

FOR
MATURE GAMERS



UNDER A WINTER'S SNOW



DEATH & DISEASE IN NORTH DAKOTA



FOX
COUNTRY

9

Nathan Ross & friends

for 7th Edition

CALL of CTHULHU®
CLASSIC ERA



UNDER A WINTER'S SNOW

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Feel free to contact us through our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/StygianFoxPublishing/>

Published by Stygian Fox, Chester, CH1 3EE, UK.

<http://www.stygianfox.com>

Printed on Earth and other, co-existent, planes of existence.

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Under A Winter's Snow

INTRODUCTION

IN THE SMALL TOWN OF EISNER, NORTH DAKOTA, THE COLD WINTER WIND HOWLS AND THE SNOW BLOWS IN THICK WET CLOTS, SWADDLING THE TOWN IN A STIFLING WHITE.

IN THE SMALL TOWN OF EISNER, NORTH DAKOTA, A MAN COLLAPSES, SWEATING AND SHIVERING. HE IS BUNDLED INTO BED, SWADDLED IN BLANKETS TO REST AND HOPEFULLY, RECOVER.

HE DOES NOT.

AS MORE PEOPLE FALL ILL, THERE ARE FEARS THAT THIS MAY BE A RESURGENCE OF SPANISH FLU, REARING UP AGAIN TO CLAIM YET MORE LIVES.

OTHERS WHISPER OF A SHROUDED MAN SEEN IN DREAMS AND ABOUT THE STREETS AND OF OLD SUPERSTITIONS LONG THOUGHT FORGOTTEN.

BENEATH THE SNOW LIES THE FROZEN BODY OF A MAN, SWADDLED IN STIFLING WHITE AND SORCERY.

THE SOURCE OF THE TOWN'S ILLNESS AND DESPAIR.
IF ONLY THEY KNEW.



UNDER A WINTER'S SNOW

Under Winter's Snow is a scenario set in the small rural city of Eisner (pop,n 712), North Dakota in 1921 and follows the investigators as they try to unravel the mystery surrounding a deadly disease outbreak. It is intended to run as a stand-alone adventure, though it can be adapted to an existing campaign and there are several different options for beginning the scenario to facilitate this.

For Keepers wishing to set the scenario elsewhere though, neither the city nor state are integral to the events, only that it is set in a small town where snow is common.

Likewise, though this adventure is firmly anchored in the events of the early 1920s, referencing the 1918 Spanish flu pandemic and World War 1, Keepers can also play upon these same themes in a modern setting, using modern pandemics and wars as analogues.

The situation facing the investigators may at first seem straightforward; a supernatural illness bound to a body buried in the snow, but as is often the case, things are a little more complicated, and tragic, than that.

The roots of the sickness engulfing Eisner run deeper and can trace their way back several years to two young teenagers; Eli Hutchens and Carolyn Dawill. The pair were childhood sweethearts and could scarce be separated from one another, regularly absconding from lessons and chaperones to spend a few private moments together and exchange sweet words and tender kisses. One of their favored retreats was an abandoned farmhouse, which possessed a reputation for being haunted. It was here that the pair found an aged and illuminated grimoire. The grimoire contained unsettling illustrations of shapeless creatures and malignant orbs. It described an entity, Yog-Sothoth, as well as several magical incantations and the means to contact it. They delved into the study of forbidden knowledge together until Eli was drafted into the growing war in Europe. As he left, the two promised to marry upon his return.

As the war in Europe drew to a close, she received a telegram.

There had been a German offensive, the telegram said. Her fiancé's battalion had suffered heavy shelling, it said. They were deeply sorry to inform her, it said.

Touched by madness and unwilling to simply grieve, she scoured the depths of her sorcerous knowledge. On a moonless night, she summoned an otherworldly creature, without fixed form or definite shape. She bound it to her and bound to it her beloved Eli's visage and voice. She did not have him back, not truly, but for her it was enough.

There was just one small problem.

Eli was not killed during the German offensive, only wounded and abandoned in the war-torn French countryside. When he recovered and returned to Eisner, he encountered Carolyn's summoned creature. It struck him down, burying his body deep in the snow on Camphor Hill, overlooking the town. But Eli was not without sorcery of his own and on the cusp of death he cast a spell, suspending himself in a state halfway between living and dead. The spell would feed upon the life and health of those around him until he was restored and he could claw himself free of the snow.

It is at this point, as Eli's spell saps the life from Eisner's citizens and Carolyn is becoming curious about the strange disease, that the investigators arrive.

THE INVESTIGATORS

There are several options for how the investigators come to be involved in the events taking place in Eisner. Keepers are strongly encouraged to work with their players as they create their investigators to ensure that they fit within the background and with each other, as the options presented can lead to quite different experiences.

When people first began to fall ill in the town, Eisner's local physician, Dr Jeremiah Antle, contacted the Ward County Medical Office to report the situation, concerned that it may be the beginning of another epidemic. The investigators have been sent by the county to assess the situation and to provide what assistance they can in limiting the spread of the disease. As officials of the county, this gives the investigators both a good reason to investigate and the authority to dig deeply into the situation and uncover the truth. Using this background, the investigators have no reason, at least initially, to suspect the involvement of any supernatural or Mythos-related elements and indeed, may not even be aware of the Mythos at all. This background is considered the default for this scenario and a few small details will have to be adjusted to accommodate other backgrounds.

Alternatively, Eli, upon his return to America sans both voice and face, has left a trail of confusion and madness behind him in his return to his hometown. The investigators are members of a law enforcement agency and have managed to track him back to Eisner just as the events of the scenario begin. This set-up also provides the investigators with a good deal of authority to get things done but focuses more directly on tracking down Eli from the outset and lends itself toward a somewhat pulpier style of gameplay. Whether the investigators know beforehand that the individual they are tracking is a sorcerer is up to you.

A third option for involving the investigators, a perennial favorite and a useful option if you have an eclectic group of investigators, is to simply strand the investigators in Eisner as a snowstorm rages. Because this option provides investigators no intrinsic motivation to investigate the illness aside from their native curiosity, it is suggested that you really dial up the atmospheric and thematic elements (discussed shortly) in order to build a sense of increasing urgency, running the scenario as a survival horror as they attempt to escape the town before succumbing to the supernatural illness.

None of the investigators should be local residents of Eisner, though they may have ties to people within the town. Distant friends, correspondents or in-laws are all effective ways to tie the investigators into the situation and can be a starting point for investigators looking for information on Eisner's recent history as well as encouraging them to care

more deeply for the fate of the doomed town. Although...

A final option for involving investigators is to disregard that previous recommendation entirely. The investigators may be a group of local youths, just entering adulthood as the events of the scenario begin. The early 1920s was a difficult time for rural America. A severe economic depression, combined with increased migration to cities and a decline in demand for American agriculture gutted many small communities, even without the addition of Mythos-fuelled plagues. Presenting this scenario as an allegory of this trend can be an interesting take on the events, as the investigators come to grips with the diseased and dying husk of their hometown while being tempted by the, comparatively, brighter opportunities of city life. However, this option will require some adaptation of the material presented here to account for the investigators' existing local knowledge and is only suggested for more experienced Keepers.

ELI AND THE SUMMONED ENTITY

In order to reduce confusion throughout the rest of this scenario, the entity summoned by Carolyn and wearing his features will be referred to as Eli, while the real Eli will be referred to as the Shrouded Man, based on his appearance in the dreams of his victims.



THEMING

Mythos tales often focus upon the powerlessness of humans in the face of more powerful, eldritch forces. Under Winter's Sky builds on this by using two natural forces as key thematic elements; the winter weather and disease. These two themes are central to the tone of the scenario and should be developed throughout the course of play. Both of these are elements that humanity has always struggled against, yet cannot hope to truly defeat.

Several scenes have been outlined in later sections incorporating these themes, though you should of course feel free to adapt and come up with your own twists to better suit your particular group.

SNOW AND INCLEMENT WEATHER

Snow conceals. The Shrouded Man's body concealed beneath the snow only the most obvious expression of this theme. Throughout the scenario, key clues are concealed beneath snow. The weather is an active adversary, hindering the investigators with icy winds as they search for the truth. Nor should Keepers restrict this to the literal; Carolyn's snow white face, a white sheet covering a deceased patient, an important letter buried in an avalanche of other documents. These descriptive elements work together to create a cohesive, underlying obstacle that hinders their goals throughout the scenario.

The flip side to this theme is that as the snow may conceal the truth, what is hidden beneath the snow is horrifying, and perhaps better left unknown. The revelations that the investigators uncover as they dig down into the snow are shocking and should always come at a cost.

THE RAVAGES OF DISEASE

The disease ravaging the town of Eisner is of course, one of the central elements of this scenario and deliberately evokes reference to the 1918 Spanish flu pandemic. This reference is explicit within the scenario, the NPCs and investigators are not simply fearful of the disease spreading through the town, they are scared of the disease as a recurrence of Spanish flu. It is as much a fear of the known as of the unknown that grips them.

Like Spanish flu, the disease in Eisner is potent, striking down healthy adults as easily as the infirm, elderly and newly born. It is able to take someone hale and hearty in the morning and reduce them to death's door by evening. It is beyond the investigators' abilities to treat or contain the disease. This should quickly become apparent to investigators and Keepers should reinforce this. Their only hope lies in finding the source of the disease and ending it.

However, it is not just the literal illness that the investigators must contend with, the town itself is also metaphorically succumbing to the disease. Descriptions of the town should be rife with imagery of decay and disease and as

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the situation in Eisner worsens, this should only increase. Openly draw comparisons between the sick and the town, it should be clear to the investigators that if they fail, the town as a whole is doomed.

A TICKING CLOCK

It is crucial that investigators face pressure, pushing them to find the source of the disease. At the start of the game, roll 2D10 and subtract the total from 100. This number represents the impact of the disease upon Eisner, essentially a **SAN** track measuring the health and wellbeing of the town. Should this number reach zero then, though not everyone in Eisner may yet be affected, the town is irrevocably doomed. Whether Keepers determine this starting value before play begins and keep it secret from the investigators or whether the Keeper rolls it as they first learn of the extent of the infection in Eisner and allow it to be public information is a matter of personal preference.

Throughout the scenario, the Keeper should regularly roll, subtracting the result from the total of this track. Keepers should roll 1D10 the first time and increase the roll by 1D10 for each subsequent roll, up to 3D10. Few, if any treatments or public health interventions the investigators may enact will slow the spread of the disease but should they come up with a good idea, consider reducing the number of D10s rolled.

But how often should you roll? There are two options. The first is to roll at regular in-game intervals, such as once each day, with the situation worsening after each roll. This option constrains the length of the investigation to between 4–7 days. Alternatively, Keepers may decide to save these rolls for moments of increased tension within the narrative. This can be effective in tying together the worsening state of the town with the tension the investigators are experiencing. But remember, you will only have 4–7 rolls to play with before Eisner is doomed, so make each one count.

Occasionally within this scenario, you will find reference to “waves.” These simply refer to specific points on the track where the effects on Eisner get measurably worse. This includes the range and spread of the disease, the severity of the symptoms and number of people killed and the likelihood of the investigators getting sick.

Track Value	Wave
81-100	Wave 1
31-80	Wave 2
0-30	Wave 3

ARRIVAL IN TOWN

Before the investigators have even arrived in Eisner, lodgings have already been arranged for them in a small boarding house run by husband and wife, Francis and Doreen Rutger. From the very beginning, the investigators should be placed on the back foot in their efforts. Though Dr Antle

was quick to warn state authorities about the outbreak, the illness spreads and acts quickly and several people have already died by the time the investigators arrive. Be sure to draw attention to this as they arrive at the Rutger’s boarding house; two bodies, secured under white sheets, are being loaded into a truck just a few doors down.

FALLING ILL

Another mechanism to put pressure on the investigators is if they also fall ill, affected by the Shrouded Man’s spell. As a guide, one investigator should begin experiencing symptoms when the track enters wave 2 with a second investigator falling ill at the beginning of wave 3. Keepers should feel free to adjust this based on party size or preference. All of the investigators getting sick early in the scenario can provide a strong motivator for players. The disease causes severe flu-like symptoms that eventually lead to death and has the following mechanical effects.

Each time the disease track is rolled, sick investigators must make a **CON** roll. Failure causes them to lose **CON** equal to the highest D10 rolled. Even on a successful roll, a sick investigator will lose **CON** equal to the lowest D10 rolled. Keepers may also wish to further simulate the effects of the illness by imposing penalty dice on physically demanding activities.

In addition, the nightmares and fever dreams brought on by the disease take a toll on the mind. Investigators must also make a **SAN** roll (0/1D6) each time they fail a **CON** roll. These nightmares also serve an additional purpose, allowing Keepers to provide investigators horrifying insights, either specific clues and intuitions relating to the case or fragments of Mythos spells, potentially increasing an investigator’s Mythos skill.

FRANCIS AND DOREEN RUTGER

Francis and Doreen have lived their entire lives in Eisner and have settled into a quiet retirement, renting their empty rooms to travellers and seasonal workers for a little extra income. The Rutgers know many of the families affected by the spreading illness and can provide the investigators introductions to these families to begin their investigation. They can also provide directions to Dr Antle’s clinic along with a hand drawn map of the area (see Handout 1). Take care that only the locations in black are marked when the Rutgers give them the map. Aside from this, much of the Rutgers’ information boils down to small town gossip that is not particularly germane to the investigation, though the scandalous living arrangements of Miss Carolyn Dawill and Mr Eli Hutchens (given that they are still unwed) should be among them.

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The Rutgers play another important role in the running of this scenario. The Rutgers wish to make the investigators as welcome as possible, providing both breakfast and dinner each day. Keepers can use the tone and events that occur during these scenes as a barometer to reflect the town's overall wellbeing by incorporating the following scenes during the course of the scenario.

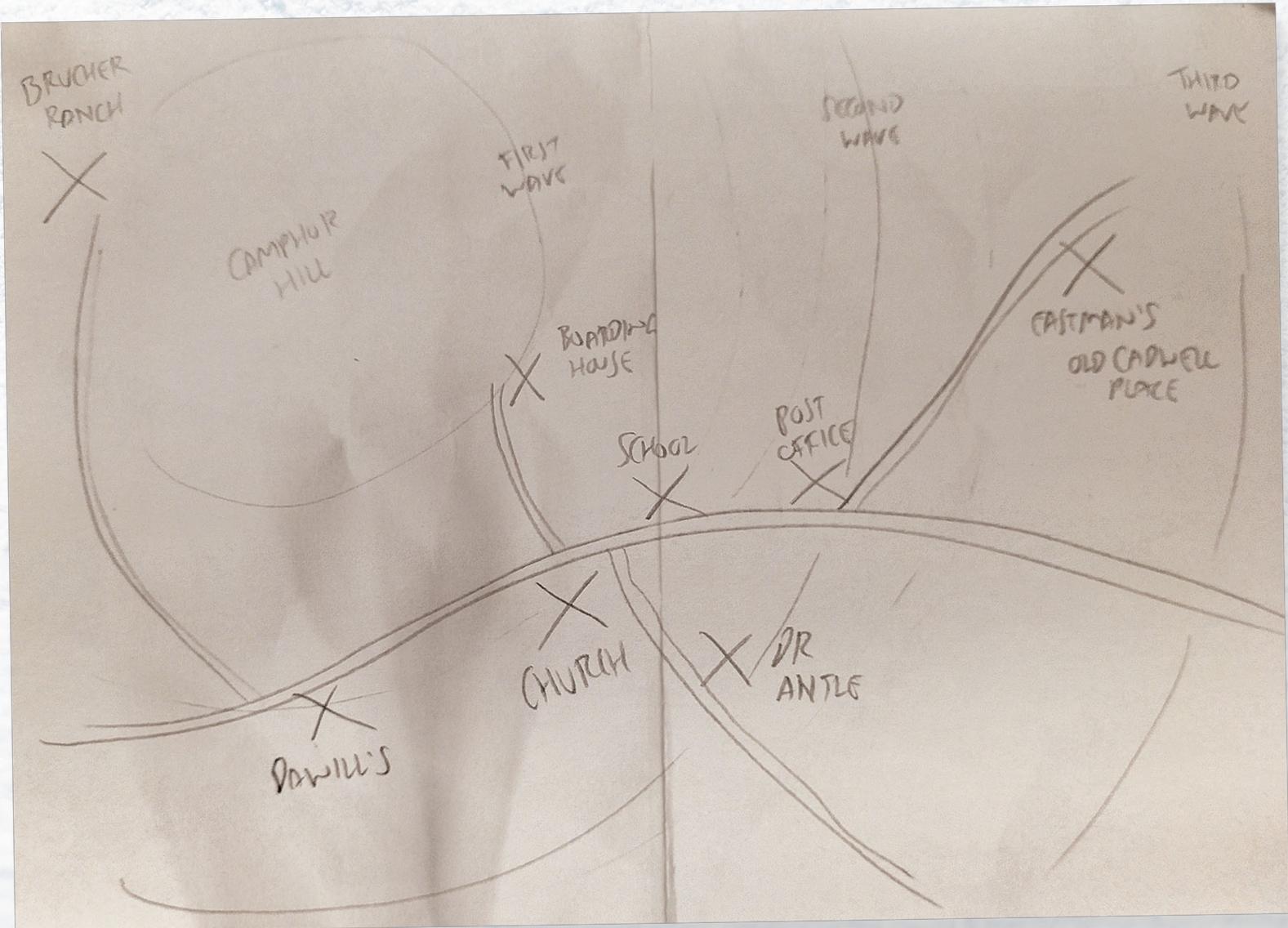
During breakfast as the disease enters wave 2, Doreen drops the milk jug with a startled cry. The jug shatters and the milk, spoiled, smelling rank and filled with curdled chunks, spills everywhere. This is particularly effective if the investigators are currently examining any clues and documents which might be damaged and covered by the pooling white milk.

During wave 3, as the investigators sit down for their meal, a tortured groan and crash echoes through the house. The roof of the back porch has collapsed under the weight of the snow and Francis half-buried and insensible. A doctor's examination places his health and survival in doubt.

MAPPING EISNER

Canny investigators may think to map the spread of the disease through Eisner in an attempt to locate the source of the infection. Alternatively, Keepers may suggest this to struggling players after a successful **Idea** roll. The map provided by the Rutgers in Handout 1 contains a great deal of information (marked in red) that can be annotated on the map over the course of the game, providing investigators an evolving grasp on the disease's spread. Keepers should not attempt to obfuscate or confuse the information that might be gleaned from mapping the disease's spread, although the location of Samuel Eastman's home on the east of Eisner is a small red herring.

Handout #1 — map of Eisner



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INITIAL CONSULT

The primary source of information on the rapidly spreading illness is Jeremiah Antle, Eisner's only doctor. Overwhelmed by the rash of cases and stymied in his efforts to successfully treat his patients, Jeremiah is all too eager for the additional help the investigators can provide. Depending on the investigators' backgrounds and introduction to the scenario, it is likely that they will have been corresponding with him prior to their arrival in Eisner and he will be expecting them.

Jeremiah has kept detailed notes on the progression and spread of the disease (see Handout 2). The symptoms of the disease are flu-like in nature, though particularly severe. Those infected first develop a dry cough followed by fatigue and muscle aches throughout the body. This is followed by prolonged fever, sweats and chills before becoming non-responsive and dying. He has noted the fitful and disturbed sleep his patients have been getting, but writes this off as delusions brought about by the fever.

A man of science, Jeremiah is unwilling to entertain notions of a supernatural origin to the disease even as the evidence mounts as the scenario proceeds.

EXAMINING PATIENTS

Jeremiah will facilitate any enquiries or examinations the investigators might wish to conduct. Half a dozen patients are being treated in Jeremiah's clinic while the rest are being cared for in their own homes. Jeremiah is being assisted by two nurses working alternate shifts, one of which is Carolyn.

Physical examination of the patients only serves to confirm Jeremiah's observations. Investigators may want to take swabs and use their medical or scientific skills in an attempt to culture or otherwise isolate the disease to better study it. This approach will take some time to provide conclusive results, time in which the disease will continue to infect and kill the people of Eisner and will ultimately, only provide negative results. After all, the illness is caused by sorcery, not a virus or bacterium. However, such an examination of the patients does yield one curious discovery. In none of the patients are there any signs of secondary infection or pneumonia. Unusual, as these are normally the main contributors to lethality in cases of the flu.



01/12/21

C. Tiller (M, 37). Presented with feelings of weakness, persistent cough. Prescribed dram of whiskey to clear lungs. No sign of phlegm or other infection however.

01/14/21

Patient complains of aches and severe muscle cramping. Fell when leaving clinic. Keeping him overnight for observation. Suffered from disturbed sleep throughout the night. Did not wake but was highly active and cried at several times. Has developed a fever (101°F).

01/15/21

Fever has worsened (103°F) and Tiller cannot get out of bed due to weakness. Second dose of whiskey. No signs of pneumonia.

01/16/21

Patient wakes up only intermittently, delirious. Non-responsive, cannot awaken. C. Tiller passed, 2.19 pm.

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01/15/21

H. Vinsen (F, 54) Complained of tight, binding feeling in chest and suffering from restricted breathing. No signs of congestion or inflammation. Wanted to keep her overnight but she insisted she return home.

01/16/21

House call. Patient suffering bouts of severe nausea and low-grade fever. Still refusing to stay at clinic. B. Vinsen (husband) confided that she had been out of sorts for two days prior to seeking treatment. Left him with strict instructions to prevent spreading infection to himself.

01/18/21

House call. Patient appeared pale and complained of chills. Examination revealed reduced muscle strength and bleeding at the back of the throat. Patient also had difficulty focusing. Husband reports that she has slept poorly the last two nights.

01/21/21

House call, called by B. Vinsen. Patient's condition much deteriorated. Has not slept for periods of greater than 30 minutes at a time. Feels going to sleep and suffers delusional episodes. Prescribed sedative to help patient rest. B. Vinsen admitted to shortness of breath and intermittent cough.

01/22/21

H. Vinsen passed during the night.

NIGHTMARES AND FEVER DREAMS

Talking to the patients (those that are still cogent enough to speak) or their families reveals that not only are they suffering from nightmares and fever dreams but that the nightmares share a disturbing level of similarity. These nightmares are a manifestation of Eli's spell as it drains the health and vitality of those afflicted.

In the nightmare, the dreamers are confronted by a man of strange and unnerving charisma. At no point in the dream does the man speak but instead his meaning seems to sear itself directly upon their minds. From the patients the man demands something, though in the manner of dreams they cannot recall precisely what he was demanding upon awakening, only whether they acquiesced. Particularly sharp investigators may notice that in those who are able to at least occasionally reject the man's demands the disease progresses more slowly and that giving into his demands seems to coincide with a rapid deterioration in condition. The man's appearance appears particularly alarming to the patients. For though they will admit that the man possessed eyes, nose, mouth and other facial features, each patient will insist that the man had no face and are unable to give the investigators a coherent description.

CAROLYN DAWILL

From the beginning, Carolyn involves herself in the investigators' efforts and tries to provide them assistance, whether they want the help or not. Carolyn's interest has already been piqued by the stranger aspects of the illness and will point out the patients' disturbing and similar nightmares to the investigators should they not pick up on this themselves. Even if they spurn her help, Carolyn will keep popping up on the peripheries of the investigation as she takes her own steps to uncover the source of the disease.

Observing Carolyn as she cares for the clinic's patients portrays her as a kind, caring and self-assured young woman. Several years studying Mythos tomes and grimoires have left her quite mad, though this is not obvious at first glance. Not because Carolyn is deliberately deceptive, but because she is so self-deceptive. Carolyn genuinely believes that she loves and cares for her parents, her fiancé, her town. But truly, she is obsessed with appearing loving and kind and preserving a false and fanciful image of the past. This should become apparent to the investigators across the length of the scenario as they uncover the truth of some of her actions. On losing her fiancé, she summoned an alien entity to replace him. Her attempts to cure the sick, both in the current epidemic and during the Spanish Flu, ignored the subsequent deaths her spells caused. These actions reflect the darker depths of Carolyn's psyche and her insanity.

ELI HUTCHENS

Passing the alien entity off as Eli was a straightforward matter for Carolyn. Not only does it look identical to him, any changes in his personality have been ascribed to his experiences in the war.

To the investigators however, Eli should come across as obviously unsettling, as if there is something malign and altogether wrong with him. The entity possesses a perpetual and distinctive cough, a horrible wet, hacking sound and if asked, this is blamed on a piece of shrapnel lodged in his chest.

Despite Eli's intelligence, it is bound to obey Carolyn and follows her directions to the letter. Without her instruction though, it will sometimes work to its own ends, such as striking down the Shrouded Man.

The investigators are bound to meet Eli early in their investigation, as he drives the van collecting the bodies of the dead. It is crucial that the investigators do meet him as recognizing his distinctive cough provides them an important lead when a patient's body is stolen later in the scenario.

CONDUCTING AUTOPSIES

The investigators may choose to examine one or more of the bodies of the disease's victims. Currently, these bodies are being held in the basement of Eisner's only church until they can be buried. The far wall of the basement is crumbling and ridden with mildew, caused by a burst water pipe and that the wall appears on the verge of collapse. This shocks the pastor who claims there was no evidence of damage or a burst pipe earlier in the week.

When performing an autopsy, the investigator conducting the autopsy should make a **Medicine** roll. Whether they succeed or fail, they find something seriously wrong with the deceased. Their internal organs are twisted and distorted in shape and seem to have been reduced to a fragile jelly-like consistency. The autopsy also reveals the same unusual finding as a medical examination of the living patients; there are no secondary infections in any of the victims. Failing the **Medicine** roll indicates that the investigator has ruptured the organs. This fills the room with a ghastly stench of rot and death, requiring everyone in the room to make a **SAN** roll (0/1D4) as they gag and choke.

SAMUEL EASTMAN

Samuel Eastman was the first person to fall ill, dying before the investigators arrive in Eisner. On the evening that the Shrouded Man returned, Samuel and Eli were hunting on the slopes of Camphor Hill. They met the Shrouded Man and Eli struck him down. Samuel witnessed all of this and the glimpses he caught of Eli's true form (and the Shrouded Man's own strange visage) rendered him insensible. After burying the Shrouded Man, Eli brought Samuel home.

Due to his proximity when the Shrouded Man cast his

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spell, Samuel quickly began to suffer from its effects. This, along with what he had seen upon Camphor Hill, reduced him to a raving mess.

Samuel's wife, Anna, has been deeply affected by his strange behavior prior to his death. As a means of coping, she has thrown herself into her job at the post office, where the investigators are likely to find her. Point out how uncomfortable it feels inside the post office; the temperature spiking too hot and too cold by turns as the gas heater struggles and coughs.

Initially reticent, the investigators' questions quickly have her babbling, a much needed outlet for her grief.

Despite not knowing the truth about what happened on the hunting trip, Anna is certain that there was something deeply wrong with her husband before he passed, more than simple illness. She is adamant that his ravings when he was brought home were not caused by the disease and that he wasn't showing any symptoms at this point. In particular, she says he spoke of meeting a shrouded figure. Samuel had said to her, "He has come home. He was here already but now he's come home again."

Eli is one of her husband's oldest friends, though if the investigators ask she will quietly admit that the relationship

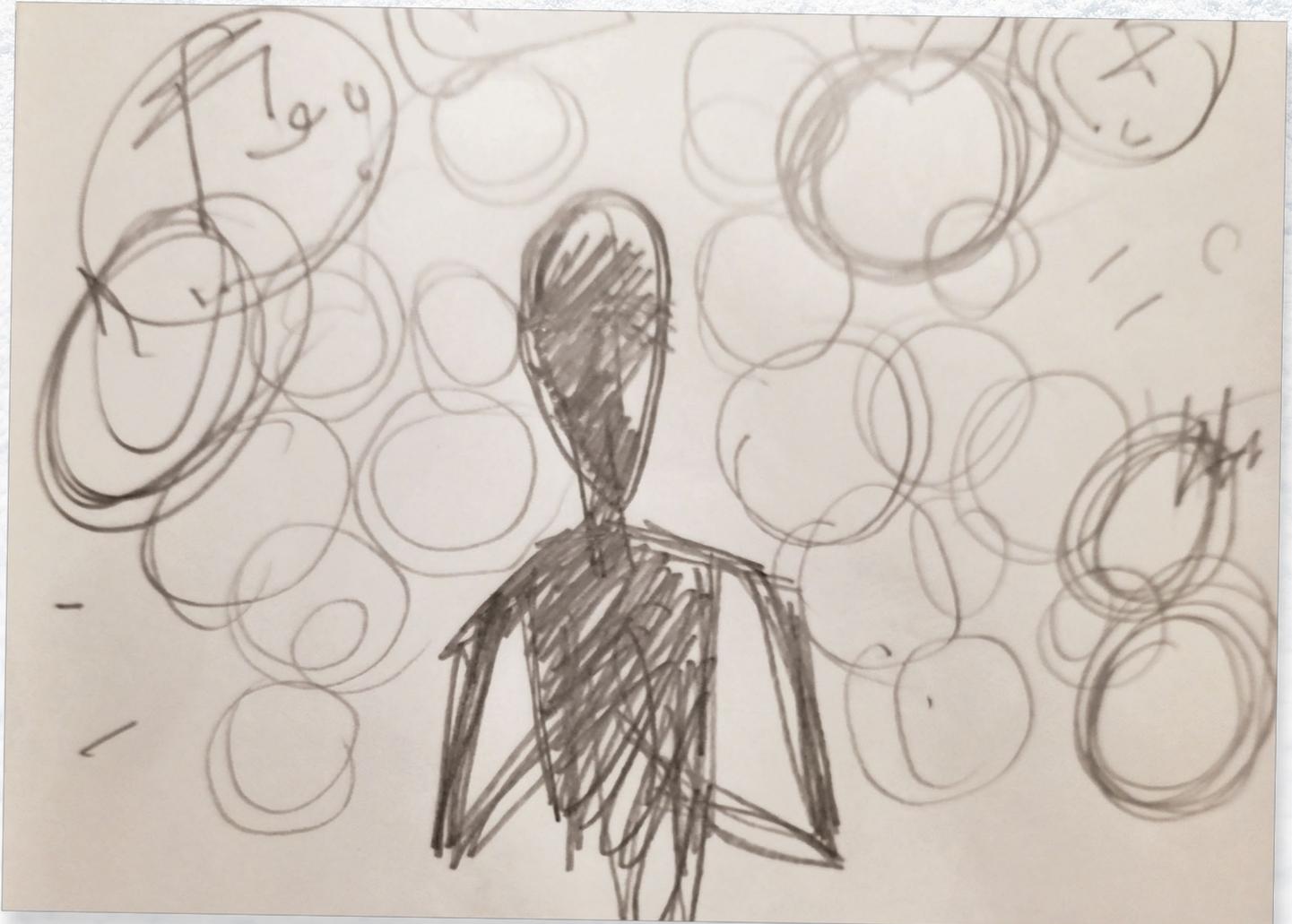
between the two had been strained for the last few years, ever since Eli returned from the war.

Samuel also wrote and sketched compulsively before he died, filling a journal with near illegible scrawl. Anna avoids going home whenever possible but is willing to give the investigators a key if they wish to retrieve the journal. The Eastman's house is located across the road from the old Cadwell place (described later); an imposing and decaying farmhouse long abandoned and buried in the snow. This journal is not a true Mythos tome but an examination of the journal does require a **SAN** roll (0/1). A successful **Cthulhu Mythos** skill roll will successfully identify imagery associated with Yog-Sothoth amongst the sketches (see Handout 3).

BRUCHER RANCH

The Shrouded Man's sorcery does not only affect the people of Eisner. As the investigators begin studying and trying to treat the disease, be sure to have them run into Reggie Brucher, owner of a local cattle ranch. His cattle have begun to sicken and die, threatening his livelihood.

Handout #3 — Samuel's Sketch



Reggie is morose and superstitious, quick to connect the illness affecting his cattle and that affecting the people of Eisner, and quick to pronounce it a divine or supernatural judgment on the town for any number of perceived social ills. He has turned to drink as a means of coping. His own drunken and wretched state is a harbinger of what is in store for Eisner. Should investigators obtain permission from him to examine his livestock, they can confirm that they are suffering similar symptoms to the townsfolk.

THE OLD CADWELL PLACE

Asking any resident of Eisner about the dilapidated farmhouse near the Eastman's yields a plethora of unlikely and sinister stories about "the Old Cadwell Place," abandoned since the turn of the century. Although stories of ghostly apparitions, strange lights and satanic worship abound, the truth is that the patriarch of the family worshipped Yog-Sothoth and was a sorcerer of some small power before, after miraculously recovering from an injury as his daughter-in-law simultaneously died of an illness, he was murdered by his own son, who then cast his body into the fireplace. Investigators may learn of this story from one of the older locals, such as the Rutgers, and the astute among them may see the connections it has to their current situation. It is from his diary and grimoire that Carolyn and Eli first began learning sorcery.

The farmhouse has stood empty for many years and the interior of the building reflects this, thick with dust, and rot has set in to the walls and floorboards. There are indications that animals have nested here at some point, though none recently.

There are also more recent traces left behind in the house by Carolyn and Eli, though these are still several years old.

- ✘ A moldering picnic blanket has been spread upon the floor of one of the bedrooms along with the remnants of a picnic basket which has been torn nearly to pieces by animals.
- ✘ A handful of books are piled in one corner. They have suffered some water damage but are recognizable as secondary school textbooks, The newest bears a publishing date in 1911.
- ✘ Most telling are the initials "EH and CD" crudely carved into the side of a bookcase.

Depending on how closely the investigators search the farmhouse, they may also find signs of singed wood beneath the haphazardly applied and peeling whitewash in one of the rooms. Scraping up the whitewash reveals an eldritch symbol burned into the wall, one associated with the Outer God Yog-Sothoth.

TREATMENT OPTIONS

Without knowing the true cause of the disease, and without extensive knowledge of the Mythos or the occult, there is little the investigators can do to effectively treat patients. Dr Antle has been prescribing patients whiskey to clear their lungs, and has prescribed several patients sedatives in order to help them sleep. Unbeknownst to Dr Antle, the use of sedatives is actively harming his patients, allowing the disease to affect them more rapidly.

Family members of the sick are also trying various home remedies and cures which they swear by; tonics made from cherry bark, camphor and white kerosene are common, as is packing the patient in ice.

However, none of these treatments have been very effective.

Because the origin of the disease is supernatural and not biological, public health interventions such as quarantine, handwashing and disinfectant use are likewise of limited use.

A POSSIBLE CURE

While the investigators options for treating the disease through mundane options seems bleak, one avenue does present itself. At the peak of the Spanish flu outbreak, more than a dozen residents of Eisner, at death's door, effected a seemingly miraculous recovery. The investigators can learn of this from local records and these can be corroborated by Dr Antle, though he ascribes them to adequate care. The common link between these recoveries, which should strike the investigators, is that all the patients were being cared for by Carolyn Dawill.

Carolyn did indeed cure her patients, using a smaller version of the spell which now afflicts the town. For Carolyn however, there is little difference between caring for the sick and curing them, and she will not think to mention any potential cure to the investigators or Dr Antle, at least initially. Should the investigators ask her about this, she will freely admit to using a treatment of her own devising, though she will leave out its supernatural origins. Once it has been brought up by the investigators, she is eager to treat the patients in the clinic as soon as possible. If the investigators don't speak to Carolyn, her curiosity about the strange course of the illness is piqued and she approaches Dr Antle about treating the patients herself. This should occur around the middle or toward the end of wave 2.

With the help of the investigators, Carolyn administers her treatment to the patients. She burns a mix of powders in a censer, encouraging the patients to breathe deeply of the thick, pungent smoke. Scant minutes later, they begin to thrash, their limbs tangled in white bedsheets. A dark, vivid shadow coalesces in the center of the room and from within, a whispered incantation can be heard. Everyone witnessing this must make a **SAN** roll (1/1D4+1). Carolyn, as well as any investigators who make a successful **Cthulhu**

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Mythos roll, recognize this as an invocation to Yog-Sothoth. The shadow lingers in the clinic for several hours and the patients' conditions fluctuate throughout. Carolyn and the Shrouded Man's spells work at cross-purposes and by the time the shadow has vanished, half the patients are markedly improved, while the other half are dead.

BOON OF THE PUTRID HUSK

This spell, cast by both Carolyn and the Shrouded Man, is a deeper variant of the *Curse of the Putrid Husk*, presented in the *Call of Cthulhu Keeper's Rulebook*. Unlike the standard spell, it inflicts nightmare and disease upon a target over a prolonged period in order to restore health to another, usually the caster. It restores health (Hit Points) at a five to one ratio over the course of several days, costing **SAN** twice that of the Hit Points to be restored.

A STOLEN BODY

Obsessed with learning more about whatever sorcery opposed her own, Carolyn instructs the entity to steal one of the patients' bodies that night, planning to raise the spirit and question it further. Unless the investigators are particularly paranoid or lucky, this theft will not become known to them until the following morning. Neither Dr Antle, nor the nurse on duty saw the theft take place however, the nurse heard a horrible wet, hacking coughing sound sometime after midnight. This should immediately turn the investigators' suspicions onto Eli.

SNOWSTORM

It is trivial for the investigators to obtain Eli and Carolyn's address (and they may already have obtained the address at an earlier point). Be sure to highlight the snow and biting wind as they leave the clinic. The weather rapidly worsens as the investigators pursue Eli back to his home, blanketing Eisner in a fierce snowstorm.

If the investigators are driving through the storm, the driver will need to succeed on a hard **Drive** roll to avoid running off the road and crashing the car into a snowdrift. Even if they succeed, the heavy snow has caused a whiteout. Play upon the investigators' sense of isolation, lost in a white expanse and unable to see beyond a few feet, and use this scene to roleplay more deeply any phobias or manias the investigators may have, particularly if they are ill. This may take the form of phantasms or hallucinations and may even be an opportunity to provide subtle clues if necessary. Investigators may endeavor to make for shelter by foot, and they are not far from the Dawill home. However, exposure to the bitter cold is dangerous and investigators take 1D10 damage if they fail a **CON** roll.

THE LURE OF ANSWERS

Assuming the investigators made their way to the Dawill's directly from the clinic, they arrive while Carolyn is in the midst of interrogating the spirit of the dead patient. There is no answer if the investigators knock and the door itself is locked. However, a search reveals a set of cellar doors at the back of the house, unlocked and recently cleared of fallen snow. Carolyn performs most of her sorcerous work within the cellar, including raising the spirit. Descending, the investigators clearly hear Carolyn's voice as she questions the spirit. Listening at the doorway before confronting Carolyn might prove a good idea; catching sight of the recently resurrected spirit will require them to make a **SAN** roll (1/1D6+1).

The spirit tells Carolyn the following:

- ✘ The Shrouded Man called them, by name and by knowledge, while they slept and while they dreamed.
- ✘ He called from above and he called from below. They knew him but could not see him. He was hidden in the bright, white dark.
- ✘ He called for them to build for him an altar of flesh upon yellow peaks. Each time they did finish their labor, the altar would crumble and would be torn down. Then, they would begin their labor again. Until the yellow peaks were soaked with blood.

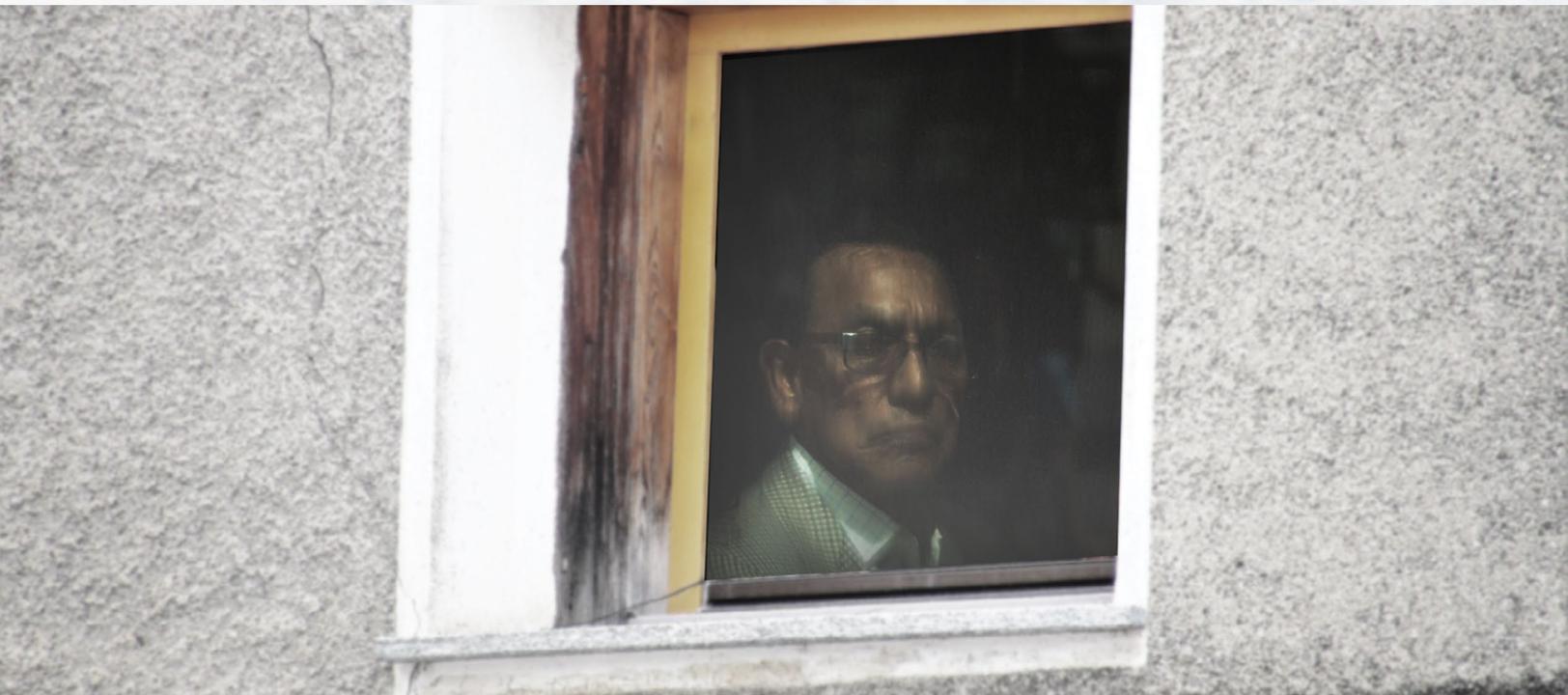
Eli is also in the cellar with Carolyn.

With the information she has learned from the spirit, Carolyn decides she must track down the caster of the spell, though whether it is to learn from them or stop them is unclear, even to Carolyn. Should the investigators confront her, far from seeing it as a threat, Carolyn attempts to enlist their aid. After all, they all want the same thing. Namely, to stop the spread of the disease.

Carolyn does her utmost to persuade the investigators to help her acquire another body, that she might learn more.

Whether they work with Carolyn or not should be left to the investigators. Encourage the investigators to weigh the benefits of discovering the disease's source (both for Eisner as a whole and for themselves personally) against their moral convictions and the taboos against desecrating the dead.

However, helping Carolyn comes at quite a cost to the investigators' sanity and humanity. Acquiring the body, whether by theft, grave-robbing or abuse of their authority, is but the first step and Carolyn will want their help in preparing it and with the summoning spell. From there, Carolyn's demands will only increase, first for more bodies and eventually escalating to the still-living sick, who she plans to sacrifice in a ritual to locate the Shrouded Man. These monstrous acts should build and weigh upon the investigators, eventually making their strained psyches dependent upon Carolyn's direction.



Throughout, investigators should have every opportunity to stop or try to prevent Carolyn continuing her necromantic investigation. If they do so, Carolyn flees, instructing Eli to cover her escape.

Her sorcerous efforts will locate his body buried on Camphor Hill, though not before the bloody and macabre sacrifice is concluded.

THE DAWILL'S HOUSE

By searching Carolyn's house, the investigators can gain revealing insights into Carolyn and the situation as a whole. Few visit the Dawill's home and the house is cluttered with scraps and oddities that have caught Carolyn's interest over the last few years. Many of these objects are quite banal but notes on magical incantations, occult diagrams and unsettling reagents also lay scattered about in plain view.

Despite this, Carolyn and Eli do not live alone in the house. The house does not belong to either of them but rather to Carolyn's parents. Carolyn has cared for them since she was a teenager. While learning from the Cadwell grimoire, Carolyn made the mistake of trying to share her knowledge of the Mythos with her parents. As a result, both were driven quite mad. They were both later victims of Spanish flu but after being cured by Carolyn, they were left dull-eyed, complacent and drooling.

It takes time, patience and Persuasion to get anything coherent out of Carolyn's parents but should the investigators do so, they are given a crucial account pointing them toward the location of the Shrouded Man's body. The Dawill's account is rife with fantastical elements and non-sequiturs that make it difficult to parse but, put simply, is as follows.

The man in the mask, who Carolyn's parents have somehow intuited is not in fact Eli, returned home in the dark of night, clothed in blood. The man in the mask saw them watching and he laughed at them. He whispered that the mask was his, he had killed its owner and he would wear it forevermore.

With careful questioning, the investigators can ascertain that the Dawill's account occurred the same night Eli brought Samuel Eastman back from their hunting trip.

The original Cadwell grimoire can also be found in the house. This grimoire contains descriptions of Yog-Sothoth and invocations for contacting him. Even with no knowledge of the Mythos or of Yog-Sothoth, the imagery and iconography should be familiar to the investigators from both the Cadwell's and Samuel Eastman's journal. In addition, the grimoire also contains instructions for a number of other spells. Of particular interest to the investigators are two spells; one for summoning and binding alien entities to a specific form and a second used to recover from injury by partaking of the life of others. The grimoire also contains a spell to dismiss such shapeless entities and makes clear that such entities "usurp their form's appearance entire, that only one may look as such." The spell for summoning such entities has been annotated in Carolyn's handwriting, musing about using a relative's blood or essence to bind an entity to a particular form.

By Carolyn's bedside, the investigators can find a bundle of letters, written to her by Eli during the war. Wedged among them is a telegram from the United States Army, confirming the death of Eli Hutchens and offering condolences (see Handout 4). These letters appear to be well worn, as if read and handled often.

UNDER A WINTER'S SNOW

Dear Mr and Mrs Hutchens,

It is with regret that I write to you to share my unreserved condolences at the decease of your son, PFC Eli Monte Hutchens, No. 433571, American Expeditionary Forces. During an enemy offensive and amidst heavy shelling, your son ventured into no man's land to rescue a beleaguered squadron. Regrettably, he lost his life, defending his fellow soldiers to the last and saving several lives.

As his commanding officer, I know that he spoke often and with affection of both you and of his fiancée waiting back home. Though we mourn him alongside you, I trust that you find some small measure of comfort that he at all times comported himself honorably and that the cause for which he gave his life is just.

You have my deepest sympathies and condolences in your loss.

Yours Faithfully,



1st Lieutenant Matthew Hadforth

From the offices of Maj. Gen. C.A.F. Flagler,
Commander of 42nd Division and Gen. John J.
Pershing, Commander of the American Expedi-
tionary Forces

CAMPHOR HILL

Camphor Hill, so-named for the copious yellow blooms of camphorweed which carpet its slopes in spring and summer, is where the Shrouded Man's body lies buried and the centerpoint of the affliction upon Eisner. Mapping the spread of the illness, the account of Samuel Eastman, the spirit's oblique reference to yellow peaks and Carolyn's sorcerous divinations all point toward Camphor Hill.

The exact site of his body bears no marker and is difficult to find, only an Extreme **Spot Hidden** roll reveals the slight perturbations in the snow where he is buried. Rather, as the investigators get closer to the Shrouded Man, the effects of his spell upon them worsen. Those investigators already sick begin to hallucinate, seeing the form of the Shrouded Man from their dreams pointing along the path while those as yet unaffected begin coughing and feeling feverish. In this manner, the investigators find their way to a small copse of trees where the Shrouded Man's body lies buried.

Unless the investigators have taken efforts to prevent this, they will only arrive at the burial site with, or shortly after, Carolyn and Eli, though this need not lead to immediate hostilities. Like the investigators, Carolyn is showing clear symptoms of the disease as the spell wicks away her health, though Eli appears completely unaffected.

Unearthing the body of the Shrouded Man reveals that the snow has been torn and rent from beneath. For the Shrouded Man has cast not a single spell to resurrect himself, but several. Each time restored to life, he tried to tear his way free from his snowy tomb and failing fell, casting the spell to resurrect himself once more.

From here, the resolution of the scenario depends upon Carolyn and the investigators. Both destroying and resurrecting the Shrouded Man will rid Eisner of the disease plaguing it.

Tragically for Carolyn, the spell she cast to grant the summoned entity her beloved's features means that she does not recognize the Shrouded Man and, assuming the investigators do not clue her in on this detail, she can be persuaded to destroy him. However, without pressure from the investigators, she will be inclined to assist his resurrection, out of curiosity if nothing else. Should she learn of the Shrouded Man's true identity, she will stop at nothing to bring him back.

A particularly grisly end awaits the investigators if they have fallen too far under Carolyn's sway (as outlined in *The Lure of Answers*). Carolyn will gladly trade away one or more of their lives in order to complete his resurrection.

AFTERMATH

Should the investigators manage to prevent the Shrouded Man's resurrection before the countdown reaches zero, they regain 1D6 **SAN**. The people of Eisner, though grieving those lost to the epidemic, stand together as a community.

Many of the disease's symptoms quickly vanish, though a full recovery takes much longer. If the investigators have also managed to banish the entity back to its home plane, they regain a further 1D4 **SAN**. The investigators may still manage to prevent the Shrouded Man's resurrection after the countdown has reached zero but this is very much a pyrrhic victory. With so many deaths, the town of Eisner cannot hope to recover. The town will eventually be abandoned, lost in the snow.

ELI HUTCHENS, The Entity

STR 90 **CON** 120 **SIZ** 65 **INT** 45 **POW** 45
DEX 80 **HP** 18
DB: +1D4 **Build:** 1 **Move:** 10 **MP:** 9

ATTACKS

Fighting (Flensing Claws) 60% (30/15), damage 1D4+2+db

Firearms (Rifle) 30% (15/6) Springfield M1903 bolt action hunting rifle, 1/round, magazine capacity 5, 110 yards base range, 2D6+4. Has only the single magazine in the rifle.

Skills: Drive Automobile 20%, Listen 40%, Spot Hidden 40%, Stealth 25%, Track 50%.

Defenses: None above base but regains 1 HP per round.

Spells: Body Warping of Gorgoroth (variant)

Sanity Loss: None while the entity is wearing Eli's form but if the entity attacks or takes damage, a hint of its alien form is momentarily revealed, 1/1D4+1.

Quotes: A wet hacking cough.

CAROLYN DAWILL

STR 50 **CON** 60 **SIZ** 50 **INT** 70 **POW** 90
DEX 60 **APP** 50 **EDU** 65 **SAN** 0 **HP** 11
DB: none. **Build:** 0 **Move:** 8 **MP:** 18

ATTACKS

None above base.

Skills: Cthulhu Mythos 28%, First Aid 75%, Medicine 50%, Occult 75%, Psychology 40%.

Defenses: None above base.

Spells: Adjure the Shapeless (variant Banishment of Yde Etad),- Boon of the Putrid Husk, Contact Shapeless Entity, Curse of the Putrid Husk, Elder Sign, Resurrection, Shrivelling, Summon/Bind Shapeless Entity

Nationality: American

Age: 24

Education: Nursing diploma

Quotes: "This isn't a normal illness, you can see that. I need a body, someone who's died from it. I'll use it and figure out the source. I'll fix it. Make everything right again. You just have to trust me."



UNDER A WINTER'S SNOW

- 01/12/21 *C. Tiller (M, 37).
Presented with feelings of weakness,
persistent cough. Prescribed dram of whiskey
to clear lungs. No sign of phlegm or other
infection however.*
- 01/14/21 *Patient complains of aches and severe
muscle cramping. Fell when leaving clinic.
Keeping him overnight for observation.
Suffered from disturbed sleep throughout
the night. Did not wake but was highly active
and cried out several times.
Has developed a fever (101° F).*
- 01/15/21 *Fever has worsened (103° F) and Tiller
cannot get out of bed due to weakness.
Second dose of whiskey.
No signs of pneumonia.*
- 01/16/21 *Patient wakes only intermittently, delirious.
Non-responsive, cannot awaken.
C. Tiller passed, 2:19 pm.*

CALL OF CTHULHU 7TH EDITION

- 01/15/21 H. Vinsen (F, 54). Complained of tight, binding feeling in chest and suffering from restricted breathing. No signs of congestion or inflammation. Wanted to keep her overnight but she insisted she return home.
- 01/16/21 House call. Patient suffering bouts of severe nausea and low-grade fever. Still refusing to stay at clinic. B. Vinsen (husband) confided that she had been out of sorts for two days prior to seeking treatment. Left him with strict instructions to prevent spreading infection to himself.
- 01/18/21 House call. Patient appeared pale and complained of chills. Examination revealed reduced muscle strength and bleeding at the back of the throat. Patient also had difficulty focusing. Husband reports that she has slept poorly the last two nights.
- 01/21/21 House call, called by B. Vinsen. Patient's condition much deteriorated. Has not slept for periods of greater than 30 minutes at a time. Fears going to sleep and suffers delusional episodes. Prescribed sedative to help patient rest. B. Vinsen admitted to shortness of breath and intermittent cough.
- 01/22/21 H. Vinsen passed during the night

Under A Winters Snow



DEATH & DISEASE IN NORTH DAKOTA

Nathan Ross & friends