

CALL of CTHULHU®

Alone Against
THE TIDE

Solitaire Adventure by the Lakeshore



**Nicholas Johnson
and Friends**



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Clear Credit

Alone Against the Tide was written by Nicholas Johnson. It was originally available from the Miskatonic Repository. This edition has been edited and revised by Lynne Hardy.

This supplement is best used with the *Call of Cthulhu* (7th Edition) roleplaying game, available separately.

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INTRODUCTION

Alone Against the Tide is a solo adventure for the *Call of Cthulhu* roleplaying game. Unlike a standard game of *Call of Cthulhu*, this adventure requires no Keeper, as it is a solo scenario. In fact, you are both the Keeper and the story's main character. You can take on the role of an investigator of your own design or, if you prefer, one of the two ready-to-play investigators provided: **Dr. Ellery Woods** (page 80) or **Dr. Eleanor Woods** (page 78).

Depending on the investigator you play, your reasons for traveling to the quiet, affluent lakeside town in which the adventure is set may vary. The horrors your character experiences and how much of the mystery affecting Esbury you manage to solve depend on your choices throughout the game. These choices not only affect what happens to your investigator, but also the other people you meet along the way.

For all its scenic beauty and charm, Esbury is a dangerous place, and there is every chance that your investigator could die as the events of *Alone Against the Tide* unfold. Thankfully, though, you can attempt this scenario as many times as you want to. You can also choose a different investigator (or create a new one) each time you play to help you explore the various challenges and pathways the story has to offer.

So, what are you waiting for? Esbury's fate is in your hands!



PREPARING TO START

1. Make sure you have a copy of the *Call of Cthulhu: Keeper Rulebook* (7th Edition) or the *Call of Cthulhu Starter Set* at hand.
2. If you intend to use either **Dr. Ellery Woods** or **Dr. Eleanor Woods**, copy or print out the relevant investigator sheet (pages 82–83). If you would rather create your own investigator, copy, print, or download a blank investigator sheet (an interactive PDF 1920s era investigator sheet is available to download from chaosium.com).
3. Read the **Getting Started** section on page 5, which explains how this book is structured and how some of the rules work.
4. Once that's done, you are ready to take on the challenges of *Alone Against the Tide*—starting on page 8.



GETTING STARTED

Before you begin play, you will need a set of roleplaying dice, a pencil, and an eraser. As mentioned in **Preparing to Start**, you will also need a copy of either the *Call of Cthulhu: Keeper Rulebook* (7th Edition) or the *Call of Cthulhu Starter Set*, and your investigator sheet. This adventure is designed to lead you through the basic rules of character creation in *Call of Cthulhu* as you play (entries **12** and **80**)—you'll be directed to them by the text once you start the scenario. Of course, if you are using a pre-generated investigator, just ignore the comments in the text about creating a new character.

If you'd prefer not to create your own investigator, a male and female variant of the same ready-to-play character, Dr. E. Woods, is included at the end of this scenario* (pages 78–82). Note that only certain skills have already been allocated points. You have a pool of 70 bonus skill points to spend on any skills for Dr. Woods—this can include increasing those skills already allocated points or choosing other skills to broaden out Dr. Woods' abilities—just add the bonus skill points, divided up however you wish, to the base skill values written next to the different skills on the investigator sheet—for example, as Dr. Woods has no skills points in Jump, its base value is 20% (as written next to the skill on the investigator sheet), if you allocate 10 of your bonus skill points to Jump it becomes 30% (20+10). It's up to you to decide what skills to increase. As a guide, the following skills could be useful:

Anthropology, Appraise, Archaeology, Charm, Climb, Fast Talk, Fighting (Brawl), Firearms (Handgun), Intimidate, Jump, Listen, Locksmith, Navigate, Persuade, Psychology, Spot Hidden, Stealth, Survival, and Swim.

Allocate the 70 bonus skills points wherever you want to—of course, you'll have to pick which skills you think are going to be useful—that's part of the game! You won't have enough skill points to always pass your skill rolls, but that's where Luck points can come in very handy (see **Using Luck Points**, page 6).

**You can download writable PDF sheets for both variants of Dr. E. Woods from the Alone Against the Tide page at chaosium.com*



Dr. Ellery Woods

GETTING STARTED

READING THIS BOOK

As this is a solo adventure, you don't read this book in the same way you would a standard roleplaying scenario—that is, you don't read it through from beginning to end! If you do, not only will it be very confusing, but it will also spoil the surprises lying in wait for you. Another difference is that the book isn't split into chapters but into separate entries. Each entry is numbered, and at its end can be found instructions for where to go and what to read next. You may have to make a choice or attempt a skill roll to see what happens.

Occasionally, you may be asked to record something on your investigator sheet that you'll need to refer to later in the game—if you reach the relevant entry, you'll be prompted where to go next based on what you wrote down. Don't carry these notes over to subsequent playthroughs—every investigator must discover Esbury's secrets for themselves.

A NOTE ABOUT THE RULES

Bonus and Penalty Dice

Depending on the situation, some entries instruct you to add either a bonus or a penalty die to your roll. If you are awarded a bonus die, roll an extra “tens” die alongside your usual percentile dice when making that skill roll, and take the best (lowest) result. If you are assigned a penalty die, you also roll an additional “tens” die, but this time you take the worst (highest) result.

For more on bonus and penalty dice, see the *Call of Cthulhu Starter Set*, **Book Two**, pages 14–15 or the *Call of Cthulhu: Keeper Rulebook*, page 91.

Combat

Combat in *Alone Against the Tide* has been simplified so that there are no opposed rolls. If combat is an option open to your investigator, the entry will tell you what skill roll to make and what the level of difficulty is for that roll: Hard (success only at equal to or below half of the skill's value) or Extreme (success only at equal to or below one-fifth of the skill's value). If no difficulty level is stated, the roll is a Regular one (success at equal to or below the skill's value). Certain non-combat skill rolls may also be at Hard or Extreme difficulty. For more on difficulty levels, see the *Call of Cthulhu Starter Set*, **Book Two**, page 14 or the *Call of Cthulhu: Keeper Rulebook*, pages 82–83.

Any damage your investigator suffers from taking part in combat is listed in the entry. Roll the damage die indicated to determine how many hit points they lose as a result of their injury. There are also some non-combat situations where your investigator may take damage; again, roll the damage die indicated in the entry. If your investigator is reduced to zero hit points as a result of a damage roll, the entry tells you what the outcome is. For the sake of simplicity, the major wound rules (*Call of Cthulhu Starter Set*, **Book Two**, page 20 or the *Call of Cthulhu: Keeper Rulebook*, page 120) are not used in *Alone Against the Tide*.

Using Luck Points

We recommended that you use the optional **Spending Luck** rule (*Call of Cthulhu: Keeper Rulebook*, page 99) when playing through *Alone Against the Tide*. For those using the *Call of Cthulhu Starter Set*, this rule allows you to spend your Luck points to alter the result of skill or characteristic rolls. You may alter a roll on a 1-for-1 basis, with any spent Luck points deducted from your current Luck total.

For example, if your skill is 50 and you roll a 54, ordinarily, you would fail the roll; but, if you spend 4 Luck points, you turn that failure into a success. You can't spend Luck points to alter every roll, though: damage rolls, Luck rolls, Sanity rolls, and rolls to determine the number of Sanity points lost cannot be adjusted by spending Luck points in this manner.

To work out how much Luck your investigator has, at the end of character creation, roll 3D6 then multiply the result by 5. Circle that number on the Luck track on your investigator sheet. You will need to do this for Dr. Woods if you've chosen to play that character instead of creating your own investigator.

While you may spend your investigator's Luck points to succeed at a failed skill or characteristic roll, there will be no opportunity to improve their Luck score during their visit to Esbury. And, be aware, they may be called upon to make a Luck roll at some point during the adventure, so you should try to make the best use of your investigator's Luck that you can. Remember, a Luck roll is based on your investigator's current Luck score, not their starting one.

Insanity

Physical damage is not the only danger your investigator faces—several encounters may challenge their Sanity as well.

- In *Alone Against the Tide*, there are only two states of insanity: temporary and permanent. Treat any “indefinite insanity” result as temporary insanity.
- If your investigator goes temporarily insane, the entry will tell you what to do next. Follow these instructions rather than using the standard rules for a bout of madness.
- This scenario doesn't make use of phobias or manias, so ignore them.
- Should your investigator go permanently insane (reduced to zero Sanity points), then they are out of the game. They either die in a manner appropriate to the situation that caused the permanent insanity, or they run off into the woods and hills around Esbury, never to be seen or heard from again. You may begin the adventure afresh, creating a new investigator to see if you can uncover more about the strange goings-on in the benighted lakeshore town.

A NOTE ABOUT THE ENTRIES

The entries are numbered consecutively from 1 to 243. All entries present information in the same way:

1. The entry number is in large bold numerals.
2. Details describe the scene or briefly comment on a situation.
3. After that, the entry might instruct you to go to a certain entry or ask you to choose an action or to roll a die, which have different outcomes.
4. The parenthesized number or numbers at the end of each entry are “trace numbers,” showing the entries from which you may have come in order to have arrived at the present entry—these allowing you to backtrack if necessary.
5. Occasionally, you will encounter the phrase “THE END.” This signifies that your investigator is doomed and the adventure is over. Sometimes, it means you have won, of course. If you failed in this attempt, you may always try again.



ALONE AGAINST THE TIDE

START

Our story begins sometime in the 1920s, on the pier opposite the lakeside resort town of Esbury, Massachusetts. Your investigator's reasons for visiting the town are discussed in the relevant entries. Read through the **Introduction** and **Getting Started** sections and gather everything you need. Then, when you are ready to begin playing, go to number 1.



Dr. Eleanor Woods

1

The sun sinks low on the horizon as you board the ferry headed across the lake to Esbury. As you set foot on the boat, the ferryman greets you with a wide smile and a cheery wave. He stands by the gangplank as you pass, welcoming the other passengers as he removes his cap to scratch at his balding head. His pudgy figure fills his well-worn suit. He looks a little awkward, but he seems a rather pleasant sort. Leaving the man behind you, you take a seat toward the prow, eyes fixed on your destination.

• Go to 12.
(Beginning)

2

You position yourself close to the men and tune your ears to their conversation. *"Between you and me, I heard that most of these items are fakes—outright hoaxes and counterfeits. Harris was a doddering old nut. He claimed that his findings predate the earliest known records of ancient India, but that's impossible. They're completely inconsistent with all of the other data. And besides, there's a reason why he left the Miskatonic, if you catch my meaning."*

The other man nods his approval. *"You aren't wrong. His findings aren't properly supported by evidence, yet he kept trying to publish his hogwash. I imagine that's why they had him resign. Still, at least a few of the items might be authentic, so hopefully this won't be a total waste of time."*

The first man shifts his stance and lowers his volume slightly again, to where it is just perceptible. *"Maybe. And that monk over there does seem to lend some sort of validity to your claim. If an actual Indian wants them, perhaps there is something valuable here."*

- *Go to 17.*
- (34)

3

You take your first steps onto the pier with the rest of the ferry passengers, trying to get your land legs once again. The passengers still chat casually as they walk off to their destinations. You note one last little flirty wink from the full-figured woman as she struts along confidently behind the women accompanying her, and you feel the two dark-suited men push past you at a brisk pace, nudging you out of their way. Sanford gives you one last wave and a smile as he begins tending to the old rust-stained boat that is his pride and joy.

The last light of the sun is fading fast, and the fog is growing thick on the water now. The night is still young, but you would rather not be wandering around in the dark and fog of a town you are unfamiliar with. Taking in your surroundings, you see a sizable crowd jockeying for entrance into a lavish, modern-looking building along the lakeside. A folding sign sits out front, illuminated by a lantern. The words "ESTATE SALE TONIGHT" are written on it in large, bold letters.

While this seems to be the main attraction, you could also seek out somewhere to stay for the night and set about your work in the morning.

If you have not done so already, calculate your secondary attributes as per page 7, **Book Two** of the *Call of Cthulhu Starter Set*, or the summary on pages 34–35 of the *Call of Cthulhu: Keeper Rulebook*.

- *To visit the estate sale, go to 15.*
 - *To find somewhere to stay for the night, go to 26.*
- (27, 36, 42, 56, 66, 89)

4

You choose your words carefully before replying, not wanting to give out sensitive information. You tell him that you're with the Police Department over in Boston, and that you're working a case. The ferryman scratches his head. *"Boston, huh? And they sent you all the way out here? I imagine this has to do with Professor Harris' death, but Officer Powell has that handled, I think."* The man shrugs and flashes another smile. *"Ah, but I suppose it's not my place to pry."* He extends his hand to you, *"I'm Lance Sanford, by the way, I think we skipped the introduction."*

- *To inquire about Prof. Harris, go to 27.*
 - *To inquire about Officer Powell, go to 36.*
 - *To ask Lance Sanford about himself, go to 42.*
 - *To pass the time waiting to arrive in Esbury, go to 56.*
- (80)

5

You call out to Joshua to explain himself, half expecting that he will simply brush you off. Surprisingly, he turns in your direction and steps toward you.

As Joshua moves closer to you, you can once again make out his features despite the fog. You see now that he is visibly red in the face and his eyes are bloodshot. He is clearly livid. His hand darts beneath his coat and reemerges holding a Colt M1911, which he points directly at you while speaking in an agitated manner.

"What the hell is your problem?! I threaten you and you come back for more?! Do you have a death wish?! Leave Amelia alone! I've been about this for far too long for you to wander into town and ruin it for me!"

He shoves you back and levels the gun at your face, looking you dead in the eyes with sweat on his brow. He grits his teeth, panting and huffing for a second before holstering the gun and bracing himself against a nearby building.

"Get the hell out of my sight. If I have to look at that goddam face of yours for one more second, I'll put another hole in it."

You see no reason to further provoke Joshua, and you hurriedly leave him where he is.

- *To press on to the Harris house, go to 55.*
 - *If you feel that this investigation is not worth the risk and want to return to the hotel, go to 122.*
- (90)

6

You feel that the information in the journal is essential to your interests, and you cannot help but make a bid. You place your paper with the others and hope that Mr. Warren calls your name when the amounts are compared.

- *Make an **Appraise** or **Credit Rating** roll: if you succeed, go to 100; if you fail, go to 14.*
- (81)

7

With no immediate threat to yourself, you are free to explore the Harrises' home, though you do so quickly in case someone comes looking. Glancing about the sitting room you are in, you find it's in a bit of a mess from the earlier scuffle.

Glancing toward the entrance, you note the foyer, filled with boxes, crates, and other unidentifiable objects covered with dust sheets. You poke your head into the next room and find a kitchen and an adjacent dining room, both spotlessly maintained, though sparsely furnished.

Peeking beneath the dust sheets in the entryway, you find various items of furniture and décor, as well as stacks and stacks of books. Many of them are historical texts and reference materials, some of which were written by Prof. Harris himself. There is also a large number of general works of science and literature, as befits any well-educated man.

You place the cover back down, sensing that you will find nothing of value here. You turn your attention instead to the set of stairs opposite the entrance. You ascend the staircase and see two doors, one to either side of you. The door to your left is slightly ajar, and no doubt leads to the bedroom. By a process of elimination, the door to your right must lead to the study. It seems to be locked, and your earlier search of the house did not yield a key. With enough time, you might be able to get the door open, but it would probably be unwise to spend too long trying since Amelia or one of those close to her may return soon.

- *To enter the bedroom, go to 123.*
- *To enter the study, make a **Locksmith** roll: if you succeed, go to 108; if you fail, go to 75.*
- *If you fail this roll, you may attempt to push it and roll again, but if you fail a second time, there will be greater consequences. If you push the roll and succeed, go to 108; if you fail, go to 87.*

(39, 49, 53, 54, 76, 85, 91, 99, 130, 147)

8

You look the idol over. It is made of a sea-green stone and chiseled in the likeness of a water lizard of some sort. The sculpture is grotesque and hideous, and the very depiction of the lizard-like creature unnerves you. Still, the work is extremely well-preserved and unquestionably ancient.

You feel uncomfortable staring at the alien-looking thing for long, so you stow it away under the bed and out of sight.

- *Go to 32.*
- (32)

9

You wake in the morning, grateful for the rest. You rise from your bed and take in the modest surroundings that make up your room. The furnishings are sparse; a small poor-quality dresser and a cramped and dusty writing desk tucked in the corner. Sitting atop the desk is a plate of eggs and toast, apparently set out for you by the hotel's owner. The walls are plain and unadorned, save for a single window that faces toward the lake. However, this view is currently blocked by the incredibly thick fog, which has taken on a pale green hue. Your vision is obscured entirely, and you cannot see into the depths of that outlandish green mist.

You also notice your personal belongings placed around the room, exactly as you left them the night before.

- *Go to 106.*
- (26)

10

You slip silently out of your cell and press low to the ground. Powell is reading over his documents and puffing away contentedly at his cigar. He doesn't notice your breakout.

After several tense minutes, you manage to inch your way toward the building's entrance. You crack the door open just enough to escape, closing it behind you as you exit.

You now stand amid the dim, dank fog. You note the last of the sun's rays illuminating the mist above you, but your vision is largely obscured by both the haze and the growing darkness.

Given your recent escape, it would not be wise to linger here. You weigh your options. You could address the problem head-on by returning to the Harris house to look for clues. You might also consider returning to the hotel to gather your thoughts. Or you could simply put this all behind you and skip town. It's too late and too foggy for the ferry to be operational, but you know there are smaller side roads that wind around the lake. You'd have to make the journey on foot and in the dark, but an unpleasant option is still an option.

- To investigate the Harris house, go to **147**.
 - To visit the hotel, go to **122**.
 - To abandon your investigation and leave town, go to **124**.
- (107)

11

You step out into the greenish mist. You feel it clinging tightly to you as you make your way the short distance to the police station.

Upon entering the small brick building, you are struck with a sense of claustrophobia. The walls here are uncomfortably close together and space is tight. Crammed into the tiny structure are a large desk, several filing cabinets, and a few chairs; a closet-sized holding cell with iron bars sits at the rear of the room. Behind the large desk is Officer Powell, smoking a cigar with his feet propped up on the table. His coat is unbuttoned and his hat lies on top of a stack of papers, next to a battered old revolver.

He opens one eye and frowns at you, sighing through his cigar as he straightens himself up to look presentable. "If you're bothering me right now, I'm going to assume this is important." You mention that you would like to see the police report for Prof. William Harris' death, to which he replies with a snort. "You have no business dealing with that, and even if you did, this is my jurisdiction. Shove off and leave me in peace."

He doesn't seem cooperative, but perhaps you could convince him that you have some special circumstance that warrants you looking through his files.

- Make a **Fast Talk** roll: if you succeed, go to **46**; if you fail, go to **101**.
- (32, 106, 153)

12

You settle into a seat with your thin briefcase resting on your lap, noticing that the rest of the passengers are likewise getting comfortable for the short trip across the lake. Glancing around, you catch sight of the ferryman entering the cabin. As you sit patiently and wait for the engine to come to life, you listen to the sounds of idle chatter around you. You look out across the water and notice a thin fog beginning to form over the surface of the water as the temperature drops with the approach of night.

After a few minutes, you hear the engine sputter into action and feel the ferry lurch forward. The conversations around you continue as the ferryman joins you all on deck. You can't help overhearing most of the talk, though it's surprisingly banal. There are almost a dozen passengers on the ferry; most of them are simply looking to spend their money during their weekend in Esbury and to enjoy the various shops and leisure activities the lakeside town has to offer. Many of the passengers seem to come from money, as is common in Esbury.

You notice a strange look from one of the women in the group. She has a full figure and brown hair and eyes. She seems to be looking you over, admiring your features.

*If you are creating your own investigator—at the top of your investigator sheet, you will find spaces for eight characteristics: Strength (STR), Constitution (CON), Power (POW), Dexterity (DEX), Appearance (APP), Size (SIZ), Intelligence (INT), and Education (EDU). Allocate the following values among your characteristics: 40, 50, 50, 50, 60, 60, 70, 80. When you've chosen which values to associate with each characteristic, write them in the large square beside the relevant characteristic. In the smaller squares next to this, write an amount equal to half the characteristic value and an amount equal to one-fifth of the characteristic value. If you need more information about what these characteristics mean, consult **Book Two**, page 7 of the Call of Cthulhu Starter Set or pages 30–31 of the Call of Cthulhu: Keeper Rulebook.*

*If you are using the pre-generated investigator, Dr. Woods—take a look at how their characteristics have been assigned. The half and fifth values have already been calculated for you. If you need more information about what these characteristics mean, consult **Book Two**, page 7 of the Call of Cthulhu Starter Set or pages 30–31 of the Call of Cthulhu: Keeper Rulebook.*

- Go to **80**.
- (1)

13

Banyu, the Buddhist monk, chats casually with you as you walk through the fog. You both note that the light is beginning to dim through the mist, and this becomes the topic of conversation for a few minutes. *"It will be even harder to see soon. I would not like to be out and about any longer than we must. This fog is most unusual. Is this hue common here?"*

You respond that the greenish color of the fog is highly unusual, and he seems mildly perturbed. *"I have seen nothing like it at my temple in India, either."*

The conversation continues like this for some time, until finally, you arrive at your destination. The place in question is a small house located on the edge of town, near the church.

Banyu informs you that he has no intention of going inside, as he knows it may result in violence and he is opposed to physical conflict. He shoots you a quick glance and then goes to stand by the church.

You try the door and find it unlocked. You have no doubt that the men inside will be armed, so you slip in quietly, hoping to avoid notice.

- Make a **Stealth** roll: if you succeed, go to **165**; if you fail, go to **144**.
- Note down "Meet Banyu: Entry 215" on your investigator sheet. Later, you may be prompted to visit Banyu if you know where to meet him. At that time, you may then go to **215**.

(97)



Banyu

14

You placed a modest bid on the journal, thinking its unremarkable nature would prevent anyone from paying anything resembling a large sum. Clearly, you were mistaken, as another name is called and a bright-eyed and blond-haired youth goes to claim the book for a price that is noticeably more than your offer.

- Go to **81**.

(6)

15

Pushing through the crowd, you make your way toward the estate sale. Judging by the number of people packing into the dance hall, this seems to be quite the event.

Most of the people here are well-dressed, with conspicuous amounts of jewelry and designer clothing on display. You see a broad-shouldered man in a policeman's uniform standing by the door. He has a scarred yet clean-shaven face and a baton at his side. His brow is furrowed in a serious expression and he watches the commotion through narrow eyes.

As you mingle with the assorted academics and collectors, you notice a few other faces that stand out in the crowd.

Most immediately, you spot a man in flowing orange robes with tawny skin. He seems more than a little out of place and is garnering some odd looks from the other guests.

Glancing around further, you happen to notice the two dark-suited gentlemen from earlier, standing in a corner toward the front of the room, talking to a young dark-haired man in a dated yet elegant long coat. He is of a slight build and has rather sharp features; a thin wisp of a mustache hangs beneath his nose.

Most noticeable, though, is the rather attractive young woman standing on stage at the front of the room next to a bespectacled old man. Long black hair cascades down her shoulders, accentuating her pale features and complementing her formal black dress. Occasionally, she and the older gentleman peek at objects hidden beneath white sheets—the sale items waiting to be displayed.

- To mingle with the crowd of guests, go to **34**.
- To speak to the officer at the back of the room, go to **88**.
- To approach the man in orange, go to **102**.
- To introduce yourself to the dark-suited men, go to **60**.
- To make your way toward the stage and the woman, go to **22**.
- To leave the hall and go find a place to stay for the night, go to **26**.

(3)

16

Your business here is completed. You see the crowd staring covetously at the newly acquired items and you spot Amelia looking smug and satisfied with a leather bag full of cash. Mr. Warren begins to clear away the tables while Officer Powell stands by the door and directs people out of the building and into the ever-thickening fog.

Though some seem content to stay and socialize, you feel that it would be best to go bed down for the night.

- Go to 26.
- (81)

17

You have begun gathering information in Esbury. Would you like to interact some more?

You may now select another option from those listed. Do not repeat a choice already selected. Once you have chosen three options from the list below (or before, if you are ready to move on) go to 35. Note that selecting to leave the hall will make you ineligible to make further selections from this list.

- To mingle with the crowd of guests, go to 34.
 - To speak to the officer at the back of the room, go to 88.
 - To approach the man in orange, go to 102.
 - To introduce yourself to the dark-suited men, go to 60.
 - To make your way toward the stage and the woman, go to 22.
 - To leave the hall and go find a place to stay for the night, go to 26.
- (2, 28, 29, 37, 40, 43, 44, 57, 72, 105)



18

You tell the ferryman you're an author working on a new novel that you've been researching for some time. You mention how you were planning to consult with Prof. Harris here in Esbury about some historical background information for your writing.

The ferryman looks at you quizzically. *"Professor Harris? Didn't you hear? He's dead. About a week ago. Officer Powell could tell you more. Or his widow, Amelia. She'll be hosting an estate sale for some of the Professor's things tonight. Poor thing, she really needs the windfall, especially in a town like Esbury. Might be you could pick up some of his notes for cheap and do the research yourself."* The man shrugs, clearly not wanting to dwell on buying the items of a dead man. He extends his hand in a friendly gesture, trying to change the subject. *"I'm Lance Sanford by the way. Pleasure to meet you."*

- To inquire about Prof. Harris, go to 27.
- To inquire about Officer Powell, go to 36.
- To ask Lance Sanford about himself, go to 42.
- To ask about the estate sale, go to 66.
- To ask about the widow Amelia, go to 89.
- To pass the time waiting to arrive in Esbury, go to 56.

(80)

19

Finally, you hear your name called—your bid for the altar was found to be highest. You are now saddled with a large and bulky item, easily the size of a traveler's trunk. Not unmanageable, but definitely more than you'd prefer to lug around. Still, it is surprisingly light considering the number of gemstones worked into the ancient wood. Naturally, those will make it quite valuable, and the strange painted scrawls provoke your interest.

- Reduce your **Credit Rating** by 5 percentiles. Go to 81.

(103)

20

Your instincts get the better of you and you feel compelled to make your escape. You rise from your seat, looking for suitable exits. The only way that doesn't lead toward the entrance is through the kitchen. You don't know if there's an exit that way, but you think it's worth a shot.

Unfortunately, you never get to take it. As you rise and head for the kitchen doorway, Officer Powell bursts into the room, shouting, *"Freeze! Police!"* You glance over your shoulder and see his revolver leveled at you, and you go stiff. *"You're under arrest for trespassing! You're going to come with me. Now."*

He has you dead in his sights. Talking would do you little good as he's already caught you trying to flee the scene. You should probably do what he says. On the other hand, you could try to run. Staring down the barrel of a gun, the odds don't look good but maybe you like your chances better with the gun than the prison cell.

- To go quietly, go to 65.
- To make a run for it, go to 82.

(31, 126)

21

As Joshua towers over you, fists raised in rage, an idea crosses your mind. You pull both of your feet up and drive them into his chest. You kick him back with all your might, sending him tumbling down the stairs.

You hear several thumps and thuds as Joshua rolls down the steps. When he reaches the bottom, he lays there, sprawled out and clearly injured. His groans betray his semiconscious state, and you walk over to him confidently. With one final kick, you send him over the edge into unconsciousness.

Amelia is mortified at the sight. She runs out into the street, fleeing the scene. You quickly search Joshua's pockets and find his wallet, which includes his identification—with an address. A search of his other pocket reveals a house key.

Several options are immediately apparent. You can continue searching the house, leave in pursuit of Amelia, or make your way to Joshua's home.

- To search the Harris house, go to 179.
- To chase Amelia, go to 136.
- To search Joshua's house, go to 151.

(132)

22

You make your way to the stage, navigating around the many guests in the dance hall. Your eyes lock firmly on the woman, and hers rise to meet yours as she looks up from peeking at one of the hidden objects. She stops what she's doing as you approach and a smile appears on her lips as she notices that she's caught your eye.

She rests her left hand on her hip as you come to stand at the foot of the stage. The old man behind her continues his inspections, either unaware or uncaring that you've come to distract them. The woman leans toward you over the edge of the stage. You can see her makeup has been painstakingly applied, despite her status as a recent widow.

You clear your throat as you meet her gaze, and promptly introduce yourself. She extends her hand to you formally. *"Well, aren't you a new face in town?"* she teases. *"We get those quite a bit here. No doubt you plan to bid on some of my late husband's things. Good for both of us, I say. Just be sure to give a good price for little old me, alright?"* She winks slyly at you.

You realize now would be a good time to get some more information from this woman who might be the most well-informed regarding your interests. She certainly seems like the flirty sort and would probably respond well to more of the same.

- Make a **Charm** roll: if you succeed, go to 43; if you fail, go to 57. (15, 17)

23

You mention the passing of a distant colleague in Esbury and how you've been sent by Miskatonic to recover his work and bring it back to the university.

The man sighs and nods slowly. *"You mean Professor Harris. Real shame what happened to him. Always seemed like such a nice man. Officer Powell says they're still cleaning up the mess at the professor's place. But some of the more valuable bits will probably be at the estate sale tonight, if you're really wanting at it."* The man looks down at his hands for a moment, and then back at you as he extends one your way. *"Anyway, I'm Lance. Lance Sanford. Pleased to meet you, but I wish it were under better circumstances, eh?"*

- To inquire about Prof. Harris, go to 27.
- To inquire about Officer Powell, go to 36.
- To ask Lance Sanford about himself, go to 42.
- To ask about the estate sale, go to 66.
- To pass the time waiting to arrive in Esbury, go to 56.

(80)

24

You write a reasonable bid for the pair of clay cylinders and place it in the box. Shortly after you do so, Mr. Warren clears the box and begins checking the bids.

- Make an **Appraise** or **Credit Rating** roll, both at Hard difficulty (success only at equal to or below half of the skill's value): if you succeed, go to 38; if you fail, go to 73.

(81)

25

The man dives at you. You attempt to throw yourself out of his way, but you aren't quick enough. The full weight of his body slams down on you, propelling you out of the doorway and onto the bricks of the street.

You struggle and squirm for a minute before the man chokes you out, and you slip into the black depths of unconsciousness.

- Go to 138.

(144)

26

While the estate sale seems interesting, you would feel more secure with a roof over your head for the night. You pull someone out of the crowd and inquire as to where you can find a room to rent. You're directed a few blocks into town to a modestly priced hotel a few buildings down from Esbury's police station.

As you enter in from the cool night air, you're greeted by the heat of a roaring fire. The small front room feels stuffy and cramped. The bulk of the space is dominated by the large service counter, behind which sits a wiry-looking wisp of a woman. She turns her wide eyes to you and asks your name, then quotes you a price that's more than fair. With the transaction complete, you haul your thin briefcase up the stairs, unpack it, and settle into your room for the night.

- Go to 9.

(3, 15, 16, 17)

27

The ferryman raises a questioning eyebrow at you. *"Professor Harris? I can't say much really. I didn't know him all that well, but he seemed like a nice guy. I was sad to hear that he died."*

You gently press for more information about his death. Sanford frowns, but answers: *"Officer Powell says it's suicide. I'm inclined to believe him, but Professor Harris seemed happy enough to me. More than content to relax in Esbury like anyone else. In between his studies of course. Ancient Indian history, I think it was. I had coffee with the professor a few weeks ago and he talked my ear off about it. I couldn't understand half of what he said, but he was quite excited by whatever it was."*

You exchange a few more pleasantries with Sanford before he goes off to finish guiding the boat into port. You pass the time in casual conversation with the other passengers and in observing the scenery. You note the tall pines and the sloping hills along the lakeshore around Esbury. These features, and the small town beyond, are just visible through the growing mist, but squinting helps make them out to your satisfaction.

In time, you arrive on the pier at Esbury, grateful to be off the water.

- Go to 3.
(4, 18, 23, 33, 41, 63, 71, 104)

28

You are well-traveled enough to know that the two men are concealing handguns at their waists. What they could possibly need them for is beyond you, but their hidden weapons and shady nature make you think it isn't good.

Before you turn to go, you think you catch a glint of metal from beneath the folds of the young man's coat as well. This man might likewise be armed.

- Go to 17.
(60)

29

The officer seems rather alert and vigilant. It would probably be best not to bother him and let him do his job. He clearly does not need or want your help in any way.

- Go to 17.
(88)

30

The ceremonial robe catches your eye, and you settle on placing a bid. You sign your name on a paper with a realistic price and put your submission in with the rest. You wait for Mr. Warren to call out the robe's winner.

- Make an **Appraise** or **Credit Rating** roll: if you succeed, go to 52; if you fail, go to 48.
(81)

31

You nod sympathetically. This woman is clearly uncomfortable talking about her deceased husband, and anyone would want to put that behind them. You pause for a moment, trying to frame your next question with a measure of sensitivity.

You open your mouth to speak, but you are interrupted by a loud knock at the door. Amelia jumps up, startled, and stands there for a moment in confusion as the pounding on the door resumes. *"Police! Open the door!"* Amelia's face drains white as she goes to answer the knock.

Your gut tells you something is wrong here. You feel uneasy about the officer at the door. You tell yourself you're being irrational and on edge, but you have some trouble fighting that feeling. You have a few precious moments to react.

- To ignore your instincts and wait, go to 47.
- To take this chance to hide, make a **Stealth** roll: if you succeed, go to 98; if you fail, go to 20.
(55)

32

A cursory inspection of your personal belongings reveals that nothing is amiss. All of your possessions are just as you left them. While you are here looking things over, you can take this opportunity to more closely scrutinize items bought at the estate sale.

Alternatively, you may leave and go explore elsewhere if your curiosity is satisfied.

After examining each item, you will be redirected to this entry or given the option to proceed as appropriate. If you have none of the items or are done looking over what you bought, choose to investigate elsewhere.

- If you bought the journal from the estate sale and want to look it over, go to 74.
- If you bought the clay cylinders from the estate sale and want to look them over, go to 62.
- If you bought the altar from the estate sale and want to look it over, go to 128.
- If you bought the idol from the estate sale and want to look it over, go to 8.
- To go to the police station, go to 11.
- To go to the ferry, go to 153.

(8, 62, 74, 106, 128)



Strange Altar

33

You tell the man you're a doctor, sent by the coroner to look into Prof. Harris' death. The man nods slowly, mournfully. *"Ah, that's a bad business. I liked the old man. Can't say I know much about his death though. You'll want to talk to Officer Powell about that. Or maybe his widow, Amelia. They'll probably be at that estate sale tonight. Without Professor Harris around, she'll need the extra windfall if she plans to stay in Esbury. This place ain't cheap."* The man brushes his hand against his shirt and then extends it to you. *"My name's Lance, by the way. Lance Sanford. Good to meet you, but I wish it was under happier circumstances."*

- To inquire about Prof. Harris, go to 27.
- To inquire about Officer Powell, go to 36.
- To ask Lance Sanford about himself, go to 42.
- To ask about the estate sale, go to 66.
- To ask about the widow Amelia, go to 89.
- To pass the time waiting to arrive in Esbury, go to 56.

(80)

34

Rather than single anyone or anything in particular out, you feel it would be best to use your time to get a general impression and speak to multiple people to get their points of view.

Hearing the talk around the room, you come to understand that most of the people who have gathered here are merely treating this as a social event. However, there are a fair number of academics and collectors in attendance as well. Judging by the relative wealth of the townsfolk, you imagine that there will be a lot of bids placed on the items.

While walking among the guests, you happen to notice a pair of men conversing in hushed tones. They seem to be trying to avoid being overheard, but a keen ear might be able to catch what is being said.

- Make a **Listen** roll: if you succeed, go to 2; if you fail, go to 44.

(15, 17)

35

The murmuring of the crowd dies down and people begin to gather around the stage as Amelia and the older gentleman call everyone to attention.

The widow strides confidently to the front of the stage where the lights are centered. She flashes a broad smile at the crowd and begins to speak. *"Good evening everyone! I'm so glad you all could make it tonight. As you all know, my husband recently passed and... well..."* At this point, Amelia begins to tear up theatrically, so much so that her makeup begins to smear. She produces a handkerchief to dry her eyes before continuing: *"Well... I'm very upset. I miss my poor William very much, and I don't know what I'll do without him. And that's why I've brought you all here tonight. I hope you can find some use for his collection, and I know that he would be happy to see his things go to those who value them highly. I hope you'll show this poor widow a kindness by finding something you like. But now, let us begin. I'll leave the auctioning to Mr. Warren."*

With her opening statement complete, Amelia moves to stage left and allows the bespectacled old man, presumably Mr. Warren, to take center stage. He clears his throat before speaking. *"Tonight, we have six very ancient and very valuable items for sale from the estate of Professor William Harris. Though exceedingly strange, I have deemed these items to be authentic to the best of my ability. I have placed a ballot box, slips of paper, and a pencil on each of the six tables, next to the item for sale. If you wish to bid on an item, simply write your name and the amount you are willing to pay for it on a slip, then place it in the box. The item will be sold to the highest bidder. All of the proceeds will go to the wife of the deceased."*

With that, Mr. Warren moves to reveal the gathered items.

• Go to 70.
(17)

36

You ask about Officer Powell, and Sanford gives you a guarded response. *"He's the law in Esbury. Certainly, knows what he's doing, since he handles the town on his own. Truth be told, though, he can be a little intimidating. He's a big man, and not somebody you'd want to find yourself on the wrong side of. I think he gets it from his days in the war. I don't have cause to talk to him much, though."*

You exchange a few more pleasantries with Sanford before he goes off to finish guiding the boat into port. You pass the time in casual conversation with the other passengers and in

observing the scenery. You note the tall pines and the sloping hills along the lakeshore around Esbury. These features, and the small town beyond, are just visible through the growing mist, but squinting helps make them out to your satisfaction.

In time, you arrive on the pier at Esbury, grateful to be off the water.

• Go to 3.
(4, 18, 23, 33, 41, 63)

37

You blurt out a greeting, trying to make the stranger feel welcome. His face contorts into a look of disappointment, and the man turns his back on you. You have clearly displeased him somehow, and he wants nothing more to do with you.

• Go to 17.
(102)

38

You muster your patience and wait for Mr. Warren to finish comparing the proposed bids for the strange clay cylinders. Thankfully, your patience pays off, and you soon find them in your possession.

• Reduce your **Credit Rating** by 5 percentiles. Go to 81.
(24)

39

You attempt to speak kindly to Amelia, trying to soothe her regarding the frightening events that have just occurred. Despite your best efforts, she appears inconsolable. Between her sobs, she tries to offer a feeble explanation. *"It was Josh... H-he was only trying to h-help..."* She continues crying, lost in her fear.

It doesn't seem like she'll be much use to you at the moment.

• To search the premises, go to 7.
• To tie up Officer Powell in case he wakes up, go to 68.
• To tie up Amelia, go to 125.
• To simply make good on your escape, go to 111.
(76, 99)

40

You take the hint and decide to leave them be before they get truly angry. You turn back to the crowd and search for another distraction.

- Go to 17.
- (60)

41

You choose your words carefully before replying, not wanting to give out sensitive information. You tell him that you're with an investigative service in Boston, and that you're working a case. The ferryman scratches his head. "*Boston, huh? And they sent you all the way out here? I imagine this has to do with Professor Harris' death, but Officer Powell has that handled, I think.*" The man shrugs and flashes another smile. "*Ah, but I suppose it's not my place to pry.*" He extends his hand to you "*I'm Lance Sanford, by the way, I think we skipped the introduction.*"

- To inquire about Prof. Harris, go to 27.
 - To inquire about Officer Powell, go to 36.
 - To ask Lance Sanford about himself, go to 42.
 - To pass the time waiting to arrive in Esbury, go to 56.
- (80)

42

You ask Sanford about himself and he beams a big bright smile your way. "*I've lived in Esbury for years, since back before all the rich folk found the place and turned it into their little vacation spot. My father owned the ferry to and from the town, and he passed it on to me when he got too old to do it himself anymore. I love it here. I can't imagine living anywhere else. The lake is so clear and clean. I guess that's why we get so many visitors. This place has definitely grown since I was younger, though. Sometimes I miss the way things were before, but I love Esbury all the same, even now. You'll like it here, too.*" Sanford winks at you.

You exchange a few more pleasantries with Sanford before he goes off to finish guiding the boat into port. You pass the time in casual conversation with the other passengers and in observing the scenery. You note the tall pines and the sloping hills along the lakeshore around Esbury. These features, and the small town beyond, are just visible through the growing mist, but squinting helps make them out to your satisfaction.

In time, you arrive on the pier at Esbury, grateful to be off the water.

- Go to 3.
- (4, 18, 23, 33, 41, 63, 71, 104)



43

You take her hand in yours and bring it to your lips, keeping eye contact with her as you do so. She giggles and her smile grows wider as she regards you with interest. *"My, aren't you the charmer? If I weren't a widow, I'd be thrilled. But I still must mourn my husband, you understand. He was a stuffy old goat and obsessed with his studies. I have no problem selling his things, mind you, but that's because I need the money. A girl like me gets used to a certain standard of living, after all. But I can't very well go chasing after the first suitor who comes to replace him. No matter how fetching."* She winks at you again and rests her hand on your arm and lowers her voice to a whisper. *"But perhaps you could join me for a drink later. I have a little bit set aside for good company. I won't tell if you don't."* She seals the conversation with a final wink before lifting her hand and turning back to the stage and its hidden artifacts.

- Go to 17.
- (22)

44

You strain your ears trying to overhear the huddled pair's words, but the noise of the other conversations around the room drowns out what is said.

- Go to 17.
- (34)

45

You examine the items with a trained eye. The crown and ceremonial robe are obviously authentic and typical of what you would expect. They are in great condition and would certainly fetch a good price, though they are no rarer than any other antiquity. Likewise, Prof. Harris' journal seems like it would be of value to a scholar, though a few delicate cursory page turns show that it contains personal accounts and travelogues as well as historically relevant information. This is likely a good source of information on Prof. Harris himself.

However, the other items present are noticeably different. The altar and clay cylinders bear a similar script, and both show comparable signs of aging and wear. Given this, they are unlikely to be fabrications, but they are unlike more traditional finds from ancient India. A close inspection of the lizard idol leads you to believe it is likewise verifiably authentic. Though the workmanship is strange and unnatural and clearly nothing like anything you've seen from ancient India or elsewhere, it doesn't bear any signs of work from modern tools or influence from modern styles either.

- Go to 81.
- (70)

46

You imply that you know the right sort of people who might ask the wrong sort of questions if you don't get access to that report.

You aren't certain whether or not Officer Powell believes you, but you can tell it's more trouble than he's willing to risk. With a look of irritation, he thumbs through the stack of papers on his desk before handing you the file you asked after.

According to the report, Prof. Harris' death is officially a suicide. His death occurred at his home address. He was up late one night in his study, where he stuck a gun into his mouth and painted the room red. His body was found the following afternoon by his wife, Amelia Harris. There was no note. The deceased had no prior criminal history, and the gun found at the scene hadn't been used in any reported crimes. Overall, the report is dry and minimalist. All requisite information is present, but only to the barest standard of diligence.

Satisfied, you hand the file back to Powell, who grumbles and tucks it away before clearing his throat loudly and propping his feet back up.

You feel that you have been given a cue to leave and that Officer Powell will not likely be of much further help.

- To go to the Harris household, go to 90.
 - To return to the hotel, go to 122.
- (11)

47

You hear a muffled exchange of words through the door, and within moments, Officer Powell emerges into the room with Amelia in tow. Powell's thick brow knits together in anger and his voice conveys a serious weight. His eyes bore into you. You glance down and notice his revolver is drawn and aimed at you. *"You're under arrest for trespassing. You've no business being here. You're going to come with me. Now."*

He doesn't seem to be in a talking mood. It would be unwise to refuse, given the firearm aimed directly at you. Still, it might be better to take your chances now than to rot in a cell.

- To go quietly, go to 65.
 - To attempt an escape, make a **Hard Fighting (Brawl)** roll (success only at equal to or below half of the skill's value): if you succeed, go to 76; If you fail, go to 82.
- (31, 126)

48

It would seem one of the other collectors here wants this particular item more than you. The robe is sold for a higher price than you expected, and to someone other than yourself.

- Go to 81.

(30)

49

You take a step toward Amelia, cock the hammer on the revolver, and level it toward her, adopting the angriest expression you can muster. She shrieks and cowers, falling to her knees.

"Please don't hurt me! I'll tell you whatever it is you want! I'm sorry. I never meant for any of this. Joshua sent that policeman after you. He has the law in his pocket. Josh runs the bootlegging here in Esbury and he cuts Powell in on the profits in exchange for looking the other way and helping keep everything secure."

She produces a handkerchief and dries her eyes. *"Josh protects me. He loves me. He has for quite some time..."*

You press further, inquiring about the nature of their relationship, and how this relates to her husband's death. She stares back at you blankly and takes a deep breath. *"Josh and I have been intimate for a few years. My husband was a good man, when he wasn't obsessing over his work. But he was sometimes away for so long, and paid so much attention to his books... I have needs. A woman my age shouldn't be neglected. I met Josh through his whiskey business. One thing led to another and..."* She smiles, dabbing at the last of her tears.

"We were happy, even with William around. Recently though, Josh had been insistent that we get him out of the picture so that we could be together. I didn't like it, but I agreed. I let Josh take care of it. I just wanted it to be behind us and for us to be together. I told him I wanted to sell everything and leave town. Just the two of us. I think that was the first time I saw him angry. He never said why."

She looks down at her hands, trying to avoid your gaze. *"You don't have to worry about anything. We'll leave town just as soon as we can. I suggest you do the same."* She looks at Powell's unconscious body lying on the floor.

- To search the premises, go to 7.
- To tie up Officer Powell in case he wakes up, go to 68.
- To tie up Amelia, go to 125.
- To simply make good on your escape, go to 111.

(76)

50

Despite the uneven terrain, you manage to keep your footing. You fly over rock and root as fast as your legs will carry you, and you cover much ground in a short amount of time.

Unfortunately, this reckless speed at which you're traveling, combined with the fog and cover of night, prevents you from noticing the ground giving way to a cliff edge. As your momentum carries you forward toward the edge, you spot a tree standing several feet out beyond the cliff face. It's too late to stop the fall, but perhaps you can control the landing.

- Make a **Jump** roll: if you succeed, go to 167; if you fail, go to 232. (183, 186)

51

You pick a path and head down it, figuring that your odds are as equally likely to be right or wrong here. As you continue walking, you notice the mist becomes even more obscuring. The fading light and the hint of darkness compound the lack of visibility.

You notice the trail now rises steeply as it winds its way away from Esbury. You take this as a good sign since it means you're farther from the lake shore. While you're smiling at your good fortune, you fail to spot the muddy patch of ground that causes you to slip and go stumbling toward the edge of a cliff.

- Make a **Climb** roll: if you succeed, go to 174; if you fail, take 1D6 damage. If you survive this, go to 139; however, if this reduces you to zero hit points, you have fallen to your death. Your visit to Esbury is over. **THE END.** (158)

52

The Brahmin's robe is yours. Mr. Warren spent more than a few minutes looking over the offers, but ultimately, it was your name he called. You claim your prize and fold it away into your briefcase for safekeeping.

- Reduce your **Credit Rating** by 2 percentiles. Go to 81. (30)

53

The vase hits you squarely in the chest, shattering on impact. The broken shards fly around you, some cutting your flesh. You are knocked off balance and tumble to the floor.

Seizing this opportunity, Amelia runs out the door as fast as her legs will carry her, calling for help as she does so.

You could chase after her, or you could take this opportunity to explore the empty house. The choice is yours.

- To explore the house, go to 7.
- To chase after Amelia, go to 141.

(68)

54

You ask about Prof. Harris' death and how it came to happen, fearing that you already know the answer to your inquiries. Amelia takes a deep breath before answering, *"Joshua killed him."*

You press further, asking about the nature of their relationship, and how this relates to her husband's death. She stares back at you blankly and takes a deep breath. *"Josh and I have been intimate for a few years. My husband was a good man, when he wasn't obsessing over his work. But he was sometimes away for so long, and paid so much attention to his books... I have needs. A woman my age shouldn't be neglected. I met Josh through his whiskey business. He bootlegs for the whole town. One thing led to another and..."* She smiles, looking lost in thought.

"We were happy, even with William around. Recently though, Josh had been insistent that we get him out of the picture so that we could be together. I didn't like it, but I agreed. I let Josh take care of it. I just wanted it to be behind us and for us to be together. I told him I wanted to sell everything and leave town. Just the two of us. I think that was the first time I saw him angry. He never said why."

She looks down at her hands, trying to avoid your gaze. *"You don't have to worry about anything. We'll leave town just as soon as we can. I suggest you do the same."*

She looks at you one last time and frowns. *"I may not have loved him especially, but I don't want to discuss my late husband's death any further. If you simply must dig into it, feel free to search my home. I left the door unlocked, so it shouldn't give you any trouble. Now leave me alone."* She stands and walks over to the altar. She kneels and begins to pray, forgetting your presence. You take your cue to leave.

- To continue to the Harris house, go to 7.
- To visit the hotel, go to 122.
- To abandon your investigation and leave town, go to 158.

(164)

55

Despite Joshua's urgings, you feel compelled to speak to Amelia yourself. You approach the front of the house and note your surroundings.

The house's exterior hints at the wealth of the occupants, but then again, so do most places in town. Directly across from the residence is a small church, whose religious iconography seems to have inspired the Harrises in the design of their own home. A bronze cross hangs over the front door, and decorative columns line the outside walls of the two-story house. All in all, the architectural style is somewhat baroque, complete with a pair of carved angels lounging beneath the eaves that are just visible through the strange haze.

You knock on the door and wait in the mist for a few moments, hoping for someone to hear you. Eventually, much to your relief, the widow Amelia answers the door. She's wearing a bright red dress, which accents her deep crimson lipstick. She appears to have taken great care over her appearance. She flashes you a smile and invites you inside. The house opens into a large foyer, and you see various crates and bundles stacked high along the walls. *"Just selling off a few of the more common things. Mind the mess, the porter hasn't come for it yet."* She takes you by the hand to lead you past the stacks of items, helping you to pick your way through the deceased Prof. Harris' assembled possessions. She takes you into a small drawing room full of antique furniture and offers you some coffee.

After settling in and exchanging a few well-mannered pleasantries, you ask in more detail about the late Prof. Harris.

Amelia sighs theatrically and looks down at her hands. *"I can't imagine what you want to ask about William. I found him in his study with the gun still in his mouth. What more could you want to know?"*

- Make a **Psychology** roll: if you succeed, go to 126; if you fail, go to 31.

(5, 90)

56

You exchange a few more pleasantries with Sanford before he goes off to finish guiding the boat into port. You pass the time in casual conversation with the other passengers and in observing the scenery. You note the tall pines and the sloping hills along the lakeshore around Esbury. These features, and the small town beyond, are just visible through the growing mist, but squinting helps make them out to your satisfaction.

In time, you arrive on the pier at Esbury, grateful to be off the water.

- Go to 3.

(4, 18, 23, 33, 41, 63, 71, 104)

57

You manage a smile and stumble through a compliment and the woman laughs. *"Oh my! Well, aren't you the nervous sort? Don't know what to say to a pretty woman like me, eh? That's quite alright. I wouldn't have you anyway. You're welcome to stay for the sale though. I might like you better as a buyer."* She winks and turns around, walking back to her place on the stage.

• Go to 17.
(22)

58

You decide to place a bid on the crown and affix your name and a suitable price to a slip of paper, which finds its way into the box. You wait patiently for Mr. Warren to announce the highest bidder.

• Make an **Appraise** or **Credit Rating** roll: if you succeed, go to 64; if you fail, go to 94.
(81)

59

Mr. Warren takes his time mulling over the names and figures before calling out the name of a "Dexter James." One of the dark-suited men from earlier comes forward to claim the altar.

• Go to 81.
(103)

60

You approach the huddled group and introduce yourself to them, stating that you recognize them from the ferry. The two men from earlier appear annoyed at your presence and are visibly irritated. *"Scram man, we don't know you. You got nothing to do with us."* The third man seems likewise bothered and frowns at your intrusion.

They certainly make you feel unwelcome. Ignoring you in hopes that you'll leave, the two men in suits turn their backs to you. You see the jacket of each suit shift oddly, as if it's ill-fitting.

• Make a **Spot Hidden** roll: if you succeed, go to 28; if you fail, go to 40.
(15, 17)

61

You glance over the items but you do not have an eye for antiquities. As near as you can tell, everything is as it appears to be and as Mr. Warren claims.

Still, as you look over the notebook, you notice it contains personal accounts as well as academic findings. It will likely be a good source of information regarding Prof. Harris.

• Go to 81.
(70)

62

You turn the hardened clay cylinders over in your hands, your eyes falling on the large cracks running through both items. Despite this damage, their solid construction has led to the cylinders' survival throughout the ages.

The next most obvious quality is the strange writing plastered along the sides of each cylinder. It's quite remarkable in that it doesn't resemble any language known to you. Unfortunately, you have no way of translating it.

• Go to 32.
(32)



Brick Cylinders of Kadatheron

63

You tell the man that you're a reporter with *The Boston Gazette*. Some professor died out here recently and you're supposed to gather details for the obituary. The man nods solemnly. "You mean Professor Harris. Real shame what happened to him. Always seemed like such a nice man. Officer Powell says they're still cleaning up the mess at the professor's place. Can't say I know much about his death, though. You'll want to talk to Officer Powell about that. Or maybe his widow, Amelia. They'll probably be at that estate sale tonight." The ferryman looks down at his hands and then extends one toward you. "My name's Lance Sanford, by the way. Let's just put that grisly business behind us for now and enjoy the water, eh?"

- To inquire about Prof. Harris, go to 27.
- To inquire about Officer Powell, go to 36.
- To ask Lance Sanford about himself, go to 42.
- To ask about the estate sale, go to 66.
- To ask about the widow Amelia, go to 89.
- To pass the time waiting to arrive in Esbury, go to 56.

(80)

64

You pay a considerable sum but the Indian crown is now yours. You smile with satisfaction as you tuck the bronze headpiece into your briefcase.

- Reduce your **Credit Rating** by 2 percentiles. Go to 81.

(58)

65

The officer is armed and angry, so you decide it's probably best not to resist. You're escorted out of the house at gunpoint and into the sickly green fog. Amelia neither says nor does anything as you pass. She simply stares at you as you go.

On the street, just outside the Harris property, you spot Joshua, grinning madly. His eyes meet yours and his smile gets just a bit wider. He put Officer Powell up to this. He's not even trying to hide it. That still doesn't explain why, but at least you know for a certainty that Joshua is not friendly to you, and that he has Powell in his pocket.

You mull this over as you're marched through the misty streets and taken to the police station. You're ushered into the dim and dingy room and shoved into a closet-sized cell on the far wall. Officer Powell turns the key in the lock, sealing you in the cell. He settles into his seat and pays you no further mind as he begins puffing on a cigar.

He seems to have no intention of letting you go any time soon.

- To wait the night in the cell, go to 84.
- To attempt an escape, make a **Locksmith** roll: if you succeed, go to 107; if you fail, go to 84.
- To try to convince him to let you out, make a **Fast Talk** roll: if you succeed, go to 127; if you fail, go to 84.

(20, 47)

66

The mention of an estate sale grabs your interest and you ask for some more information. Sanford obliges. "Amelia Harris is selling off some of her late husband's collection. She could use the money and doesn't really have an interest in that ancient Indian stuff the professor studied. But some folks do—collectors, academics, that sort of thing. She put the word out not long after her husband died. People have been trickling in for it the past few days. If you're looking to get your hands on something, it's going on tonight at the dance hall by the pier."

You exchange a few more pleasantries with Sanford before he goes off to finish guiding the boat into port. You pass the time in casual conversation with the other passengers and in observing the scenery. You note the tall pines and the sloping hills along the lakeshore around Esbury. These features, and the small town beyond, are just visible through the growing mist, but squinting helps make them out to your satisfaction. In time, you arrive on the pier at Esbury, grateful to be off the water.

- Go to 3.

(18, 23, 33, 63, 71, 104)

67

Not wanting to take any chances with your freedom, you slip quietly out into the mist. As you step onto the stone pavement outside, you turn your collar up, hoping it might provide you with some semblance of anonymity. You begin walking down the street at a brisk pace, hoping to put some distance between yourself and the Harris house.

You continue along the path for a short distance before you hear the sound of heavy footsteps approaching you. Thanks to the thick fog, you don't think you've been spotted. You quickly duck into a nearby alley to let the traveler pass. The man moves by you at a quick jog, cursing under his breath. You recognize Joshua's voice, and you feel certain that he's connected to your attempted arrest.

Still, you realize that you don't have many options to deal with that right now. With the law after you and this damnable fog keeping you from leaving on the ferry, the best thing you can do is head back to the hotel and either lie low there or figure out what your next move is.

- Go to 122.

(98)

68

You consider that the officer is merely unconscious and not restrained, and that you should remedy that before he comes to. You pull down a curtain from the window, letting the sickly green light of the fog into the room. You take the length of fabric and bind Officer Powell's hands. It's crude, but it will have to suffice.

As you finish securing the knots, Amelia suddenly lunges for a vase sitting next to her and hurls it at you.

- *Make a Dodge roll: if you succeed, go to 91; if you fail, take 1D4 damage. If you survive this, go to 53; however, if this reduces you to zero hit points, you have been killed by a decorative flower holder. Your visit to Esbury is over. THE END.*

(39, 49, 76, 85, 99)

69

Joshua removes the blade from your face and walks across the room. He lifts the hideous idol from its spot amid the dusty relics and places it on the floor in front of you as you struggle in vain against the thick ropes that bind you.

You glance at the grotesque statue, and then fix your gaze on Joshua as you squirm and twist beneath the ropes. Joshua locks eyes with you, smiling with wicked glee as he rests the cold metal lightly against your throat. Then his eyes glaze over as he begins speaking in a strange tongue. "*Grah'n y'hab ngnw ronog Bokrug stell'bsna, phlegeth ep throd ron.*" He speaks each syllable in a slow and monotonous tone, as if he's focusing very carefully on the sound of the words.

As the last syllable passes his lips, Joshua takes the knife and presses it sharply against your neck. With a single, smooth motion, he slits your throat.

As you bleed out, your eyes perceive impossible visions. The world before you melts away, replaced by a shining city of marble, onyx, and lustrous gems. You see this magnificent city in all its splendor, sitting next to a placid lake. And then, in an instant, it's gone as the water rises up to swallow it. The lizard-thing of the idol, given life and power by your blood, surges up from the water. The being eyes you with malicious sentience as the waters swell and consume you.

You have been offered up as a sacrifice to one of the Great Old Ones. Your visit to Esbury is over. THE END.

(138)

70

Mr. Warren approaches the first table and removes the cloth covering to reveal an odd pair of clay cylinders covered with strange etchings. They are small and seem quite fragile, with large cracks running down their sides.

Mr. Warren proceeds to the next table and likewise uncovers the item in question. This one is significantly larger and more ornate. It appears to be some sort of altar or reliquary, heavily decorated with yellow-green gemstones. However, there is one similarity with the first item: the presence of the same strange written characters, though these ones seem to have been painted on.

The old scholar turns to the next item in question and displays it for all to see: a decorated crown of solid bronze, wrought with the image of a Hindu god.

The next item is certainly the most mundane: a large, thick, leather-bound journal that appears well-worn and beaten, with several loose papers jammed between the pages. Mr. Warren senses the confusion of some members of the crowd and clarifies that the notebook is the assembled personal works and studies of Prof. Harris.

The item that follows the journal is a well-preserved ceremonial robe of a Brahmin priest. The cloth is pure white.

The last item is perhaps the strangest of all. It is a small statue or idol, presumably of one of the many deities of ancient India. Made from a blue-green stone in the shape of a rather grotesque lizard-like creature, the craftsmanship is crude and gaudy, so much so that it appears fake. People begin moving among the items, looking them over and conversing quietly.

- *Make either an Appraise or an Archaeology roll: if you succeed, go to 45; if you fail, go to 61.*

(35)

71

You tell the man that you're here on pleasure, not business. You smile at him and he smiles back. "*Like so many others then, eh?*" he replies. "*Can't say I blame you—Esbury is a nice little place. Lots to do here on the lake. Boating, fishing, swimming. And there's some camping to be had on the other side of town. There's also a nice dance hall close to the pier, but that will be closed for the night, what with that estate sale of Professor Harris' things going on. That might interest you too, if you have a little extra money you're looking to spend.*" The man pauses for a moment, as if unsure of what to say, then finally extends his hand and smiles warmly. "*I'm Lance Sanford, by the way. It's a pleasure.*"

- *To inquire about Prof. Harris, go to 27.*
- *To ask Lance Sanford about himself, go to 42.*
- *To ask about the estate sale, go to 66.*
- *To pass the time waiting to arrive in Esbury, go to 56.*

(80)

72

You recognize the man's style of dress to be that of a Buddhist monk. You bow a customary greeting, to which the monk smiles and returns the gesture before speaking in heavily accented but fluent English. *"It is good to see one here with such respect for our customs. I am Banyu."* His expression turns to a frown as he makes a sweeping gesture to the rest of the room. *"The rest here seem only to seek to profit from my culture. Selling the items of my ancestors is most shameful."* You respectfully question why he would come such a long way to witness such a thing, and he sighs before turning back to you. *"I have come with what money my temple could gather so that I might save a certain few of the artifacts. Ones that your Professor Harris stole from my temple in Sarnath when he came to visit some years ago."* The monk seems troubled and falls silent. He bows a farewell and you take the cue to leave.

• Go to 17.
(102)

73

Though you wished to buy the curious clay cylinders, someone else placed a higher bid. You hear Mr. Warren announce the name "Arthur Duncan" and see one of the dark-suited pair approach to take the item from him.

• Go to 81.
(24)

74

Though you glanced at the notebook during the estate sale, you haven't had time to properly look it over until now.

Reading through the book, you become deeply engrossed and spend the next few hours in study. The time spent yields valuable information. Prof. Harris made several trips to India, starting about 12 years ago. During these visits, he went to multiple sites to make observations and recover artifacts. His longest and most profitable trip appears to have been 10 years ago during an excursion to Sarnath, India, where he writes about "recovering" several items from an active Buddhist shrine. Apparently, Prof. Harris had some regrets about this theft, but he couldn't resist taking the artifacts for his personal collection. The descriptions of the items he came across in Sarnath match some of the items at the estate sale last night. The clay cylinders,

the gemstone-encrusted altar, and the lizard-like idol are all described in detail in the entries related to his trip to Sarnath.

These same items then appear throughout the rest of his journal. He'd clearly been studying them over the past decade and developed something of a fixation with them. It was the idol that initially caught Harris' eye, and according to him, the depiction of the great and grotesque water lizard matched no description of any known Hindu deity. Hoping to find clues to the idol's identity, Harris set about trying to translate the mysterious script on the cylinders and the altar. In doing so, he met with significant difficulty, as the text was only barely recognizable as an archaic dialect of a pre-Sanskrit language. The process was slow and painstaking until about a year ago.

At this time, Prof. Harris writes of having a strange and enlightening dream. He reports walking in the ancient world from whence these items originated: a grand city of marble walls and onyx streets, of bronze gates and marvelous palaces and gardens. He writes of visiting the 17 tower temples of this ancient city and meeting the bearded gods who dwelled there, sat upon their ivory thrones. Harris calls the strange place Sarnath, despite the sheer impossibility of this. He claims that among the temples he learned the secrets of the ancient writing.

His next entry goes on to describe the odd clay cylinders as the "Brick Cylinders of Kadatheron," though he hadn't yet identified the other objects. The next few pages have been torn from the journal.

The entries resume with more mundane matters, though there are still references to the artifacts from time to time. The most recent entries in the journal speak of Harris' daily studies and living with Amelia. It's clear that he cared about her deeply from the way he writes about her, but he laments that his studies keep him from spending the time with her that he would like. Instead, he lavished her with gifts and money, which she was all too happy to accept. He notes that Amelia had never been happier despite the distance between them.

The last entry to catch your eye is dated a little over a week ago. Apparently, the pages torn from his journal went missing only recently. Prof. Harris expresses deep concern at this as there were no signs of forced entry to his study, and only he and Amelia had access to it, though he was sure he hadn't removed them from the journal himself.

You finish your reading by glossing over the last week of the professor's life, which is rather uneventful and peaceful beyond his continued obsession with the artifacts and his occasional worries about Amelia.

• Go to 32.
(32)

75

Try as you might, you are unable to get the door open. No manner of fiddling with the lock will get it to budge. You even resort to force by throwing your weight against the door.

With a sigh of resignation, you abandon your task.

• *Go to 140.*
(7, 110)

76

Officer Powell is a large man, and armed. He is experienced in dealing with people resisting arrest and the scars on his face hint that he's seen his fair share of fights.

Still, you're not willing to be arrested. It's a dangerous and desperate move, but all you need is one good hit—one solid blow to lay him out.

You tense up and swing, throwing all of your weight behind your punch. The gun goes off, blowing a hole in the wall behind you as Powell reflexively tries to block the blow with his hands. He's not quick enough to stop you. A heavy thump on the side of the head sends him crashing to the floor.

Amelia shrieks in fright and surprise as the lawman collapses. You quickly scoop up his revolver and arm yourself with it. You turn your gaze on her as she cowers in the corner, her face drained of all color.

With the threat of arrest removed for the moment, you have ample opportunity to continue your investigation. Being suitably armed opens up a few more options as well.

- *To solicit information from Amelia at gunpoint, make an **Intimidate** roll with a bonus die: if you succeed, go to 49; if you fail, go to 99.*
- *To attempt to calm Amelia down, make a **Persuade** roll: if you succeed, go to 85; if you fail, go to 39.*
- *To search the premises, go to 7.*
- *To tie up Officer Powell in case he wakes up, go to 68.*
- *To simply make good on your escape, go to 111.*

(47)



Fight with Officer Powell

77

You take a knee and begin twisting the combination lock slowly, listening for the sound of the clicks and feeling for the slight stopping of the dial with a successful guess of the number. You repeat this process a few times, and the safe's door swings open with a barely perceptible creak of metal.

The contents of the safe are fairly sparse. There is a stack of documents on the bottom shelf: passports, birth certificates, and financial papers. A quick look at them reveals nothing of interest. They're tied to both Amelia and William Harris, so it appears as if this safe hasn't been opened since the professor's death. There's also a solitary small gold bar, a little over 2 lbs. (1 kg) in weight, sitting off to one side. Considering the trouble you went through to get to this point, you place the gold bar in your pocket as compensation.

At least now you won't be leaving empty-handed. Satisfied, and with nothing more to see in the room, you leave and move on.

• Go to 140.
(123)

78

You don't want to take any chances with a man like this. You draw your handgun and fire off a round into the man's back. It tears through him and blood begins to ooze from his wound. He looks down at his chest and then back at you before the blood loss gets to him and he sinks to the ground in a puddle of his own blood.

The monk, his orange robes splattered with a noticeable amount of blood, looks mortified at the sight of such brutal violence.

He closes his eyes before calmly but sternly speaking to you: *"The man was misguided, but he did not deserve to die. Go. Leave from here."*

This isn't necessarily the reaction you expected, but his tone leaves no room for discussion. You holster your weapon and exit into the hotel lobby. The woman who owns the establishment takes your hand and shakes it. *"I guess you did what had to be done. It's not pleasant, but I doubt you were left with any other choice."* She pauses for a moment, running a hand through her graying hair. *"If you're looking for the other one, I think I heard him say something about going down to Joshua's place by the church. He might be involved in some way, so be careful."*

With no other leads, you take her advice and step out into the haze, walking briskly toward the far end of town.

• Go to 160.
(142)

79

You rush outside, hoping to catch a glimpse of the thief. As you exit the hotel, you are immediately struck by the lack of visibility. The fog seems to have grown thicker, and although you aren't certain, it seems as if the sun might be sinking lower toward the horizon. In the green and dusky haze, you pause a moment to listen, knowing your sight will prove useless here.

The town is still and quiet. There's nobody out and about near you. No footsteps, no automobiles, no voices. You strain your ears and focus, entering a near-meditative state, concentrating only on the sounds of your surroundings.

• Make a **Listen** roll: if you succeed, go to 114; if you fail, go to 131.
(134)

80

The woman clearly sees something in you that she likes. Perhaps it's your looks or a glint of intelligence in your eyes. She gives you a sly wink before turning back to her companions. You likewise turn your attention to the rest of the passengers.

Sitting apart from the general crowd are two men in dark, well-tailored suits, whispering quietly to each other. They have unamused expressions on their faces, as if they don't seem pleased to be here. Perhaps they're on business.

Noticing that you're sitting alone, the ferryman approaches you and stands over you with his characteristic smile. You notice he's missing a tooth in the upper left corner of his mouth. His eyes are bright as they light upon you.

"Good afternoon! You look a bit lonely there, friend. What brings you to Esbury?"

*If you are creating your own investigator, it is now time to choose an occupation. This list of occupations can be found on page 9 of **Book Two** in the Call of Cthulhu Starter Set. If you're using the Call of Cthulhu: Keeper Rulebook instead, choose one of the occupations listed below then look it up in the **Suggested Occupations** section (pages 40–41). Make a note of the occupational skills, then allocate the following values among them and the Credit Rating skill, writing each one in the large square beside the relevant skill on the investigator sheet: 40%, 40%, 40%, 50%, 50%, 50%, 60%, 60%, 70%. Ignore any starting value already mentioned for your chosen skills. Once you've done that, choose 7 personal interest skills to boost by 20% (i.e. add 20 to the skill's base value). Just as you did with your characteristics, calculate the half and fifth values and jot those down as well. You may equip your character as you see fit, though you should refrain from including any weapons. If you are playing Dr. Woods instead, all of their skill points have been assigned for you.*

ALONE AGAINST THE TIDE

- *If you are an Antiquarian, go to 104.*
 - *If you are an Author, go to 18.*
 - *If you are a Dilettante, go to 71.*
 - *If you are a Doctor of Medicine, go to 33.*
 - *If you are a Journalist, go to 63.*
 - *If you are a Police Detective, go to 4.*
 - *If you are a Private Investigator, go to 41.*
 - *If you are a Professor, or you have chosen to play Dr. Woods, go to 23.*
- (12)

81

You notice that you're not the only one looking over the items with such interest. The monk appears to be closely scrutinizing the stranger items as well, and the dark-suited gentlemen from earlier seem to have taken a liking to the curious idol. Apart from this, various other guests wander around the tables, occasionally fixing on one in particular. There are many guests and a fair number of bids being placed.

If you would like to bid on any of the items, now is the time.

You will be redirected to this entry after each choice and you may choose to bid on any number of items. Please make each choice only once, and please note that each successful bid will lower your Credit Rating for future bids.

- *To bid on the clay cylinders, go to 24.*
 - *To bid on the altar, go to 103.*
 - *To bid on the crown, go to 58.*
 - *To bid on the journal, go to 6.*
 - *To bid on the ceremonial robe, go to 30.*
 - *To bid on the strange idol, go to 92.*
 - *If you are unable or do not wish to bid on any further items, go to 16.*
- (14, 19, 38, 45, 48, 52, 59, 61, 64, 73, 86, 94, 100, 154)

82

You eye the barrel of the gun, weighing your chances. It doesn't look good, but you decide it beats the alternative. Your muscles tense, waiting to spring into action. You take a breath and go for it.

You miscalculated just how slim your chances were. You manage to take one step before you hear the loud crack of the revolver. You feel a round slam into your chest and then another. You stumble back, clutching at your wounds, doubled over in agony. You look up just in time to see Powell looming over you before he smashes the butt of the gun over your head.

In a daze, you look down at the pool of blood forming around you. Your limbs start to go numb. The pain starts to recede and you feel yourself growing cold. You know that you're going to die. The last thing you see is the glint of murder in the policeman's eyes.

You have died. Your visit to Esbury is over. THE END.
(20, 47, 146)

83

Lumbering lazily in your general direction, the hideous thing takes a swipe at you. Whatever this creature is, you are mercifully faster than it.

You run as swiftly as your feet will carry you, and you dare not look back. Instinctually, you rush into the hotel and slam the door behind you, retreating to the closest thing to a safe space you can find.

You rest a moment, bracing yourself against the door and catching your breath. You have no idea what's out there or where it came from. Perhaps you don't want to know.

Your instincts lead you to believe that it's somehow connected to Harris' possessions and the circumstances surrounding Harris' death. Why else would this be happening now, of all times?

You don't wish to dwell on it at the present moment and you have little to go on. You weigh your options with as much rationality as you can muster.

You could simply remain here—seal the entrances and wait out the night, hoping that it won't find you and will leave with the coming of day, or even prepare to hold out here and fight back, should it come at you again. Another option is to flee this impossibility—run into the fog as fast as you can and make for the trees, hoping to leave this unnatural thing behind you in Esbury, with the rest of your fruitless endeavors here. Or—if you're feeling particularly brave of heart—you may steel yourself against the horror and press on with your investigation, hoping to unravel the goings-on in Esbury and perhaps even the origins of this horrid thing—and maybe find a way to get rid of it.

- *To remain in the safety of the hotel, go to 173.*
- *To flee everything, go to 166.*
- *To continue the investigation, go to 200.*

(162)

84

Officer Powell glowers at your every little action. Despite his laziness, he keeps a close eye on you, and you won't be slipping away any time soon. No matter what words you try, he ignores your pleas for release. The hours drag on. As the two of you sit alone in the room, the air becomes warm and stifling. Powell opens a window to let the room air out.

You stare out into the green fog and feel a great sense of unease, as if something is staring back at you. You shake off this irrational fear and busy your mind with thoughts of how to obtain your freedom.

You don't ponder for long. Your sense of unease grows greater until it's all-consuming. You know that something is coming. You hear the shouting first. People panicking in the streets. Officer Powell jerks out of his silent vigil when the shouting begins, before rushing outside to restore order.

He's gone for quite some time and the shouting continues. And then the water rises, seeping through the doorway and into the small building that you're stuck in. At first it merely wets the floor, but soon you're up to your ankles in it. Then your knees. Then your waist. In the course of a few hours, it rises with little sign of stopping. Between the bars, the fog, and the water, you feel thoroughly trapped.

Real madness overtakes you now. You swear that you can make out strange and alien shapes within the swirling mists—horrible, flabby things with slender limbs and sagging features. They are decidedly unhuman. When these hallucinations—for that is what they must surely be—begin, you hear the shouts turn to full-fledged screams, and then die out in the night, choked by the mist.

Through the window, you see the light from multiple fires glowing within Esbury, illuminating and consuming everything, even as the water rises to swallow up the town. You smell the smoke mingling with the fog.

You try to convince yourself that you're having a panic attack, that this is all a dream, that this isn't real. You don't know what is happening, or why. You have no idea how these cruel and unnaturally horrific things came to be. You have no idea why they emerged from that eerie fog. You don't know any of the reasons for this.

And you never will. The water rises, and you float upwards, gasping for air with only inches between you and the ceiling. As the water rises over your head, your lungs fill, and you drown.

You have died. As it stands, your character died ignorant of the nature of these unholy horrors, and perhaps that is for the best. If you wish, you may begin again and try for a better outcome, or at least one that explains the goings-on further. For now, though, your visit to Esbury is over. THE END.

(65)

85

You lower your weapon and adopt a soft tone of voice, reassuring her that you mean her no harm, that you were simply startled by the attempted arrest. You promise not to hurt her.

She cries throughout your speech, but eventually the waterworks slow to a snuffle. Finally, she nods and accepts your explanation, and even apologizes to you.

"I'm sorry. I never meant for any of this. Joshua sent that policeman after you. He has the law in his pocket. Josh runs the bootlegging in Esbury, and he cuts Powell in on the profits in exchange for looking the other way and helping keep everything secure."

She produces a handkerchief and dries her eyes. *"Josh protects me. He loves me. He has for quite some time..."*

You press further, inquiring about the nature of their relationship, and how this relates to her husband's death. She stares back at you blankly and takes a deep breath. *"Josh and I have been intimate for a few years. My husband was a good man, when he wasn't obsessing over his work. But he was sometimes away for so long, and paid so much attention to his books... I have needs. A woman my age shouldn't be neglected. I met Josh through his whiskey business. He bootlegs for the whole town. One thing led to another and..."* She smiles, dabbing at the last of the tears.

"We were happy, even with William around. Recently though, Josh has been insistent that we get him out of the picture so that we could be together. I didn't like it, but I agreed. I let Josh take care of it. I just wanted it to be behind us and for us to be together. I told him I wanted to sell everything and leave town. Just the two of us. I think that was the first time I saw him angry. He never said why."

She looks down at her hands, trying to avoid your gaze. *"You don't have to worry about anything. We'll leave town just as soon as we can. I suggest you do the same."* She looks at Powell's unconscious body lying on the floor.

- To search the premises, go to 7.
- To tie up Officer Powell in case he wakes up, go to 68.
- To tie up Amelia, go to 125.
- To simply make good on your escape, go to 111.

(76, 99)

86

Clearly, none of the others expected anyone to pay such a ludicrous price for the crude idol. You still can't believe how much money you offered for it, but the grotesque and misshapen thing is now yours. The monk and the men in dark suits stare daggers at you, but nobody else seems to mind or take much notice beyond a few raised eyebrows that anyone would pay such an excessive amount for such a trifling and outlandish thing. Still, when you look Amelia's way, you can tell she is quite pleased.

- Reduce your **Credit Rating** by 10 percentiles. Go to 81.

(92)

87

You carry a bobby pin on you for just such an occasion. You fumble with the lock for quite some time, trying to force the tumblers into place. Despite your best efforts, the lock is stubborn and unwilling to move. As you contemplate giving up on the lock and trying to break the door down, the front door of the house flies open, rattling on its hinges.

Go to **140**.
(7, 110)

88

You turn around and backtrack toward the entrance to the ballroom. Something about the officer by the door catches your attention and holds it. He gives off a commanding presence and his eyes bore into you intensely as you make your way over to him.

As you move within earshot, he rests his hand on his baton and clears his throat. *"I really hope there isn't going to be any sort of problem, citizen. I wouldn't want to see anyone getting hurt tonight."* His hand does not move from his baton.

- Make a **Psychology** roll: if you succeed, go to **105**; if you fail, go to **29**.
(15, 17)

89

You ask after Prof. Harris' widow, Amelia. Mr. Sanford is only too happy to give you the gossip.

"Amelia Harris. She moved here with Professor Harris a few years back. Pretty young broad. Seems to be holding it together after her husband's death, though. She's got some pluck, I'll tell ya that. She seems like the type who comes from old money, just like most of the newcomers to Esbury. But she's selling off some of her late husband's things tonight, so I guess she needs the dough. I can't say much beyond that. I don't know her all that well." Sanford shrugs and smiles.

You exchange a few more pleasantries with Sanford before he goes off to finish guiding the boat into port. You pass the time in casual conversation with the other passengers and in observing the scenery. You note the tall pines and the sloping hills along the lakeshore around Esbury. These features, and the small town beyond, are just visible through the growing mist, but squinting helps make them out to your satisfaction.

In time, you arrive on the pier at Esbury, grateful to be off the water.

- Go to **3**.
(18, 33, 63, 104)

90

You walk into town, toward the Harris address. Even knowing the location, it's difficult for you to find your way due to your unfamiliarity with the town and the density of the peculiar green mist. As a result, it's some time before you arrive at the Harris house.

As you approach the building, a man steps out of the fog, blocking your path. He is young and thin, with rather angular features and the faint hint of a mustache atop his lip. He's dressed in a dark suit and stares at you from beneath a flat cap.

"You're an unwelcome surprise. I don't know what you're looking for, but you won't find it here." Your eyes betray you as you glance at the Harris house. The man scowls visibly. *"Why don't you leave the poor widow alone, you creep? If you want to bother her, you're going to have to go through old Joshua here, capiche?"* His hand brushes beneath his coat as if searching for something, but then he stops himself. He pauses for a moment, looking you over once more before spitting on the ground at your feet and turning away.

- To call out to Joshua, go to **5**.
- To make your way to the Harris house, go to **55**.
- To heed his warning and return to the hotel, go to **122**.
(46, 101)

91

The vase shoots past you and into the wall, shattering on impact. The broken shards fly off at all angles, narrowly missing you. You are startled and flinch reflexively.

Seizing this opportunity, Amelia runs out of the door as fast as her legs will carry her, calling for help as she does so.

You could chase after her, or you could take this chance to explore the empty house. The choice is yours.

- To explore the house, go to **7**.
- To chase after Amelia, go to **141**.
(68)

92

Something draws you to the curious idol, and you feel compelled to make a bid. You notice that you're not alone in this, as the monk and one of the dark-suited men both place bids of their own into the box. You hope that yours is high enough.

- Make an **Appraise** or **Credit Rating** roll, both at *Extreme difficulty* (success only at equal to or below one-fifth of the skill's value): if you succeed, go to **86**; if you fail, go to **154**.
(81)

93

As before, you sense Joshua's frustration and realize that patience is the better course of action. You wait for him to swing. He throws his full weight behind the blow and you easily move aside and shove him forward, using his momentum against him.

You send him crashing into the wall. He drops to the floor, thoroughly dazed by the force of the impact.

You hurry to the front door and barricade it with a chair, buying you time to move about the house freely. Glancing about, you see a small living room and kitchen, and two doors at opposite ends of the common area. The door on your left is wide open, and you can see a set of stairs leading down. The door on your right is closed. You assume it leads to the bedroom.

- To head down the stairs, go to **156**.
- To head into the bedroom, go to **202**.

(121)

94

You underbid on the item, thinking you would be able to score a good deal. Another bidder offered a fairer price and they walk away with the Indian crown.

- Go to **81**.

(58)

95

You fire wildly at the creature before you, unnerved by its presence. You want nothing more than to pull the trigger of your weapon and send this thing into oblivion.

Unfortunately, you have no such luck. You fire shot after shot, but they all fly harmlessly wide of the monstrosity. Your bullets are lost to the mist.

You panic and scream as the thing falls on you, pinning you to the ground while it digs at your face with its slender and misshapen fingers. The abomination's fingernails rake across your face, drawing blood. You bash helplessly against the thing with the butt of your gun.

Even though you feel yourself doing considerable harm to the flimsy flesh of its swollen body, in the end, it's just not enough. You remain trapped beneath its weight. It lays atop you, slowly stripping the flesh from your face with its bony fingers. You fight against it and scream in agony with every rake of its blunted fingernails, but there's nothing you can do. You are gradually mauled to death by the unholy thing.

You have died. You may try again and hope for a more favorable outcome, but for now, you have been claimed by whatever horrors lurk in this cursed town. Your visit to Esbury is over. THE END.

(162)



96

Joshua aims the gun at you, and you freeze in shock. The weapon goes off in his hand and the bullet whizzes through the air, tearing open your left shoulder and throwing you back against the wall.

You collapse in a heap, blood oozing from your wound. You know it isn't fatal, but that doesn't make the pain any less. As you struggle to fight through that pain, you find Joshua standing over you. The look on his face is one of pure rage. It is the last thing you see as you are clubbed into unconsciousness.

Go to 138.

(125, 140, 145)

97

You rush the man, and swing for his head. Your blow lands and carries him into the wall. With a sickening crack, he is rendered unconscious and collapses in a heap on the floor.

You stand over the wide-eyed monk. He seems battered and bruised, and is no doubt in some degree of pain. Still, he manages to rise to his feet and extend his hand in thanks.

He offers words of gratitude to you for rescuing him from his attacker. *"I am glad that you came when you did. That one was rather violent. It is regrettable that you had to hurt him so, but he will live."*

You inquire about the reason for the brawl, and the monk replies slowly. *"His friend robbed me of some of the relics of my temple. This one wished to stay behind and inflict harm on me so that I would not pursue them."* You mention the robbery in your room and express common cause with him.

The monk smiles at you and shakes your hand more vigorously. *"Then we shall go after our things together. I heard them discuss where they would meet up later, after that one,"* he points to the unconscious thug, *"was done with me."* Wondering at your good fortune, and not willing to turn down any aid, you accept the monk's offer. You doubt the suited man will be waking any time soon, and you will both be gone by then. You simply leave him and exit the hotel, with the orange-robed Buddhist leading you through the mist.

• Go to 13.

(142)

98

Your hunches are never wrong. Whatever that officer is here for, you don't want any part of it. Glancing around, you weigh your options. You decide to creep toward Amelia and Officer Powell, positioning yourself behind a stack of items that are waiting for the porter. Neither of them seems to notice you as they rush past your hiding place, giving you a clear line to the door.

Alternatively, now might be a good time to explore the house. While there is the risk of discovery, it's not as if you have anything to lose by snooping around somewhere you weren't supposed to be.

For a brief moment, your gaze wanders to the staircase opposite the entryway. The bedrooms and study are likely up there, and you might be able to find some valuable information.

• To make your escape, go to 67.

• To explore upstairs, go to 110.

(31, 126)

99

You turn your weapon in Amelia's general direction and demand that she explain the meaning of everything.

She begins to cry, the tears smearing her makeup. She tries to speak but ends up stuttering and stammering until you menacingly take a step in her direction. She cowers once more and begins blurting out the first thing that comes to mind.

"It was Joshua! He put the policeman up to it! H-he protects me. He loves me..." She trails off and falls to the floor in a weeping mess.

She is too upset to be of any further use to you at the moment.

• To attempt to calm Amelia down, make a **Persuade** roll: if you succeed, go to 85; if you fail, go to 39.

• To search the premises, go to 7.

• To tie up Officer Powell in case he wakes up, go to 68.

• To tie up Amelia in case she does anything irrational, go to 125.

• To simply make good on your escape, go to 111.

(76)

100

You feel that the knowledge in these pages could very well prove essential to you, so you offer a price that is more than fair. Sure enough, Mr. Warren calls your name and presses the leather-bound tome into your eager hands.

• Reduce your **Credit Rating** by 2 percentiles. Go to 81.

(6)

101

You try to convince the officer that you have a particularly good reason for needing access to the file, but he simply doesn't care. *"Scram, stranger, you're ruining my smoke. If you want to dig at the dead guy, go bother his widow. Her place is over on the north side of town, right next to the church. Can't damn well miss it."*

Officer Powell will be of no more help at this time.

- To go find the Harris house, go to 90.
- To return to the hotel, go to 122.

(11)

102

You approach the strange man. He seems well-traveled and weary, and his long, orange robes are a stark contrast to the fine suits and dresses of the New England financial elite. He seems decidedly out of place.

You open your mouth as if to speak and find him staring intensely at you.

- Make an *Anthropology* roll: if you succeed, go to 72; if you fail, go to 37.

(15, 17)

103

You decide on a fair bid for the gemstone-studded altar and submit your offer. Not long after, Mr. Warren empties the ballot box and begins sifting through the entries for the highest bid.

- Make an *Appraise* or *Credit Rating* roll, both at Hard difficulty (success only at equal to or below half of the skill's value): if you succeed, go to 19; if you fail, go to 59.

(81)

104

You tell the man that you're a collector of antiquities, and that you heard there's going to be an estate sale of some items of interest here. The ferryman nods slowly. *"You heard right, friend. Professor Harris' things are being sold off by his widow, Amelia, at an estate sale tonight. Shame about what happened to him, but his loss is your gain I suppose."* The ferryman hesitates a moment before extending a hand toward you in greeting. *"I'm Lance Sanford by the way. Pleased to make your acquaintance."*

- To inquire about Prof. Harris, go to 27.
- To ask Lance Sanford about himself, go to 42.
- To ask about the estate sale, go to 66.
- To ask about the widow Amelia, go to 89.
- To pass the time waiting to arrive in Esbury, go to 56.

(80)

105

For an officer of the law, Officer Powell possesses a rather tuggish disposition. He seems to be looking for a fight, and from the scars on his face, you can tell he's been in many. With his size, he does cut a rather intimidating figure. Still, the use of thinly-veiled threats as an introduction is somewhat unnerving, and certainly not proper behavior for a moral and ethical man. It's probably best not to provoke this man, and it would be wise to avoid him as much as possible.

- Go to 17.

(88)

106

After getting dressed and eating the modest breakfast set out for you, you're ready to begin your day. You take a moment to consider what that means for you.

Your mind turns to Prof. Harris. If you're so inclined, you might be able to investigate the circumstances of his death further. Considering that you don't have his widow Amelia's address, you would have to start your search with the official report filed with Officer Powell at the police station.

Alternatively, you could take this free time to look through your belongings and examine any items you might have. The hotel owner has been in your room, so a check of your things might be in order. Or perhaps you have some other reason to look over your possessions.

Finally, if you feel that your business in Esbury is concluded, you could always try to find Lance Sanford at the ferry.

- To go to the police station, go to 11.
- To look over your items, go to 32.
- To go to the ferry, go to 153.

(9)

107

You spot a paperclip lying just outside the bars of your cell. No doubt it fell off one of the stacks of documents on Officer Powell's desk. You slip your hand between the bars and reach out to grab it, sighing with relief at your good fortune. You bend the paperclip to serve as an improvised lockpick. Glancing up, you see that Officer Powell is still turned away from you, puffing absentmindedly on his cigar.

You set to work trying to get the lock open. The lock is strong, as it's meant to keep criminals safely behind bars, but it is no match for your skills. It takes you some time to finally get it open, but eventually you feel it give way.

You check on Officer Powell one more time. He seems to be paying you no attention. If your luck holds, you may be able to sneak out of the prison cell without him noticing.

- Make a **Stealth** roll: if you succeed, go to **10**; if you fail, go to **146**. (65)

108

You reach into your pocket and produce the bobby pin that you carry on you for just such an occasion. You insert it into the lock and fumble with it for a few minutes. It sticks and strains, and for several terrible seconds, you fear that it will break in the lock. And then the tumblers give, and the door clicks open.

You push your way into the small study and find the room much as you expected. The door opens across from a window, which lets in the pale, greenish light of the mist. This illuminates the room, which is adorned primarily with mostly-empty bookcases. There are also several glass display cases throughout the room, but these are similarly empty. At the far end of the room, just beneath the window, is a desk, still littered with the professor's blood-soaked papers.

Searching through the desk drawers, you find stacks of notes and various personal items. Buried in the bottom drawer, you find an impossibly old scrap of papyrus pressed into a glass frame. All across the ancient document are strange and unusual scrawls. As you pick it up to inspect it, you notice a sheet of paper lightly attached to the back of the frame, bearing the same scrawls as the papyrus but with annotations in its margins. Presumably, this is a translation of the papyrus' text.

As you read it over, you marvel at the impossibility of its content. The papyrus purports to be written by a priest from an unknown city by the name of "Ilarnek." In this account, the priest records observations of an odd and ugly race of beings who once lived upon a lake in the forgotten land of Mnar. The document goes into great detail about the fire rituals of these strange creatures, and speaks of the haunting dances they would perform in the light of the flames beneath the gibbous moon—and always under the watchful gaze of a sea-green stone idol, chiseled in the likeness of a great lizard.

The priest's writings go on to mention rituals used to ward off the influence of that detestable creature; rituals performed by humans. The text for the ritual in the annotation is untranslated and simply rendered in standard characters so that it reads: "*Y'babyar nog nglui ah, Bokrug.*" The strange phrase sticks in your mind.

You pause for a moment to consider the implications. You carefully detach the translation, fold it up, and put it in your pocket as evidence, before exiting the study.

- You have learned a ritual chant. Note it on your investigator sheet as "*Ritual Chant: Entry 235.*" When prompted, you may choose to use this chant. If you do so, go to **235**.
- Go to **140**.

(7, 110)

109

You hear the clattering and banging in the next room and pointedly ignore it. Whatever may be going on there, it doesn't involve you. You finish setting things straight and take a deep breath, pondering your options.

You have precious few. You could see if the hotel owner saw anyone coming and going. The establishment is small, and they would likely notice anything going on. Maybe that way you could set about recovering your lost belongings.

Another option is to continue your investigation surrounding the late Prof. Harris and his artifacts. You could go into town to gather more information.

Alternatively, you could always just cut your losses and leave. The ferry won't be running with the fog as dense as it is, but you could set out into the woods and try circling the lake. This would take several hours of walking through the wilderness in the mist, but with a little luck, you might be able to make it back to the road by nightfall.

- To search for your belongings, go to **134**.
- To continue your investigation, go to **148**.
- To leave town, go to **124**.

(122)

110

You turn your attention to the set of stairs opposite the entrance. You ascend the staircase and see two doors, one to either side of you. The door to your left is slightly ajar, and no doubt leads to the bedroom. By a process of elimination, the door to your right must lead to the study. It seems to be locked and you don't have a key. With enough time, you might be able to get the door open, but it would probably be unwise to spend too long trying, since someone may come to investigate.

- To enter the bedroom, go to 123.
- To enter the study, make a **Locksmith** roll: if you succeed, go to 108; if you fail, go to 75.
- If you fail this roll, you may attempt to push it and roll again, but if you fail a second time, there will be greater consequences. If you push the roll and succeed, go to 108; if you fail, go to 87.

(98)

111

You leave the scuffle behind you, happy to put that business out of mind. You begin walking down the street at a brisk pace, hoping to get some distance between yourself and the Harris house.

You continue along the path for a short distance before you hear the sound of heavy footsteps approaching you. Thanks to the thick fog, you don't think you've been spotted. You quickly duck into a nearby alley to let the traveler pass. The man moves by you at a quick jog, cursing under his breath. You recognize Joshua's voice, and you feel certain that he's connected to your attempted arrest.

Still, you realize that you don't have many options to deal with that right now. With this damnable fog keeping you from leaving on the ferry, the best thing you can do is head back to the hotel and figure out what your next move is.

- Go to 122.
- (39, 49, 76, 85, 99)

112

You roll to the side and press yourself up against the door frame, hastily dodging away from the spot Joshua shoots at. He curses under his breath as he levels the gun at you yet again. However, the slight pause between shots is all you need. Your instincts take over and you lunge at him, attempting to wrestle the weapon from him.

You knock him over with the force of your tackle. You grapple with him, clutching desperately for the gun.

- Make a **Fighting (Brawl)** roll: if you succeed, go to 143; if you fail, go to 152.
- (141)

113

You let out a frightened scream as the creature lumbers toward you. You panic and try to run but your legs fail you. You stumble and fall, tripping over yourself in your haste to escape.

As you tumble to the ground, the abominable being throws itself on top of you. Its long-fingered hands wrap around your throat and begin choking the life out of you. The creature shakes you violently as it steadily throttles you to death.

As you black out, the last thing you see are those horrible, lifeless eyes staring into your soul.

You have been killed by a being from another world. Though you are uncertain how this creature came to be here, it matters little now, as your lifeless body adorns the streets of the lakeside town. Though you are free to start the adventure over and try again, for now, your visit to Esbury is over. THE END.

(162)



114

You direct your attention away from any distractions and home in on the sounds around you. You hear the lapping of the water on the pier nearby, and little else. The stillness is somewhat unsettling. There are no birds chirping, no people in the streets. Except...

In the distance, you hear the faint echo of footsteps. They sound quite far off, and it would have been easy to miss them if you weren't listening for them. Still, given how far away they seem to be, the footfalls must be heavy. They reverberate in quick succession, as if in a hurry. You set off in their direction.

You rush through the empty streets, pausing occasionally to listen again for the footfalls of the person you're pursuing. After some time, you come upon a small plaza next to the town's church. Unfortunately, it appears that your quarry has reached their destination, and is no doubt within one of the houses around the plaza. You have no way of knowing which one.

You take a deep breath and decide to roll the dice. There are only a handful of houses here, so you feel you have good odds of finding who you're looking for.

• *Make a **Luck** roll: if you succeed, go to 165; if you fail, go to 149.*
(79)

115

You struggle against your bonds as you begin to panic. Mercifully, they give way. Joshua is shocked by the sound of snapping rope echoing off the walls and he jumps away from you on pure reflex.

You act on instinct. Without thinking, you rush toward him, attempting to wrestle the knife from his grasp. You know that you need to be the one in control of the weapon if you're going to survive this, especially as there's another armed man just outside the door.

You grasp Joshua's forearm, preventing him from attacking you with the knife. You then try to pry it from his hand even as you jab and strike at him with knees and elbows, hoping desperately that you can snatch the blade from his grip.

• *Make a **Fighting (Brawl)** roll: if you succeed, go to 133; if you fail, go to 180.*
(138)



116

You look over the characters scrawled in blood across the altar's side. You realize they're an obscure dialect of ancient Indian origin, and although you cannot translate them properly, you can pronounce the characters phonetically: "Y'hahyar nog nglui ah, Bokrug." As you recite the words, the dark-suited man looks at you as if you're completely mad.

That is until the mist around you begins to swiftly dissipate and the waters stop rising. The man looks at you with wide eyes, like you're some kind of miracle worker—and perhaps you are. Though you don't fully understand what it is that you've done, you've somehow put a stop to what's going on here.

Joshua's former henchman probes you for answers for a while, but you assure him you are just as surprised as he is, and eventually he parts ways with you.

Over the next few days, the water subsides in Esbury, and eventually the ferry begins operation again. You take the first ride out, eager to leave this place and the strange occurrences behind you.

Though you haven't solved the mystery surrounding the events taking place in Esbury, you have put a stop to them, at least for the time being. The man with the artifacts will eventually sell them off for quick cash, and the tragedy will then repeat itself elsewhere. Only this time, there will be no one to prevent it from fully taking shape. But you will never know this, and it isn't your concern. You only have to live with what happened in the little Massachusetts town, and you will carry that memory with you forever. You have survived, and may use this character in future adventures, if you so wish. Your visit to Esbury is over. THE END.

(216)

117

You attempt to roll out of the way of the lumbering monstrosity, but are too slow. It throws itself on top of you and its long, slender fingers wrap themselves around your throat. The thing chokes the life from your body and you slip away, into the blackness of death.

You have died. If you wish, you may attempt the adventure again and try for a different outcome. But, for now, your visit to Esbury is over. THE END.

(214)

118

You fall to your knees, press your ear to the safe's door, and begin twisting the combination dial, hoping to hear the clicks of the drive pin connecting to the tabs on each of the lock's internal wheels. Unfortunately, you can't quite manage to get the wheels to line up properly, despite your best efforts.

Defeated, you rise and dust yourself off. With nothing else to keep your attention, you leave the room.

- Go to 140.

(123)

119

Judging by the direction you've been traveling, the path on the right seems as if it should be the correct one. You leave the crossroads behind and put one foot in front of the other, plodding silently down the foggy path.

You feel the elevation begin to change beneath your feet. You are sloping downward now, presumably following a trail that winds along the length of the lake.

Your suspicions are soon confirmed, as the ground beneath your feet becomes increasingly waterlogged. It isn't long before your shoes are covered in mud, and water begins to rise around your feet as you slog through the marshy ground.

Suddenly, the water level rises sharply. You feel it surge up to your calf, and then to your knee. As you wade through the muck, you find yourself hoping that the water level will recede the further forward you go.

It doesn't. As you slosh onward, the water rises to your waist and shows no sign of getting any shallower.

You feel confident that the road ahead is the correct one, and that the area is flooded. You will have to swim into the fog and hope to reach the other side of this unexpected inlet if you are to make your way out of here.

- Make a **Swim** roll: if you succeed, go to 175; if you fail, lose 1 hit point. If you survive this, go to 18; however, if this reduces you to zero hit points, your leg gets caught on a branch hidden beneath the water and you drown. Your visit to Esbury is over. THE END.

(158)

120

You aim your weapon at Joshua and pull the trigger. You watch with a sense of detachment as you gun him down. Two shots in quick succession: the first one intentional, the second a product of recoil and reflex to make sure that he's no longer a threat.

Both bullets hit him square in the chest, knocking him back against the wall behind him. He slumps to the ground in a seated position, leaving behind a smear of blood down the wall.

His eyes glaze over as he begins to bleed out. His cold, lifeless eyes bore into you as his mouth forms his last words. Unutterable alien syllables spew from his mouth with his dying breath: "*Bokrug ron 'bthnk n'ghft, 'ai.*"

You shudder as he dies, his body suddenly listless. You check his pockets and find ID that gives his address, as well as a key to his home. That might be worth investigating.

Amelia is crying silently where you left her, inconsolable at having witnessed Joshua die so violently. At least this gives you the opportunity to search the house.

- *Make a **Sanity** roll: if you succeed, lose 1 Sanity point; if you fail, lose 1D3 Sanity points.*
- *To search the Harris house, go to 179.*
- *To leave and go search Joshua's house, go to 151.*

(145)

121

You wait for Joshua to strike, timing your reaction just right. He drives forward with the point of the blade and you roll to one side. The force of his lunge carries his blow through and he embeds the knife in the wall behind you, cursing as he does so.

He lets go of the blade's handle and turns to face you, balling up his fists and adopting a readied stance. He takes a few experimental swings at you, which you handily dodge.

Still, you cannot simply keep avoiding him. You'll have to subdue him if you want to make it out of here, and judging by the banging on the front door, you'll have to do so quickly.

- *Make a **Fighting (Brawl)** roll: if you succeed, go to 93; if you fail, take 1D3 damage. If you survive this, go to 168; however, if this reduces you to zero hit points, you have been beaten to death. Your visit to Esbury is over. THE END.*

(157)

122

Feeling that it's the best course of action right now, you return to your room at the hotel. You turn the key in the lock and your door swings open to reveal a startling scene.

Your room has been ransacked. The bed is overturned, and the covers are strewn about. The dresser drawers have all been pulled out and emptied. Your briefcase lies open on the floor. Anything of value you had is gone. Anything you may have gained from the estate sale is longer in your possession, and anything you brought with you beyond the basic essentials is likewise missing.

The window hangs open, letting the greenish mist into the room. You close it to keep out the chill and begin to set things straight while you overcome the shock of what has happened. As you consider your options, the sounds of a loud and violent commotion drift in from the room next door.

- *To ignore the scuffle, go to 109.*
- *To investigate, go to 142.*

(5, 10, 46, 54, 67, 90, 101, 111, 127, 130, 153)

123

You push the door aside and enter the bedroom. The room is lavishly decorated and very feminine. Large, soft pillows sit atop the bed and a tangle of sheets and blankets lie strewn across the mattress.

Judging by the state of the room, this space belonged more to Amelia than it did Prof. Harris, even before his death. The room is dominated by her personal effects. A makeup case sits on the dresser, with a hand mirror beside it. The door to the closet is open; the racks inside overflow with various dresses and fashionable outfits. The clothes belonging to the late Prof. Harris take up a small and innocuous corner of the closet, pushed far to the side so as to not get in the way of Amelia's things.

The most surprising find you stumble upon is a small pile of discarded men's clothing next to the bed. It seems to have been left there recently, and given the difference in style and size to the men's clothes in the closet, it's clear they don't belong to Prof. Harris.

Your suspicion is confirmed when you see a photograph of Joshua on the nightstand. There's also a half-empty bottle of whiskey there, with two glasses sitting next to it.

You also happen to notice a safe built into the wall, just behind the nightstand. A combination lock keeps it sealed, though if you were so inclined, you may be able to crack it.

There is little else of interest in the room.

- *To attempt to open the safe, make a **Locksmith** roll: if you succeed, go to 77; if you fail, go to 118.*
- *To leave the room, go to 140.*

(7, 110)

124

You pack what remains of your belongings into your thin briefcase and leave your room behind. You descend the staircase, ignoring the sound of the other guests in their rooms. When you reach the establishment's doorway, you peer out the nearby window and into the sickly fog.

- Go to 158.
(10, 109)

125

Amelia is too much of a liability to leave alone at the present moment. You resolve to restrain her. You pull a dust sheet off some of the furniture in the entryway and use it to bind her to an armchair in the room. She struggles for a moment, but in her distraught state, she quickly sinks into resignation and ceases to resist.

As you finish securing the knots, the front door of the house flies open, rattling on its hinges. Dominating the doorway is Joshua, red-faced and furious. He has a gun in his right hand, which he quickly aims in your direction.

You have just a second to hit the ground before he pulls the trigger. Perhaps your reflexes are quick enough.

- Make a **Dodge** roll: if you succeed, go to 145; if you fail, take 1D10+2 damage. If you survive this, go to 96; however, if this reduces you to zero hit points, you are dead. Your visit to Esbury is over. **THE END.**

(39, 49, 85, 99)

126

You don't know why you hadn't realized it before. Selling all of his things, adopting such a flirty demeanor, dismissing questions about her husband's death: Amelia doesn't seem too broken up about her husband passing. She's hiding something—you'd bet your career on it. You suspect she's involved in Prof. Harris' death in some form or another.

You open your mouth, prepared to call her bluff and press her for more information, but you are interrupted by a loud knock at the door. Amelia jumps up, startled, and stands there for a moment in confusion as the pounding on the door resumes. "Police! Open the door!" Amelia's face drains white as she goes to answer the knock.



Your gut tells you something is wrong here. You feel uneasy about the officer at the door. You tell yourself you're being irrational and on edge, but you have some trouble fighting that feeling. You have a few precious moments to react.

- *To ignore your instincts and wait, go to 47.*
- *To take this chance to hide, make a **Stealth** roll: if you succeed, go to 98; if you fail, go to 20.*

(55)

127

You turn your attention to Officer Powell and plead with him to release you. Initially, he pays you no mind. Eventually, however, you mention that you'll leave town if he lets you go, and that seems to seal the deal.

"Having you out of the way makes my life a bit easier. Get the hell out of here before I change my mind. If I see you again, you're getting a bullet." You do not hesitate to leave the cell as he unlocks it.

- *Go to 122.*

(65)

128

You examine the extraordinary altar. The most readily apparent feature, beyond its size, are the many gemstones set into its surface. They are of a greenish-yellow color and shine even in the half-light of the room.

You also notice strange lettering written in broad strokes along the object's side. The symbols are smeared and sloppily done, suggesting they were written with some haste. What you had originally taken for paint is, upon closer examination, dried blood.

While you cannot be certain, it would appear that this item has been involved in some tragedy.

- *Go to 32.*

(32)

129

You take a step toward the man. He hears your approach and rounds on you, swinging wildly with a shout of surprise.

His fist catches you in the chest and sends you sprawling backward. He throws himself on top of you, landing blow after blow with his fists. You raise your arms to fend off the worst of his fury as he works you over. Amid the confusion, you glance up to see the monk running out of the room.

Finally, the man in the suit grabs you by the collar and begins slamming you violently against the floor. It takes only a few such blows before you lose consciousness.

- *Go to 138.*

(142)

130

You ask Amelia about Joshua, his relationship to her, and why he would have you arrested. *"Josh and I have been intimate for a few years. My husband was a good man, when he wasn't obsessing over his work. But he was sometimes away for so long, and paid so much attention to his books... I have needs. A woman my age shouldn't be neglected. I met Josh through his whiskey business. He bootlegs for the whole town. One thing led to another and..."* She smiles, lost in thought.

"We were happy, even with William around. Recently though, Josh had been insistent that we get him out of the picture so that we could be together. I didn't like it, but I agreed. I let Josh take care of it. I just wanted it to be behind us and for us to be together. I told him I wanted to sell everything and leave town. Just the two of us. I think that was the first time I saw him angry. He never said why."

She looks down at her hands, trying to avoid your gaze. *"You don't have to worry about anything. We'll leave town just as soon as we can. I suggest you do the same."*

She rises to leave, then hesitates a moment. *"I don't know if this helps, but I think he might have been angry because I wanted to sell my husband's effects. The day after William died, I found Josh in the study. He never went in there until after William was dead. I've caught him in there multiple times these past few days. I can't imagine what he would want with William's things, though."* She pauses and then continues. *"It scares me, you know. The way he's been acting. If you need to find him, his house is across the street over there, right outside and to the left. He won't be alone. He brought some friends in from out of town. I wouldn't recommend going over there. He doesn't like you."* She looks away from you then walks out of the room at a brisk pace, leaving you alone in the chapel.

- *To continue to the Harris house, go to 7.*
- *To go to Joshua's house, go to 160.*
- *To visit the hotel, go to 122.*
- *To abandon your investigation and leave town, go to 158.*

(164)

131

You pause outside the hotel doorway, listening for the sounds of footsteps. The streets are eerily still and nearly silent.

You fancy you hear something and set off in the general direction of the sounds. You wander the streets for what feels like hours. Your suspicions are seemingly confirmed as it gets harder and harder to see, the lack of visibility caused by the mists compounded by the fading light. Dusk falls hard and fast, and you're left roaming the streets in the darkness.

As you contemplate abandoning your task, you tense up and freeze as you hear a nauseating squelching sound suddenly begin behind you.

A sense of terror washes over you as the unexpected sound breaks the silence. You are ruled by a sense of unease and are driven to run, though you don't know why. You do not wish to find out.

• *Make a DEX roll: if you succeed, go to 171; if you fail, go to 162. (79, 136, 148, 149)*

132

You throw yourself to the floor with all haste, trying to get out of the line of fire. You hear the loud sound of the gunshot as a bullet embeds itself in the wall behind you.

You hear a squeal as Amelia comes running after Joshua, begging him to stop shooting and put the gun away. He curses and shoves her aside, but he does holster his weapon.

He rushes past her and up the stairs, just as you manage to stumble to your feet. He comes at you, swinging his fist. It's not ideal, but at least with the gun put away, you have a fighting chance.

Make a Fighting (Brawl) roll: if you succeed, go to 21; if you fail, take 1D3 damage. If you survive this, go to 152; however, if this reduces you to zero hit points, you have been beaten to death. Your visit to Esbury is over. THE END.

(140)

133

You throw a punch at Joshua's face and send him stumbling backward, stunned. You manage to rip the knife from his grasp as he regains his footing. You take the blade and swiftly plunge it into his chest.

Joshua's face takes on a pained and shocked expression, as if offended that you'd dare to kill him. Still, he slumps to his knees. He looks up at you as he begins to die. His eyes glaze over and stare at you with a smoldering malevolence. Strange words pass from his lips as the last of his life fades away. "*Bokrug ron 'bthnk n'ghft, 'ai.*" A last shuddering breath rattles his body, and he slumps into a lifeless heap at your feet.

You feel greatly disturbed by this but you attempt to shake it off and move on. You survey the room. The table at the far end is covered in curious artifacts, as well as a large stack of papers. There is little else here save for the flickering bulb above you, the empty chair, and Joshua's dead body.

You might consider leaving this place, as sitting in a dank basement with a fresh corpse is not an entirely pleasant experience.

• *Make a Sanity roll: if you succeed, lose 1 Sanity point; if you fail, lose 1D3 Sanity points.*

• *To look over the items, go to 210.*

• *To leave this place, go to 181.*

(115)

134

You exit your room and make your way to the hotel's front desk. The wiry-looking old woman stands next to the fireplace, stoking the coals to keep out the mist's chill. As you approach her, she raises her eyebrows at you inquisitively but says nothing.

You clear your throat and ask her if she saw anyone entering or leaving your room, or even just anyone unusual at the hotel. She bites her lip for a minute before nodding quickly. She grasps your wrist with a fierceness you would not have expected of her tiny frame. "*The men had guns, I had to give them the keys. One of them just left, but the other is still upstairs. I think he's beating that Indian man.*" She looks at you nervously, almost pleading for you to do something.

• *To deal with the man upstairs, go to 142.*

• *To pursue the man who left, go to 79.*

(109)

135

You make your way through the empty streets of Esbury, stumbling through the dense fog. As you set out from the Harris household, you note a twilight tinge beginning to form over the green mist. Thankfully, you know your destination, and you point yourself toward the hotel where you're staying, despite the threat of coming darkness.

The trip takes some time though, and night descends before you reach your destination. As you near the hotel, you freeze in response to a frightening noise. A strange squelching sound echoes through the otherwise silent streets.

At first, you linger from shock and surprise, but then out of curiosity, as you question what would make such an odd noise.

And then, to your dismay, your question is answered. Out of the mist emerges a frighteningly bizarre thing: a misshapen mass of sagging green flesh, its belly horribly distended and bloated, with limbs that are long and spindly. Its face is dominated by large, bulbous eyes and pouting, flabby lips, and its head is adorned with strange ears.

You take in all of these strange features as it lunges toward you. The only noise it makes is that unnerving squelching sound.

• *Make a DEX roll: if you succeed, go to 171; if you fail, go to 162.*
(222)

136

You chase after Amelia Harris. She's vanished in the mist, but you're determined to find her.

But determination alone is not enough to track down the wayward widow. After wandering through the fog for what feels like hours, you are certain that you are lost.

After trying to get your bearings for some time, you finally find yourself outside the hotel, frustrated that Amelia has managed to escape you.

• *Go to 131.*
(21, 143)



137

You decide to put your misgivings aside and simply get some rest so that you can try again in the morning. You tidy away your things and head off to bed. You lock the door of your room, just to be safe.

You toss and turn, gaining an hour or two of uneasy sleep. But in the middle of the night, you are awakened by the most terrible sounds.

Somewhere in the fog-shrouded town, people are screaming—frightened, bloodcurdling howls of abject terror. Instinctively, you rush to the window to try to figure out what the cause might be, so you can be prepared for it. You stare out and see only blackness and mist.

You nervously turn back to the room, assuring yourself that you're safe in here and that whatever is causing the screams can't be anywhere close by. You're only able to foist this lie on yourself for a moment, because as you anxiously pace your room, you see water seeping in beneath the door. The implications of this are not lost on you. Your room is on the second floor of the building—the rest of Esbury must be thoroughly flooded by now.

With the first floor inundated and the water level in your room rising swiftly, you find yourself trapped. Your only method of egress is the window, which leads out into the flooded, dark, and hazy streets. You don't much like the prospect of venturing out into the sunken town, but you have little choice.

You turn again to the window and undo the latch with shaky hands. You are about to lift the window open when a green, three-fingered, webbed hand smacks against the pane. You jump back with a start, overcome by panic. This is nothing natural, of that you are sure. As you stare in horror, more of the unnatural form comes into view—a second hand, trying to force the window open along with the first. And a face—a terrible, unearthly face—dominated by pouting, flabby lips and bulbous, dead eyes. These eyes stare at you, taking you in as a mere fixture among your surroundings.

You stare back at the creature as the water rises around your ankles. The thing pounds against the window and you see cracks beginning to form. You freeze in terror, knowing it will soon be upon you.

Surprisingly, the glass holds as the water fills the room. It does not give out until the water reaches your chest. With a sharp crash, the glass breaks and this bloated and misshapen thing



The thing at the window

squeezes into the room with you. It is slow and lumbering but, try as you might, you cannot fight it. Although you manage to land a blow or two against its soft flesh, your horror overcomes your senses. It lays hands on you and shoves you down beneath the rising water. It holds you there until your breathing stops.

You have drowned. If you wish, you may attempt the story again and hope for a better outcome. But, for now, your visit to Esbury is over. THE END.

(171)

138

You awake, stripped of any weapons, and tied to a chair in a dusty basement. The first thing you notice is the pain from your wounds. They are still fresh, and have not been tended to in any way.

The second thing you notice is the table across from you with its strange collection of items. A pair of cracked clay cylinders, a gemstone-studded altar with curious scrawls, a stack of papers, and an unnatural looking idol of sea-green stone fashioned in the shape of a lizard-like creature. Standing next to the table is a man that you can't quite make out in the dimness of the room. He puffs absently at a cigar as he stares at you. Behind the table is a still and other bootlegging equipment. You turn your head to see one of the suited men from before leaning against the door, sipping from a flask.

When you begin to move, the unknown man walks over to you. He grins widely, and you spot a glint of madness in his eyes as he hovers at the edge of the illuminated area. He produces a knife from his pocket, and the blade catches the glimmer of the dim bulb flickering above. The stranger shoots a glance at the suited man by the door, who nods then leaves.

The remaining man comes into the light and presses the knife against your cheek. It digs into your flesh, nicking you and drawing a drop of blood on the tip. *"Thought you could cause trouble for Josh, eh? I'm going to enjoy this, getting rid of my little problem. Everything was fine until you started snooping around. You're putting me and Amelia both in danger here, and you're getting in the way of my plans. So, I'm going to enjoy tearing open your throat and offering up your life to the idol. Perhaps it will please him. And then I'll get what I want. I'll finally make my way to that beautiful place that I've seen in my dreams. It will be over soon, but I will bleed you slow. Because I want to enjoy this..."*

He takes the knife and presses it in deeper. You struggle reflexively against your bonds, trying to escape the pain. Perhaps if you struggle hard enough, you can break free.

• *Make a STR roll: if you succeed, go to 115; if you fail, go to 69.*
(25, 96, 129, 155, 168)

139

You skid down the side of the cliff, slamming against the cold and unforgiving stone several times as you do so. You have no control over your descent and are entirely at the mercy of gravity and cruel fate.

You tumble and fall for what feels like an eternity before eventually being deposited forcefully against a tree at the base of the rocks.

You are certain you must have some serious injuries, perhaps even a few broken bones. Your left leg is particularly painful, and you can feel your foot swelling in your shoe as you struggle to your feet.

You look around, taking stock of the situation. There's no visible trail at this elevation and there's no easy way back up to your previous path, especially in your current condition. Cursing your misfortune, you limp forward into the woods, trying to find some way to orient yourself and make your way back to the trail.

• *Make a Navigate roll: if you succeed, go to 229; if you fail, go to 170.*
(51)

140

You turn around and leave the door closed behind you. Looking down the stairs, you realize that you are not alone. Dominating the entryway is Joshua, red-faced and furious. He has a gun in his right hand, which he quickly aims in your direction.

You have just a second to hit the ground before he pulls the trigger. Perhaps your reflexes are quick enough.

• *Make a Dodge roll: if you succeed, go to 132; if you fail, take 1D10+2 damage. If you survive this, go to 96; however, if this reduces you to zero hit points, you are dead. Your visit to Esbury is over. THE END.*
(75, 77, 87, 108, 118, 123)

141

It's too risky to let Amelia go right now, so you decide to pursue her into the street. You don't get more than five steps from the door before you find yourself staring Joshua down. Unblinking, he raises a gun at you, and the look on his face shows that he clearly intends to use it. You have only a moment to react.

• *Make a Dodge roll: if you succeed, go to 112; if you fail, take 1D10+2 damage. If you survive this, go to 155; however, if this reduces you to zero hit points, you have died. Your visit to Esbury is over. THE END.*
(53, 91)

142

Fearing that someone might be in danger, or perhaps that this commotion is somehow related to the theft from your room, you rush to investigate.

You find the adjacent room's door open, and inside you discover a large and familiar-looking man in a dark suit. He looms over the prone body of a beaten and bloodied Buddhist monk. The man in the suit has clearly worked him over.

The suited man has his back to you, and you doubt you've been noticed yet. With a little luck, you might be able to get the drop on him and subdue him quickly.

Alternatively, if you have come into possession of a firearm during your stay in Esbury, you could always resort to lethal force.

- To subdue the man, make a **Fighting (Brawl)** roll with a bonus die (for surprise): if you succeed, go to 97; if you fail, take 1D3 damage. If you survive this, go to 129; however, if this reduces you to zero hit points, the man beats you to death. Your visit to Esbury is over. **THE END.**
- To discharge your firearm, make a **Firearms (Handgun)** roll with a bonus die (for surprise): if you succeed, go to 78; if you fail, take 1D3 damage. If you survive this, go to 129; however, if this reduces you to zero hit points, the man beats you to death. Your visit to Esbury is over. **THE END.**

(122, 134)

143

You roll over one another, punching and kicking and kneeing and elbowing. You slam your head into his, smashing your forehead against his nose, clearly breaking it. He reflexively grabs at his face and drops the gun.

Without hesitation, you seize the weapon and fire into him, knowing he would do the same if the circumstances were reversed. The look on Joshua's face is utter shock as the bullet pierces his chest.

The color drains from his face, and his hand weakly grips at your clothes. He looks offended that you would dare to kill him. He stares deep into your eyes as he dies, uttering strange sounds, the likes of which not even a dying man should make. You fancy that you almost hear words, though you're sure it's only your mind playing tricks on you. With his last breath, he utters the phrase: "*Bokrug ron 'bthnk n'ghft, 'ai.*"

His hand goes limp. You push the corpse off you, shuddering as you do so. Mustering your courage, you check his pockets for keys and ID, which reveals his place of residence. You could make your way to his house to search for clues, or you could continue on in search of Amelia.

- Make a **Sanity** roll: if you succeed, lose 1 Sanity point; if you fail, lose 1D3 Sanity points.
- To go to Joshua's house, go to 151.
- To search for Amelia, go to 136.

(112)

144

You open the door but it catches a draft, slamming against the wall as you attempt to slip inside. The door rattles on its hinges and you hear the sound of footsteps pounding across the floor in another room.

Your attempts to conceal yourself prove too slow as a pair of men burst into the living room and lock their attention on you.

They rush forward, and the larger of the two tries to tackle you.

- Make a **Dodge** roll: if you succeed, go to 157; if you fail, go to 25.

(13, 160)

145

Reflexively, you drop to the ground behind the couch as Joshua aims the gun your way. Thankfully, the shot goes over your head. You heave a sigh of relief, thankful for your safety.

And then the reality of the situation dawns on you. You dive for Officer Powell's gun, which has fallen to the ground nearby. You scoop it up quickly, acting purely on instinct. You grip the weapon in both hands and prepare to return fire. You take a deep breath and aim the gun at Joshua.

- Make a **Firearms (Handgun)** roll: if you succeed, go to 120; if you fail, take 1D10+2 damage. If you survive this, go to 96; however, if this reduces you to zero hit points, then you have died from your wounds. Your visit to Esbury is over. **THE END.**

(125)

146

You creep out of your cell as quietly as you can. You make it nearly halfway to the door before it turns out your best is not good enough.

Powell hurriedly rises to his feet and raises his gun at you. He has no intention of letting his prisoner escape. Your fight or flight response takes over, and you act solely on instinct when faced with your probable demise.

- Go to 82.
- (107)

147

You make your way through the foggy streets of Esbury, heading once more to the Harris house. As your feet hit the road's flagstones, you hear the sound of your footsteps reflected back by the walls of the buildings all around you. Otherwise, all remains quiet and sleepy.

The light is very dim and growing darker by the second. By the time you find yourself once more at Amelia Harris' home, night has fallen.

As you approach the building, you freeze dead in your tracks as a woman in a red dress passes mere feet from you—Amelia Harris! She doesn't seem to notice you, in part because of the fog but also because she looks lost in thought. You watch her move hurriedly through the mist and enter the nearby church.

You could choose to enter the Harris house and search the premises, or you could pursue Amelia for questioning.

- To enter the Harris House, go to 7.
- To follow Amelia, go to 164.

(10)



148

You step out into the fog, hoping to find someone in town who can give you a little more information.

Unfortunately, the town seems to be largely deserted, as people prefer to remain inside with the thick mist obscuring sight. You wander for a little more than an hour before you find someone moving quickly home from the town's grocery store. You stop the gentleman and press him for answers.

He appears nervous and says he doesn't want to be out in the "Damn scary fog" any longer than he has to. You assure him it will only take a few moments, and the man agrees to answer your questions as best he can.

You ask about Prof. Harris and the man nods somberly. *"Dead. Suicide they say. I don't really know if I buy it. The professor was a good man. And happy too, so long as he had his things. Between you and me, I think his widow had something to do with it. She was a bit young for him, and didn't seem to be too fond of him, neither. Her eyes tended to wander, if you catch my meaning. And she goes and sells all his things when he dies, so that's sort of telling, ain't it?"* You take in the new information silently, weighing the credibility of it in your head as you inquire further.

You ask about Prof. Harris' things and the gentleman scratches his head. *"Old stuff from India. I don't know much about it. I heard him talk about it from time to time—said it was mostly religious things. Every once in a while, he'd get a visitor wanting to look at them. They usually left upset. Can't say why."*

At this, the man begins shifting uncomfortably and asks if he can go. You decide he has no more to offer you and you allow him to leave.

Armed with this new information, you set out to find Amelia, assuming her to be at her home. You wander through the streets for a while as the sun sinks lower and lower. The growing darkness exacerbates the lack of visibility, and you are soon lost among Esbury's buildings. Eventually, you find yourself in front of the hotel. You stop and use this landmark to orient yourself until your thoughts are disturbed by what sounds like footsteps.

- Go to 131.
- (109)

149

You try a door and find it locked. You move down the line of buildings and repeat this process several times. They are all similarly secured.

Defeated, you decide to head back to the hotel to gather your thoughts.

- Go to 131.
- (114)

150

You resolve to simply wait it out. You have a wonderful view of the spectacle that unfolds. The waters of the lake rise continually and rapidly. It's now to a point where it must be over some of the buildings in Esbury, though you cannot see into the thick fog below. You wonder at the loss of life and property.

Though the lake continues to rise, seemingly without source and without end, this is the least of the oddities that transpire. Through the mist, you spot scattered flames illuminating sections of the town. You find this especially strange, since there seems to be no discernable pattern or reason for it, especially in a place that must be half-submerged by now. Perhaps the fires are on the roofs of the taller buildings, but what could the purpose of that possibly be?

All the while there is the screaming. The howls of people afraid of the water. The desperate cries of the lost. The startled shouts of those woken from sleep to find themselves in grave danger. And the more primal screams of abject terror.

You glance back over toward the lake itself, wanting to turn your attention away from the horrible suffering in town. You see the water rising in great rippling waves, all emanating from a single central point. You try to find their exact origin—bizarrely, the spot seems to correspond with the moon's reflection. You

are unable to make out any details of what might be causing the waves, though.

You absent-mindedly direct your gaze toward the gibbous moon hanging overhead and note yet another baffling sight. Great clouds of mist seem to be rising toward the moon from the ground, extending in long, wispy columns up into the heavens—or perhaps streaming down from above. You're uncertain of which, or if it even matters. You do not think it does.

Looking back toward the town, you find it all beneath the water now, save for your little island. The waves crest a mere 12 inches (30 cm) below your feet, and you know there is no escaping the rising tide.

Resigned as you are to your fate, you still aren't prepared for what happens next. The waves stop suddenly. Everything falls silent and still. Then, a long lizard-like head rises from the water. It is covered in scales colored like the sea. The detestable lizard-thing's mouth opens, revealing rows of needle-like teeth as it emits a hissing sound that pierces the night and your very soul. And then its eyes open. Orbs of pure malevolence fix themselves on you. It watches you for a second. A minute. An eternity.

And then the stones beneath your feet shift and you tumble into the water. You know it's the lizard-thing's doing, though



The flooded town

it hasn't moved since its head broke free of the lake. As you sink beneath the surface, you look upward and see the horrible lizard-thing darting toward you in the light of the gibbous moon. You pray you'll drown before it takes you, but fate is not so kind.

Your demise serves only to feed the horrible, detestable water lizard that is Bokrug, Great Old One, and doom of the cities of Sarnath and Esbury.

You have died. Thank you for playing, and we hope you've enjoyed this adventure. Your visit to Esbury is over. THE END.

(196, 211)

151

You make your way through Esbury's streets, confirming your whereabouts every so often by approaching a building to check the address against the location you're searching for.

After some time, you arrive at Joshua's house. You insert the key in the lock and open the door into a small living area.

Glancing around, you see a compact living room and kitchen. There are two doors at opposite ends of the common area. The door to your left is wide open and you can see a set of stairs leading down. The door to your right is closed. You assume it leads to the bedroom.

- To head down the stairs, go to **156**.
- To head into the bedroom, go to **202**.

(21, 120, 143, 222)

152

You are locked in a desperate struggle with Joshua. Both of you are fighting for your life, scrambling to make use of the handgun that could so quickly put an end to the conflict.

Despite your best efforts, you lose the battle. Joshua clutches the gun tightly and rams it into your chest, pulling the trigger several times and ending your life.

You have met a mercifully swift death. Those who remain in Esbury will not be so lucky. You may always attempt the story again but, for now, your visit to Esbury is over. THE END.

(112, 132)

153

You pause to consider the strange green coloration of the fog and its incredible thickness. You wonder if it's even safe to be out on the water with visibility so limited. You decide to head to the docks first to see if the ferry is still running before hauling all of your possessions down to the lakeshore.

You venture out into the cloying green mist and walk briskly toward the docks. You arrive to find Sanford pacing the deck of his boat with a small flask in his hand. He stares out into the fog, lost in thought before you rouse him by inquiring about passage out of town.

He confirms your fears. *"Sorry, I can't take her out like this. I can barely see three feet in front of me. The lake is fairly tame, but I'd have no way of telling where the shore is or if any other boats might be out on the water. I like you, but it's too dangerous. I just can't risk it. I've rarely seen a fog this thick. And this green... Never seen anything like it. I'm staying put."*

You know that nothing you say could possibly convince him. Resigned to your fate, you head back toward the rest of town.

- To visit the police station, go to **11**.
- To return to the hotel, go to **122**.

(32, 106)

154

Though you put a sizeable bid in for the idol, a truly outrageous sum is called, easily twice what you offered. Mr. Warren squints hard at the paper before calling out the staggering price and an unfamiliar-sounding name: "*Banyu*." Confused whispers break out as the orange-robed monk collects the statue with a look of excitement on his face.

- Go to **81**.

(92)

155

Instinctively, you retreat toward the cover of the house. You turn to run, but you aren't quick enough. As you enter the doorway, Joshua fires his gun and you take a bullet in the back. You feel it tear through you and see the projectile pass out the other side. You collapse to the floor.

You reach down to clutch your wound, staring at your bloody hand in disbelief. You look up to find Joshua standing over you. He raises his gun at you. For a brief and terrible moment, you anticipate the end of your life, but Amelia shrieks. Joshua curses under his breath and kicks you in the face. You slip into unconsciousness.

- Go to **138**.

(141)

156

You cautiously descend the stairs, which creak beneath your feet. When you reach the bottom, you find yourself in a dank and dusty basement, illuminated by a single dim and flickering bulb that dangles precariously from the ceiling. The room smells faintly of cigar smoke.

You notice an old table across from you, on which sits a strange collection of items: a pair of cracked clay cylinders, a gemstone-studded altar with curious scrawls, a stack of papers, and an unnatural looking idol of sea-green stone fashioned in the shape of a lizard-like creature. Behind the table is a still and other bootlegging equipment.

You might consider looking over the items you have found here, or you could simply leave the basement alone.

- To look over the items, go to **210**.
- To leave this place, go to **181**.

(93, 151, 165, 202)

157

You duck the blow and dodge out of the man's way as he flings himself toward you. He stumbles into the wall. You quickly throw your weight against your assailant and knock the wind out of him.

As you've stunned the large man, you take the chance to enter the building, slamming the door behind you and blocking him from attacking you again once he recovers. Unfortunately, you're now face-to-face with the other man, who scowls menacingly at you while brandishing a knife.

"You bastard! Think you can cause trouble for old Josh, eh? I'll gut you like a fish. Besides, I think we could use a little bit of blood for what's coming next."

He shouts something incomprehensible and lunges at you with the blade. His eyes betray his murderous intentions.

- Make a **Dodge** roll: if you succeed, go to **121**; if you fail, go to **176**. (144)

158

This trip would be arduous even on a good day, but your gut tells you that today the journey will be particularly difficult.

Still, you feel it's in your best interest to leave this business behind you, and a walk through the woods is the most expedient route out of Esbury with the ferry out of commission. You strike out for the edge of town and make your way to the tree line.

The trail here is fairly well kept, as it's frequented by the citizens of Esbury when they engage in leisure activities such as hunting and camping. As you march silently into the mist, you're even able to make out an occasional sign denoting trail names or campgrounds. The markers peek out at you from the fog, going unnoticed until you're almost on top of them. Curious as to the reduction in visibility caused by the mist, you stick your arm straight out in front of you, noting with slight discomfort that you're unable to make out your fingernails through the murk.

You take up a quicker pace, hoping that the more ground you cover, the sooner you'll be free of the fog. Despite your best efforts, the mist's greenish glow is your constant companion.

You walk on for what must be a little more than an hour before coming to a fork in the path. Given the fog's density, you aren't quite able to make out which direction you should go. Thankfully, you spot the silhouette of a signpost in the gap between the trails and you make your way toward it.

The paint on the signs is worn and they're entirely indistinguishable from one another. Perhaps on a good day, you might be able to make out the words on them, but in this fog, that task is completely impossible. If you want to make your way out of here, you'll have to rely on your own skill and knowledge.

- Make a **Navigate** roll: if you succeed, go to **119**; if you fail, go to **51**. (54, 124, 130)

159

You throw yourself out of the way of the careening automobile as it swerves back and forth across the road. You let it pass before you finally rise and brush off the worst of the mud.

As annoyed and frightened as you are by what just occurred, it dawns on you that this was a good thing—it confirms the direction you should be going. You follow the car, marching silently and purposefully on.

- Make a **CON** roll: if you succeed, go to **184**; if you fail, go to **233**. (212)

160

You set off through the streets of Esbury and into that unnerving fog, headed in the direction of Joshua's house. A few hours have passed since you first set out, and the sky is now dark, but you finally find it. The place in question is a small house located on the edge of town, near the church.

You try the door and find it unlocked. You have no doubt that the men inside will be armed, so you slip in quietly, hoping to avoid notice.

- Make a **Stealth** roll: if you succeed, go to **165**; if you fail, go to **144**. (78, 130)

161

Try as you might, you are unable to get the door open. No manner of fiddling with the lock will get it to budge. You even resort to force by attempting to throw your weight against the door.

With a sigh of resignation, you abandon your task.

- Go to **222**. (179)

162

You turn to run—somewhere, anywhere, just away from the sickening sound. You don't get far.

You take a few hurried steps and feel something throw itself against your back, sending you tumbling forward. It is slick and large, easily your size. You can feel moisture through your clothes as it wraps its long, flabby arms around you. You look down at the limbs with horror as you realize they are decidedly not human. You struggle, elbowing the thing that's grabbed you. Its hold slackens, and you are released.

Free of the thing's grasp, you spin to confront it and stare in terror into its misshapen face. Its bulbous, lifeless eyes stare back at you like those of a dead fish. Curious, fin-like flaps of ears hang from the side of its head and its mouth is framed by sagging, flabby lips. The thing's body is distended and round, with long spindly limbs hanging from the bloated torso.

As you stare, the horror begins to sink in. The creature opens its mouth as if to speak but makes no sound. It takes a stumbling step toward you and your instincts take over.

- Make a **Sanity** roll: if you succeed, lose 1 **Sanity** point; if you fail, lose 1D6 **Sanity** points.
- If you are armed, you may make a **Firearms (Handgun)** roll: if you succeed, go to **177**; if you fail go to **95**.
- However, if you are temporarily (or indefinitely) insane as a result of the **Sanity** roll, and wish to use any gun you might be carrying, roll 1D4 and apply the result, as follows:

1. The red mist descends over you and you fire instinctually at the hideous creature. Apply a bonus die to the **Firearms (Handgun)** roll: if you succeed, go to **177**; if you fail, go to **95**.
2. You fire wildly into the creature in your panic. Make 2 **Firearms (Handgun)** rolls: if at least one of them succeeds, go to **177**; if both fail, go to **95**.
3. Your fear means that your hands are shaking so badly you can barely hold the gun. Apply a penalty die to the **Firearms (Handgun)** roll: if you succeed, go to **177**; if you fail, go to **95**.
4. You are overcome by your fear and faint. Go to **243**.

- Alternatively, you may choose to flee. If you do so, make a **DEX** roll: if you succeed, go to **83**; if you fail, go to **113**.
- However, if you are temporarily (or indefinitely) insane as a result of the **Sanity** roll and wish to flee, roll 1D4 and apply the result, as follows:

- 1–2: Your feet take over and you run for your life. Apply a bonus die to the **DEX** roll: if you succeed, go to **83**; if you fail, go to **113**.
- 3–4: Your fear roots you to the spot. Apply a penalty die to the **DEX** roll: if you succeed, go to **83**; if you fail, go to **113**. (131, 135)

163

You steel yourself against the pain in your leg. You don't want to find out whatever it is that's behind you. Pain shoots through you but you manage to carry on, for a while at least.

Eventually, the splashing behind you stops. You don't know if your pursuer has given up the chase or if they're simply waiting for you to stop. You pause for a moment to catch your breath, but only a moment.

You peer through the mist at the ground ahead of you—or rather, the lack thereof. The water here has risen, and you cannot see the ground beneath it. From what little visibility you have, it looks as if this is more than a mere puddle. Your pursuer might yet be behind you and there are no other paths available within your limited sight. You'll have to swim if you wish to progress. And with your injured leg, this is a rather grim prospect.

- Make **Hard Swim** roll (success only at equal to or below half of the skill's value): if you succeed, go to **185**; if you fail, go to **209**. (170)

164

You hurry through the shrouded streets and take refuge in the church. The door creaks abominably as you enter, so there's no chance of slipping in unnoticed.

You find yourself in a large chapel, with hand-carved pews flanking you on either side. These continue for several rows until they reach a pulpit from which the priest would normally conduct services. With the last of the fog-filtered daylight fading through the stained-glass windows, you are aware that these are not the hours of a typical service. The church is open to the public during off-times, but the sole occupants are yourself and Amelia, who's taken a seat in the front row and is praying with her head bowed.

She does not lift her gaze as you take a seat next to her. You sit for a minute and allow her time to finish her prayers. You need information from her, but you're respectful of her devotions.

Finally, she opens her eyes and looks at you, sighing softly as she does so. She looks somewhat nervous, and the color drains from her face. "*W-what is it you want? You're not supposed to be here.*"

- To press for more information about Prof. Harris' death, go to 54.
- To ask about Joshua, go to 130.

(147)

165

You approach the house and place your hand on the doorknob. You hear voices inside, so you pause, waiting for them to stop. You press your ear to the door. The conversation eventually fades and you hear footsteps walking away, vanishing into the depths of the building. Feeling satisfied that you won't be spotted immediately, you turn the knob and creep inside.

Glancing about, you see a small living room and kitchen, with two doors at opposite ends of the common area. The door on your left is wide open and you can see a set of stairs leading down. The door on your right is closed. You assume it leads to the bedroom.

- To head down the stairs, go to 156.
- To head into the bedroom, go to 202.

(13, 114, 160)

166

You give in to your panic and let it wash over you. That thing was trying to kill you. It's still out there, waiting for you. It will find you here if you try to hide. That unnatural and unholy thing. You cannot stay here.

You don't even bother to warn anyone else or grab your things. You simply take a deep breath and rush into the mist. The darkness and fog make it so you can see absolutely nothing. But still, you desperately run as fast as your legs can carry you.

- Make a **DEX** roll: if you succeed, go to 186; if you fail, go to 208. (83, 177, 223)

167

Just before your feet leave the ground, you throw your momentum into a jump. You leap forward into the protective boughs of the tree.

Branches snap and break as they give way under the force of your impact, but those below hold, stopping your fall. You aren't entirely without injury but the damage is, thankfully, just cuts and bruises rather than broken bones.

You begin making your way down the tree, dropping carefully from limb to limb. When you finally make it to the bottom and appraise the distance you've traveled downward, you're certain you just avoided a lethal fall.

Winded and battered, you trudge on through the night, hoping to put even more distance between yourself and Esbury.

- Make a **CON** roll: if you succeed, go to 184; if you fail, go to 198. (50)

168

You swing at Joshua. You manage to land a few solid blows but you get as good as you give, with him hitting you several times as well. It seems like this brawl could go on for some time before a winner is decided.

Unfortunately for you, time is not on your side. As you continue to strike out against Joshua, the door of the house bursts open and the other man charges you. Together, he and Joshua beat you into unconsciousness.

- Go to 138. (121)

169

You wander for quite some time, unable to find anything. Feeling frustrated and hopeless, your worries are compounded as the ground beneath you becomes damp. At first, you simply tell yourself it's the fog. But as the water rises over the tops of your toes and then up past your ankles, you cannot deny that Esbury is rapidly flooding.

You splash about the town streets, contemplating giving up, when you suddenly hear a horrid squelching sound to your right.

You turn in terror as something distended and misshapen lunges out at you from the mist. You have only a moment to react.

- *Make a **Dodge** roll: if you succeed, go to 228; if you fail, take 1 damage. If you survive this, go to 214; however, if this reduces you to zero hit points, you are tackled and killed by a mysterious creature. Your visit to Esbury is over. THE END.*

(200)

170

You stumble through the woods, leaning heavily on your injured leg on the rough terrain. The ground is uneven and slippery beneath your feet. You must be close to the lake but despite your best efforts, you're unable to find the shore.

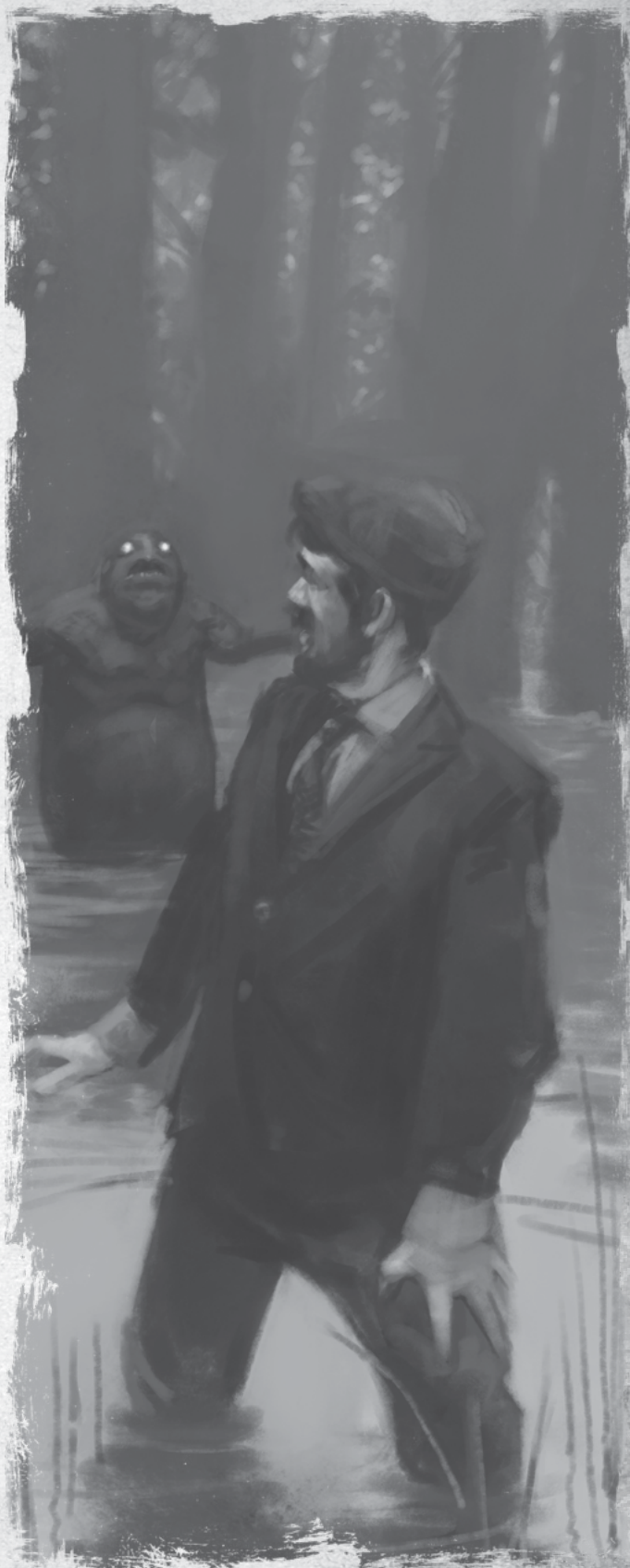
The shore does, however, find you. As you stagger through the darkness and mist, the lake's water level begins to rise and the ground you're on swiftly becomes waterlogged. At first, it's only a minor inconvenience, but it doesn't take long for the water to reach your ankles. Then your calves. Then your knees. It shows no sign of stopping.

You drag your wounded leg behind you. The pain grows until it's almost unbearable but you keep sloshing through the swamp that's forming all around you. You will yourself onward.

Until you hear the splashing behind you—something stomping through the muck, a few feet back. You quickly glance over your shoulder, trying to catch a glimpse of it, but it's obscured by the shadows and shrouded by the fog. Whatever it is, it seems to be in no hurry. It's keeping pace with you, not chasing you. But if your leg gives out...

- *Make a **CON** roll: if you succeed, go to 163; if you fail, go to 193.*

(139)



171

You quickly duck into the hotel, avoiding whoever or whatever else is out there. You pause for a few moments to gather your thoughts.

Darkness has come and your job is not yet done. With perseverance, you may yet finish your task. The most obvious choice is to resume the investigation.

Another potential course of action is to simply cut your losses and leave. You could try to abandon Esbury on foot, and you must admit that the idea is tempting despite being wholly impractical. This place has not been good to you.

Of course, you could always simply sleep on it—stay another night in the hotel and hope to either continue your work or move on in the morning. You aren't certain why, but you feel a vague sense of unease at the idea of spending a second night here. You try to push the thought from your mind as you come to a firm decision.

- *To stay the night in the hotel, go to 137.*
- *To attempt to leave in the dead of night, go to 194.*
- *To continue the investigation, go to 200.*

(131, 135)

172

You fall to your knees, press your ear to the safe's door, and begin twisting the combination dial, hoping to hear the clicks of the drive pin connecting to the tabs on each of the lock's internal wheels. Unfortunately, you can't quite manage to get the wheels to line up properly, despite your best efforts.

Defeated, you rise and dust yourself off. With nothing else to keep your attention, you leave the room.

- *Go to 222.*

(207)



173

You cannot gather the courage to leave the safety you've found. Still, you won't sit completely helpless. You pull a chair from the hotel's common area and barricade the lobby door. You close the shutters on the windows. You gather what weapons you have on hand, and you wait, hypervigilant against what is to come.

For nearly an hour, you pace the common area nervously. You almost talk yourself into believing that your earlier experience was a hallucination until the water begins to seep in beneath the door. Esbury is flooding. You seriously begin to question your decision to remain, but you realize that it's too late to choose any alternatives at this point. You grit your teeth and prepare for the worst.

You're about to head upstairs when you hear the pounding at the door. Something is trying to force its way inside. You tighten your grip on your weapon and prepare to stand and fight.

- *If you have a gun, make a **Firearms (Handgun)** roll: if you succeed, go to 217; if you fail, go to 192.*
- *If you do not have a firearm, go to 225.*

(83, 223)

174

You skid down a steep slope toward the cliff edge, but quickly manage to catch yourself by grabbing onto a rocky outcrop to halt your fall. You take a few deep breaths and make sure not to look down as you scramble back up to where you slipped.

Finally, you make it back onto the muddy trail above, gasping for breath. You lie there for a moment to recover before gathering your strength and continuing down the path.

You march on, despite a growing weariness. Your feet are sore and you can barely see in this darkness. But you're resolved on this course of action and you won't abandon it now.

You carry on for well over an hour before the poor visibility becomes a major problem. You constantly trip over rocks and fallen branches. You almost go over another ledge before deciding that this plan is untenable under the current conditions. You must start a fire of some kind so you can create a torch. It may not solve the problem of the fog but it may at least alleviate the darkness a little.

- *Make a **Survival** roll (the specialization isn't important, as making a fire is among the most basic of survival skills): if you succeed, go to 189; if you fail, go to 201.*

(51)

175

You wade forward, into the water, and feel the ground slope away beneath your feet. You kick off and swim forward using broad, simple strokes in an attempt to maximize the distance you move for the least amount of effort.

You can barely see anything in the fog, so you try to keep your course as straight as possible, hoping there are no hidden twists or curves in the path you now swim above. You glide through the water for several minutes, eventually reaching the opposite side, where you spot the path emerging from the water.

You clamber out of the water and shake off the worst of the wetness. You're covered in filth and are soaked to the bone, but at least you're on the path once more.

However, you are cold and wet, and the darkness and fog make navigating that much harder, despite the trail beneath your feet. You resolve to make a fire, so that you may first dry yourself, then make a torch to keep back the darkness so that you might find your way.

- Make a **Survival** roll (the specialization isn't important, as making a fire is among the most basic of survival skills): if you succeed, go to 206; if you fail, go to 224.

(119)

176

You're too slow and Joshua plunges the blade into your chest as he pins you against the wall. His face lights up with joy as he watches you struggle in agony. His eyes are the very picture of sadistic madness, and he drinks in your pain.

Joshua leans in close as you feel your strength fade, whispering to you in a strange tongue that sends chills through your remaining blood. "*Grab'n y'hab ngnw ronog Bokrug stell'bsna, phlegeth ep throd ron.*" He cackles madly and pulls the knife from your chest. You desperately grasp at your wound to slow the blood loss. "*I have seen this in my dreams. Your blood will lead the way to that magnificent city. It is pleased...*"

He then takes the bloody knife and quickly slashes it across your throat, finishing his sacrifice to something unspeakable.

You are dead. If you like, you may attempt the story again and hope for a better outcome. But, for now, your visit to Esbury is over. THE END.

(157)

177

You hurriedly draw your gun and fire into the creature. Once. Twice. Three times. Each bullet slams into the thing and sends it reeling backward. You note that all of the bullets go clean through the creature, hardly slowed by its flimsy flesh. The thing's wounds quickly begin leaking clear fluid at an alarming rate and it appears to deflate before your very eyes. It takes a few more stumbling steps toward you and for a single horrific second, you fear it will collapse on top of you. Thankfully, it crumples to the ground at your feet. Its movement ceases as it silently dies.

You shudder at your victory over the otherworldly creature. However, you don't have long to relish your success as you hear the squelching sound again, this time from multiple directions. You reload your weapon quickly in case they should chance upon you, and you make a snap decision of how to proceed.

- To seek the safety of the nearby hotel, go to 223.
- To flee from this place as fast as you can, go to 166.
- To muster your courage and attempt to get to the bottom of this mystery, go to 200.

(162)

178

You fix your eyes first on the strange altar, and then on the stack of notes. Rifling through them, you are able to piece together the characters written in dried blood on the altar's side: "*Bokrug brings DOOM to Sarnath.*" As you look over the altar, you also notice smaller letters—this time written in ink—hidden just beneath the larger bloody characters. The smaller text appears to be some sort of chant: "*Y'habyar nog nglui ah, Bokrug.*" The words stick in your mind.

As you begin stuffing the religious object into your sack, you note a similar script on the other side of the altar, written in fresh blood. Most of the characters are the same and you once again consult the notes to finish the translation. You decode the missing word to find the text now reads: "*Bokrug brings DOOM to Esbury.*"

Somewhat unnerved, you finish shoving the altar into your bag, knowing that it's evidence of some sort of cult practice or deranged religious belief.

The thought does not sit well with you.

- You have learned a ritual chant. Note it on your investigator sheet as "*Ritual Chant: Entry 235.*" When prompted, you may choose to use the chant. If you do so, go to 235.
- Go to 210.

(230)

179

With no immediate threat to yourself, you're free to explore the Harris household, though you do so quickly in case someone comes looking. Glancing about the sitting room you're in, you find it's in a bit of a mess from the earlier scuffle.

Looking toward the entrance, you note the foyer, filled with boxes, crates, and other unidentifiable objects covered with dust sheets. You poke your head into the next room and find a kitchen and adjacent dining room, both spotlessly maintained though sparsely furnished.

Peeking beneath the dust sheets in the entryway, you find various items of furniture and décor, as well as stacks and stacks of books. Many of them are historical texts and reference materials, some of which were written by Prof. Harris himself. There is also a large number of general works of science and literature, as befits any well-educated man.

You place the covers back down, sensing that you will find nothing of value here. You turn your attention instead to the set of stairs opposite the entrance. You ascend the staircase and see two doors, one to either side of you. The door to your left is slightly ajar, and leads to the bedroom. By a process of elimination, the door to your right must lead to the study. It seems to be locked and your earlier search of the house did not yield a key. With enough time, you might be able to get the door open, but it would probably be unwise to spend too long trying since Amelia or one of those close to her may return soon.

- To enter the bedroom, go to 207.
- To enter the study, make a **Locksmith** roll: if you succeed, go to 188; if you fail, go to 161.

(21, 120)

180

Try as you might, you are unable to pry the blade from Joshua's grasp. He manages to land a single, solid punch to your face that sends you reeling backward. In a moment, he's on top of you.

Joshua locks eyes with you, smiling with wicked glee as he rests the cold metal lightly against your throat. Then his eyes glaze over as he begins speaking in a strange tongue. "*Grab'n y'bah ngnw ronog Bokrug stell'bsna, phlegeth ep throd ron.*" He speaks each syllable in a slow and monotonous tone, as if he's focusing very carefully on the sound of the words.

As the last syllable passes his lips, Joshua takes the knife and presses it sharply against your neck. With a single, smooth motion, he slits your throat.

As you bleed out, your eyes perceive impossible visions. The world before you melts away, replaced by a shining city of marble, onyx, and lustrous gems. You see this magnificent city in all its splendor, sitting next to a placid lake. And then, in an instant, it's gone as the water rises up to swallow it. The lizard-thing of the idol, given life and power by your blood, surges up from the water. The being eyes you with malicious sentience as the waters swell and consume you.

You have been offered up as a sacrifice to one of the Great Old Ones. Your visit to Esbury is over. THE END.

(115)

181

You decide that you've seen enough of Joshua's house and that you have no reason to linger here. You exit the building and close the door behind you.

You look out into the fog and find it thicker than you remember. You can see almost nothing. Compounding this problem is the darkness, which has completely fallen while you were inside.

Armed with new knowledge, you feel prepared to confront what lies ahead of you. You take a few steps out into the street and are shocked to find the town's cobblestones waterlogged. The lake's water level is rising, and Esbury is beginning to flood.

Given earlier events, you suspect this may not be entirely natural. Even if it is, the rapidly rising water is a serious threat in itself. You feel a twinge of fear but overcome it and spur yourself into action. You know you must escape the flood, and that you must act quickly.

If you know where to meet with Banyu, now is the time you may choose to do so.

- To search for higher ground and hope to avoid the rising waters, go to 211.
- To try to outrun the rising tide, go to 194.
- To meet up with Banyu, check the entry number noted on your investigator sheet, then go to it.

(133, 156, 202, 210)

182

You are a second too late. You scramble to get out of the vehicle's way, but it accelerates rapidly, making no attempt to avoid you as the driver can't see you in the fog.

It strikes you at full speed. Your bones shatter on impact, killing you instantly.

Though you nearly escaped, you are, unfortunately, now dead. Your visit to Esbury is over. THE END.

(212)

183

You yank your hand free of the cold, clammy grasp and find it damp and covered in mucous. You shake the worst of the disgusting substance off as you rush to get away from whatever

it was that grabbed you. Fortunately, the thing's exact form and features were concealed by the fog and the darkness, but this doesn't stop your imagination from running wild.

Thankfully, your feet also run wild. Moving as fast as your legs can carry you, you press on through shrouded streets as more of the hazy, hideous things peer out at you, all mercifully masked by the mist. You rush past them, not wanting to find out what they are but knowing full well they're not human. Finally, you make your way to the edge of town.

You don't even bother with the trail. Navigating in this low level of visibility would be nearly impossible even if you weren't being actively chased by otherworldly horrors. You simply rush into the forest, stumbling past branches and over roots and rocks. If you can keep your footing, you may just be able to put enough distance between yourself and the cursed town behind you.

• *Make a DEX roll: if you succeed, go to 50; if you fail, go to 197.*
(194)



Bokrug

184

You march through the night, moving more slowly and more carefully now, but never stopping. Still, you manage to keep up a brisk pace for several hours before you finally force yourself to stop and take a brief nap against a tree.

Your sleep is light and restless, and you dream of horrific things. Of rising waters and hideous beings with strange faces. Of crumbling towers built of marble and gemstones. Of burning fires and the screams of the dying in an unfamiliar city of unknowable antiquity. You wake with a start as a terrifying, grotesque lizard-thing rises from the water and hisses malevolently at you.

Jolted from your sleep, and thoroughly unnerved, you glance about quickly. You realize that the sun is shining brightly, and the fog has dissipated. You gather yourself and begin walking at a much calmer pace.

It's several more hours before you find the road. You follow it for some time before a car passes and offers you a ride to Boston.

You settle down in Boston for the next few days in an attempt to recover from your experiences in Esbury and the long walk to safety. You try to put it all behind you, but you find a rather disturbing article in the morning newspaper a few days later. The resort town of Esbury is reported to have mysteriously flooded in the middle of the night, claiming the lives of all its residents as they slept. No reason is cited as to the cause of the flood, and no survivors, bodies, or debris are reported to have been found.

Your visit to Esbury is over. You have survived by abandoning the town to its fate. While you do not fully comprehend what went on there, you're relieved to have avoided your own demise. Still, the memories of that night will haunt you for quite some time. You lose 1D8 Sanity points, but you may use this character in future adventures, if you wish. Congratulations on surviving Alone Against the Tide. THE END.

(159, 167, 189)

185

Your fear spurs you on. You drag your injured leg behind you as you wade through the water until you finally kick off and begin swimming properly.

You splash through the murky water for a fair distance before making it to a patch of drier ground. Mercifully, you don't hear the sounds of pursuit.

You don't wait around for your pursuer to reappear. Though thoroughly pained, you limp along, trying to regain your bearings. Ultimately, you decide to trust your gut. You pick a direction and start walking. Before long, you come upon a trail and feel relatively confident that you've made the correct choice.

You couldn't be more wrong. Having taken a wrong turn earlier, and without any sort of reference point, you've gotten completely turned around. You now find yourself once more facing the town of Esbury.

You have little time to express your frustration. As you stand dismayed in the middle of the road, an automobile comes barreling out of the mist, directly at you.

• *Make a Dodge roll: if you succeed, go to 191; if you fail, go to 221.*
(163)

186

You sprint through Esbury's foggy streets, breathing heavily as you try to abandon this godforsaken town. You move in no particular direction through the green mist, simply running away as fast as you can.

You follow twisting and turning alleys and open streets—in the dense fog you can discern little difference. As you run, you encounter that same horrible, distended monstrosity. It lumbers toward you but you are much too quick for it.

But then you round a bend in the road and find another one. You quickly change your heading, only to find yet more of the things blocking your path. A whole multitude of the vile, horrendous creatures shamble toward you. You panic and quickly look for an escape route.

Luckily, you find a narrow alley between two buildings and you dive toward it with all due haste. Thankfully, there are none of the things to be seen once you emerge on the other side.

As you continue to run, you notice something else peculiar: the town seems to be flooding. The water is rising at an alarming rate and you're already splashing through ankle-deep water by the time you reach the edge of town.

You run into the forest, knowing full well that it's a hopeless task to look for the trail in this darkness and fog. You move through the woods as fast as your legs will carry you.

• *Go to 50.*
(166)

187

You can barely see anything in the fog, so you try to keep your course as straight as possible, hoping there are no hidden twists or curves in the path. You wade further into the muck then begin swimming. You splash through the water for several minutes before running into trouble. Something cuts your leg—presumably a submerged fallen branch or log. Splintered and broken, it digs deep enough to open a wound. Eventually, you reach the opposite side, where you spot the path emerging from the water.

You clamber out of the water and shake off the worst of the wetness. You're covered in filth and are soaked to the bone, but at least you're on the path once more.

However, you are cold and wet, and the darkness and fog make navigating that much harder, despite the trail beneath your feet. You resolve to make a fire, so that you may first dry yourself, then make a torch to keep back the darkness so that you might find your way.

- Make a **Survival** roll (*the specialization isn't important, as making a fire is among the most basic of survival skills*): if you succeed, go to 206; if you fail, go to 224.

(119)

188

You reach into your pocket and produce the bobby pin you carry on you for just such an occasion. You insert it into the lock and fumble with it for a few minutes. It sticks and strains, and for a few terrible seconds you fear that it will break in the lock. And then the tumblers give, and the door clicks open.

You push your way into the small study and find the room much as you expected. The door opens across from a window, which lets in the pale, greenish light of the mist. This illuminates the room, which is adorned primarily with mostly-empty bookcases. There are also several glass display cases throughout the room, but these are similarly empty. At the far end of the room, just beneath the window, is a desk, still littered with the professor's blood-soaked papers.

Searching through the desk drawers, you find stacks of notes and various personal items. Buried in the bottom drawer, you find an impossibly old scrap of papyrus pressed into a glass frame. All across the ancient document are strange and unusual scrawls. As you pick it up to inspect it, you notice a sheet of paper lightly attached to the back of the frame, bearing the same scrawls as the papyrus, but with annotations in its margins. Presumably, this is a translation of the papyrus' text.

As you read it over, you marvel at the impossibility of its content. The papyrus purports to be written by a priest of an unknown city by the name of "Ilarnek." In this account, the priest records observations of an odd and ugly race of beings who once lived upon a lake in the forgotten land of Mnar. The document goes into great detail about the fire rituals of these strange creatures, and speaks of the haunting dances they would perform in the light of the flames beneath the gibbous moon—and always under the watchful gaze of a sea-green stone idol, chiseled in the likeness of a great lizard.

The priest's writings go on to mention rituals used to ward off the influence of that detestable creature; rituals performed by humans. The text for the ritual in the annotation is untranslated and simply rendered in standard characters, so that it reads: "*Y'bahyar nog nglui ah, Bokrug.*" The strange phrase sticks in your mind.

You pause for a moment to consider the implications. You carefully detach the translation, fold it up, and put it in your pocket as evidence, before exiting the study.

- You have learned a ritual chant. Note it on your investigator sheet as "*Ritual Chant: Entry 235.*" When prompted, you may choose to use this chant. If you do so, go to 235.
- Go to 222.

(179)

189

You gather some suitably dry wood then reach into your pocket for the small book of matches you always carry on your person, just for situations like this.

You fumble around for quite some time, keeping to the road as best as you can, before successfully lighting your makeshift torch. As you walk along, your torch illuminates a signpost further along the trail. Investigating the sign more closely, you find that the trail splits ahead. If you keep to this path as you'd intended, you'll loop back around to Esbury. So, instead, you take a smaller trail that branches off to the side, marching along into the night.

- Make a **CON** roll: if you succeed, go to 184; if you fail, go to 198.

(174)

190

You hear a sound in the distance. It grows louder, and you recognize the unmistakable rumble of an automobile thundering toward you. You move off the road, keeping a safe distance to one side but with the edge of the carriageway still in view.

You hear a loud splash as the vehicle forces its way through the flooded section of road. You shout at the car as it speeds past you and on into the night. You doubt the driver heard you—and if they did, they have no intention of stopping to investigate.

With a resigned sigh, you make your way back onto the carriageway and continue walking. It is a long, arduous journey. You follow the road for hours on end through the darkness and fog. Your feet blister and ache, and your eyelids droop from weariness. All the while, you fight against a gnawing, looming terror growing in the back of your mind.

But despite all of this, you press on. You eventually stagger up to the dock on the far side of the lake and make it into your car. Half asleep, you throw yourself behind the wheel and head for home. Exhausted and unthinking, you drive on instinct. You do manage to note that the fog is absent once you leave the lake behind. The darkness is now your sole companion.

You settle down in Boston for the next few days in an attempt to recover from your experiences in Esbury and the long walk to safety. You try to put it all behind you but you find a rather disturbing article in the morning newspaper a few days later. The resort town of Esbury is reported to have mysteriously flooded in the middle of the night, claiming the lives of all its residents as they slept. No reason is cited as to the cause of the flood, and no survivors, bodies, or debris are reported to have been found.

Your visit to Esbury is over. You have survived by abandoning the town to its fate. While you do not fully comprehend what went on there, you're relieved to have avoided your own demise. Still, the memories of that night will haunt you for quite some time. You lose 1D8 Sanity points, but you may use this character in future adventures, if you wish. Congratulations on surviving Alone Against the Tide. THE END.

(224)



A lift to safety?

191

You throw yourself to the ground, making sure you avoid the oncoming car. You land face-first in water that's already several inches deep. You roll over quickly as the car speeds past you, and you rise from the ground soaking wet.

You look in dismay once again toward Esbury, which is flooding fast. You can make out little through the fog, but amid the darkness, you can see flames burning bright. The colors are muted by the mist but are significantly brighter than the surrounding shadows.

You can think of no reason why a sinking town would be on fire, but whatever excuses your head conjures up are not comforting. You do not stand to ponder on it long. As you despair over your circumstances, the mist closes in tightly around you, as does something more unsavory. A green, flabby hand seizes your arm and begins pulling you violently toward the town. You struggle against the grasp as best you can, but you find you cannot easily slip away. A more purposeful application of force is required.

- If you have a gun, make a **Firearms (Handgun)** roll: if you succeed, go to 213; if you fail, go to 226.
- If you are unarmed, go to 231.

(185, 201, 229)

192

The door swings inward, rattling on its hinges. The bulbous, misshapen thing lumbers into the room. Its lifeless, bulging eyes fix on you while its putrid mouth opens and closes silently.

Your hands shake abominably as you come face-to-face with the alien creature. Your eyes dart back and forth, staring first at it and then at the multitude of others like it that clog the doorway behind it. You cannot bring yourself to stare at the thing any longer, so you close your eyes and fire wildly.

When you open your eyes again, you see the bullet hole in the wall behind the creature. You missed. You don't have time to collect your nerves for another shot as the monstrous thing throws itself at you and pins you to the ground.

With its cracked and broken fingernails, it claws open your throat as it wordlessly mouths praise to its dark god.

You are dead. Your visit to Esbury is over. THE END.

(173)

193

You splash through the rising water as best you can, knowing what it means if you fail. Unfortunately, the flesh is weak, and your leg gives out.

You never see what it is that's been chasing you. You hear it come toward you but it's shrouded by the mist. You can just make out the outline: something almost human but decidedly not. You blink and it's upon you. You tumble face-first into the muck. The moist, disgusting thing lies on top of you as you gasp desperately for air. But you find none, and soon drown.

You are dead. If you like, you may start again and hope to progress further by means of another path. But, for now, your visit to Esbury is over. THE END.

(170)

194

You are through with this place. You want nothing more to do with Esbury, and whatever business you intended to carry out here is no longer worth your time. You gather your things and set out into the fog.

You keep up a brisk pace as you stride through the darkness and the mist. You move with all due haste, winding your way down streets and through alleyways as you make for the edge of town.

Suddenly, something reaches out and grabs your arm, wrapping it tightly in a vicelike grip. You panic and try to pull away.

- Make a **STR** roll: if you succeed, go to 183; if you fail, go to 199.

(171, 181)

195

You look the idol over. It's made of a sea-green stone and chiseled in the likeness of a water lizard of some sort. The sculpture is grotesque and hideous, and the depiction of the lizard-like creature unnerves you. Still, the work is extremely well-preserved and unquestionably ancient.

You feel uncomfortable staring at the alien-looking thing for too long, so you stow it away in the sack out of sight.

- Go to 210.

(210)

196

On reaching the top of the stairs, you emerge into the belfry and find yourself looking down on the rapidly-flooding, fog-shrouded town. You glance out at the lake, which is no longer covered by the fog. You see the surface swelling and falling strangely beneath unnaturally massive waves, as well as the stars and gibbous moon reflected in the seething water.

Finding yourself in relative safety, you finally have a moment to pause and reflect. You take a deep breath, bowing your head in thought—or, perhaps, prayer. Your mind is in a whirl but, eventually, a single thought breaks through, determining your course of action.

- *If you know a ritual chant, now is the time you may choose to use it. Check the entry number noted on your investigator sheet, then go to it.*
- *Otherwise, go to 150.*

(228, 237)

197

You run on for some distance, dashing between the trees in the forests around Esbury. You stumble through the darkness and fog, half-tripping over roots and rocks. Eventually, you lose your footing and crash into a boulder.

Your head slams against the rock, knocking you out. You have no idea what happens next as you never wake up.

You have died. You don't know if it was the fall, or the rising waters, or the strange monsters that took your life, but your visit to Esbury is over. Better luck next time. THE END.

(183)

198

You march on as best you can, putting one foot in front of the other. You are bruised and tired, and you cannot go on for long. Within a short time, you pause to lean against a tree to catch your breath and fall quickly and quietly asleep.

Yours is a deep and dreamful slumber. The waking world melts away, replaced by a shining city of marble, onyx, and lustrous gems. You see this magnificent city in all its splendor, sitting next to a placid lake. And then, in an instant, it's gone as the water rises up to swallow it. The lizard-thing of the idol, given life and power, surges up from the water. The being eyes you with malicious sentience as the waters swell and consume you. You do not wake from your repose.

You have died, claimed in the night by the unnatural powers of the Great Old One manifesting in the lake. Your visit to Esbury is over. THE END.

(167, 189)

199

Try as you might, you're unable to break the thing's grip on your arm. It pulls you in closer and closer until you can see its horrible, inhuman form. Its body is bulging and misshapen, with long slender limbs and a hideous face. Its skin is the same sickly green color as the unnatural mist.

The thing pulls you to the ground. You hear the squelching steps of many more like it. You struggle to rise as they surround you, but there is no escape. You fight back as best you can, but eventually, their bodies crash upon you like a fleshy, flabby wave that scratches and squeezes the life from your body.

You have died, your life claimed by strange things in service to their horrible god. Your visit to Esbury is over. THE END.

(194)

200

You collect yourself and step out into the mist, determined to get to the bottom of this. The fog is thick, and night has fallen. At this stage, you have few—if any—leads to investigate. While this is far from ideal, your best option seems to be patrolling the streets, looking for something out of the ordinary—more so than what you've already seen.

You begin cautiously walking down the streets, making sure to keep up a brisk pace and an open ear for anything that might be lurking in the mist. The streets are eerily silent except for your own footsteps.

You pass houses and places of business. Little seems to stand out at first, but with a bit of persistence and luck, you may just find something.

- *Make a Luck roll: if you succeed, go to 238; if you fail, go to 169.*

(83, 171, 177, 223)



201

You gather up a pair of sticks and try to rub them together to make a flame, as you've heard of others doing. Whether this is simply a myth or the secret merely eludes you is irrelevant, as you fail to start a fire.

You eventually abandon the task and trudge on, following the trail as best you can in the thick fog. The path begins to slope away from you. Pleased with your progress, you assume you must be coming down from the hills and nearing your destination.

You couldn't be further from the truth. Having taken a wrong turn earlier, and without a light to guide you through the darkness and fog, you've gotten completely turned around. You now find yourself once more facing the town of Esbury.

You have little time to express your frustration. As you stand dismayed in the middle of the road, an automobile comes barreling out of the mist directly at you.

• *Make a Dodge roll: if you succeed, go to 191: if you fail, go to 221.*
(174)

202

You open the door to find a bedroom, much as you'd expected. The room clearly belongs to a bachelor, as the only feminine object is a set of lace sleepwear lying across the bed. You look to a nearby nightstand and find several framed photographs of Joshua and Amelia, so you assume the clothes are hers. Peeking out of a drawer in the nightstand is an open box of bullets, as well as several bottles of bootleg whiskey.

You scan the rest of the room. The only other object of note is a dresser. You search it and find it to be full of men's clothing, the sort that Joshua would wear. However, as you are rifling through his things, you find an envelope. Turning it over, you see it's unsealed, and judging by the crumpled state of it, the letter inside has been read over several times.

You pull out the letter and begin reading. It appears to be a correspondence between Joshua and a Dr. Webber, based out of Arkham. Webber is, apparently, a psychotherapist that Joshua sees on a monthly basis. According to the letter, the past few months have been quite difficult for Joshua. In addition to his criminal activities and his relationship with Amelia, he has been troubled by strange dreams, which Dr. Webber labeled as obsessive delusions.

Joshua has a fixation with a particular dream of a beautiful city in a far-off land. He describes the city as made of marble and says that sometimes he wakes up crying because he has to leave it behind in his dreams. He also reports seeing a frightening lizard-thing in the water off the shore of this strange city. Sometimes, in the night, it whispers that it knows the way to the city. Though the lizard-thing scares him, he listens to the whispers. Joshua professes a deep desire to go to the city, though he doesn't know where it is or even if it's real. For his part, Dr. Webber assures Joshua that these things are completely fictitious and that he must find a way to return to reality and leave the delusions behind.

You return the letter to its envelope, then slip everything back where you found it, thinking about how this affects the course of events here in Esbury. Silently, you return to the main area of the house. You may now investigate the basement or leave the house.

• *To investigate the basement, go to 156.*
• *To leave the house, go to 181.*
(93, 151, 165, 210)

203

You take a knee and begin twisting the combination lock slowly, listening for the sound of the clicks and feeling for the slight stopping of the dial with a successful guess of the number. You repeat this process a few times, and the safe door swings open with a barely perceptible creak.

The contents of the safe are fairly sparse. There is a stack of documents on the bottom shelf: passports, birth certificates, and financial papers. A quick look at them reveals nothing of interest. They're tied to both Amelia and William Harris, so it appears as if this safe hasn't been opened since the professor's death. There's also a solitary small gold bar, a little over 2 lbs. (1 kg) in weight, sitting off to one side. Considering the trouble you went through to get to this point, you place the gold bar in your pocket as compensation.

At least now you won't be leaving empty-handed. Satisfied, and with nothing more to see in the room, you leave and move on.

• *Go to 222.*
(207)

204

You turn the hardened clay cylinders over in your hand and squint to make out the tiny script pressed into their sides. Consulting the notes stacked beside you, you begin to work out a rough translation. The cylinders tell the story of the *"lake-mist green beings of Ib, with their bulging eyes, pouting, flabby lips, curious ears, and voiceless mouths."* It speaks of the origins of these strange beings, how they *"descended one night from the moon in a mist"* and *"gave praise to the chiseled sea-stone idol of Bokrug beneath the gibbous moon."* It goes on to describe their strange city of stone and their ritual destruction of precious metals to appease this detestable water lizard.

The tale is perplexing and impossible but, if true, it is rather frightening. You recall the green mist outside and note with alarm that the moon is gibbous tonight. As you place the clay cylinders in the sack, you glance over at the sea-green idol nearby and are further chilled by what this might portend.

• Increase your *Cthulhu Mythos* skill by 2 percentiles. Go to **210**. (218)

205

Exhaustion overtakes you. You lean back, close your eyes, and drift into a deep slumber.

Your sleep is disturbed by strange and horrific dreams. You see a shining city of marble, onyx, and lustrous gems. You see this magnificent city in all its splendor, sitting next to a placid lake. And then, in an instant, it's gone as the water rises up to swallow it. The lizard-thing of the idol, given life and power, surges up from the water. The being eyes you with malicious sentience as the waters swell and consume you.

You exist in this state for what feels like an eternity, drifting through the sunken ruins alongside the horrible lizard-thing. It eyes you closely, scrutinizing your every motion. But it never acts, merely watches you with checked malevolence. As you stare into its eyes, you begin to wish it would simply consume you so you wouldn't have to be under its watchful gaze any longer. This becomes a maddening desire and you find yourself willingly swimming toward the thing. It opens its jaws to receive you, revealing row after row of needle-like teeth. Just as you're about to offer yourself to the creature, you finally wake.



The sunken ruins of Sarnath

ALONE AGAINST THE TIDE

You find yourself dangling over the edge of the belfry, about to roll into the flooded town below and lose yourself in the waters. You quickly pull back toward the center of the platform for safety. As you do so, a glimmer within your sack catches your eye. You reach inside to find the source and extract the sea-green stone idol. It shimmers with a blueish-white light of angry intensity. Looking at it pains your eyes.

You consider throwing the damnable thing into the water below but something stops you. A thought creeps into your mind, taking shape and driving your actions.

• Make a **POW** roll: if you succeed, go to **219**; if you fail, go to **234**. (235)

206

You walk to the edge of the trail and gather some fallen branches. Like a good survivalist, you had the presence of mind to conceal a match on your person. Because it's wet, it takes a little while, but you manage to kindle a few small flames.

You spend some time around your tiny fire, taking in the warmth. You don't wish to linger long though, so you improvise a torch to carry with you and continue on your way.

It's a long, arduous journey. You follow the trail for hours on end, through the darkness and fog, pausing only occasionally to feed the flames of your torch. Your feet blister and ache, and your eyelids droop from weariness. All the while, you fight against a gnawing, looming terror growing in the back of your mind.

But despite all of this, you press on. You eventually stagger up to the dock on the far side of the lake and make it into your car. Half asleep, you throw yourself behind the wheel and head for home. Exhausted and unthinking, you drive on instinct. You do manage to note that the fog is absent once you leave the lake behind. The darkness is now your sole companion.

You settle down in Boston for the next few days in an attempt to recover from your experiences in Esbury and the long walk to safety. You try to put it all behind you, but you find a rather disturbing article in the morning newspaper a few days later. The resort town of Esbury is reported to have mysteriously flooded in the middle of the night, claiming the lives of all its residents as they slept. No reason is cited as to the cause of the flood, and no survivors, bodies, or debris are reported to have been found.

Your visit to Esbury is over. You have survived by abandoning the town to its fate. While you do not fully comprehend what went on there, you're relieved to have avoided your own demise. Still, the memories of that night will haunt you for quite some time. You lose 1D8 Sanity points, but you may use this character in future adventures, if you wish. Congratulations on surviving Alone Against the Tide. THE END.

(175, 187)

207

You push aside the door and enter the bedroom. The room is lavishly decorated and very feminine. Large, soft pillows sit atop the bed and a tangle of sheets and blankets lie strewn across the mattress.

Judging by the state of the room, this space belonged more to Amelia than it did Prof. Harris, even before his death. The room is dominated by her personal effects. A makeup case sits on the dresser, with a hand mirror beside it. The door to the closet is open; the racks inside overflow with various dresses and fashionable outfits. The clothes belonging to the late Prof. Harris take up a small and innocuous corner of the closet, pushed far to the side so as to not get in the way of Amelia's things.

The most surprising find you stumble upon is a small pile of discarded men's clothing next to the bed. It seems to have been left there recently, and given the difference in style and size to the men's clothes in the closet, it's clear they don't belong to Prof. Harris.

Your suspicion is confirmed when you see a photograph of Joshua on the nightstand. There is also a half-empty bottle of whiskey there, and two glasses sitting next to it.

You also happen to notice a safe built into the wall, just behind the nightstand. A combination lock keeps it sealed, though if you were so inclined, you may be able to crack it.

There is little else of interest in the room.

- To attempt to open the safe, make a **Locksmith** roll: if you succeed, go to **203**; if you fail, go to **172**.
- To leave the room, go to **222**.

(179)



208

You sprint through the foggy streets of Esbury, breathing heavily as you try to abandon this godforsaken town. You move in no particular direction through the green mist, simply running away as fast as you can.

You follow twisting and turning alleys and open streets—in the dense fog, you can discern little difference. As you run, you encounter that same horrible, distended monstrosity. It lumbers toward you but you are much too quick for it.

But then you round a bend in the road and find another one. You quickly change your heading, only to find yet more of the things blocking your path. A whole multitude of the horrendous, vile creatures shamle toward you. You panic and quickly look for an escape route.

Unfortunately, none present themselves. The horrible things close in. You are trapped. They soon lay arms upon you, and despite your protests, they rake their fingers across your skin and strangle you with their fleshy, flabby hands.

The last sight you see is the putrid, bulging eyes of one of the creatures as it squeezes the life from you.

You have died. If you like, you may try again, but for now, your visit to Esbury is over. THE END.

(166)

209

You make your best attempt to swim through the water and evade your pursuer, but your injured leg is dead weight, slowing you down and making it hard to move. You struggle on for a short time, but the sounds of the chase soon begin again. They are close to you and gaining quickly. You know you cannot escape.

Something grabs you from behind. It's almost like a human hand, but most certainly isn't. It pushes you down into the water and holds you there. Despite your struggles, you swiftly drown.

You have died. Hopefully, you will fare better at your next attempt, but for now, your visit to Esbury is over. THE END.

(163)

210

You stand over the table of curious artifacts, confident that they have something to do with the strange events in Esbury. You decide it's best to look them over and glean what information you can from them.

You begin by leafing through the stack of notes. You realize they contain some of the same characters that are written on some of the ancient items. You may be able to use these notes to assist in any translation attempts you wish to make.



ALONE AGAINST THE TIDE

There is also an empty sack on the table that was used to bring these relics here. You are free to load them back up and take them with you.

After examining each item, it will be added to your inventory and you will be redirected back to this entry or given the option to proceed as appropriate. You should not select any option more than once. When you are ready, feel free to leave.

- If you want to look over the journal, go to 240.
- If you want to look over the clay cylinders, go to 218.
- If you want to look over the gemstone altar, go to 230.
- If you want to look over the idol, go to 195.
- To check the bedroom upstairs, go to 202.
- To leave the house, go to 181.

(133, 156, 178, 195, 204, 218, 230, 240)

211

You try to find somewhere you can wait out the flood—somewhere at a high elevation that won't be consumed by the rising water.

Thanks to the darkness and the fog, you won't be able to scan the town's skyline to look for such a place and will, instead, have to rely on your memory.

The only place close that comes to mind would be the nearby church. If the worst should happen, you could climb up into the bell tower to wait out the flood.

You rush toward the house of worship. You see its solid gray stonework peeking out at you from the fog, providing a sense of comfort and security. You push open the church's large double-doors and slip inside, quickly closing the doors behind you, in hopes they will at least buy you some time before the water seeps in. You rush to the stairs leading up to the bell tower and climb them as quickly as you can.

You soon find yourself looking out over Esbury. The town itself is shrouded in mist, but from this high vantage point, you can see over the fog to the lake beyond. Large, undulating waves break the surface of the normally placid waters, and the stars and gibbous moon are brightly reflected from the dark backdrop.

Finding yourself in relative safety, you finally have a moment to pause and reflect. You take a deep breath, bowing your head in thought—or, perhaps, prayer. Your mind is in a whirl but, eventually, a single thought breaks through, determining your course of action.

- If you know a ritual chant, now is the time you may choose to use it. Check the entry number noted on your investigator sheet, then go to it.
- Otherwise, go to 150.

(181)

212

You don't hear it until it's upon you: a loud splash a short distance back, followed by the sound of a struggling, backfiring engine trying to push through the water as an automobile accelerates straight toward you. You can just make out the headlights through the fog as they wash over you, and you have only a moment to react.

- Make a **Dodge** roll: if you succeed, go to 159; if you fail, go to 182. (224)

213

You quickly reach for the firearm at your side. You point the gun in the thing's general direction, pull the trigger, and fire. The sound of the gunshot overwhelms the silence of the night air. Presumably, the bullet strikes the creature, as its grip slackens and you hear a distinct splash as it tumbles to the ground.

You turn to flee but find yourself face-to-face with the bulging eyes and flabby face of a strange, green, vaguely humanoid monstrosity. On impulse, you fire and the thing goes tumbling backward into the water as well.

No sooner does it fall into the rising flood than another hand grips you, this time by the shoulder, as another gropes for your leg. You empty two more rounds into the mist. The hands go slack once more, and you are freed for a brief moment.

You direct your attention about you. In every direction, you see a figure in the mist. You hastily reload your weapon and begin firing, hoping to carve out a safe passage with your gunfire.

You manage to bring down several of the creatures in a hail of gunfire while the water continues to rise rapidly around you. You spend your last bullet, then try to make a run for it, using the gun as a makeshift club as you attempt to force your way out.

Unfortunately, the creatures overwhelm you. You are dragged down, held under the water, and claimed by the rising flood.

You have died. You fought valiantly and took many of the strange horrors to the grave with you, but this was not enough to save yourself or the town. Your visit to Esbury is over. THE END.

(191)

214

The thing takes a swipe at you, connecting solidly with your body. The force behind the blow throws you off balance and you're sent sprawling backward a few feet into the middle of the road. The thing continues to lumber toward you.

If you can rise to your feet and move quickly, you may yet be able to outrun it. If not, you shudder to think what fate may befall you.

• Make a **DEX** roll: if you succeed, go to 237; if you fail, go to 117. (169)

215

You rush across the street and into the church, all the while splashing through the ever-rising water. You slam the door behind you and make your way down the aisle, toward the Buddhist monk standing beside the high altar.

As you approach him, you can see that the man looks shaken. His eyes are wide and his hands tremble as he holds onto one of the pews for support. He fixes his gaze upon you and starts speaking quickly in a language you don't understand. He stops himself, then begins speaking frantically. *"I did not think you would make it back! A—are you okay? D—did you see what is out there?"*

You mention the rising water and he shakes his head vigorously. *"No! The creatures! In the mist! The green monsters!"* You raise a skeptical eyebrow, and he leads you to the door.

He cracks the door open slightly and you gaze out into the mists. You do, indeed, see something strange: a not entirely human silhouette shambling about in the darkness and the fog. Before you can get a better look, the monk yanks you back into the room and closes the door. But not before the thing notices, as a loud banging begins on the door mere seconds later.

"You see it now, yes? They come for us." He draws you closer, pulling you in so he can speak in a hushed tone, though still in a hurried manner. *"That is why I came here, friend. My temple wanted me to bring the relics back because they are cursed by evil things. My temple would perform rites over the relics to keep the curse away, but they are not safe elsewhere. It may be too late, but I know the words. Come, join me. We will stop this."*

He takes your hand and drags you to the altar. You set down the sack of things, and the monk closes his eyes and begins to speak in a strange tongue. *"Y'bahyar nog nglui ah, Bokrug."* He utters each syllable slowly and carefully, giving you the chance to join with him if you so choose.

• If you have the strange idol, go to 227. Otherwise, go to 236. (13, 181)



216

You manage to calm the man, assuring him that he has at least a moment to explain what's going on. He takes a couple of deep breaths before coming clean. *"Look, I don't know what the hell is happening. Joshua called us out here but he didn't say anything about this! Whatever's going on, it isn't natural! Once things started going south, I grabbed the most valuable-looking things I could find, and I ran."* He gestures down to the gemstone-studded altar he's lugging around.

You stoop down to inspect it, and notice letters scrawled across the side. The writing is incredibly strange and unfamiliar but you can attempt to translate it.

- *Make a Hard Archaeology roll (success only at equal to or below half of the skill's value): if you succeed, go to 116; if you fail, go to 242.* (238)

217

The door slams open, revealing a hideous green creature. The thing is a vaguely fish/frog-like being, with lifeless eyes and flabby lips. Its body is horribly distended. Long, spindly limbs protrude from the torso. It grabs either side of the doorframe with these slender limbs and launches itself inside.

You react quickly, aiming your gun at the creature's face and firing a round into the thing's cold, lifeless eyes. It drops to the ground immediately, unmoving, and leaking ichor.

You have no time to celebrate your victory as another, similar creature enters the building and moves toward you. You take another breath and calmly fire, bringing the thing down.

This pattern repeats itself several times, with you occasionally pausing to reload as the water rises around you. The flow of water and unholy horrors does not end, and by the time the flood has risen to your waist, you realize you won't be escaping this place. Still, you resolve yourself to take as many of the creatures down with you as you can.

You hold on for what seems like hours. You hear screaming in other parts of the town, and through the windows, you think you can make out flickering flames shrouded by the fog. You shudder at the thought of what could be going on out there, but you hold firm and continue to fire at the creatures as they find their way inside. The stream of them slows but does not stop. In the end, it's the rising water that claims your life.

You have died. Your visit to Esbury is over. THE END. (173)

218

You turn the hardened clay cylinders over in your hands, your eyes falling on the large cracks running through both items. Despite this damage, their solid construction has led to the cylinders' survival throughout the ages.

The next most obvious quality is the strange writing that is plastered along the side of each cylinder. It's quite remarkable in that it doesn't resemble any language known to you. Using the notes on the table, you attempt to translate it.

- *Make an Archaeology roll: if you succeed, go to 204; if you fail, you are unable to translate them and should go back to 210.* (210)

219

Your mind clouds over once more, as if dreaming again. You see the strange city in your mind's eye. Your vision passes over precious metals changing hands between exotic merchants. Disks of silver and gold move from buyer to seller before disappearing into bags and boxes. You glide formlessly over the city and out into the surrounding lands, where you see the citizens marching in lines, carrying precious metals to the city from the mines. You float above it all and look out to the lake, where you sense brooding hatred and disgust.

Your awareness snaps back to reality as you stare into the idol's light. You make the connection between those precious metals and this grotesque lizard-thing's disdain.

- *If you have a gold bar, go to 239. Otherwise, go to 234.* (205)

220

Exhaustion overtakes you. You lean back, close your eyes, and drift into a deep slumber.

Your sleep is disturbed by strange and horrific dreams. You see a shining city of marble, onyx, and lustrous gems. You see this magnificent city in all its splendor, sitting next to a placid lake. And then, in an instant, it's gone as the water rises up to swallow it. The lizard-thing of the idol, given life and power, surges up from the water. The being eyes you with malicious sentience as the waters swell and consume you.

You exist in this state for what feels like an eternity, drifting through the sunken ruins alongside the horrible lizard-thing. It eyes you closely, scrutinizing your every motion. But it never acts, merely watches you with checked malevolence. As you stare into its eyes, you begin to wish it would simply consume you so you wouldn't have to be under its watchful gaze any longer. This becomes a maddening desire, and you find yourself willingly swimming toward the thing. It opens its jaws to receive you, revealing row after row of needle-like teeth. Just as you're about to offer yourself to the creature, you finally wake.

You find yourself dangling over the edge of the belfry, about to roll into the flooded town below and lose yourself in the waters. You quickly pull back toward the center of the platform for safety. Glancing back at the peaceful, flooded lake, you notice a small group of boats floating amid the ruins, searching for survivors. You quickly call out to them, and it isn't long before you're helped into a boat.

As you're taken to shore, the authorities question you about what happened here. You explain what you can—the believable bits, at least. Once you make land, you're quickly taken to Boston to recover. Over the next few days, you confer with the authorities a few more times and find that you're the incident's only survivor. You're relieved to have escaped with your life, but the memory of what happened there will haunt you forever.

Congratulations, you have survived the horrific events of Alone Against the Tide. You may save this character for future use in another Call of Cthulhu game, though you do lose 1D6 Sanity points as a result of the terrible things that occurred during this adventure. Your visit to Esbury is over. THE END.

(235)

221

The car shoots forward, and you're caught in its headlights as they pierce through the fog. The driver doesn't show any sign of slowing—they're driving with reckless abandon, bounding along the road and swerving madly.

You're unable to predict any pattern in the erratic route the vehicle takes. You try to throw yourself aside to avoid it, but you fail.

The car hits you head-on. Many of your bones shatter as you are killed on impact.

You have died. You're welcome to try the story again in hopes of a different outcome, but for now, your visit to Esbury is over. THE END.

(185, 201, 229)

222

You get ready to leave the Harris household, as you feel your business here is concluded. You pause at the door a moment to consider what your next step should be. You know you spent a good deal of time at the Harris place, and though the fog prevents you from making out the time of day, you imagine there's not much daylight left.

- To investigate Joshua's house, go to 151.
- To return to the hotel, go to 135.

(161, 172, 188, 203, 207)

223

You rush inside the nearby hotel and slam the door closed behind you. You stay there for a moment, catching your breath as you try to come to terms with what you just saw.

You killed one, but judging by the sounds, there are more of those disgusting, aberrant creatures out there. You don't relish the thought of dealing with them again.

You weigh your options. You could always simply hole up here in the hotel, where it seems to be relatively safe.

If you're feeling brave of heart, you could confront the issue and see if you can find out what these things are and where they're coming from. Perhaps you could even stop them.

And if you're willing to take a larger risk for the chance of greater safety, you could flee into the woods. In the darkness and the fog, there's little chance you'd be able to make it out, but if you could manage it, you'd be able to get far, far away from this godforsaken town. The choice is yours.

- To remain in the hotel, go to 173.
- To investigate further, go to 200.
- To flee the horrors of Esbury, go to 166.

(177)

224

Try as you might, you cannot find any way to start a fire. You have no lighter or matches on your person, and you know of no tricks that will help you. In the end, you give up and return to the path.

You wander along the trail, unsure of where you're going. You make sure to keep dirt and gravel beneath your feet, checking constantly that it hasn't given way to grass or water. You focus solely on the placement of your steps, confident that you will reach your goal simply by putting one foot in front of the other.

Unfortunately, this also distracts your attention from your surroundings.

• *Make a **Listen** roll: if you succeed, go to 190; if you fail, go to 212.*
(175, 187)

225

You arm yourself with whatever you find handy, which happens to be a knife left out next to what was once the hotel owner's dinner. You clutch the blade in trembling hands as the door buckles and quakes under a great weight.

And then the door gives. Water rushes into the room. Worse than that, though, are the forms filling the doorway. Emerging from the darkness and mist into the light of the room are alien figures with lanky limbs and bulbous bodies. The beings are green—the same sickly color as the mist from which they emerge. They fix their bulging, dead eyes on you and lurch clumsily forward.

You carve the creatures open with your blade, gutting them like large fishes, and succeed in completely covering yourself in their dripping ichor. They stream through the door one by one, but they are seemingly endless in number.

You see your end coming slowly. A little less speed of the stroke. A little more soreness of the arm. A little more shortness of breath. You cannot keep them off for much longer. Eventually, you tire, and one of the creatures slips through and knocks you over. You kick, slash, and thrash beneath it as it traps you under its weight.

As the water fills your lungs, the last thing you see are the cold, lifeless eyes of the creature that brings about your demise.

Unfortunately, you have met your doom and you are now dead, though you are welcome to begin the adventure again and attempt to reach a different outcome. But, for now, your visit to Esbury is over. THE END.

(173)

226

You reach for your firearm and manage to draw it quickly, only to have it knocked from your hands by the large, bulging form of a hideous green creature. Your gun falls into the rising water with a splash and is lost among the shuffling bodies of yet more strange beings.

You struggle against them as best you can, but it's to no avail. Without a proper weapon, you're at the mercy of these unnatural and misshapen things.

They don't kill you right away. Instead, they carry you, kicking and screaming, toward a burning house. Piled atop the smoldering heaps of ashes are mounds of corpses that have already been set alight. You also spot various pieces of jewelry and scattered gemstones strewn among the wreckage—entire fistfuls of them. The firelight reflects brilliantly off the looted gold and gems.

You don't have time to admire them or to wonder at the spectacle before you, as you are swiftly fed to the flames. As you burn alive in agonizing pain, the last sight you see is the creatures dancing a lurching, shuffling jig through the fog beneath the gibbous moon, giving praise to their strange and unimaginable god.

You have died, offered up as a sacrifice to a Great Old One. Your visit to Esbury is over. THE END.

(191)



227

You stare at Banyu as he completes his chant, and it's as if a great weight has fallen from his shoulders. You look at him curiously for a moment before you notice the pounding at the door fades to a stop. Cautiously, you go to the door and crack it open a little, so you can look outside.

As the door swings open, a rush of water swirls into the church, soaking your legs and the floor around you, before pooling amid the church pews. Looking out into the streets, it appears that all of Esbury is awash with waist-deep water, though the fog has faded and the water doesn't appear to be rising any further.

Banyu comes to join you and he breathes a sigh of relief. *"It is done now. We will be safe for the moment. I will take the artifacts with me when I leave this place. We will prevent this from happening again."*

With that, Banyu gathers up the sack of items by the altar and wades out into the floodwater. You don't know where he's going, but you never see him again.

In time, Esbury is evacuated. The bodies of some residents are found, their deaths labeled as drowning. Some residents claim to have seen strange things in the mist, which the papers label as an outbreak of mass hysteria brought on by the anomalous flooding. Some residents are committed to mental institutions, though many return to Esbury when the water recedes.

You're still not entirely sure what went on there, but you are fully aware that it wasn't entirely natural. You do your best to forget it, but the memory still lingers in the back of your mind. You never return to Esbury.

You have survived this adventure, and you may save this character to use at a later time, if you wish. Your visit to Esbury is over. THE END.

(215)

228

It swipes at you, but your reflexes are much too fast for it to connect with you. You manage to catch a glimpse of sickly green flesh as you quickly spin out of its reach.

You turn and run, not stopping to confirm your attacker's identity. You cover as much distance as you can in as short a time as possible. You run down numerous streets and alleyways before you eventually feel comfortable enough to pause and reassess your situation.

By this point, the water has risen to your calves and is swiftly approaching knee-level. At the rate the water's rising, you don't have time to search the town any further. You must look to your self-preservation, especially with those strange things lurking in the fog.

You can just make out the church's silhouette through the mist. With no other real options, the prospect of rising above the tide in the church's belfry seems like a good idea. You rush inside the quiet holy space and quickly begin climbing the steps toward your hoped-for salvation.

• *Go to 196.*

(169)

229

Though you've fallen, you realize that you're not completely without landmarks. If you follow the cliff above you, you may just be able to find the point where the elevation changes, and in doing so find your way back to the path. You limp forward in pain, making sure to keep the cliff face on your left.

You follow the cliff wall despite the fog, at points navigating purely by keeping your hand in contact with the rock face, occasionally stopping to lean against it for support in your injured state. Eventually, you manage to find the trail again, crying out in relief at your apparent turn of good fortune.

You move along the path for what must be an hour until you see a distant light piercing the fog. You rush toward it, not caring that you're putting weight on your damaged leg, only to find yourself standing face-to-face with a brick wall.

Peering through the fog, you find that you've somehow gotten turned around and are back in Esbury. You cry out in frustration.

Suddenly, you hear the revving of an engine. A car comes hurtling toward you as you stand, despairing, in the middle of the road.

• *Make a Dodge roll: if you succeed, go to 191; if you fail, go to 221.*

(139)

230

You examine the extraordinary altar. The most readily apparent features beyond its size are the many gemstones set into its surface. They are of a greenish-yellow color, and shine even in the half-light of the room.

You also notice strange lettering written in broad strokes along the object's sides. The symbols are smeared and sloppily done, suggesting they were written with some haste. What you had originally taken for paint is, upon closer examination, dried blood.

While you cannot be certain, it would appear that this item has been involved in some tragedy.

Using the notes on the table, you may be able to piece together a translation of the text written in blood.

- *Make an **Archaeology** roll: if you succeed, go to 178; if you fail, you are unable to translate the scrawls on the altar and should go back to 210.*

(210)

231

You find yourself woefully unprepared to deal with the otherworldly horrors that are in front of you. Unarmed, you're unable to fight back effectively. You nearly escape the first creature's grasp through sheer tenacity, but more of them quickly emerge from the mist, and it's not long before you're subdued by their sheer weight of numbers.

You struggle against them as best you can, but it's to no avail. Without a proper weapon, you're at the mercy of these unnatural and misshapen things.

They don't kill you right away. Instead, they carry you, kicking and screaming, toward a burning house. Piled atop the smoldering heaps of ashes are mounds of corpses that have already been set alight. You also spot various pieces of jewelry and scattered gemstones strewn among the wreckage—entire fistfuls of them. The firelight reflects brilliantly off the looted gold and gems.

You don't have time to admire them or to wonder at the spectacle before you, as you are swiftly fed to the flames. As you burn alive in agonizing pain, the last sight you see is the creatures dancing a lurching, shuffling jig through the fog beneath the gibbous moon, giving praise to their strange and unimaginable god.

You have died, offered up as a sacrifice to a Great Old One. Your visit to Esbury is over. THE END.

(191)

232

Your weight carries you forward, and you go tumbling over the edge of the cliff. You do your best to catch yourself, but it's too late. As you fall, you do what you can to slow your descent, but you have precious little control over it. It's a short fall to your swift and sudden death.

You have died. Unfortunately, you couldn't escape from the horrors alive, though perhaps you will do better on your next attempt. Your visit to Esbury is over. THE END.

(50)

233

You orient yourself along the path and begin moving automatically, slowly but surely covering the ground toward your escape.

However, the journey proves to be longer than you'd anticipated. You march on for hours with no sign of light and no sign of reaching the main road. You quickly grow weary, thoroughly fatigued by the day's events.

Though you fight sleep for some time, you aren't entirely certain when your eyes finally close. You collapse at the roadside in exhaustion.

Perhaps the area around you flooded. Perhaps an animal found you. Or perhaps you were struck by another car as you slept. You don't know, as you don't wake up in time to find out what causes your demise.

You have died. You may attempt the story again from the beginning, and hopefully, you will achieve a better outcome. But, for now, your visit to Esbury is over. THE END.

(159)



Being of It

234

A thought takes shape in your mind and clarity takes hold. But the thought is not your own. You see visions of the strange reptilian beast, that detestable water lizard. You stare into its eyes, hypnotized, as it hisses at you, beckoning you forward. You heed its call.

Your feet move you forward, carrying you over the edge of the belfry and into the water below. You don't thrash about. You don't swim. Or struggle. Or resist. You simply sink, welcomed into the risen water's embrace.

You have died, led to your demise by the will of Bokrug, the great water lizard. The Great Old One has ensured that doom has come to the little lakeside town. There are no survivors. Eventually, the idol will be found, and the process will begin again. But this is of no concern to you. Your visit to Esbury is over. THE END.

(205, 219)

235

The words of the ritual chant force themselves into your mind. You stare blankly at the reflection of the moon and stars upon the rising waters of the lake. Your lips move as if controlled by someone else, automatically uttering the strange syllables of the unfamiliar words. "Y'hahyar nog nglui ah, Bokrug." You recite the words in a slow, monotonous voice, speaking the phrase ten times before you stop.

You feel strangely tired after this, so you sit on the belfry's stones and look out over the town. The water has risen so high, over the tops of many of the buildings in Esbury, and you're positioned on one of the few landmarks still above water. You're certain that much damage has been done here.

At least the water is still and placid now, apparently returned to its normally peaceful state. The unnatural green mist seems to be dissipating as well. It still lingers here and there, but by the light of the gibbous moon, you can see the fog starting to thin out.

You take a deep breath, pondering what is to come next.

- If you have the strange idol, go to 205.
- Otherwise, go to 220.

(108, 178)

236

Banyu enters a state of hyper-focus as he conducts his chant. You see the look of desperate hope on his face while also sensing the budding terror beneath his relatively calm exterior. As his chant ceases, he stares toward the door, holding his breath.

The banging at the door pauses for a moment, then resumes with renewed vigor. Banyu's face is full of shock and fear. "The chant did not work... We are doomed." He drops to his knees in abject horror as the door splinters open and bloated green creatures begin squeezing themselves through the gap.

You do your best to fend them off, but as the water rises around you, they eventually overwhelm you. They don't kill you right away. Instead, they seize you and Banyu and carry you off down the flooded streets of Esbury. Eventually, they stop before a building that has been set ablaze. They feed you to the flames and begin to dance around the fire, moving with strange, unearthly motions while their silent lips sing praise to their detestable god: Bokrug, the great water lizard.

You have died. Your ultimate fate was as a sacrifice to one of the Great Old Ones. There are few worse ways to die. Your visit to Esbury is over. THE END.

(215)

237

You rise quickly and scurry out of the horrible thing's way. Your feet pound against the street's flagstones, carrying you far away from the creature. You cover as much distance as you can in as short a time as possible. You run down numerous streets and alleyways before you eventually feel comfortable enough to pause and reassess your situation.

By this point, the water has risen to your calves and is swiftly approaching knee-level. At the rate the water's rising, you don't have time to search the town any further. You must look to your self-preservation, especially with those strange things lurking in the fog.

You can just make out the church's silhouette through the mist. With no other real options, the prospect of rising above the tide in the church's belfry seems like a good idea. You rush inside the quiet holy space and quickly begin climbing the steps toward your hoped-for salvation.

- Go to 196.

(214)

238

You prowl the town, hoping desperately to find some source or clue. The water rises, and soon it's past your ankles. You splash through the streets, clinging to hope.

It seems your faith was not misplaced. As you move through the mist, a man slams into you. You recognize him to be one of the dark-suited gentlemen from the ferry yesterday. The man is wide-eyed and pale. He carries a gun in one hand and drags a sizable object beside him through the rising water. You glance down and see it is an altarpiece, with bright jewels studded across its surface. You also notice a sack bulging with heavy goods tied about his waist. The man fixes his wild eyes upon you. "*What are you doing!? We have to run! They're coming for us! For everyone! We have to go!*"

The man seems ready to panic, but perhaps you can calm him.

• Make a *Persuade* roll: if you succeed, go to 216; if you fail, go to 241. (200)

239

You reach into your pocket and pull out the small gold bar. As you walk toward the statue, you hear a reptilian hiss in your mind, all-consuming and oppressive, shaking you to your core. Instinctively, you grab your head with your other hand, trying to hold back the growing headache.

You find yourself standing over the idol. You raise the ingot high above your head and bring it crashing down onto the stone figure. As soon as the gold touches the sea-green stone, the idol shatters into several fragments. As it splits apart, the hissing roar in your head subsides, though your brain still throbs. The mental strain has worn you down, and you swiftly drift off into a deep and dreamless slumber.

When you finally awake, you're being pulled into a boat by the authorities who came to investigate the flooding. You don't know how long you've been there, but you're taken to the far lakeshore and eventually on to Boston, where you spend several days in much-needed rest.

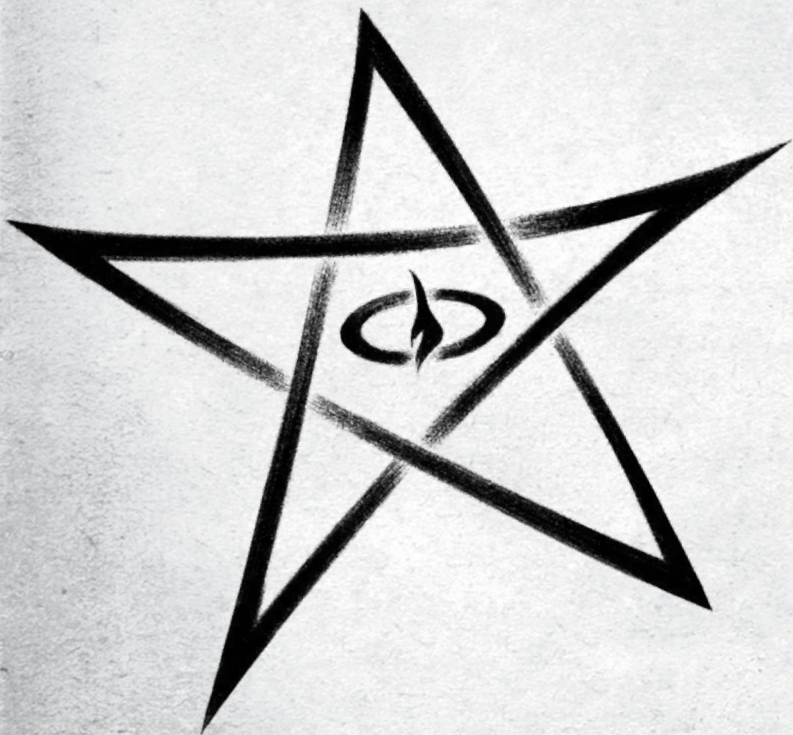
While there, the story of what happened in Esbury hits the newspapers. According to the reports, the freak flooding caught the entire town off guard, and there were very few survivors. Still, the water is beginning to subside now, and bodies and property are being recovered.

Though Esbury was claimed by the flood, you were not. And with all that you learned of the mysterious entity behind it, you were able to destroy the unholy idol that was the source of its connection to this world, and in doing so, you've prevented this horror from being unleashed on the world again.

You will forever remember your time in Esbury, and you will carry the horror of the place with you wherever you go. But you can take solace in the fact that the foul lizard-like creature has been put to rest.

Congratulations on surviving Alone Against the Tide and on thwarting the malign forces of the Mythos at work in the quiet lakeshore town. You may use this character in future adventures, if you wish. Your visit to Esbury is over. THE END.

(219)



240

Looking through the book, you become deeply engrossed and spend the next few hours in study. The time spent yields valuable information. Prof. Harris made several trips to India, starting about 12 years ago. During these visits, he went to multiple sites to make observations and recover artifacts. His longest and most profitable trip appears to have been 10 years ago during an excursion to Sarnath, India, where he writes about "recovering" several items from an active Buddhist shrine. Apparently, Prof. Harris had some regrets about this theft, but he couldn't resist having the artifacts for his personal collection. The descriptions of the items he came across in Sarnath match some of the items at the estate sale last night. The clay cylinders, the gemstone-encrusted altar, and the lizard-like idol are all described in detail in the entries related to his trip to Sarnath.

These same items then appear throughout the rest of his journal. He'd clearly been studying these items over the past decade and developed something of a fixation with them. It was the idol that initially caught Harris' eye, and according to him, the depiction of the great and grotesque water lizard matched no description of any known Hindu deity. Hoping to find clues to the idol's identity, Harris set about trying to translate the mysterious script on the cylinders and the altar. In doing so, he met with significant difficulty, as the text was only barely recognizable as an archaic dialect of a pre-Sanskrit language. The process was slow and painstaking until about a year ago.

At this time, Prof. Harris writes of having a strange and enlightening dream. He reports walking in the ancient world from whence these items originated: a grand city of marble walls and onyx streets, of bronze gates and marvelous palaces and gardens. He writes of visiting the 17 tower temples of this ancient city and meeting the bearded gods who dwelled there sat upon their ivory thrones. Harris calls the strange place Sarnath, despite the sheer impossibility of this. He claims that among the temples he learned the secrets of the ancient writing.

His next entry goes on to describe the odd clay cylinders as the "Brick Cylinders of Kadatheron," though he hadn't yet identified the other objects. The next few pages have been torn from the journal.

The entries resume with more mundane matters, though there are still references to the artifacts from time to time. The more recent entries in the journal speak of Harris' daily studies and living with Amelia. It's clear that he cares about

her deeply from the way he writes about her, but he laments that his studies keep him from spending the time with her that he would like. Instead, he lavished her with gifts and money, which she was all too happy to accept. He notes that Amelia had never been happier despite the distance between them.

The last entry to catch your eye is dated a little over a week ago. Apparently, the pages torn from his journal went missing only recently. Prof. Harris expresses deep concern at this as there were no signs of forced entry to his study, and only he and Amelia had access to it, though he was sure he hadn't removed them from the journal himself.

You finish your reading by glossing over the last week of the professor's life, which is rather uneventful and peaceful beyond his continued obsession with the artifacts and his occasional worries about Amelia.

• Go to 210.

(210)

241

You try to calm the man, who's in a deep state of panic. You do your best to talk him down but he will not slow his pace to listen to you. You hurry along, trying to get him to stop and speak with you for just a moment, but the fear has taken hold of him totally and completely.

You try to block his path physically, rushing round in front of him to cut him off. He doesn't take kindly to this. Too late, you realize your mistake. There's madness in his eyes, and he raises his gun to fire at you for daring to be an obstacle to his escape.

At this range, there's no hope of you getting out of the way in time. The man fires once into your chest then steps over you to continue his flight from this place, leaving you bleeding on the ground. You lie helpless on the flooding streets, bleeding heavily.

Mercifully, you pass out from the blood loss so you don't know what it is that finally claims your life. Perhaps you bled out. Perhaps the water rose even further and you drowned. Or perhaps a worse fate befell you. Whatever the case may be, you have died. Your visit to Esbury is over. THE END.

(238)

242

You simply have no idea what you're looking at. The characters are strange and unusual and they match no script known to you. Studying the rest of the object yields no other clues.

As you dally here in the darkness and mist, you don't notice the otherworldly things' approach. They surround you and strike together, nearly a dozen unholy abominations with distended forms and lifeless eyes.

They fall upon you and your companion swiftly. Though he is armed, he only manages to bring down a few of them before they subdue him, then strangle the life out of him. You fare little better, seized by the creatures despite your best efforts.

Kicking and screaming, you are hauled bodily through the streets of Esbury. They carry you to a burning building, where the horrid creatures feed you to the flames. As you burn alive, you see the abominable beings take up a shuffling dance of unnerving nature. Their pouting, flabby lips sing silent praises to their unknown god to which your soul is sacrificed.

You have died, burned alive as an offering to one of the Great Old Ones. Your visit to Esbury is over. THE END.

(216)



Idol of Bokrug

243

You come to, only to find the hideous creature's long-fingered hands wrapped around your throat, choking the life out of you. The creature shakes you violently as it steadily throttles you to death.

As you black out for the second time, the last thing you see are those horrible, lifeless eyes staring into your soul.

You have been killed by a being from another world. Though you are uncertain how this creature came to be here, it matters little now, as your lifeless body adorns the streets of the lakeside town. Though you are free to start the adventure over and try again, for now, your visit to Esbury is over. THE END.

(162)

1920S ERA INVESTIGATOR

Name Eleanor Woods
 Player _____
 Occupation Professor
 Age 40 Sex Female
 Residence Arkham, MA
 Birthplace Boston, MA

CHARACTERISTICS

STR 50 ²⁵/₁₀ DEX 60 ³⁰/₁₂ INT 70 ³⁵/₁₄
 CON 60 ³⁰/₁₂ APP 40 ²⁰/₈ POW 50 ²⁵/₁₀
 SIZ 50 ²⁵/₁₀ EDU 80 ⁴⁰/₁₆ Move Rate 7 ⁺¹/₋₁



Major Wound ☐ M11IP
 Dying 00 01 02
 Unconscious 03 04 05
 HIT POINTS 06 07 08 09 10
 11 12 13 14 15
 16 17 18 19 20

Temp. Insane ☐ Indef. Insane ☐ 50 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

SANITY

CALL of CTHULHU

Out of Luck 01 02 03 04 05 06 07
 LUCK 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

M10IP
 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

MAGIC POINTS

INVESTIGATOR SKILLS

<input type="checkbox"/> Accounting (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Fast Talk (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Law (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Science (01%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Anthropology (01%) 60 ³⁰ / ₁₂	<input type="checkbox"/> fighting (Brawl) (25%) 45 ²² / ₉	<input type="checkbox"/> Library Use (20%) 40 ²⁰ / ₈	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Appraise (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Listen (20%)	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Archaeology (01%) 70 ³⁵ / ₁₄	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Locksmith (01%) 50 ²⁵ / ₁₀	<input type="checkbox"/> Sleight of Hand (10%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Art / Craft (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Firearms (Handgun) (20%) 40 ²⁰ / ₈	<input type="checkbox"/> Mech. Repair (10%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Spot Hidden (25%)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Firearms (Rifle/Shotgun) (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Medicine (01%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Stealth (20%)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Natural World (10%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Survival (10%) Desert 50 ²⁵ / ₁₀
<input type="checkbox"/> Charm (15%)	<input type="checkbox"/> First Aid (30%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Navigate (10%) 30 ¹⁵ / ₆	<input type="checkbox"/> Swim (20%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Climb (20%)	<input type="checkbox"/> History (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Occult (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Throw (20%)
Credit Rating (00%) 60 ³⁰ / ₁₂	<input type="checkbox"/> Intimidate (15%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Op. Hv. Machine (01%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Track (10%)
Cthulhu Mythos (00%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Jump (20%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Persuade (10%) 40 ²⁰ / ₈	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Disguise (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Language (Other) (01%) Arabic 40 ²⁰ / ₈	<input type="checkbox"/> Pilot (01%)	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Dodge (half DEX) 50 ²⁵ / ₁₀	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Psychology (10%) 50 ²⁵ / ₁₀	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Drive Auto (20%)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Psychoanalysis (01%)	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Elec Repair (10%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Language (Own) (EDU) English 80 ⁴⁰ / ₁₆	<input type="checkbox"/> Ride (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/>

WEAPONS

Weapon	Regular	Hard	Extreme	Damage	Range	Attacks	Ammo	Malif.
Unarmed	45	22	9	1d3 + db	-	1	-	-

COMBAT

Damage Bonus none
 Build 0
 Dodge 50 ²⁵/₁₀

Injuries & Scars

Phobias & Manias

Arcane Tomes, Spells & Artifacts

Encounters with Strange Entities

CASH & ASSETS

Spending Level	\$50
Cash	\$300
Assets	\$30,000

FELLOW INVESTIGATORS

A mind map template for character analysis. The central node is a circle containing the text "Me". Eight branches radiate from this central node. Each branch terminates in a rectangular box divided into two horizontal sections. The top section is labeled "Char." and the bottom section is labeled "Player".

Pushing Rolls: Must justify reroll; Cannot Push Combat or Sanity Rolls

First Aid heals 1 HP; Medicine heals +1d3 HP

Reach 0 HP without Major Wound = **Unconscious**

Dying: First Aid = temp. stabilized; then require Medicine

Natural Heal rate (non Major Wound): recover 1HP per day

Natural Heal rate (Major Wound): weekly healing roll

1920S ERA INVESTIGATOR

Name Ellery Woods
 Player _____
 Occupation Professor
 Age 40 Sex Male
 Residence Arkham, MA
 Birthplace Boston, MA

CHARACTERISTICS

STR 50 25 10 DEX 60 30 12 INT 70 35 14
 CON 60 30 12 APP 40 20 8 POW 50 25 10
 SIZ 50 25 10 EDU 80 40 16 Move Rate 7 +1 -1



Major Wound M11IP
 Dying 00 01 02
 Unconscious 03 04 05
 HIT POINTS 06 07 08 09 10
11 12 13 14 15
 16 17 18 19 20

Temp. Insane 50 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

CALL of CTHULHU

Out of Luck 01 02 03 04 05 06 07
 LUCK 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

M10IP
 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

INVESTIGATOR SKILLS

<input type="checkbox"/> Accounting (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Fast Talk (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Law (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Science (01%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Anthropology (01%) <u>60</u> <u>30</u> <u>12</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> fighting (Brawl) (25%) <u>45</u> <u>22</u> <u>9</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Library Use (20%) <u>40</u> <u>20</u> <u>8</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Appraise (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Listen (20%)	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Archaeology (01%) <u>70</u> <u>35</u> <u>14</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Locksmith (01%) <u>50</u> <u>25</u> <u>10</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Sleight of Hand (10%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Art / Craft (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Firearms (Handgun) (20%) <u>40</u> <u>20</u> <u>8</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Mech. Repair (10%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Spot Hidden (25%)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Firearms (Rifle/Shotgun) (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Medicine (01%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Stealth (20%)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Natural World (10%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Survival (10%) Desert <u>50</u> <u>25</u> <u>10</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Charm (15%)	<input type="checkbox"/> First Aid (30%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Navigate (10%) <u>30</u> <u>15</u> <u>6</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Swim (20%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Climb (20%)	<input type="checkbox"/> History (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Occult (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Throw (20%)
Credit Rating (00%) <u>60</u> <u>30</u> <u>12</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Intimidate (15%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Op. Hv. Machine (01%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Track (10%)
Cthulhu Mythos (00%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Jump (20%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Persuade (10%) <u>40</u> <u>20</u> <u>8</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Disguise (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Language (Other) (01%) Arabic <u>40</u> <u>20</u> <u>8</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Pilot (01%)	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Dodge (half DEX) <u>50</u> <u>25</u> <u>10</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Psychology (10%) <u>50</u> <u>25</u> <u>10</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Drive Auto (20%)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Psychoanalysis (01%)	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Elec Repair (10%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Language (Own) (EDU) English <u>80</u> <u>40</u> <u>16</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Ride (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/>

WEAPONS

Weapon	Regular	Hard	Extreme	Damage	Range	Attacks	Ammo	Malif.
Unarmed	45	22	9	1d3 + db	-	1	-	-

COMBAT

Damage Bonus none
 Build 0
 Dodge 50 25 10

BACKSTORY



Personal Description A white man, with heavily tanned skin, dark hair, brown eyes, and a short, neatly trimmed beard. Wears a newsboy's cap, which looks slightly at odds with his smartly tailored three-piece suit.

Ideology/Beliefs Fortune favors the prepared mind.

Significant People His old friends of the Boston Nine. Ellery may have left his days of crime behind him when he got his education, but you never really leave a gang.

Meaningful Locations Boston, the city he calls home.

Treasured Possessions The research manuscript he's been working on for over a year now. Ellery hopes it will win him academic acclaim.

Traits Inquisitive, ambitious.

Injuries & Scars

Phobias & Manias

Arcane Tomes, Spells & Artifacts

Encounters with Strange Entities

GEAR & POSSESSIONS

Tailored three-piece suit, newsboy's cap. Thin briefcase containing a research manuscript, a change of underwear, and a few essential toiletries.

CASH & ASSETS

Spending Level \$50
Cash \$300
Assets \$30,000

QUICK REFERENCE RULES

Skill & Characteristic Rolls

Levels of Success: Fumble 100/96+ Fail > skill Regular ≤ skill Hard 1/2 skill Extreme 1/3 skill Critical 01

Pushing Rolls: Must justify reroll; Cannot Push Combat or Sanity Rolls

Wounds & Healing

First Aid heals 1HP; Medicine heals +1d3 HP

Major Wound = loss of $\geq \frac{1}{2}$ max HP in one attack

Reach 0 HP without Major Wound = **Unconscious**

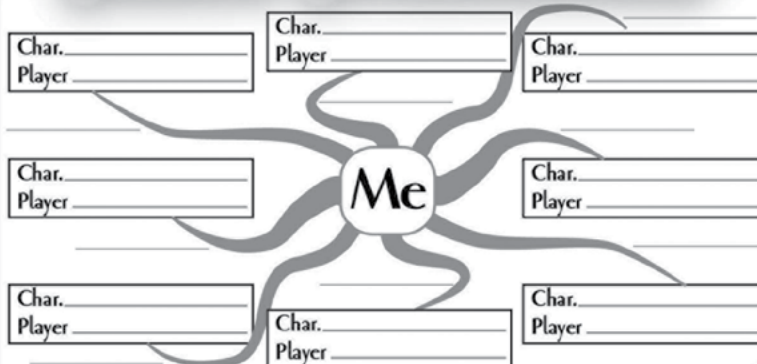
Reach 0 HP with Major Wound = **Dying**

Dying: First Aid = temp. stabilized; then require Medicine

Natural Heal rate (non Major Wound): recover 1HP per day

Natural Heal rate (Major Wound): weekly healing roll

FELLOW INVESTIGATORS



1920S ERA INVESTIGATOR

Name _____
 Player _____
 Occupation _____
 Age _____ Sex _____
 Residence _____
 Birthplace _____

CHARACTERISTICS

STR	<div></div> <div></div>	DEX	<div></div> <div></div>	INT	<div></div> <div></div>
CON	<div></div> <div></div>	APP	<div></div> <div></div>	POW	<div></div> <div></div>
SIZ	<div></div> <div></div>	EDU	<div></div> <div></div>	Move Rate	<div></div> <div>+1</div> <div>-1</div>

Major Wound **Max HP**

HIT POINTS	Dying	00	01	02
	Unconscious	03	04	05
	06	07	08	09
	10	11	12	13
	14	15	16	17
	18	19	20	

Temp. Insane Indef. Insane **Start** **Max**

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

Insane 01 02 03 04 05 06 07

SANITY

CALL of CTHULHU

LUCK

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

Out of Luck 01 02 03 04 05 06 07

Max MP

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

Magic Points

INVESTIGATOR SKILLS

<input type="checkbox"/> Accounting (05%)	<div></div> <div></div>	<input type="checkbox"/> Fast Talk (05%)	<div></div> <div></div>	<input type="checkbox"/> Law (05%)	<div></div> <div></div>	<input type="checkbox"/> Science (01%)	<div></div> <div></div>
<input type="checkbox"/> Anthropology (01%)	<div></div> <div></div>	<input type="checkbox"/> Fighting (Brawl) (25%)	<div></div> <div></div>	<input type="checkbox"/> Library Use (20%)	<div></div> <div></div>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<div></div> <div></div>
<input type="checkbox"/> Appraise (05%)	<div></div> <div></div>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<div></div> <div></div>	<input type="checkbox"/> Listen (20%)	<div></div> <div></div>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<div></div> <div></div>
<input type="checkbox"/> Archaeology (01%)	<div></div> <div></div>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<div></div> <div></div>	<input type="checkbox"/> Locksmith (01%)	<div></div> <div></div>	<input type="checkbox"/> Sleight of Hand (10%)	<div></div> <div></div>
<input type="checkbox"/> Art / Craft (05%)	<div></div> <div></div>	<input type="checkbox"/> Firearms (Handgun) (20%)	<div></div> <div></div>	<input type="checkbox"/> Mech. Repair (10%)	<div></div> <div></div>	<input type="checkbox"/> Spot Hidden (25%)	<div></div> <div></div>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<div></div> <div></div>	<input type="checkbox"/> Firearms (Rifle/Shotgun) (25%)	<div></div> <div></div>	<input type="checkbox"/> Medicine (01%)	<div></div> <div></div>	<input type="checkbox"/> Stealth (20%)	<div></div> <div></div>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<div></div> <div></div>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<div></div> <div></div>	<input type="checkbox"/> Natural World (10%)	<div></div> <div></div>	<input type="checkbox"/> Survival (10%)	<div></div> <div></div>
<input type="checkbox"/> Charm (15%)	<div></div> <div></div>	<input type="checkbox"/> First Aid (30%)	<div></div> <div></div>	<input type="checkbox"/> Navigate (10%)	<div></div> <div></div>	<input type="checkbox"/> Swim (20%)	<div></div> <div></div>
<input type="checkbox"/> Climb (20%)	<div></div> <div></div>	<input type="checkbox"/> History (05%)	<div></div> <div></div>	<input type="checkbox"/> Occult (05%)	<div></div> <div></div>	<input type="checkbox"/> Throw (20%)	<div></div> <div></div>
Credit Rating (00%)	<div></div> <div></div>	<input type="checkbox"/> Intimidate (15%)	<div></div> <div></div>	<input type="checkbox"/> Op. Hv. Machine (01%)	<div></div> <div></div>	<input type="checkbox"/> Track (10%)	<div></div> <div></div>
Cthulhu Mythos (00%)	<div></div> <div></div>	<input type="checkbox"/> Jump (20%)	<div></div> <div></div>	<input type="checkbox"/> Persuade (10%)	<div></div> <div></div>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<div></div> <div></div>
<input type="checkbox"/> Disguise (05%)	<div></div> <div></div>	<input type="checkbox"/> Language (Other) (01%)	<div></div> <div></div>	<input type="checkbox"/> Pilot (01%)	<div></div> <div></div>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<div></div> <div></div>
<input type="checkbox"/> Dodge (half DEX)	<div></div> <div></div>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<div></div> <div></div>	<input type="checkbox"/> Psychology (10%)	<div></div> <div></div>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<div></div> <div></div>
<input type="checkbox"/> Drive Auto (20%)	<div></div> <div></div>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<div></div> <div></div>	<input type="checkbox"/> Psychoanalysis (01%)	<div></div> <div></div>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<div></div> <div></div>
<input type="checkbox"/> Elec Repair (10%)	<div></div> <div></div>	<input type="checkbox"/> Language (Own) (EDU)	<div></div> <div></div>	<input type="checkbox"/> Ride (05%)	<div></div> <div></div>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<div></div> <div></div>

WEAPONS

Weapon	Regular	Hard	Extreme	Damage	Range	Attacks	Ammo	Malif.
Unarmed				1d3 + db	-	1	-	-

COMBAT

Damage Bonus

Build

Dodge

BACKSTORY



Personal Description _____

Traits _____

Ideology/Beliefs _____

Injuries & Scars _____

Significant People _____

Phobias & Manias _____

Meaningful Locations _____

Arcane Tomes, Spells & Artifacts _____

Treasured Possessions _____

Encounters with Strange Entities _____

GEAR & POSSESSIONS

CASH & ASSETS

Spending Level _____

Cash _____

Assets _____

QUICK REFERENCE RULES

Skill & Characteristic Rolls

Levels of Success:

Fumble	Fail	Regular	Hard	Extreme	Critical
100/96+	> skill	≤ skill	½ skill	1/3 skill	01

Pushing Rolls: Must justify reroll; Cannot Push Combat or Sanity Rolls

Wounds & Healing

First Aid heals 1HP; Medicine heals +1d3 HP

Major Wound = loss of $\geq \frac{1}{2}$ max HP in one attack

Reach 0 HP without Major Wound = **Unconscious**

Reach 0 HP with Major Wound = **Dying**

Dying: First Aid = temp. stabilized; then require Medicine

Natural Heal rate (non Major Wound): recover 1HP per day

Natural Heal rate (Major Wound): weekly healing roll

FELLOW INVESTIGATORS

Char.
Player _____

Char.
Player _____

Char.
Player _____

Char.
Player _____

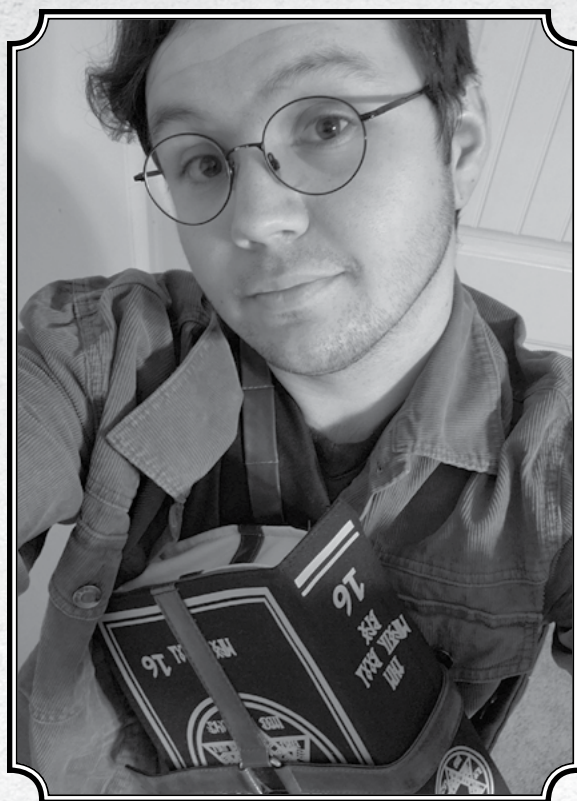
Me

Char.
Player _____

Char.
Player _____

Char.
Player _____

Char.
Player _____



NICHOLAS JOHNSON

Nicholas Johnson is a writer from Lakeland, Florida. He became an avid reader at a young age, and quickly discovered the works of Lovecraft and a great number of other authors, leading him to develop a taste for classic literature. Not long after, he was introduced to TTRPGs and immediately fell in love with them. When his time was not consumed in these two favorite leisure activities, he focused diligently on his academic studies. This served him well, as he went on to graduate from the University of Florida with a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology. After graduation, he briefly became a teacher in the correctional system, but quickly became disillusioned and sought other opportunities.

While between jobs, he fell back on his creativity and pursued his love of writing and TTRPGs. He delved deeper into the Mythos that had so fascinated him and made his debut with *Alone Against the Tide*. Since then, he has gone on to work on several other projects as both a writer and editor. He currently spends much of his time engrossed in numerous writing projects, and he has plans for more *Call of Cthulhu* works in the future.

CONTRIBUTOR BIOGRAPHIES



LYNNE HARDY

Originally trained as a biomedical scientist, Lynne discovered roleplaying games back in the mists of time—or the early 1990s, as they're more commonly known. The second game she ever played was *Call of Cthulhu* and, after writing and editing for companies such as Nightfall Games, Cubicle 7, and Pelgrane Press, she returned to the non-Euclidian fold to act as the lead writer, editor, and line developer on the multi-award winning *Achtung! Cthulhu* Kickstarter project for Modiphius Entertainment. She is now Associate Editor at Chaosium for *Call of Cthulhu* and Line Editor for the upcoming *Rivers of London RPG*. Lynne doesn't like horror films much as they're far too scary, but she is rather fond of tea and fountain pens. And a nice G&T, of course...

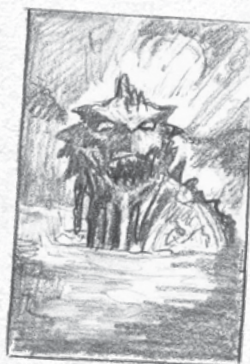
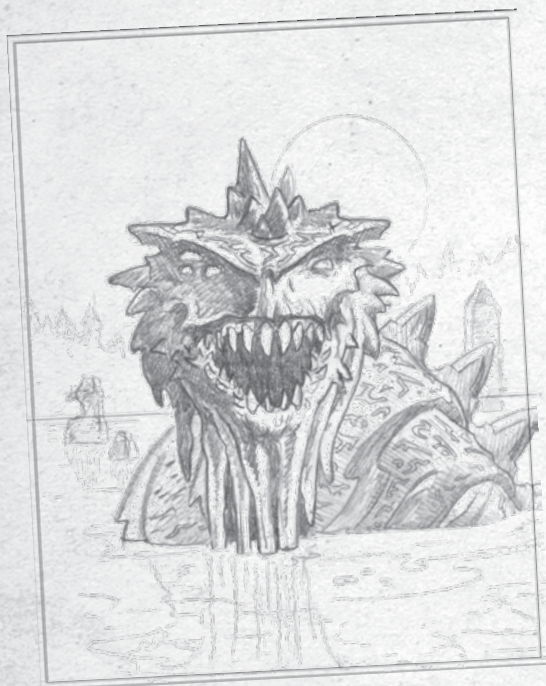
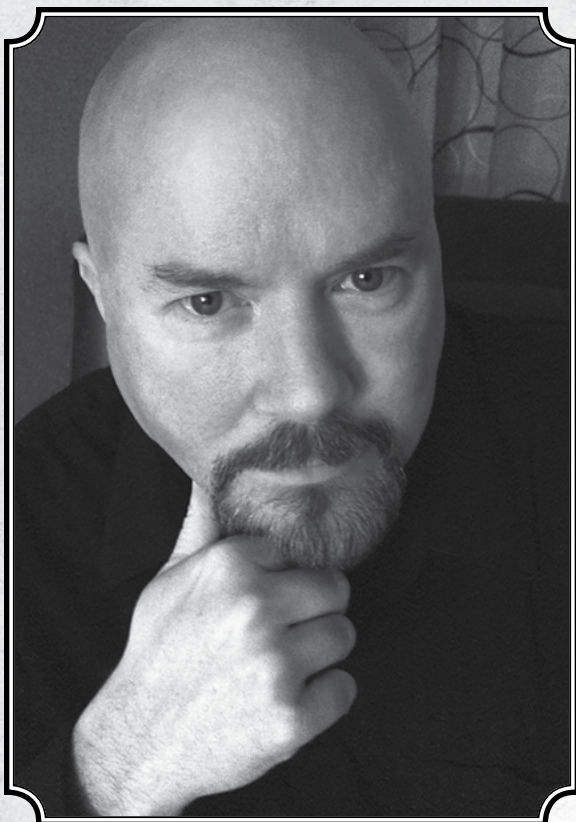


MIKE MASON

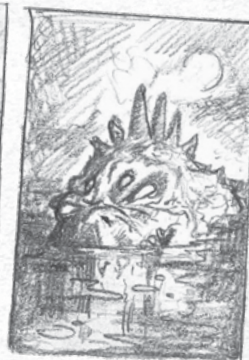
is an award-winning game developer and creative director for the *Call of Cthulhu* roleplaying game. Mike is the co-writer of *Call of Cthulhu 7th edition*, *Pulp Cthulhu*, and also took the lead on the *Call of Cthulhu Starter Set* and the revised *Masks of Nyarlathotep*; in fact, traces of Mike's tentacles can be found on every book in the line. Around the millennium, Mike published *The Whisperer*, a zine devoted to *Call of Cthulhu*, and ran the Kult of Keepers, a group of *Call of Cthulhu* scenario writers organizing numerous convention games. Mike previously worked for Games Workshop as the Line Manager and co-writer of the ENnie Award winning *Warhammer 40,000 RPG Dark Heresy*. Mike lives in the Midlands of England, betwixt the rolling Derbyshire Peaks and the Satanic Mills of Nottinghamshire.

M. WAYNE MILLER

ENnie Award winning illustrator M. Wayne Miller continues his quest to synthesize the perfect blend of science fiction, fantasy, and horror with his work. Having carved a place among the best in the industry, he welcomes the challenge and reward of ever greater achievement, and ceaselessly strives to learn and grow as an artist and illustrator. His list of clients includes Chaosium Inc., Thunderstorm Books, Celaeno Press, Kobold Press, and Pinnacle Entertainment Group, as well as numerous authors and private collectors.



1



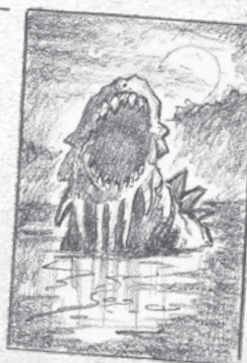
2



3



4



5



6

DORUK GOLCU

From a very young age, Doruk wanted to create monsters. To that end, he studied until his eyes bled out of his skull and got degrees in genetics and neurobiology, only to find that the creation of monsters was considered “unethical” in those fields. In the end, he decided to just draw them instead and became an illustrator. *Chaosium* and *Call of Cthulhu* hold a special place in his heart for being where he got his first professional break as such. When he is not busy drawing and painting, he teaches Argentine tango, practices martial arts, and eats unhealthy amounts of chocolate. He tends to move to an entirely new location every five years or so, but is currently hiding in a small sleepy town in the US Midwest with lots of trees, squirrels, and probably some cryptids.





CALL of CTHULHU®

Alone Against THE TIDE

Solitaire Adventure by the Lakeshore

Set in the 1920s, *Alone Against the Tide* is a solo horror adventure for the *Call of Cthulhu* roleplaying game. You take on the role of an investigator traveling to the affluent, scenic, and remote lakeside town of Esbury, Massachusetts. You decide your pathway through the story by choosing from the options presented. Your choices not only affect what happens to your investigator, but also the fate of Esbury's residents and visitors—even the town itself!

You may choose to create your own investigator or use the ready-to-play investigator, Dr. E. Woods, a professor of archaeology from Miskatonic University. There are a variety of reasons for visiting Esbury, but almost all are tied in some way to Esbury resident, Professor William Harris.

What has Professor Harris' research got to do with the strange green fog enveloping the town? Who are the menacing, dark-suited men that arrived on the ferry with your investigator? And, why is a Buddhist monk visiting Esbury, a town more used to entertaining New England's wealthy elite?

Armed with a pencil, some roleplaying dice, and a copy of the *Call of Cthulhu: Keeper Rulebook* or the *Call of Cthulhu Starter Set*, you are ready to brave the mist-shrouded streets of Esbury.

Dare you take on the challenge?

For use with the *Call of Cthulhu* roleplaying game.



**Doctor
E. Woods**
— an academic
researching the
town of Esbury.

What is Call of Cthulhu?

Call of Cthulhu is Chaosium's roleplaying game of mystery and horror set within the world of the Cthulhu Mythos. Players take on the role of investigators of the strange, arcane, and unknown: regular people making a stand despite the cost to body and soul. Against weird cults, bizarre magic, and otherworldly monsters, only they can save humanity and the world from the terrors from beyond.



CHA23174 \$14.99

ISBN-13: 978-1-56882-351-5

5 1499



9 781568 823515

For more information about Chaosium
and Chaosium publications, please see
our website at chaosium.com

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