will earn, and a number of his subsequent works appear more influenced by Americanism.

JESSIE REDMON FAUSET **EDUCATOR, 1882 – 1961**

Known as the "Midwife of the Harlem Renaissance," Jessie moved to Harlem in 1919, leaving her teaching position in Boston to become the literary editor of *The Crisis*. In her pivotal role, she introduces the works of the unknown literary geniuses of the Renaissance such as Hughes, McKay, and Toomer.

Jessie not only fosters their work, but creates her own, and becomes the most published novelist of the time. Her works include numerous essays, poems, and novels, including *There is Confusion* (1924). In 1926, she leaves *The Crisis* and returns to the world of teaching.

DOROTHY WEST **WRITER, 1907 – 1998**

Dorothy moves to Harlem in 1926 at the age of 18, holding the mantle of the youngest member of the Renaissance writers—although two years earlier, she was being published regularly in the *Boston Post*. She also holds the title of sole surviving member of the Renaissance in the 1990s. In 1926, West ties Zora Neale Hurston in a writing contest with her fiction piece, *The Typewriter*. She remains a steadfast member of the group including Hughes, Paterson, and a number of other writers that travels to the Soviet Union to make a race relations film, *Black and White*.

RICHARD WRIGHT **WRITER, 1908 – 1960**

The eldest son of a school teacher and sharecropper on the Rucker's Plantation, Richard Wright's parents were the first generation of the Wrights born free after the Civil War. At 15, he published his first story, "The Voodoo of Hell's Half-Acre", before graduating high school as valedictorian in 1923. This moment is a test of the young man, as the principal gives him a prepared speech that does not offend the white students. Wright weathers the pressure and gives his original speech.

Wright arrives in Harlem at the tail end of the Renaissance to become the editor of the *The Daily Worker*, a Communist newspaper. He will continue the work of those that have moved on, and eventually publishes the books *Native Son* and *Black Boy*.

ZORA NEALE HURSTON **FOLKLORIST, 1891 – 1960**



Hurston, an enigma among luminaries, rewrote her life, as she lived it. For decades, no one was sure of her birth location or her actual age. It was believed that she was born in Eatonville, Florida—one of the first African-American-only towns in the United States. In fact, she was born in Nostalgia, Alabama and moved to Eatonville at the age of three. For all of her brilliance, work, and relationships, she dies in poverty and largely unknown. It is only through writer Alice Walker in 1973 that she received proper recognition.

In 1917, Hurston attended Morgan Academy, claiming her birthday was 1901, enabling her to receive a free high school education. In 1918, she attended Howard University and co-founded *The Hilltop*, a student newspaper. She studied Spanish, Greek and eventually earned a degree in anthropology from Barnard.

Hurston arrives in Harlem in the mid-1920s, quickly becoming one of the voices for the movement to some extent, tempered by other forces in the Renaissance. More of an adventurer, folklorist, and storyteller of rural African-American life, she'll meet much resistance from the Talented Tenth, who would rather her focus be on the elite.

VISUAL ARTISTS

AUGUSTA SAVAGE **SCULPTOR, 1892 – 1962**

Augusta Savage was the seventh of fourteen children, born into a poor and religious household. Her carpenter and Methodist preacher father and housewife mother couldn't grasp her talent. Her parents saw it as something evil, the clay figures just sinful and "graven images." Her father tried to exorcise the evil of art out of her with beatings nearly every day. Undaunted, she continued her work with clay. Her talent drew the attention of her high school principal who encouraged her to teach art, and convinced her father to allow her to do so. She earned one dollar a day for six months. At 15, she married James Savage, had a daughter, and was widowed within five years.

In 1921, Savage arrives in New York to understudy with sculptor Solon Borglum, who turns her away. Instead, she completes Cooper Union's four-year course in three years, before applying successfully to a French government art program in 1923—except a racist Alabaman receptionist she would travel with refused to accompany her. It took another seven years before she was able to travel abroad, with a scholarship from the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Rome.

She returns to the States in 1932 during the Great Depression, when countless people are out of work in the crippled American economy. But as is the theme of her life, she continues on undaunted; in 1934, Savage becomes the first African-American artist of the National Association of Women Painters and Sculptors. She later opens the Savage Studio of Arts and Crafts in a basement at West 143rd Street. The studio is open to anyone who wants to draw, sculpt, or paint.

AARON DOUGLAS

ILLUSTRATOR, 1899 – 1979

In 1920, after his return from the Great War, Club Ebony commissioned Aaron Douglas to create a mural. He graduated from the University of Nebraska in 1922; 1925 sees Douglas moving to Harlem, and teaching art at Lincoln High School. In that same year, he is the only black visual artist featured in *The New Negro*. Over the following years, his skilled hands create art for Hughes and Johnson, and his work is featured frequently in *The Crisis* magazine.

Douglas' murals will grace Harlem hotels, walls, and buildings. He will become the President of the Harlem Artist Guild in the 1930s. The work he creates embodies the spirit of the Harlem Renaissance, and earns him the title "The Father of African-American Art."

OSCAR MICHEAUX

FILM DIRECTOR, 1884 – 1951

Oscar Micheaux was born on a farm, the fifth child of 13 in rural Metropolis, Illinois. In 1911, he used those experiences in his first book, *The Conquest: The Story of a Negro Pioneer*. The book was dedicated to Booker T. Washington, and promoted the spirit of uplifting the race. Using that success, Micheaux opened a publishing company for his next two books. *The Homesteader*, his third book, appealed to him as a powerful story for film. In 1918, he began studying the craft of filmmaking, ultimately what he would become known for—earning himself the nickname "The Father of Afro-American Cinema."

In 1918–1919, Micheaux produced *The Homesteader* as a silent film from his own company; it was distributed to nearly 800 theaters. Hot on the heels of his first movie, and the only feature-length film by a black company, he releases *Within Our Gates* in 1920 as a direct response to D.W. Griffith's racist 1915 film *Birth of a Nation*.

HOOK: Oscar Micheaux has traveled to Harlem to promote his upcoming film, *Within Our Gates*, by showing a copy of *The Homesteader*. But every person he shows it to seems to vanish shortly after seeing the film. That's four missing Harlemites, and Oscar is getting worried. He doesn't know what's going on, and needs backers.

In truth, the reel of film is made of material from the Dreamlands. Anyone who views the film other than Oscar, because he made the reel, is pulled into the film. If the reel is destroyed, all of the victims die.

WITHIN OUR GATES

Oscar Micheaux's second film is released in 1920, and explores the tale of a beautiful, mixed-raced black woman who moves North in hopes of raising money for a school in the South. The film portrays a complex black relationship previously not seen, and highlights the deadly violence of the Jim Crow South, with flashbacks of the woman's family being killed by a white mob after a wrongful accusation.

SHUFFLE ALONG

Shuffle Along is a monumental feat and achievement of its time. It is the first musical composed by blacks, featuring an all-black cast and direction. Its first performance is in March, 1921 at Howard University in Washington D.C., and a few months later, it premieres in New York at the Sixty-Third Street Theatre.

The near-instant success of the show exceeds expectations, and proves to theater managers that white audiences will embrace a black musical, something that has not happened in more than a decade on Broadway. It becomes known as an “actor’s show.” The musical renews public interest in black theatricals, and is a turning point for black entertainment in the United States.

Shuffle Along weaves the stories of two men, Sam and Steve, both vying to become mayor of Jimtown USA, with the losing candidate being appointed to chief of police by the other. Sam wins the race with a crooked campaign manager; he keeps his word to Steve, but the duo quickly find themselves at odds. This leads to a humorous and dramatic fight scene between the two with a newcomer, Harry Walton, running for mayor. Harry wins the next election, and runs both Sam and Steve out of town to the most popular number from the musical, “I’m Just Wild about Harry.”

EVELYN (JARVIS) PREER ACTRESS AND SINGER, 1896 – 1932

Known in black circles as “The First Lady of the Screen,” Evelyn Preer was born in Vicksburg, Mississippi and moved to Chicago with her mother after her father’s death. She began acting in vaudeville and minstrel shows at an early age. *The Homesteader* in 1919 is her debut role, and she undertakes numerous personal and public appearances to promote the film.

At the time of her *Homesteader* appearances, she is months away from her biggest role as the lead in Oscar Micheaux’s *Within Our Gates*, a role that shows her versatility and skills. She is applauded by both black and white press. In the mid-1920s, she is known for her ability to appear in “crossover” films and stage work.

COMPOSERS, MUSICIANS, AND SINGERS

NOBLE SISSELE MUSICIAN, 1889 – 1975

Best known for the musical *Shuffle Along* (1921) with its most popular number “I’m Just Wild About Harry,” Noble Sissle was born in Indiana to a pastor father and schoolteacher mother. In 1918, he joined the 369th Infantry Regiment—the Harlem Hellfighters—and served under bandmaster James Europe in the regimental band, playing the violin and drum. Leaving the army as a Second Lieutenant after the Great War, he joined Europe’s civilian band that featured many of the members of the 369th band, and performed vaudevillian music with Eubie Blake as the Dixie Duo.

In May of 1919, Noble finds himself leading Europe’s band after a disgruntled band member murders the original band leader. Currently, Noble and Blake run Europe’s band, while working on a musical that they hope to pull off one day.

DUKE ELLINGTON MUSICIAN, 1899 – 1974

Washington, D.C.-born Edward Kennedy “Duke” Ellington started taking piano lessons at six and developed a love of ragtime. His parents’ love of manners, food, clothes, and music fostered his natural talent and style. These traits earned him the nickname “The Duke.”

In 1917, Ellington formed his first band, “Duke’s Serenaders,” that played dance halls all throughout the D.C. area. Five years later, the band is re-named “The Washingtonians,” and makes the jump to Harlem. Sensing the changing musical dynamic, Ellington focuses on jazz and recruits some of the greatest talents in the country: “Tricky Sam” Nanton on trombone, and Johnny Hodges on saxophone.

JACKIE "MOMS" MABLEY
COMEDIAN, 1897 – 1975



Born Loretta Mary Aiken in North Carolina, one of 16 children, Jackie Mabley suffered early tragedy when her father died volunteering with the fire department, and her mother was run over by a truck on Christmas a few years later. She was also raped twice, by two different men, before the age of 14. Mabley fled to Ohio and joined a vaudevillian minstrel show, during which she got her big break.

Her rising star takes her to New York by 1920, and she hits her stride as a nightclub act. She plays the Cotton Club and Connie's Inn, and headlines with people like Cab Calloway and Duke Ellington. Mabley develops a character act that spans six decades: Moms is an elderly black woman in a flower print housedress with a catchphrase, "my children." By the age of 27, she comes out of the closet and is one of the first openly gay comedians.

Mabley also becomes the first African-American woman to reach national status as a stand-up comic. Even though she is known to fans across the country, her pay, as with so many black performers, is miserly.

BESSIE SMITH
SINGER, 1894 – 1937

Born to a part-time Baptist preacher father, Bessie Smith grew up in the church and began touring in her tents. Bouncing from place to place, Bessie met and performed with Ma Rainey. Her sheer personal magnetism and powerful singing voice left audiences speechless.

Smith is coming into her own in Harlem, and can be found performing at the Lafayette or Lincoln Theaters. Word of mouth says that she'll be back in town next week! The foul-mouthed, bisexual alcoholic has close friends who know, no one messes with Bessie. In the early 1920s, she is dubbed the "Empress of Blues"—and her Columbia record deal sells nearly 800,000 copies.

FERDINAND LAMOTHE
"JELLY ROLL" MORTON
PIANIST, 1890 – 1941

Born in downtown New Orleans, music oozes from every pore of Ferdinand Morton, who began playing music as a toddler. He mastered the guitar but loved the piano, and by 12 was earning \$100 a night playing in brothels. While he is a skilled musician, Morton is also a skilled pool shark, comedian, and gambler.

In 1915, "The Jelly Roll Blues" was the first jazz arrangement ever published, allowing Morton to tell people that he invented jazz. His first records are produced in 1922; a few short years later, Jelly Roll Morton's Red Hot Peppers is created, an eight-piece band schooled in New Orleans ensemble style, and they gain national recognition. He bounces back and forth between the East and West coasts.

During the '20s, Morton's reputation exceeds him in multiple ways—most notably that he's brilliant on the keys and a force to be reckoned with, but has an ego to match, making it difficult to find people willing to work with him.

STRIDE AND CUTTING CONTESTS

Stride is a rhythmic piano technique using the left hand. Battles frequently find two pianists going head-to-head with one another, with one of their jobs on the line. If the challenger beats the style of the house pianist, the house pianist gets cut and the new player has a gig until bested.

Cutting contests took on the opposite meaning from the word's use in stride battles; in cutting contests, to be cut is to be victorious. The first pianist starts a tune, and then the second cuts in and adds a level of complexity to the music. It bounces back and forth until one of them is bested. Willie "The Lion" Smith and James Johnson are known for their legendary cutting contests. As popular entertainment at rent parties, these contests connote only friendly rivalry and status, without employment consequences.

WILLIE "THE LION" SMITH PIANIST, 1897 – 1973

Born William Henry Joseph Bonaparte Bertholoff in New York, by six years old Willie was already playing the piano. He had mastered ragtime six years later and played in saloons, dance halls, and wherever else he could, including bars. Not only skilled at the piano, he began dancing while playing the piano to gain additional tips. By 14, he was known for "stride piano." He enlisted in the armed forces at the age of 19, and went to fight on the front lines in France shortly after that. Fearless in battle, he earned his nickname, "the Lion."

The Great War has ended, and the Lion has returned to the States. One of the greatest piano players of all time is about to continue his career, but at the moment, he can be found bouncing around Harlem looking for gigs, and battling it out in cutting contests.

LOUIS ARMSTRONG MUSICIAN, 1901 – 1971



New Orleans-born Louis Armstrong grew up in a poverty-stricken section of the city called "the Battlefield." He left school in fifth grade to work for a Jewish family, the Karnofskys, collecting junk and transporting coal. The Karnofskys encouraged him to sing, and invited him for dinner frequently. After an arrest in 1912 and a few years in the Colored Waif's Home for Boys, he discovered his love of the cornet and music.

After release, his talent drew the attention of Joe "King" Oliver, the best cornet player in town, who began to mentor Armstrong and invite the young man to step in for him on occasions. Armstrong was married to Daisy Parker by the age of 18, and the couple adopted his three-year-old mentally disabled nephew Clarence, after his cousin died. But the marriage would fail quickly. That same year, he replaced his mentor Oliver in Kid Ory's band, and a year later Armstrong begins playing the riverboat circuit. He spends the next half a decade playing in various places, cutting his first record in 1923 with his old mentor, until he marries again in 1924 to pianist Lillian Hardin.

In 1924, Armstrong makes a massive splash on the New York music scene with his solos, and brings swing music to the Fletcher Henderson Orchestra. He makes dozens of records while in New York, but never feels at ease there, and leaves for a three-year stint in Chicago before returning. Even after his departure, his impact remains, as the band attempts to imitate his style.

CHICK WEBB

MUSICIAN AND BANDLEADER, 1905 – 1939

Chick Webb moves to New York in 1925, at the height of the jazz boom. He grew up drenched in music, having played with bands since age 11; as a teen, he played on cruise ships with the Jazzola Orchestra. Once in New York, Webb forms a band, the Harlem Stompers, around himself as a drummer; he is instantly recognized for his skills while playing at the Black Bottom Club. By 1927, the Stompers are playing all of the major venues such as the Cotton Club and Rose Danceland. In 1929, Webb's group makes its first record on the Brunswick label, under the name The Jungle Band.

ADELAIDE LOUISE HALL

SINGER, 1901 – 1993

Born and raised in Harlem, Adelaide Hall grew up surrounded by music and steeped in religion. Her father Arthur was a music teacher and pianist; Hall and her sister Evelyn sang in the church choir. As a young girl, she was inspired by Florence Mills, and she and Evelyn formed a band, the Hall Sisters.

Hall's sister is a year away from dying of pneumonia in 1920, which devastates Hall but steels her determination to embrace music. Her big break happens in 1921 with her casting in the musical *Shuffle Along*. She is on the cusp of a seven decade career.

ACTORS, SHOWMEN, AND PATRONS

PAUL ROBESON

ACTOR, 1898 – 1976

Paul Robeson is the epitome of a Renaissance Man. He is an athlete, singer, actor, and civil rights activist. His career spans decades, and his influence is felt for generations.

After the death of Robeson's mother when he was six, his pastor father moved the family from Princeton to Somerville, New Jersey. By 17, Robeson earned a scholarship to Rutgers University, becoming the third African American to attend. He excelled academically, became known for his debate skills, and won more than 15 letters in four different sports. He capped it off by becoming Phi Beta Kappa and class valedictorian.

Robeson plays pro football and graduates from Columbia Law School in 1923. Despite many years of

study, his practice of law only lasted a few months, a profession crushed by the unbridled racism at his firm. His wife, Eslanda, who he married in college, supports the family; they frequent events at the Schomburg Center, as Robeson begins his transition to the stage. In 1925, Robeson tackles *The Emperor Jones* and stars in Oscar Michaux's *Body and Soul*. These performances skyrocket him toward his future.

NORA "THE MAMMA WHO CAN'T BEHAVE" HOLT

CRITIC, 1890 – 1974

Born Lena Douglas, Nora Holt became the first African-American woman with a master's degree in the United States. Her master's from Chicago Musical College was one of many musical feats, also to include working as a music critic for numerous black publications, primarily *The Chicago Defender*. Shortly afterward, Holt began publishing her own magazine *Music and Poetry* from her foundation, the National Association of Negro Musicians. During her fourth marriage, to an elderly wealthy businessman, she changed her first name to Nora and took his last name. When the elderly George Holt passed, Nora inherited a fortune in Liberty Life Insurance Company stock.

Holt's personal life is well known, from her multitude of lovers both single and married. This reputation leads to her inspiration of Van Vechten's haughty Lasca Sartoris in his controversial novel, *Nigger Heaven*, in 1926—and her nickname, "the Mamma Who Can't Behave." Holt frequents the Harlem nightclub scene and may be found working or relaxing about town, but is always with an entourage.

THE NICHOLAS BROTHERS

ACROBATS, 1920S – 2000S

Fayard Nicholas (1914–2006) and Harold Nicholas (1921–2000) combined dancing, acrobatics, and jazz into a tap style unlike any ever seen. The duo came from vaudevillians at the Strand in Philadelphia. Growing up in the wings allowed the brothers to develop skills to match their talents, and in 1931, they hit it big. The pair appears on *The Horn and Hardart Kiddie Hour*, tapping out a rhythmic beat to an audience that can't see them but are astounded by the sound. That same year, they start working at the Cotton Club.

RECLAIMING SELF

Visual artists in Harlem have the task of reclaiming the visual representations of themselves and their people from white interpretations. This is not a small task, and artists take multiple approaches to reclaiming their visual expression. Many artists in Harlem bring African and Haitian influences into their work as part of that effort. While it creates a unique visual motif for Harlem artists, it also creates the philosophical double-bind known as “Primitivism.”

Some white audiences interpret the work as “folk art,” and relegate it to positions of lesser worth. Some black audiences feel the use of these themes perpetuates stereotypes and artificially limits black expression. Others take pride in updating historical themes within a modernist context, embracing the non-white influence in their work. This ambiguous relationship between history, culture, and art becomes a consistent theme for Harlem artists such as these:

- Charles Alston—painter, illustrator, and sculptor. A college student at the time, his later work with the WPA shows Harlem influences.
- Henry Bannarn—sculptor and painter.
- Richmond Barthé—sculptor.
- Selma Burke—sculptor.
- Beauford Delaney—painter. He arrives in Harlem around 1929.
- Aaron Douglas—painter and illustrator.
- Sargent Claude Johnson—painter, potter, and sculptor.
- Richard Bruce Nugent—writer and painter.
- Augusta Savage—sculptor and teacher. She works for equal rights for blacks in the arts.
- James Van Der Zee—photographer.

FANNY BRICE ACTRESS, 1891 – 1951



Fanny Brice (born Fania Borach) was born on the Lower East Side. She first took to the stage at 13, where she won an amateur night contest at Keeny’s Theatre in Brooklyn by singing “When You Know You’re Not Forgotten by the Girl You Can’t Forget.” Fanny earned \$5 and numerous coins hurled by the audience, and from that night on, Miss Brice gave up school for the stage.

This success eventually led to Florenz Ziegfeld offering her \$75 per week to join the Ziegfeld Follies for the duration of the ‘20s. When she left, after introducing the song “My Man,” Ziegfeld gave Brice a check for \$2,500 and said “You’ve earned it.” Her weekly salary reached \$3,000 per week after leaving the Follies stage.

HARRY HOUDINI ILLUSIONIST, 1874 – 1926

Harry Houdini (born Erik Weisz, later Ehrich Weiss or Harry Weiss) is the most famous magician in the world, without question. His beginning was somewhat more humble; born in Budapest to a Rabbi father and emigrating to America at the age of 3, Houdini grew up amidst squalor.

Harry turned to magic at age 17, as an escape from working in the factories. His first years were failure after failure; he tried every known type of magic until he created the Challenge Act that made him a legend.

After his big break, Houdini quickly became known for escapes and illusions. He turned his attention toward what he saw as the scourge of fake spiritualists, and their taking advantage of people who lost their loved ones. He battles them in honor of his dead mother.

Houdini is a legend in his own time; he has multiple films and acts, and millions of dollars. He is currently President of the Society of American Magicians, and a Freemason.

WILLIAM ELMER HARMON PATRON, 1862 – 1928

Real estate developer William Elmer Harmon founds the Harmon Foundation in 1922 to support various causes close to his heart, but the one the Foundation will become most known for is support for the visual arts. Harmon’s father was an officer in the 10th Cavalry, the Buffalo Soldiers. As a result, Harmon grew up surrounded by his father’s regiment, and became interested in supporting them after meeting a black artist unable to sell his paintings because of his race. In 1925, the Harmon Foundation begins presenting cash awards for black achievements in various fields, including fine arts. Within a few years, the Foundation receives so many submissions of high-quality art that the Foundation establishes an exhibition to show and sell their art on tour.

CRIMINALS, HOLY ROLLERS, AND LAWYERS

SAM BATTLE

"THE MAN," NYPD OFFICER, 1883 – 1966

White officers' policing of black communities deal out an often brutal justice for any crime, real or perceived, and police departments are rife with corruption. The New York Police Department was entirely white until 1911, when Samuel J. Battle was officially accepted to the force as New York's first black officer. He is six foot three, weighs more than 250 pounds, and is an NAACP member. He has the full support of Harlem's ministers and newspaper editors, who have hopes that an integrated force will temper police violence against blacks in New York City.

As the first black officer on the force, Sam Battle endures the abuse of white citizens and police officers. Treated on the one hand as a threat, and on the other as an amusing performance, he patiently expects respect from those around him—though he rarely receives it. He knew what he signed up for, after having experienced the failures in years prior of the same police department he had just joined. Sam is assigned to Harlem during the 1920s, as the need for policing increases with the population. He is something of a minor celebrity, meeting the elite of Harlem, and integrates himself into the community he is tasked with patrolling. That status has suspects asking for his autograph while being arrested. Battle is a man caught between the needs of the community and the demands of a racist police department.

GIUSEPPE "THE CLUTCH HAND" MORELLO

CRIME BOSS, 1867 – 1930

After fleeing Italy as a murder suspect in the 1890s, Giuseppe founded the 107th Street Mob less than a decade later. He ran the gang with a murderous zeal, killing those who opposed him and leaving their dismembered bodies in large barrels that were dumped in the ocean, left on street corners, or shipped to fake addresses in other cities. The gang extorted, robbed, counterfeited, loan sharked, and ran an Italian lottery, becoming the most powerful Sicilian crime family in New York. In 1909, Morello was caught and sentenced to 20 years for counterfeiting; his brother Nicolo took over the gang in his absence.

The Morello crime family is run by Giuseppe's two half-brothers Vincenzo Terranova and Ciro Terranova, since Nicolo was killed in 1916. Giuseppe returns in 1920 to regain control, only to be considered a threat by a former captain now turned mafia boss, Salvatore D'Aquila; Giuseppe will flee the country for a few years. He returns later to serve as consigliere to Joe the Boss.

GIUSEPPE "JOE THE BOSS" MASSERIA

CRIME BOSS, 1886 – 1931

Masseria was born in Menfi, Sicily, and moved to the United States in 1902. He quickly joined the Morello crime family as a captain, working out of Harlem. After avoiding serving prison time for a burglary conviction in 1909, he entered into a power struggle with fellow captain Salvatore D'Aquila.

By 1920, they are in an all-out war, and Masseria escapes a point-blank hit unscathed—although the straw hat on his head gets two bullet holes. After that feat, he is christened "The Man Who Can Dodge Bullets." Masseria will emerge victorious and run the Morello crime family throughout the Prohibition era.

ARNOLD "THE BRAIN" ROTHSTEIN

KINGPIN, 1882 – 1928

Arnold Rothstein was born in 1882 to wealthy Jewish parents, Abraham and Esther, in Manhattan. His brother Harry studied to become a rabbi. Arnold had a talent for numbers, but little interest in school; he was gambling by the age of ten. In 1910, Rothstein opened a casino in the Tenderloin area of Manhattan and invested in horse racing tracks. Those ventures plus building a network of informants off of his father's banking community led to Rothstein becoming a millionaire by age 30.

Prohibition opens another door for Rothstein, who turns his talents to bootlegging and narcotics. He smuggles contraband from Canada across the Great Lakes, via the Hudson River and into New York. Using his political connections and money to become a player in Tammany Hall, the established Rothstein then turned gangs from the streets into an organized criminal corporation. By 1925, he is one of the most powerful criminals in the U.S., and is worth more than \$10 million.

NUMBERS GAME

The numbers game is an illegal lottery played in poor neighborhoods throughout Harlem. It is also known as the policy racket or the daily number. Numbers are sometimes selected randomly, or from the New York Stock Exchange from day to day. Bets are placed on the order of numbers, or the value of the ending number, of a given stock. Runners pass the numbers from headquarters, the “policy bank,” and distribute them to bookies throughout the area for players to check in and collect winnings.

JACK “LEGS” DIAMOND BOOTLEGGER, 1897 – 1931

Jack Diamond joined the Irish gang the Hudson Dusters in 1914, which led to his first of many arrests for burglary. He joined the army to serve during the Great War, but deserted in 1918, and was convicted for desertion. Once out of jail in 1919, he becomes Arnold Rothstein’s bodyguard and personal thug. Also known as “Gentleman Jack,” Diamond is known for his flamboyant lifestyle; his nickname “Legs” comes from his dance moves, and the speed he uses to escape enemies when things go south.

HOOK: Alice Diamond knows that her husband is a womanizer and a playboy, but she doesn’t care. What she does care about is their family and Jack’s recent strange behavior. He comes home at night, and has stopped drinking and dancing. Rothstein hasn’t noticed yet, but when he does, he will cut Jack loose. Alice needs to find out what is wrong with Jack. Investigating Jack discovers a number of odd behaviors, including nightly outings to Mount Morris Park. Jack has become the pawn of a serpent man, who is dominating him to carry out secret plans.

STEPHANIE ST. CLAIR MOB BOSS, 1886 – 1969



Prohibition creates an opportunity for crime that leaves empires in its wake. Harlem is not immune to this, and many a speakeasy relies on bathtub gin, booze runners, and numbers games to entertain guests. Police are often bribed to avoid arrest, so long as the entertainment keeps things down to a dull roar.

Key to this in Harlem is Stephanie St. Clair, known to some as “Queenie”—although Harlem residents prefer the more respectful “Madame St. Clair.” Her career in Harlem is notable for two things: first, that she is the only woman in the numbers game. And second, she is the only independent in the game, while other operators have been intimidated or bought out by the Italian mafia. By 1925, more than thirty numbers games operate in Harlem, most of them under Madame St. Clair.

Since many banks will not accept black customers, the numbers games effectively provide an informal financial service for customers, allowing an earning opportunity for those with a little bit of change to spare. St. Clair also makes efforts to educate the residents of Harlem about their legal and voting rights, and calls out police brutality against her operations and her customers by running regular ads on the topic in the local newspapers.

St. Clair’s bold approach earns her eight months in a workhouse after her 1929 arrest, at which point she testifies to the kickbacks she has received, forcing the Seabury Commission to fire more than a dozen police officers in 1931. At the height of her career in illegal gambling, St. Clair lives on Sugar Hill, and operates numbers games throughout Harlem.

Madame St. Clair's right-hand man was an ex-rival known as Bumpy Johnson. Bumpy's career in Harlem started under Ms. St. Clair. Dutch Schultz, a Bronx mobster known as the "Beer Baron of the Bronx," attempts to move in on the numbers racket in Harlem in the early 1930s. St. Clair and Bumpy resist the effort, leading to a violent and destructive street war between the rival gangs. St. Clair holds firm and Schultz is unable to force her to abandon her territory, though afterwards she does pass the work to Bumpy, who negotiates an agreement with Lucky Luciano and the Italian mafia after she retires. Their partnership effectively locks Schultz out of Harlem, and Dutch will eventually be killed to clear the way for the Italian families.

"To think that dey should put it in ze paper that goddam Dutchman keel one of my men. And put me on de spot? Me? Me? Don't everybody know I ain't scared nothing!"

Stephanie St. Clair

MORRIS RAPHAEL COHEN **LAWYER, 1880 – 1947**

Born to Bessie and Abraham Cohen in Minsk, Morris moved to New York in 1892 with his family. He received an education from City College of New York and Harvard, and obtained his Ph.D. in 1906. Six years later, he accepted a position as Professor of Philosophy at CCNY. He has established himself as a known philosopher, competent lawyer, and keen linguist.

YOSSELE ROSENBLATT **CANTOR, 1882 – 1933**

In 1882, a small dirt-floored house in Ukraine welcomed the birth of the man who is the equivalent of Cab Calloway for cantorial music. The wunderkind was earning money by the age of 8 for his singing, and tales of his heavenly voice since birth were well known. In 1912, he emigrated to New York, and was soon singing to filled synagogues. He was a rock star before such things existed.

Rosenblatt turned down an offer from the Chicago Opera to join them in 1918, as he felt it did not allow him to cantor properly, and he did not wish to sing on stage with women. This move increased his popularity, as people wanted to see the man who turned away \$1,000 a night to sing. He is currently singing to packed houses, recording a few records, and in high demand.

He will turn down the chance to perform in *The Jazz Singer* in a few years, and the \$100,000 that is offered to him.

HOOK: One evening, the investigators are called to Yossele Rosenblatt's home. The man smiles and invites them inside, with a wave to chairs in the rear of the house. He then picks up some paper and a pen, all without speaking, and writes out a request for their help. Something strange has happened to his voice—it appears to have been stolen. All he knows is that since he turned down *The Jazz Singer*, two burly men have been following him for a week. Then this morning, he woke up and couldn't speak, and found this—he hands them a doll fashioned in his image with the throat cut out. Who are the two men? Who made the doll? Can the investigators help him before his concert tomorrow?

BETA ISRAEL (ETHIOPIAN JEWS)

Ethiopian Jews lived for centuries in the area that was the Kingdom of Aksum, dating back to the 10th century B.C. Queen Sheba of Ethiopia and King Solomon of Israel conceived a son, Menelik I, during her visit to meet the King. Queen Sheba returned to Ethiopia and gave birth to Prince Menelik, who in adulthood would steal the Ark of the Covenant from his father and return to Ethiopia with the holiest of objects. Menelik I eventually became Emperor of Ethiopia, and made Judaism the official religion of the empire. It remained so until King Ezana of Axum converted himself and his empire to Christianity, in 327 A.D. Pockets of people claiming descent from Menelik still remained.

During a 50-year span not long ago, a number of key events occurred. A Beta Israel, Daniel Ben Hamdya, traveled to Jerusalem in 1855 for a conference with a number of rabbis. A decade later, Azriel Hildesheimer, the Rabbi of Eisenstadt, Germany, pleaded with the Jewish press for the Ethiopian Jews to be spiritually rescued.

The first recorded European Jew to travel to the Beta Israel, Professor Joseph Halevy, became their staunch advocate going forward. In 1904 one of Halevy's students, Jacques Faitovitch, dedicated his life to reconnect the community. He created the first "pro-Beta Israel" committees in the United States, Britain, and Palestine (then under the control of the Ottoman Empire), and took the first Ethiopian Jewish students to Europe and Israel to increase their Jewish education. By 1908, rabbis from 44 countries proclaimed Ethiopian Jews to be authentic Jews.

It isn't until the early 1980s, however, that the Israeli government and religious leaders recognize the Beta Israel as Jews.

WENTWORTH MATTHEW RABBI, 1892 – 1973

Matthew emigrated to New York from the British West Indies in 1913, where he found work as a carpenter and prizefighter, known for his scrappiness and relentlessness. He studied Christianity and Judaism during the Great War. Matthew then resided in Harlem, and took to preaching from street corners, slowly building a congregation. Influenced by Judaism and identifying with the Beta Israel of Ethiopia, Rabbi Matthews founds the Commandment Keepers of the Living God in 1919, a black Hebrew congregation.

The congregation is just starting, and every day, one can find Rabbi Matthew preaching and promoting a similar ideal as Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association through a more religious lens.

CLUBS, ORGANIZATIONS, AND TEAMS

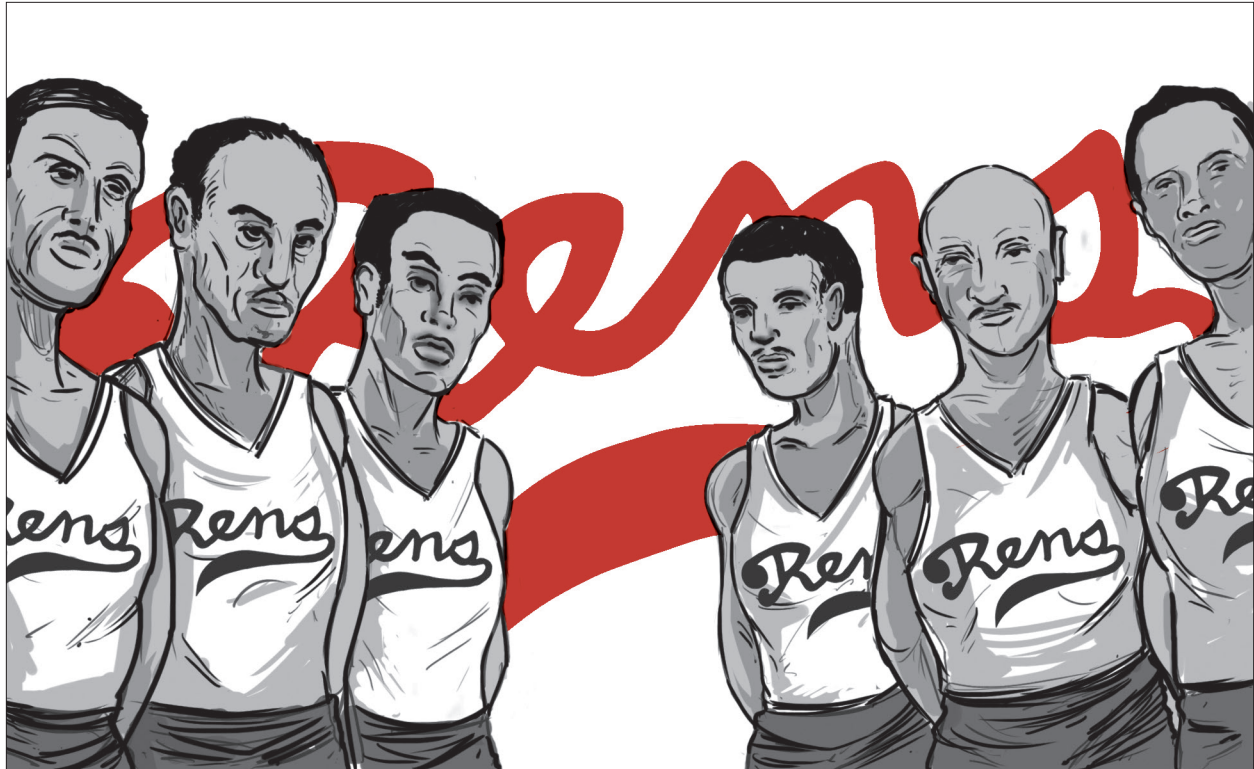
THE NEW YORK RENAISSANCE

While growing in popularity on college campuses, basketball is still in its youth, only first played at the Summer Olympics in 1904. The first National Intercollegiate Tournament is played in 1922, with a total of six participating college teams. In the time between basketball's first introduction on college campuses in 1904 and the integration of the National Basketball Association in 1950, black professional basketball teams have created their own leagues.

The all-black basketball teams are popular throughout New York City, and dozens are founded in other major cities throughout the U.S. They are often sponsored by businesses, social clubs, churches, or newspapers; they schedule games within the league, and with friendly members of the white leagues.

Harlem's very own professional basketball team forms in 1923. The New York Renaissance—a.k.a. the Renaissance Big Five, or simply the Rens—play at the Renaissance Casino and Ballroom on 137th Street. This large entertainment complex holds a ballroom large enough to serve as a court for the team. After each game, the court is cleared for a dance, giving reason for game attendees to stay in their seats—win or lose. Thankfully most of the time it is win, because the Rens are very good at what they do.

The Rens' first game is against an all-white team, a pattern that will be regular for their career. Interracial games draw the largest and loudest crowds. Their team rivals are the Original Celtics (no relation to the Boston Celtics) who play out of Madison Square Garden. The Rens beat the Celtics in 1925, two years after forming as a team, to claim the title of Colored Basketball World Championship. In that season, the team wins 88 consecutive games, a streak yet to be challenged by any other professional basketball team.



Many of the original and longest-playing players for the Rens come from other sports as well—usually baseball, but in one case, tennis. Well-known members of the team include Charles “Tarzan” Cooper, Clarence “Fats” Jenkins, Pappy Ricks, Eyre Saitch, “Wee” Willie Smith, and Bill Yancey. Their coach is Robert L. “Bob” Douglas, and under his guidance, the Rens will play any team willing to schedule them—black or white.

HOOK: The odds of being picked up for a professional team are not good, but it is possible if you can get a coach to watch you play, or if you get lucky enough to play a pickup game with one of the Rens at the Renaissance Casino and Ballroom. The team is friendly, for the most part, and they enjoy interacting with their fans.

In essence, if you can get four other people together for a game at the local YMCA—and you’re good enough to convince someone to pay for uniforms and a ball—then you can call yourself a team. Go play. More casual clubs can be found at the local YMCA and YWCA as well.

Now, successfully playing at the professional level takes work. Practice and observation of other teams. A good coach. And more practice. And maybe some more practice on top of that. Scratch that “maybe”—definitely more practice. Even so, if you schedule the Rens (they’ll probably say yes), prepare to get walked over. But it’ll probably be fun along the way.

The Harlem YMCA amateur scene is dominated by a pack of young players calling themselves the Crossroads Deal, and they accept any challenge thrown at them. They’ll gladly make the game more challenging by playing down a man, or half the team one-handed, or even outnumbered two to one. When all five players are on the court, they move as if a single entity, easily anticipating the moves of teammates even if they aren’t looking in the same direction.

The Crossroads Deal will also accept one-on-one challenges to replicate their challenger shot for shot, though the odd synchronicity of the team is not present at such challenges. Sharp observers may see a look of relief on the team, far exceeding the apparently casual nature of the game, when the challenged player wins. None have lost the challenge yet.

SOCIAL CLUBS

There were many social clubs already to be found in Harlem, before new residents came in—but fraternal orders quickly set up lodges in the city, the Prince Hall Freemasons among them. This fraternal order operates in parallel to the more traditionally well-known Freemasons, and have a friendly relationship with their brother organization. The Prince Hall Freemasons champion education rights and community service.

Members are as secretive about what goes on behind closed doors as the other Freemasons are, leading to the occasional wild speculation. That the majority of meetings are social or focused on planning community charity would be a disappointment to most of the curious. Still, if one can slip into a meeting and keep an ear open, the politics of wealthy and influential members of Sugar Hill may be revealed.

Prince Hall regularly takes the show on the road, providing band music for entertaining parades, church festivals, and fundraising.

Similar activities can also be found at the YMCA and YWCA, though perhaps with a less elite membership. The YMCA provides a vital service to those newly arrived in Harlem who have yet to figure out where they will be staying. The social clubs available through their programs provide much-needed interaction, and an easy opportunity to make friends outside of church service or speakeasy environments.

THE SUMMIT

One private club less fond of the changes in the neighborhood is called the Summit, on St. Nicholas Avenue near 145th Street. This men's club features elite socialization, and quiet rooms to catch up on the news of the day or indulge in cigars and drinks. Women are not allowed, of course. The club dates from 1897, when it opened to more than a hundred exclusively white members. The change in demographics in the area dismays the club membership, leading to fewer attendees as of the early 1920s—but the club is not willing to move. This tension leads to an ongoing standoff with neighbors.

HOOK: The neighbors across the street have a standing offer of five dollars to the first person who can sneak in and wave at them from the top floor of the house. Membership in the Summit is mostly a matter of looking the part, and perhaps knowing the right dirt on a current member. Or sometimes it's as easy as winning it in a hand of poker at a speakeasy, the night before. The members are nothing if not beholden to their word—sure, the membership may only be temporary, but the opportunity to get to poke around in the Summit's private clubhouse is hard to resist.

That said, many of the members do have influence—and while distasteful, they can be valuable to have in your corner if you get into legal trouble. Of course, favors done are favors owed, and these men didn't get where they are for ignoring the usefulness of an under-the-table deal—regardless of who they make it with.

GUMBY'S BOOKSTORE

Levi Sandy Alexander Gumby has a hobby. To be exact, he scrapbooks. Everything. And does so for almost his entire life. Thankfully, his life turns out to be both interesting and relevant to documenting the history of Harlem. Also known as “the Count,” “Mr. Scrapbook,” and “the Great God Gumby” for his approach to running an intellectual salon, he runs a popular shop called Gumby's Bookstore in Harlem, near 131st Street.

The bookstore quickly becomes a regular gathering spot for writers and artists, and Gumby documents every last moment. Gumby is also openly gay, and a dandy; as a result, his bookstore and intellectual gatherings also become places for the LGBT community in Harlem to gather as well. In many cases, he is the only one to preserve these personal moments and speeches in his scrapbooks. His work may not follow traditional archival methods, but they are invaluable primary sources, and future historians owe him a great debt for his thoroughness.

Gumby's Bookstore also serves as an art gallery for local artists. Harlem's visual artists sell pieces through the bookstore, or simply get them noticed there before they go to private collectors.

The shop is a studio, gallery, gathering space, and ultimately also a pretty decent bookstore as well. Most of the books displayed are not for sale; Gumby has faith in the long-term historical value of his collection, and wants to preserve them. His collection is, however, something of a fire hazard—and by the end of the 1920s, Gumby is forced to rent a second space, to continue storing his collection safely.

HOOK: Gumby is always on the watch for unique books and documents related to black history and experience. Diaries, records of sale, and books on niche topics are often discarded after estate sales, and lost to the garbage bin because they are of little interest to most buyers. Except for Gumby.

If you bring him a book you have rescued from such a fate, expect a delighted hug followed by a thorough interrogation, so Gumby can document the condition and location the book was found in before cataloguing it in his collection. With his thanks comes an open invitation to tour the shelves, and he will gladly answer any questions asked about his collection.

In an effort to preserve history, Gumby even makes a point of collecting works that look like they may match his interests, but are handwritten or written in languages he doesn't know. He keeps an eye out for clues about the "Oddities Collection," as he calls it. If a visitor lets slip that they know more about a mystery book, they can expect to be plied with tea, cookies, and questions. For his own sake, not knowing exactly what is on his shelf is probably for the best. Not all books are safe to read—and certainly not out loud.

THE WELL-LIT STAGE

Theater in Harlem during the Renaissance is dominated for the most part by two theater groups. The Lafayette Players are associated with the Lafayette Theater. They perform Broadway and traditional plays to resist the racial stereotypes popular at the time, which are more commonly found on stage and in vaudeville. The Lafayette Players are meant to be a serious and formal acting troupe.

The Lafayette Theater grows popular enough during the 1920s to spin off more than one travelling group, in addition to the local company. Their repertoire continues to emphasize traditionally white plays with all-black casts. This choice, while it serves to keep the troupe popular and counter stereotypes, is also criticized for not supporting the work of black playwrights.

The second group is the short-lived but extremely influential Krigwa Players Little Theater Group. They are named for the acronym CRIGWA—Crisis Guild of Writers and Artists—and are founded in 1925 by W.E.B. Du Bois and Regina Anderson, partially in response to concerns Du Bois has regarding the Lafayette Players and their choice of plays.

The Krigwa Players require all plays they perform to meet four requirements, all of which serve to promote the work of black playwrights, artists, and culture. *The Crisis* supports this effort by establishing an annual literary contest for submissions for new material. The players are initially successful, making modest profits in their first year.

Unfortunately, the Krigwa Players split after their third year, when the actors enter a tournament and win—but see no money from the prize coming to them. (It goes to cover the cost of the production.) Other theater troupes attempt to take up the mantle afterwards, to varying levels of success.

BACKSTAGE PROPS

While the Krigwa Players are a small group, the Lafayette troupe is large, and prop and stage skills are in demand for both. Truth be told, viewing a play from the catwalks while fiddling with lights, or from a little past exit left, is not the best view—or the best pay. But it is an opportunity to get closer to the scene, and learn the basics of theater and prop design.

Joining the stage hands is usually as simple as showing up when they need help, and being sober enough to be trusted with hammering together a set. New stagehands are set loose backstage to learn on the job, with the first and only formal lesson being how to correctly name the Scottish Play.

Stagehands come and go quickly, and most members of the troupe are too busy working on lines or refitting costumes to be overly concerned about a new face. This makes the theater a good place to lay low, if you've gotten yourself into hot water elsewhere in Harlem.

GLOSSARY OF HARLEMESE

Ab-so-lute-ly: affirmative

Air out: leave, flee, stroll

Astorperious: haughty, biggity

Bailing: having fun

Baloney: nonsense!

Bam & down in Bam: down South

Beating up your gums: talking to no purpose

Beluthahatchie: next station beyond Hell

Bible Belt: area in the South and Midwest where fundamentalism flourishes

Boogie-woogie: type of dancing and rhythm; in the South, it also meant secondary syphilis

Bull-skating: bragging

Bootleg: illegal liquor

Cold: exceeding, well, etc.

Collar a nod: sleep

Conk buster: cheap liquor; also an intellectual Negro

Cruising: parading down the avenue

Cut: doing something well

Dark black: a casually black person

Diddy-Wah-Diddy: a far place, a measure of distance

Dig: understand

Draped down: dressed in the height of Harlem fashion

Dumb to the fact: you don't know what you are talking about

Dusty butt: cheap prostitute

Fall guy: Victim of a frame

Flivver: a Model T; after 1928, could mean any old broken-down car

Getting on some stiff time: really doing well with your racket

Get you to go: forcing the opponent to run

Gin mill: a bar or establishment where hard liquor is sold

Granny Grunt: a mythical character to whom most questions may be referred

Ground rations: sex, also just "rations"

Gum beater: a blowhard, a braggart

Hard-boiled: a tough, strong guy

Hauling: fleeing on foot

High-hat: to snub

I shot him lightly and he died politely: I completely outdid him

Iron: a motorcycle

Jake: OK or fine, as in "everything is Jake"

Jelly: sex

Jooking: playing a musical instrument, or dancing in the manner of the jooks

Juice: liquor

July jam: something very hot

Jump salty: get angry

Kitchen mechanic: a domestic

Knock yourself out: have a good time

Lightly, slightly, and politely: doing things perfectly

Little sister: measures of hotness

Miss Anne: a white woman

Mister Charlie: a white man

Mug man: a small time thug

My people!: sad and satiric expression in the Negro language

Now you cookin' with gas: now you're talking

Ofay: white person

Ossified: a drunk person

Owl: a person who's out late

Park ape: an ugly, underprivileged Negro

Peckerwood: poor and unloved class of Southern whites

Piano: spare ribs

Pig meat: young girl

Pilch: house or apartment

Playing the dozens: low-rating the ancestors of your opponent

Righteous rags: the components of a Harlem-style suit

Russian: a Southern Negro up north, "rushed up here"

Sell out: run in fear

Sender: he or she who can get you to go, who has what it takes

Sinker: a doughnut

Smoking: looking someone over

Solid: perfect

Sooner: anything cheap and mongrel

Speakeasy: an illicit bar selling bootleg liquor

Spifflicated: drunk

Stomp: low dance

Stormbuzzard: a shiftless, homeless character

Stroll: doing something well

Take for a ride: to drive off with someone, in order to bump them off

The bear: confession of poverty

The man: the law or a powerful boss

Torpedo: a hired gun

V and X: five-and-ten-cent store

Your likker told you: misguided behavior

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RECOMMENDED MEDIA

LITERATURE

The Negro Speaks Rivers, Langston Hughes (1921)

Cane, Jean Toomer (1923)

Home to Harlem, Claude McKay (1927)

Slaves Today, George Samuel Schuyler (1931)

Jonah's Gourd Vine, Zora Neale Hurston (1934)

ART

Fetiché et Fleurs, Palmer C. Hayden (1926)

Mural at Club Ebony, Aaron Douglas (1927)

Buddha, Lois Mailon Jones (1927)

Green Apples, Augusta Savage (1930)

Chain Gang, William H. Johnson (1939)

THEATRE

The Broken Banjo

Foreign Mail

The Fool's Errand

MUSICALS

Shuffle Along (1921)

Seven-Eleven (1922)

Dixie to Broadway (1924)

Lucky Sambo (1925)

Africana (1927)

Keep Shufflin' (1928)

MUSIC

"Back Water Blues," Bessie Smith (1927)

"Dippermouth Blues," King Oliver's Creole Jazz Band (1923)

"I'm Gonna Sit Right Down and Write Myself a Letter," Fats Waller (1935)

"The Mooche," Duke Ellington (1928)

PERIODICALS

The Crisis

The Opportunity Journal

New York Age

The Messenger

The Emancipator

The Challenge

Seven Arts

TIMELINE

1919

Second Pan-African Congress, organized by W.E.B. Du Bois, held in France to discuss impact of the Great War on people of African ancestry

The 369th Infantry Regiment, a highly decorated unit of entirely African-American soldiers, returns from the Great War to Harlem

Jessie Redmon Fauset becomes literary editor of *The Crisis*

The “Red Summer of Hate;” race riots break out in Chicago, Washington, D.C., and more than 20 other American cities, from June to September

NAACP publication of *Thirty Years of Lynching in the United States, 1889-1918*

“If We Must Die,” poem by Claude McKay, published in *The Liberator* journal

1920

Harlem Stock Exchange founded

Mamie Smith makes first commercial recording of blues song

James Weldon Johnson becomes head of the NAACP

UNIA holds its First International Convention of the Negro Peoples of the World at Madison Square Garden, New York

Claude McKay publishes the poem “Spring in New Hampshire”

In April, Du Bois first states that a “renaissance of American Negro literature” is upon us

Upon graduation from high school, Langston Hughes writes the first poems regarding black identity, “When Sue Wears Red” and “The Negro Speaks of Rivers”

1921

Shuffle Along debuts at Cort Theatre

Harry Pace founds The Black Swan Phonograph Corporation; they produce “race records,” bringing jazz to a larger audience, especially Mamie Smith and Bessie Smith

The Crisis publishes “*The Negro Speaks of Rivers*”

Zora Neale Hurston publishes her first story “John Redding Goes to Sea” in *The Stylus*, a Howard University magazine

Representative L.C. Dyer sponsors an anti-lynching bill in Congress

Marcus Garvey founds the African Orthodox Church

The Colored Players Guild of New York is created

1922

Harlem Shadows, Claude McKay’s novel, is published

Meta Warrick-Fuller’s sculpture *Ethiopia Awakening* is part of the “Making of America” exhibition in New York

UNIA, NAACP, and YMCA march in support of Congressman Dyer’s federal anti-lynching bill

The Harmon Foundation promotes black artists, both financially and with exposure

Countee Cullen is a student at New York University

1923

Bessie Smith becomes famous with recordings of “Down-Hearted Blues” and “Gulf Coast Blues”

The National Urban League founds *Opportunity: A Journal of Negro Life*

A love triangle between Langston Hughes, Alain Locke, and Countee Cullen begins

Jean Toomer publishes the novel *Cane*

Oliver’s Creole Jazz Band makes 37 recordings with Louis Armstrong

Duke Ellington and the Washingtonians arrive in New York

The Cotton Club cabaret opens

Jessie Redmon Fauset’s novel *There is Confusion* is published, and is the first Harlem Renaissance book by a female author

Four white publications feature Countee Cullen’s work

Zora Neale Hurston’s short story appears in *Opportunity: A Journal of Negro Life*

1924

White downtowners embrace jazz and Harlem Mania in full effect

Aaron Douglas arrives in New York

At the Civic Club Dinner, *The Opportunity Journal* showcases black writers and artists of Harlem, introducing them to white publishers

Paul Robeson stars in the *The Emperor Jones* in London

Walter White’s novel *The Fire in the Flint* is published

Countee Cullen wins first prize in the Witter Bynner Poetry Competition

W.E.B. Du Bois’ book *The Gift of Black Folk* is published

1925

Alain Locke’s book *Harlem, Mecca of the Negro* is published, featuring black writers and artists

Sherwood Anderson’s *Dark Laughter* is published, depicting African-American life

A. Philip Randolph’s Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters labor organization is created

Zora Neale Hurston moves to Harlem

The Opportunity Journal holds its first literary awards dinner

Alaine Locke is dismissed from Howard for his radical teachings

Wallace Thurman arrives in Harlem

The New Negro is edited by Locke and published afterwards

Marcus Garvey is convicted of mail fraud and imprisoned in the Atlanta Penitentiary

Small’s Paradise nightclub opens in Harlem, and becomes one of the most successful nightclubs

Appearances, the first full length African-American drama, appears on Broadway

1926

Carter G. Woodson, historian, creates Negro History Week (which will become Black History Month)

Langston Hughes’ “The Weary Blues” is published

NAACP-sponsored theater group, the Krigwa Players, launches

White author Carl Van Vechten publishes his controversial novel *Nigger Heaven*

The Carnegie Corporation buys Arthur Schomburg’s African-American collection

The Savoy Ballroom in Harlem opens

Rudolph Fisher moves to New York and joins the National Research Council at Columbia University’s College of Physicians and Surgeons

Langston Hughes, Wallace Thurman, and Zora Neale Hurston, with illustrations by Aaron Douglas and Richard Bruce Nugent, release the first issues of the magazine *Fire!! Devoted to the Young Negro Artists* in November

1927

The Harlem Globetrotters is founded

Duke Ellington begins a three-year stint at The Cotton Club

Langston Hughes' poetry collection *Fine Clothes to the Jew* is published

Hurston and Hughes go on a road trip through the south, meeting Bessie Smith, Jessie Fauset, and George Washington Carver

Charlotte Mason becomes a patron of both Hughes and Hurston, and is known as the "Godmother" by the New Negro movement

The Dark Tower, night club and literary salon, opens
Porgy, the musical, opens on Broadway

Negro Drawings, a book of illustrations by Miguel Covarrubias, is published

Arthur Fauset publishes *For Freedom: A Biographical Story of the American Negro*

1928

Claude McKay's novel *Home to Harlem* is published

Rudolph Fisher's first novel *The Walls of Jericho* is published

Countee Cullen marries Nina Yolande Du Bois (daughter of W.E.B.) in the social event of the decade, but the marriage ends months later, as he moves to Europe with the best man, his lover

Wallace Thurman's magazine *Harlem: A Forum of Negro Life* launched as a successor to *Fire!!*, with illustrations by Aaron Douglas and Richard Bruce Nugent

The Lindy Hop becomes famous

The Harmon Foundation sponsors first all-black art exhibit

1929

The Negro Experiment Theater is founded

Thurman's play, *Harlem*, opens on Broadway and his novel, *The Blacker the Berry*, is published

The Broadway premiere of *Ain't Misbehavin'* features Fats Waller's music

The Negro Art Theatre is founded

The National Colored Players is founded

The Great Depression hits, and brings an end to the "Jazz Age"

1930

James Weldon Johnson's *Black Manhattan, A History of Harlem* is published

Hurston and Hughes begin work on the play *Mule Bone: A Comedy of Negro Life*; this joint project would ruin their friendship, and the play would not be staged until 1991

Universal Holy Temple of Tranquility is founded by Sufi Abdul Hamid

Painter Jacob Lawrence settles in Harlem

1931

Augusta Savage opens the *Savage School of Arts and Crafts* in Harlem

The Scottsboro Trial, with nine falsely-accused black youth on trial for raping two white women, begins

A'lelia Walker dies unexpectedly

Louis Armstrong's musical short "A *Rhapsody in Black and Blue*" opens

Hughes publishes four works: poems "Dear Lovely Death" and "The Negro Mother," novel *Not Without Laughter*, and poem/play collection *Scottsboro Limited*

Father Divine's International Peace Movement is established in Harlem

1932

Rudolph Fisher's novel *The Conjure Man Dies* is published; it is thought to be the first mystery novel by an African-American writer

A large number of blacks leave the Republican Party

Twenty black intellectuals travel to Russia for the ill-fated film *Black and White*

Langston Hughes publishes poetry collection *The Dream Keeper*

Countee Cullen publishes his only novel, *One Way to Heaven*

McKay publishes short story collection *Gingertown*

1933

The film *The Emperor Jones* opens, starring Paul Robeson

Aaron Douglas creates murals for the Harlem YMCA

President Roosevelt's New Deal program begins

After 33 years of operations, the National Negro Business League closes

Jessie Fauset's final novel *Comedy, American Style* is published

1934

Aaron Douglas is commissioned by the Harlem branch of the New York Public Library to create a mural entitled *Aspects of Negro Life*

Nancy Cunard, a British socialite, founds and edits the *Negro Anthology*

Oscar Micheaux's film *Harlem After Midnight* opens

The Apollo Theatre opens

W.E.B. Du Bois leaves *The Crisis* and the NAACP

Wallace Thurman dies

Rudolph Fisher dies

1935

The Harlem Race Riot is sparked by anger over discrimination by white-owned businesses

The Museum of Modern Art features the African Negro Art exhibition

Porgy and Bess opens on Broadway, with an all-black cast

Mulatto, the first full-length play by a black writer (Langston Hughes), opens on Broadway

Countee Cullen's *The Medea and Some Poems* is published

Willis Richardson's *Negro History in Thirteen Plays* is published

More than fifty percent of Harlem's families are unemployed

1936

Oscar Micheaux's film *Temptation* opens

Aaron Douglas makes murals for the Hall of Negro Life at the Texas Centennial exposition in Dallas

1937

Paul Robeson stars in the film *King Solomon's Mines*

Zora Neale Hurston's novel *Their Eyes Were Watching God* is published

Reverend Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. becomes pastor of the Abyssinian Baptist Church

1938

Hurston publishes non-fiction book *Tell My Horse: Voodoo and Life in Haiti and America*

Mother Horn, a Pentecostal preacher, opens a church in Harlem

1939

Hurston's novel *Moses, Man of the Mountain* is published

1940

Langston Hughes' autobiography *The Big Sea* is published

Claude McKay's non-fiction book *Harlem: Negro Metropolis* is published



THE ATLANTIC OCEAN

**LOVECRAFT
COUNTRY**

HARLEM UNBOUND



NAME	PLAYER	OCCUPATION	
SOCIAL CLASS	BIRTHPLACE	AGE	GENDER

CHARACTERISTICS

STR	DEX	POW	CON	MOVE RATE
APP	EDU	SIZ	INT IDEA	RACIAL TENSION

SKILLS

<input type="checkbox"/> Accounting (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Hypnosis (01%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Renaissance (01%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Anthropology (01%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Intimidate (15%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Ride (05%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Appraise (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Jump (20%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Science (01%)*
<input type="checkbox"/> Archaeology (01%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Language (Other)(01%)*	<input type="checkbox"/> Sleight of Hand (10%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Art & Craft (05%)*	<input type="checkbox"/> Language (Own) (EDU)	<input type="checkbox"/> Spot Hidden (25%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Artillery (01%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Law (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Stealth (20%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Charm (15%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Library Use (20%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Survival (10%)*
<input type="checkbox"/> Climb (20%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Listen (20%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Swim (20%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Credit Rating (00%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Locksmith (01%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Throw (20%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Cthulhu Mythos (00%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Mechanical Repair (10%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Track (10%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Demolitions (01%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Medicine (01%)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Disguise (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Natural World (10%)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Diving (01%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Navigate (10%)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Dodge (half DEX)	<input type="checkbox"/> Occult (05%)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Drive Auto (20%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Operate Heavy Machinery (01%)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Electrical Repair (10%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Persuade (10%)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Fighting (varies)*	<input type="checkbox"/> Pilot (01%)*	
<input type="checkbox"/> Firearms(varies)*	<input type="checkbox"/> Psychoanalysis (01%)	
<input type="checkbox"/> First Aid (30%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Psychology (10%)	
<input type="checkbox"/> History (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Lips (01%)	

WEAPONS

WEAPON	REGULAR	HARD	EXTREME	DAMAGE	RANGE	ATTACKS	AMMO	MALF.
Unarmed				1d3+db	—	1		

COMBAT

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DAMAGE BONUS	BUILD	DODGE

*Skill specialization

HIT POINTS

DYING		MAJOR WOUND		MAX		
UNCONSCIOUS						
00	01	02	03	04	05	06
07	08	09	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20

MAGIC POINTS

MAX	00	01	02	03	04	
05	06	07	08	09	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	

SANITY

START	MAX	INSANE	01			
02	03	04	05	06	07	08
09	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31	32	33	34	35	36
37	38	39	40	41	42	43
44	45	46	47	48	49	50
51	52	53	54	55	56	57
58	59	60	61	62	63	64
65	66	67	68	69	70	71
72	73	74	75	76	77	78
79	80	81	82	83	84	85
86	87	88	89	90	91	92
93	94	95	96	97	98	99

LUCK

OUT OF LUCK						01
02	03	04	05	06	07	08
09	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31	32	33	34	35	36
37	38	39	40	41	42	43
44	45	46	47	48	49	50
51	52	53	54	55	56	57
58	59	60	61	62	63	64
65	66	67	68	69	70	71
72	73	74	75	76	77	78
79	80	81	82	83	84	85
86	87	88	89	90	91	92
93	94	95	96	97	98	99

HARLEM UNBOUND



INVESTIGATOR _____ PLAYER _____ OCCUPATION _____

SOCIAL CLASS _____ BIRTHPLACE _____ AGE _____ GENDER _____

ACADEMIC

- Accounting
- Anthropology
- Archaeology
- Architecture
- Art History
- Biology
- Cthulhu Mythos*
- Cryptography
- Geology
- History
- Languages
- _____
- _____
- _____
- Law
- Library Use
- Medicine
- Physics
- Theology

CONTACTS

INTERPERSONAL

- Assess Honesty
- Bargain
- Bureaucracy
- Cop Talk
- Flattery
- Gambling
- Inspiration
- Intimidation
- Oral History
- Reassurance
- Renaissance

TECHNICAL

- Art
- Astronomy
- Chemistry
- Craft
- Evidence Collection
- Explosives
- Forensics
- Locksmith
- Outdoorsman
- Pharmacy
- Photography

INSANITIES

GENERAL

- Athletics
- Bargain
- Conceal
- Disguise
- Driving
- Electrical Repair
- Explosives
- Filch
- Firearms
- First Aid
- Fleeing
- Health
- Hypnosis
- Mechanical Repair
- Piloting
- Preparedness
- Psychoanalysis
- Riding
- Sanity
- Stability
- Scuffling
- Sense Trouble
- Shadowing
- Stealth
- Weapons

NOTES

SANITY

0	1	2	3
4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15

STABILITY

-12	-11	-10	-9
-8	-7	-6	-5
-4	-3	-2	-1
0	1	2	3
4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15

HEALTH

-12	-11	-10	-9
-8	-7	-6	-5
-4	-3	-2	-1
0	1	2	3
4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15

BUILD POINTS

HIT THRESHOLD