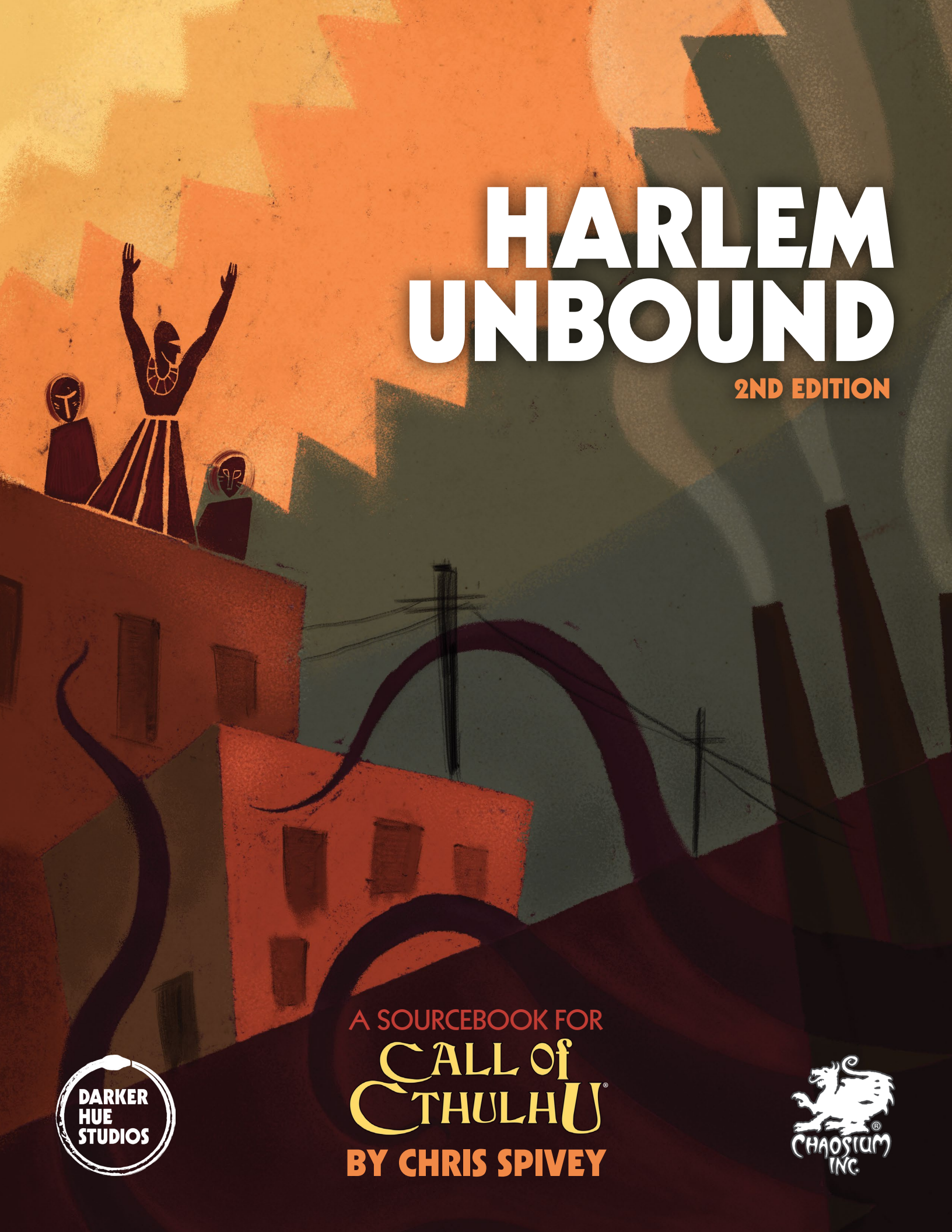


HARLEM UNBOUND

2ND EDITION

A SOURCEBOOK FOR

CALL of CTHULHU®

BY CHRIS SPIVEY

DARKER HUE STUDIOS

CHAOSIUM® INC.

HARLEM UNBOUND

Against the Cthulhu Mythos in 1920s Harlem

CHRIS SPIVEY
AND FRIENDS

CREDITS

Authors
Chris Spivey, Sarah Hood, Alex Mayo, Steffie de Vaan, Dr. Cameron Hays, Bob Geis, Noah Lloyd, Ariel Celeste, and Neall Raemonn Price

Development
Chris Spivey

Chaosium Development and Editorial
Mike Mason

Artists
Brennen Reece, Alex Mayo, and Jabari Weathers

Editorial
Dixie Cochran, Jill Spivey, Adam Alexander, and Mike Mason

Cartography
Alex Mayo

Layout
Nicholas Nacario

Art Direction
Chris Spivey

Proofreading
Keith Mageau and Chitin Proctor

Book Design
Michal E. Cross

Licensing
Michael O'Brien and James Lowder

Call of Cthulhu Creative Director
Mike Mason

Dedication
This book is dedicated to the lights in my life,
Jill and Zora Spivey.
Without you, my dreams would not be possible.

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

Harlem Unbound © copyright 2015, 2020 Darker Hue Studios. All rights reserved.

Call of Cthulhu © copyright 1981–2020 Chaosium Inc. *Pulp Cthulhu* © 2016–2020 Chaosium Inc. All rights reserved.

Call of Cthulhu, Chaosium Inc., and the Chaosium dragon logo are registered trademarks of Chaosium Inc. Pulp Cthulhu is a trademark of Chaosium Inc.

The Chaosium Yellow Sign © copyright 1989 Chaosium Inc.
The Chaosium Arcane Symbol (the Elder Sign) © copyright 1983 Chaosium Inc.

This is a work of fiction. This book includes descriptions and portrayals of real places, real events, and real people; these may not be presented accurately and with conformity to the real-world nature of these places, people, and events, and are reinterpreted through the lens of the Cthulhu Mythos and the *Call of Cthulhu* game in general. No offense to anyone living or dead, or to the inhabitants of any of these places, is intended.

This material is protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America. Reproduction of this work by any means without written permission of Darker Hue Studios and Chaosium Inc., except for the use of short excerpts for the purpose of reviews and the copying of character sheets and handouts for in-game use, is expressly prohibited.

For more information about Darker Hue Studios products please visit darkerhuestudios.com.

Find more Chaosium Inc. products at chaosium.com.

Chaosium Publication 23166
ISBN: 978-1-56882-422-2
Printed in Lithuania

CREDITS

Clear Credit

In Their Footsteps was written by Chris Spivey, with art by Brennen Reece; Song of Harlem by Neall Raemonn Price, with art by Brennen Reece and Nino Malong; Harlem Stride by Ariel Celeste, with art by Alex Mayo and Jabari Weathers; Harlemites by Chris Spivey, with art by Brennen Reece and Jabari Weathers; Souls of Harlem by Chris Spivey and Sarah Hood, with art by Nino Malong and Brennen Reece; Harlem Herself by Sarah Hood, with art by Alex Mayo and Nino Malong; Storytelling by Chris Spivey, with art by Nino Malong and Alex Mayo; Harlem Hellfighters Never Die by Chris Spivey, with art by Nino Malong and Alex Mayo; That Jazz Craze by Dr. Cameron Hays, with art by Brennen Reece and Alex Mayo; The Contender: A Love Story by Bob Geis, with art by Nino Malong and Alex Mayo; Ode to the Lost by Noah Lloyd, with art by Jabari Weathers and Alex Mayo; Dreams and Broken Wings by Alex Mayo, with art by Brennen Reece and Alex Mayo; Whispers of Harlem by Chris Spivey, with art by Brennen Reece, Alex Mayo, and Jabari Weathers; 1680s Harlem by Neall Raemonn Price; Your Name in the Book by Steffie de Vaan, with art by Jabari Weathers and Alex Mayo; 1680s Pre-generated Characters by Chris Spivey, with art by Alex Mayo; Supporting Cast by Chris Spivey, with art by Brennen Reece and Alex Mayo; and Appendices by Chris Spivey, with art by Brennen Reece and Alex Mayo. Chris Spivey provided additional text throughout. Mike Mason edited the manuscript and also wrote additional text throughout for this new edition.

Our Thanks to These Commenters and Play Testers

Chris Spivey would like to thank Ruth Tillman, Nino Malong, Rachel Wolfe, Jenny Harlett, Jeffrey Eaton, Philip Jean Pierre, Jill Spivey, and The Kickstarter Backers for their contributions to the first edition of this book. Thanks also to Adam Alexander, Charles Gerard, and Matthew DeForrest, Ph.D for their reviewing and insights. Chaosium would like to thank James Lowder and David Larkins for their insights and support in the book's development. Additionally, Darker Hue Studios would like to thank the entire Chaosium team for their partnership in bringing the second edition of Harlem Unbound to life.

Ponape Scripture, Ythogtha, and Zanthu © copyright 2020 the Estate of Lin Carter. Used with permission.

Atlach-Nacha © copyright 2020 the Estate of Clark Ashton Smith. Used with permission.

Chaosium recognizes that credits and copyrights for the Cthulhu Mythos can be difficult to identify, and that some elements of the Mythos may be in the public domain. If you have corrections or additions to any credits given here, please contact us at mythos@chaosium.com.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION: IN THEIR FOOTSTEPS 6

CHAPTER 1: SONG OF HARLEM 9
Their Eyes Were Watching God: A History of Harlem 9
Harlem Timeline 22

CHAPTER 2: HARLEM STRIDE 25
A Guide to the Renaissance 25
Equality of Art 25
Harlem is Fashion 26
Cuisine Meant for Royalty 27
The Written Word 27
Music is Life 28
Science 30
To the Stage! 30

CHAPTER 3: HARLEMITES 33
Creating Investigators 33
New Skill 34
Occupations 34
Pulp: Harlem Style 39

CHAPTER 4: SOULS OF HARLEM 41
About the People 41
Historical Folk 42
Clubs, Organizations, and Teams 68

CHAPTER 5: HARLEM HERSELF 73
Sugar Hill 74
The Valley 75
Jungle Alley 81
The Black Mecca 83
The Golden Edge 87

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 6: STORYTELLING 89

The Struggle 89
RACISM: Reality and the Game 90
Application in Play 91
Scenario Hooks 93
Sample Mythos & Supernatural Entities 100

CHAPTER 7: SCENARIOS 105

Harlem Hellfighters Never Die 105
That Jazz Craze 133
The Contender: A Love Story 153
Dreams and Broken Wings 183
An Ode for the Lost 209
Whispers of Harlem 237
Your Name in the Book 269
Collected Player Handouts for All Scenarios 301

APPENDICES 335

Appendix A: Supporting Cast 335
Appendix B: Glossary of Harlemese 347
Appendix C: Timeline 349
Appendix D: Recommended Media 352
Appendix E: Bibliography 353

INDEX 355

INTRODUCTION: IN THEIR FOOTSTEPS

HEY HEPCATS!

That *Harlem Unbound* Second Edition happened is kind of a miracle—much like the original book! When I first pitched what would become *Harlem Unbound*, I heard a lot of responses from people telling me why it would never work: it was not their brand, it would not sell, people did not want to be reminded of the past, and so on. But, getting the book out into the world was too important to me. I wanted to honor my cousin Zora Neale Hurston, preserve the past that is continually being erased in our schools and books, and also combat the ever-present rising tide of racism. I also had faith there were other people out there who wanted to address these issues. I was proven right then and hope this new edition finds an even broader audience now.

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

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

DIFFERENT DRUMMER

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

Players are likely to come to *Harlem Unbound* for various reasons:

- They are looking to expand their *Call of Cthulhu* adventures.
- They want to know how Lovecraft works with black protagonists.
- They want to try something different.
- They know Chris and are curious as to what he's been doing for years.
- They heard about the first edition and want to see what all the buzz is about.

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

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

WALKING THE WALK

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

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

IN MY SHOES

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

IT'S ALL JAKE.

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

Welcome, old sport.

Chris Spivey
December 2018

LOVECRAFT WAS A RACIST!

We all know it, but let's say it louder for the people in the back: Lovecraft was racist, misogynist, bigoted, and anti-Semitic. (I know that some people will mention his Jewish wife, but how did that end? Hint: not well.) Anyone denying his abhorrent views is lying to themselves and you. But, we're not here to focus on the man. We are here to focus on the work and how to elevate it. As a black man in the world, I am surrounded by racism, spanning from passive and quiet to active and violent. On a daily basis, I choose what to take in and what I choose to shine a light on in order to educate others. I use my experiences to tell inclusive stories in an effort to illuminate that which has often remained unseen (or purposefully ignored).

But, this isn't just a disclaimer that we will discard once we turn the page. Harlem Unbound is built on the concept of tackling issues head-on. Some say Lovecraft was "of his time," but we know that his racism was even worse than that. It was so bad that racists like Robert E. Howard, author of the Conan stories, called him out for being too racist. So, what does the popularity of his work, built on racism, say about our current society? And, how do you address the popular work which is so tethered to his reprehensible world view? We can't change the past, but we can tear it down and rebuild it into something that focuses on bringing us together. This can only be done by facing ugly truths.

No matter how I feel about it, Lovecraft's work has cultural impact and I use his work to try to make a better, more inclusive world. You can help by acknowledging the truth, dismantling it, and building a foundation of inclusion with what you have learned. We do this in-game and in the real world. So, say it with me and we'll move on: "Lovecraft was a racist. We'll use his fear and pettiness for something better."

Chris Spivey

BLR17

CHAPTER 1

SONG OF HARLEM

THEIR EYES WERE WATCHING GOD: A HISTORY OF HARLEM

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

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

Many races and creeds called Harlem home; the German and Irish gave way to waves of Southern Italians, Eastern European Jews, Caribbean Latinos, and finally the Great Migration of blacks from the Deep South and the West Indies. To be Negro in Harlem in the 1920s, at the height of the Renaissance, was to have dignity. It was a place where you could stand straight and strut like a lion, where you didn't have to append "sir" to the end of your sentence unless you felt it fine and proper. Where you didn't have to play the fool to let white folks relax into complacent contempt, where you didn't have to smile to disarm them. Where you could see a play by Negro playwrights with Negro actors, pick up a volume of Negro poetry speaking loud to Negro yearnings and Negro anger, go to a club and hear the thump and sass and horns of music that was yours. To be Negro in Harlem was to be part of something larger, something black, a drop of blood singing scat in taut veins, fueling muscles hard and scarred writhing under skin deemed uncouth and unacceptable no longer. What white society denied them elsewhere, they could find in Harlem. Later on, people would call it a Renaissance, but when they called anything at all at the time, they called it hope.

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

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

Opposite: Members of the Weckquaesgeek

BLESSED VALLEY: NIEUW HAARLEM

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

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

When men did walk in the area, they called it Schorrakin or Konkyast, but mostly they called it Muscoota—the river along the green sedge. They were of the Wappinger band of the Lenape, a tribe who called themselves Weckquaesgeek, and they spoke the same language as their cousins in the Miskatonic Valley. They never learned the secrets of smithing or writing, but they knew much of the darkness in the world at that time, taught by foreigners who came to the tribe from shattered island cities, wielding cruel and strange sorceries with an air of weary fatalism. Some refused to subsume or submit to the tribe and give up their ways. The Wappinger responded by shaving their heads with sharpened seashells, gripping their remaining hair into a tight mohawk held straight with bear fat, and masking their faces with war paint. They fought the earliest cultists of the Americas with hatchets and knives and clubs of stone, butchering and scalping the traitorous few who sought to perform dark rites dedicated to the Black Man, an avatar of Nyarlathotep, whose malignant influence periodically re-infected the isle. So, it went for centuries—if any can add color or nuance to these events, they're as dead as the shoggoths, for the Wappingers' fate was sealed in the warm and fair September of 1609.

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

"Uncivil and stupid as garden poles," was how Europeans described the Lenape tribe, who gave women important public roles as leaders of the community, and who fiercely refused to bow in the ways of war. Thus, the Dutch were

HARLEM RACE RIOT 1935

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

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

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

frustrated to no end. The natives did not value the rich pelts wriggling on animals in their woods, nor the potential bounty of the forest, but preferred to live peaceful and semi-nomadic lives without regard for material wealth. Their values were of little use to Europeans, but the Weckquaesgeek's settlements were another story, whose paths still trace a trail through the city. A Weckquaesgeek trail existed where Broadway does today, and at low tide a traveler could cross "the wading place" on foot, marveling at the splendid hills all around. The place that would become the Harlem Meer of Central Park was once a farming village called Konaade Kongh, "place of the waterfall at the hill."

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

1626 was not only a marker for the end of Wappinger Muscoota, but a marker for the creation of Black Harlem. Eleven Africans in chains stepped off a splintered ship and plunged their feet into the cold Atlantic to stride to shore, blinking their eyes in the bright sunlight shining over New Amsterdam. More came soon. Some were eventually manumitted, but they never benefited from suffrage or education. Yet, they could buy land, and they started to.

Only when Peter Stuyvesant assumed the post of Director-General did the fortunes of the New Amsterdam colony begin—from pure exploitation to a serious attempt at culture. Given the post in part as compensation for a leg lost to a cannonball, Stuyvesant divided the island into lots, encouraging farmers to settle and till the land. The Harlemites ate on tables strewn with fresh flowers, digging into meals of onions, spinach, and beets, with fresh venison and crab bought

Elder Thing

from indigenous hunters. Unable to trade with the indigenous peoples in the open, due to treaty, the Harlemites sent their children to negotiate, and their kids came back speaking the Algonquian languages. The practice of trade largely ended in 1660, as the upstate war between natives and foreigners spilled down into Harlem, but the village itself continued to grow. All the while, white indentured servants and black enslaved people walked the streets in the muggy summers and huddled together in the frigid winters. Dutch racial attitudes were more lenient than the British, and many enslaved black people were able to buy their freedom.

THE REMAINS OF NEW AMSTERDAM

Many of the cults that periodically infect Harlem in the Renaissance era date back to the families who took root during this earlier period in Harlem's history. Several ancestral cults—the aristocratic de Vries, the paranoid Van Kleis, the working-class Rapelyes, and the degenerate Jansens—proudly trace their bloodlines to early settlers of the island. One cult, founded by Ambrose Morgens and five crew members of the *Half Moon*, had an unbroken line of transmission from the first settlers on the island, pieced together from a rogue Wappinger shaman with the immortal Morgens as still-living representatives of Nyarlathotep. Another family, the van der Heyls, were students of the *Necronomicon* but subsequently relocated far upstate. Peace wasn't in the hearts of the earliest European cultists, but a love of wealth was—the native peoples had long since recovered what few relics of the Old Ones remained in Manhattan, and they kept a great deal of lore ensconced in their woven histories.

Such cults still grow like tumors in the heart of New York, buying up native (and non-native) relics, strangling themselves with infighting, or being cut out by clever investigators and war-hardened heroes. But like tumors, they always return. By the time of the Harlem Renaissance, many had followed white migrations out of the city. They grew tendrils in Flatbush and Red Hook—and from there, extended their reach into small parts of Harlem—but remained separated by the elevated trains, living in mansions outside the city in Pocantico Hills or Mystic Seaport. But, with white traffic into Harlem, many walk the same soil their ancestors did, seeking to abuse and rip occult secrets out of the new natives, just as their ancestors did of old.

Even as the New Amsterdam colony was woefully mismanaged by a company with no oversight, Harlem prospered as a refuge and manorial system. Whenever poor conditions threatened New Amsterdam, overrun with pigs and sewage and criminal behavior, refugees were welcome in Harlem so long as they left their troubles behind. It was not the first time Harlem welcomed a people fleeing inhospitable conditions for the pleasures of the valley, and it would certainly not be the last. Religion thundered over the lives of everyone in Harlem, warning them that the days of drinking gin and cider, of bowling and boating, of pleasure and plenty would soon be ending.

WITHOUT A BLOW OR A TEAR: BRITISH HARLEM

Fewer than 200 soldiers and the tattered, half-ruined Fort Amsterdam stood against ten times as many fighting marines and four English frigates in the hot August of 1664. Peter Stuyvesant had named the settlement after the city of Haarlem, but the settlement lacked the formidable walls of its namesake. When a local merchant was captured and claimed the British had four times as many soldiers as they did, Stuyvesant thought he had little choice but to surrender the entire colony of New Netherland and all related cities to the British, who seized the colony saying, "without a blow or a tear." Stuyvesant had been prepared to fight to the death, having ripped apart a letter from the captain of a British man-o'-war. His position wasn't shared by his war-weary constituents; the ones who had much to lose in the fighting won out over the warmongers. Isaack de Forest, the local merchant, inflated the numbers of the British invaders in a bald lie to Stuyvesant and encouraged the latter to surrender without a fight and preserve the property of the colony. Secret covens and rich landowners alike breathed sighs of relief as the British swooped in. Two years later, Governor Richard Nicholls issued a patent that made Manhattan "one Body Politique and Corporate." The new owners soon found little trouble among the Dutch settlers, though they found little love as well.

Relatively few blacks lived in Nieuw Haarlem when the British took over and transformed it into Harlem (at first renamed "Lancaster," though the name never stuck), even though much of the economic activity of Manhattan (and the rest of the British Empire) was fueled by enslaved labor. Even when the Third Anglo-Dutch War of 1673 returned the island to the Dutch, reverting the place names and the political and social structure, the enslaved people remained—and the English took the island back a year later. Enslaved Black people were brought in by the thousands, violently uprooted from their homes and transplanted to an alien soil.

Those who found their way to the sleepy farming village of Harlem lived a quiet, even relatively peaceful existence, free of the intrigues and mysteries plaguing the continent. Situated as it was in Manhattan, Harlem was a popular destination for those escaping .

Harlem became a spot for the idle rich of New York, full of manorial estates generated by the Dutch patroons, and few took notice of the cults driven underground by the witch trials in Connecticut and Massachusetts. When plagues like yellow fever, measles, and smallpox ravaged the poor of New York, the rich would flee to the lush forests and gorgeous rivers of Harlem, where one could see four colonies on a clear day. Free from the crime and hustle of the city, luxurious estates rose on the plains. As a consequence, the neighborhood remained somewhat sympathetic to matters of the occult, though longstanding native powers and colonial investigators—from the English constabulary tradition, not the Dutch—grounded and guttered out any truly dangerous attempts at worshipping powers old and dark. This contrarian and superior spirit extended to those not involved in darker activities—many Harlemites supported independence, three generations after the British took control.

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

It was Hamilton who resurrected the town. "If I cannot live in splendour in the Town," he said, "I can at least live in comfort in the country." Hamilton's Grange, his grand house, renewed interest in Harlem's beauty. Hamilton had bought the land from what is now West 139th to West 146th, the same place as his battle, years earlier.

The town was slow to recover, and the families who'd lost much in the prior decades invested slowly until Harlem was integrated into New York City as an industrial suburb in 1831. Harlem held a reputation as being a lazy town, with the residents sleeping 20 hours a day. Yet their famous resistance and stubbornness remained: when the "gridiron" plan of New York's street expansion threatened to sweep away the Dutch streets and Indian trails, Harlem's residents revolted, and the planners eventually warped the streets of New York to accommodate the history of Harlem, even as it devastated the natural beauty. Even the rapid economic boom, links to the city proper, and influx of poor residents to work in their fields and factories didn't save the town's elite, and by the 1870s many of the old families had retreated from the heights of Harlem to the far suburbs of the city, or further up to Connecticut. Thus, many of the old cults, having long been wiped out and birthed anew, were finally tired of provincial Harlem and either moved to the more manorial places upstate or decamped for Massachusetts.

Despite investment, the panic of 1873 caused Harlem's housing market to shudder, and New York finally stepped in and claimed the lands once walked by the Wappinger bands. Harlem still had her rough shape, but she was much changed in character. Elevated railroads stretched from the city into the heart of Harlem, and row houses sprung up before giving way to apartment buildings. Italians and Eastern European Jews flocked to Harlem, settling in the east section of the neighborhood despite racism and rent increases from bigoted white owners. As they settled, black folk began to join them, at first in dribs and drabs, then in a torrent, and then as a flood. "They left as though they were fleeing some curse," wrote the scholar Emmett J. Scott years later, and perhaps they were—the ancient curse of slavery and endemic hatred, made manifest in the cruel form of Jim Crow.

Jim Crow's curse silenced an entire generation's voice in politics and condemned them to the most menial of servant tasks, underpaid if they were paid at all. It was a magic too powerful to fight, and those who did, died. Between 1880 and 1950, African-Americans were lynched at a rate of more than one a week. The others took the most aggressive stance permissible in the hostile culture of the American South: they left. They left the sharecropping farms in Alabama, Georgia, South Carolina, Mississippi, and Louisiana, boarding trains to California, D.C., Chicago, and New York.

Southern authorities tried to keep African-Americans from leaving to go northward to fill jobs and factory positions, and from embracing opportunities found in places like Harlem. Corrupt sheriffs and roving posses arrested entire trains of African-Americans on charges of vagrancy, trying to force them back to the plantations. Other towns prohibited black folk from traveling—so-called "sundown towns" where nothing black was allowed within town limits once night fell. Oregon's constitution prohibited black people from even entering the state. Families slept in ditches and along the side of roads until they got to other railroads, boarding the Jim Crow trains bound for Harlem.

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

The Negro tenements on West 130th Street had some of the greatest concentrations of black residents in Harlem and, by 1900, tens of thousands lived in Harlem proper. While many African-Americans were busy working as servants for wealthier German and Irish families, Harlem—the city—rose, brick by brick. It was not yet black, though—the hovels of poor Irish, Italians, and Jews were torn down to make way for a wave of upper and middle-class white settlers, following the subway and elevated train lines. Most real-estate developers thought the development of new neighborhoods would dampen the sudden increase in population and that Manhattan would grow whiter as time went on. They built the new Harlem to last, a grand dream that would survive a century or more. The Great War put an end to that line of thought. Tenement building was brought to a standstill by government regulations, but wartime industries and the first waves of the Great Migration desperately required new construction, so minority workers moved in. The prophesized white settlers never materialized, so the overpriced (and now inadequately numbered) row houses wouldn't rent, and many of the previous tenants had long since fled to other areas—the Jewish diaspora out of Central Harlem was already beginning.

It wasn't until Philip Payton created the Afro-American Realty Company (AARC) to fill the empty tenement rows that the neighborhood began to boom. As the saying went at the time, if you've got nowhere else to go, "you can take your trunk and go to Harlem." When the landlords on Lenox Avenue began to raise rents and evict black tenants, the AARC bought white buildings and evicted white tenants. The construction of Penn Station and the destruction of many former Negro tenements saw numerous blacks tossed out on the street, giving rise to a fear of more race riots tearing the city apart; despite such concerns, Harlem gradually became a safe haven for blacks. Ventures like the AARC were resisted by whites and minorities like the Irish and Italians, who gradually became accepted as white. Their concerns arose from greed and racism, although a few had loftier, albeit deeply and criminally misguided motives: the cult of the Black Man found ever-renewing purchase with many of the immigrants, eager as they were for a new life—the name alone inspiring a quietly burgeoning Negro spirituality. Even as cops harassed black residents without any cause whatsoever, some diligent investigators sought to quell the myriad cults. Despite what went on in the darkness, shops and businesses opened all along the avenues, and even some Jewish residents returned to share in the newfound prosperity. Lenox Avenue became host to Temple Israel, casting in windows' prismatic images of the Star of David from within a grand Orthodox temple in a Grecian style. Black churches weren't far behind; only the oft-maligned Catholics retained a white presence in Harlem (the presence of Negro priests being a point of contention). Marcus Garvey organized the African Orthodox Church, an Episcopalian organization of worship, in 1921. But other religious elements—Vodou from New Orleans, Candomblé from the blacks coming from Brazil—appealed and flourished, especially among the immigrant communities that brought them. Others seized upon the radical ideas of the time to criticize Christianity's role in keeping their people enslaved—Nella Larsen's marvelous 1928 novel *Quicksand* was hailed as an instant masterpiece by W. E. B. Du Bois: "[*Quicksand* is] the best piece of fiction that Negro America has produced since the heyday of Chesnutt," and decried the "white man's God" that had forsaken so many. Nearly run out of town on a rail and slapped with a baseless plagiarism accusation, Larsen's career was over.

Harlem demanded reverence, and if that reverence was of race and not gods, best keep it quiet when you go to church. Not coincidentally, this attitude contributed to the cults that kept infecting the land, though they continued to ignore black and immigrant folk on the whole. When a white person came to Harlem in those days, it wasn't always in service to the banal evils of racial hegemony and boundless avarice. Blacks in Harlem found themselves with places to live and places to worship, with places of business soon to come.

THE GREAT MIGRATION

In 1910, one in ten residents of Central Harlem was black, by 1920, it was one in three, and by 1930, it was seven out of ten, one quarter of whom were of Caribbean origin. The Great Migration hit Harlem like a hurricane. Seeking a better life for their children, eager to escape the lynchings in the American South (1,500 in the decade prior), and largely discouraged from joining the army, African-Americans decided to go to places with fewer trees from which to hang them—namely, the inner cities. They came from not just from Virginia, the Carolinas, and the state of Georgia, but from the islands of the West Indies. While blacks moved in, whites moved out, fearing crime and violence from the new residents in a naked display of racism. The black residents of New York City worked for thrice the salary of any black worker in the South—even working for Consolidated Edison, owned by the famed Thomas Edison, who called his employees "niggers" to their face and enjoyed selling his new kinetoscope with mocking slides of African-Americans engaged in watermelon-eating contests.

THE HARLEM HELLFIGHTERS: OVER THERE

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

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

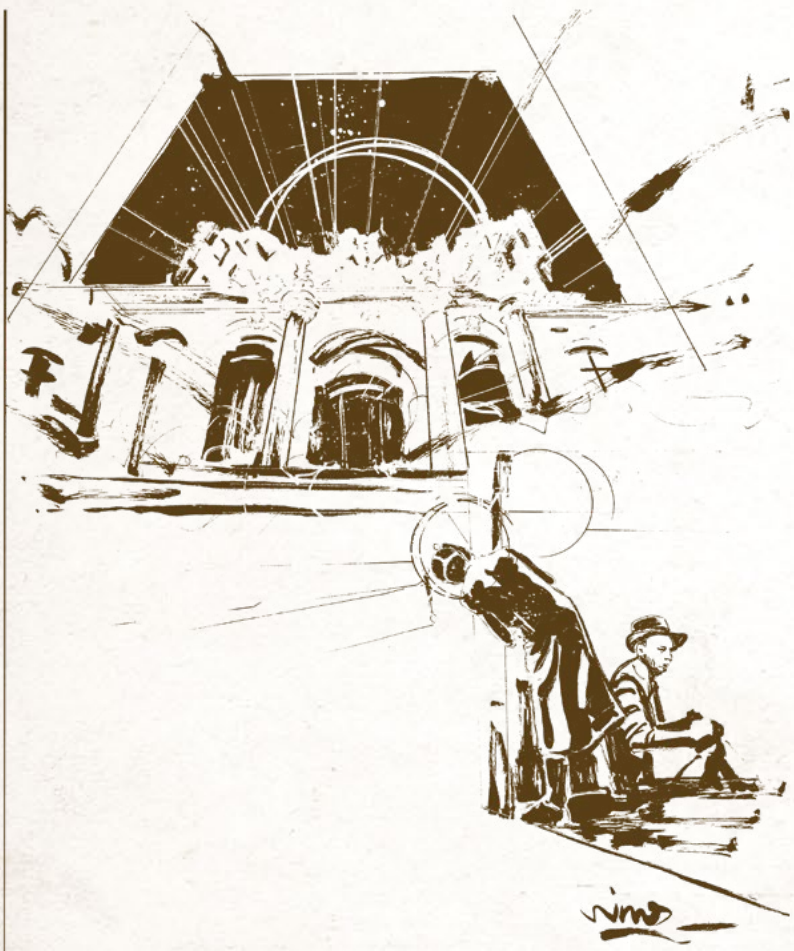
The 369th Infantry Regiment in France, wearing French helmets

With not enough white tenants, and given enough green cash, property owners stopped caring too much about black renters. The new tenants paid for their homes with jobs in the city's industries, which were gearing up for wartime production. While the nation went to war, Harlem went to work— though some, like the Hellfighters, also went to war. By 1914, 40 percent of Harlem's private houses and 10 percent of the tenements were black-owned. The rest were owned by the same (white) people as before, who made sure that if black employees were paid triple what they'd make in the South, the rent would be triple the rate of the rest of New York.

To be a child in this time was to see people being solely among their own, a scarcity to be marveled at. It was to see Jewish folk moving out of West Harlem for the Upper West Side and to watch East Harlem slowly descend into drug dealing, robbery, gambling, prostitution, and extortion. At the turn of the century, Harlem's homicide rate was the highest in New York, although black Harlem escaped the worst of the crimes and murders. The children raised on the streets of Lenox and 125th were raised on a heritage of half-forgotten songs passed down from ancestors and with the promise of something vital and something more to come.

At the turn of the century, in the Tenderloin, a black man stabs a white man after the white one crudely propositions the black man's girlfriend. Unfortunately, the white man is an undercover cop, and 3,000 Irish whites are on the scene in days, looking to crack the skull of any man, woman, or child so long as it was Negro. As Harlem fought back the resulting riot saw 60 people injured and ended with 35 arrests… and several lynchings.

OL' MAN HARLEM GIVES ME SUNDAY HEADACHES, BUT THAT OL' MAN HARLEM KEEPS ME ROLLIN' ON



Abyssinian Baptist priests shouted, "Buy property!" at their sermons every Sunday to make Harlem their own, although segregation and racism still stood in the way of the housing market, and the classy uptown addresses remained prohibited to black folk—with the exception of places like the Paul Laurence Dunbar complex, which included Harlem's first and only black bank. Despite some areas being off-limits, Harlem had wide boulevards, pleasant parks, good schools, and good churches, and those were worth any price. Most Harlemites were forced into single-family row houses divided into a half-dozen apartments or more, while their stoops were converted into businesses, offices, or barber shops. Harlem began bursting at the seams, and it didn't stop. With rents still too high in the spartan and cramped apartments, Harlemites turned to a cultural solution.

The food at most rent parties—fried chicken, pigs' feet, chitlins—"So good, it'll make you slap your mama"—had to be tasted to be believed, best chased with bathtub gin in your hand, especially on Thursdays. Those who worked in the kitchens of the rich took Fridays off, so were able to ply their trade closer to home the night before. Musicians were endemic in Harlem; you couldn't walk a

block without seeing three men in shabby suits and a guitar under one arm, busking their way to the evening meal, and they inevitably found themselves frequently invited to rent parties, especially if they were performers like Willie "The Lion" Smith, who (like many of his kin) played both the clubs and rent parties equally. The rent party experience was a Harlem tradition, but so was the dire necessity that caused them to spring into existence. With the close quarters and rents far higher than other parts of New York, Harlemites paid their neighbors' rent with their own wages, trading labor with the community to survive. Yet this went beyond surviving, as the young saw their parents relaxing, drinking, and laughing. As the jazz greats mingled with the jazz would-bes and has-beens, Harlem kept filling with immigrants and foreign accents, all with the same skin color. Buoyed by the great sense of community, Harlemites supported one another, and Harlem went from merely surviving to really thriving.

THE HARLEM RENAISSANCE

Alain LeRoy Locke, the New Negro movement's honorary godfather, boasted that, at the end of Prohibition, Seventh Avenue was home to "More style, life, variety, and novelty than can be observed in any single length of thoroughfare in the country." Yet Harlem's renaissance began with anger, not culture. The seeds of anger, planted decades before, took root and burst from the fertile soil of black souls. Soapbox speakers—spontaneous gatherings on street corners, especially outside the Lafayette Theatre—became commonplace, and they soon found a champion in a pugnacious Jamaican immigrant.

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) became active in Harlem in 1910 but it was the 1916 opening of Marcus Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association that had the most impact on Harlem's culture. Garvey's importance to Harlem is difficult to overstate, his image was seen in barbershops, street art, magazines, and newspapers. His words—eloquently spoken, even without his booming voice to lend thunder to their weight—were quoted by children and adults alike. Coming to America from his homeland of Jamaica at the invitation of Booker T. Washington, Garvey broke with Washington, advocating the inborn nobility of the Negro race and a return to Africa. He frequently clashed with W. E. B. Du Bois, whose work *The Souls of Black Folk* fired the imagination of Claude McKay, a radical and poet who wrote "If We Must Die," a clarion-call response to the Red Summer, in which race riots in 30 US cities resulted

The 1917 Silent Protest Parade, organized by the NAACP

Zora Neale Hurston

in dozens of lynchings. When Prohibition came into force, Harlem embraced speakeasies, whorehouses, and gambling dens, but also radical leftist magazines and black poetry. If they would be accused by Congress of subverting white order and white society, the black folk of Harlem would embrace that subversion.

In under two decades, Harlem went from a Jewish and Italian neighborhood with a few thousand black people to the home of 84,000 Negroes, becoming the center of the black experience in America. The world knew Harlem to be a pot of cultural revolution and excitement—with culture ranging from the politics of Garvey, Du Bois, and Washington, to the economics of A. Philip Randolph (head of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, the first African-American labor union), to the poems of Langston Hughes and the songs of Duke Ellington. Models such as Josephine Baker did with their bodies what Duke was doing with the piano, and that was enough—their presence set trends and defined fashion. Zoot suits, Chesterfield coats, top hats, and white gloves became commonplace for the well-to-do attending the theatre of the Krigwa Players or the Alhambra.

THE TWENTIES: THE CAUCASIAN STORMS HARLEM

In 1921, the musical *Shuffle Along* puts "Negroes back on Broadway!" when it opens at Cort's 63rd Street Theatre. Josephine Baker and Paul Robeson are members of the cast, exposing a generation of young Harlemites to big theatre. The production also captures the interest of white New York, at first for the novelty of a show written by and performed for blacks, and then as a genuine interest in jazz and blues takes off. In the following year, King Tutankhamen's tomb is uncovered, and with it a renewed interest in African archaeology above and below the Sahara Desert.

EAST HARLEM

East Harlem has long been a cosmopolitan mixing pot. Besides the poor Irish, German, and Scandinavian immigrants, Southern Italians, and Sicilians (and a few Northerners harassed by their Italian fellows) moved to Harlem to support the trolley construction boom in the 1870s—as strikebreakers first, then skilled workers later. Carpenters and stonemasons built the bones of Harlem with bricks and blood.

Organized crime became rampant as the early Mafia took hold among the poor, creating connections to the greater city's thriving black market. The Italian immigrants shared commonalities with their black neighbors, if not precisely sympathies—Italian immigrants were often the target of public lynching on the part of the anti-Catholic and anti-immigrant Ku Klux Klan, though never to the degree African-Americans were.

At the close of the Great War, East Harlem is Italian Harlem (with a sizeable Jewish population). By the era of the Great Depression, it's a mix of Italian Harlem and Spanish Harlem—which is which depends on who you asked, and on which street corner you stood. The number of synagogues dwindled as the Jewish population spread throughout New York. As the Harlem Renaissance grew, more Latin-American immigrants would come to Harlem, adopting the utilitarian practice of rent parties—complete with their own soul food and bands playing Cuban, Puerto Rican, and Dominican music. Unemployed young women would babysit the children of other immigrants ("Se Cuidan Ninos," read the signs in the windows) while bodegas and diners selling codfish fritters, spare ribs, and *pollo a la plancha* quickly sprang up across Harlem. The first Latino restaurant in Harlem was owned by a Sephardic Jew. Street peddlers sold sizzling meats and crushed sweet ice, and the rent party phenomenon spread

THE HARLEM HELLFIGHTERS: OVER HERE

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

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

Soldiers of the 369th Infantry Regiment

The Great Migration continues, as Afro-Americans leave their forcibly-adopted homeland in the Deep South and journey to more favorable places, Harlem chief among them. The Harlem Renaissance is just beginning. The children of an era past are young adults now, and the burgeoning culture of Harlem is their birthright, their intellectual cauldron, and their spiritual crucible. Their parents carry the scars of a life without the "Mecca of the New Negro," as *Survey Graphic* would call it, and the stress of their journey and Harlem's transformation leads many of them to early graves in the years to come. The thousand fragmented peoples of Africa and the Caribbean melt together in the heat of Harlem's forge.

The appeal of licentiousness and culture is hard to deny, especially for white audiences. Even as Du Bois criticizes McKay for playing up the less-savory aspects of Harlem to attract white readers to his work, Duke Ellington performs at the Cotton Club for solely white audiences. Individuals, such as Casper Holstein, work with their white gangster counterparts, though Holstein focuses on gambling while the Italians focus on the nascent bootlegging culture—which still finds a lot of business in Harlem proper. Chicago gun battles, sensationalized in the press, aren't spectacles played out in Harlem, where things are done more quietly, with knives, fists, and bats in back alleys. Indeed, there are deeper and darker motivations stirring, as along with the whites creeping into Harlem flows the ancient font of corruption, previously lying dormant in the suburbs, it now begins to infect a new generation with the whispered secrets of Old Gods and forgotten lore. Old cults begin to recruit new members and ancient books are cracked open again to incite, tempt, and exploit.

Despite the growing trade, hundreds of gin joints and nightclubs remain closed to black residents, even though they live a few steps away. Blacks clean the floors during the day and retreat to their own homes at night, while white folk stream in from the rest of the city to partake in the exotic flavor wrenched from the links of re-forged chains. Some residents create "buffet flats," or black alternative entertainments in residential areas— but, most African-Americans rail against the fact that they are performing their own work for the benefit of all-white audiences. This is the reality: 8 out of 10 businesses in Harlem are owned by whites; as Prohibition gains steam, bars begin to operate undercover as speakeasies; but Black pride is everywhere, in the churches, the clubs, and the lodges; and the Afro-American Realty Company is aggressively buying property and evicting whites. Harlem is many things to many people, from a place of exploitation to a place of reinvention. When the second decade of the 20th century draws to a close, Harlem remains—as always—a beacon of hope, blissfully unaware of the fate that awaits it.

Opposite page: H. P. Lovecraft

HARLEM TIMELINE

200,000,000 BCE: New York and Manhattan are lifted above sea level by the rise of the Appalachian Mountains.

160,000,000 BCE: mi-go mining operations extend as far as what will become Harlem; some artifacts from this time remain.

26,000–19,000 BCE: humans arrive in the Delmarva Peninsula in Maryland, eventually migrating northward towards the Harlem River; some are survivors of the City of the Golden Gates, and their descendants among the Lenape represent one of the largest remnant sources of such lore.

15,000–9,000 BCE: humans migrating from Canada meet and absorb the indigenous people of the region, forming what would become the Lenape tribes and the Algonquian language group; some of these tribes settle in the Miskatonic Valley.

1524: Giovanni da Verrazzano arrives in what will become New York Bay.

1531: the Wappinger destroy Zathog's avatar.

1609: the *Half Moon*, captained by Henry Hudson, arrives in New York Bay.

1620: Dutch purchase Manhattan Island from the indigenous people; New Amsterdam is established.

1623: New Netherland colony.

1647: Peter Stuyvesant becomes director-general of New Amsterdam.

1660: Haarlem is officially recognized.

1664: British capture New Amsterdam, renaming it New York; Haarlem is renamed Harlem.

1668: yellow fever outbreak in the city.

1680: Nyarlathotep returns to Harlem to persuade freed Negros to sign the *Book of Azathoth*.

1712: a revolt in New York; 70 enslaved people are arrested, 27 jailed, and 21 executed.

1732: Colonial government recognizes New York City.

1774: First Continental Congress convenes.

1776: Battle of Harlem Heights results in a Colonial victory; Harlem is burned to the ground in retribution.

1783: New York City celebrates Evacuation Day, the end of the Revolution; the last British ship departs from the harbor (in sight of the enslaved stockades).

1801: Robert Fulton's steam engine is demonstrated on a boat on the Hudson River.

1811: the "gridiron" plan for the city's streets is proposed, encouraging debate on how to incorporate places such as Harlem; the town is a few dozen families and some public buildings.

1827: New York State abolishes slavery.

1831: Harlem and New York railroads are incorporated to solidify links to Westchester County.

1863: draft riots quickly turn into a four-day race riot, with whites (primarily Irish immigrants) attacking blacks. The white rioters ransack and destroy everything in their wake. No official death count is known, but it's believed 120 people were killed, including 11 blacks lynched, and some 2,000 people injured. As a result, many blacks leave Manhattan and the population drops below 10,000.

1886: Liberty Enlightening the World is dedicated on Bedloe's Island.

1888: the Great Blizzard is one of the worst in recorded American history, paralyzing the city for a week.

1889: Harlem Opera House opens under Oscar Hammerstein on East 125th Street.

1900: race riots; two major race riots occur in New York and New Orleans. In New York, an undercover officer accuses an innocent black woman of solicitation in the Tenderloin District. When her friend tries to intervene, the white officer attacks him and is killed in response. At the officer's funeral, police and white gangs attack blacks and burn their property. Over the course of four days, 10,000 whites composed of gangs and police attack nearly every African-American they encounter; no police are ever found guilty or charged.

1910: National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) is founded; W. E. B. Du Bois becomes editor of *The Crisis* magazine.

1912: James Weldon Johnson's *Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man* is published.

1917: Marcus Garvey founds the New York branch of the United Negro Improvement Association (UNIA). The Silent Protest Parade marches down Fifth Avenue.

1917: United States enters the Great War.

1919: February, W. E. B. Du Bois organizes the Pan-African Congress in Paris. The "Red Summer of Hate" follows; race riots break out in Chicago, D.C., and more than 20 other American cities. The NAACP's *Thirty Years of Lynching in the United States* and Claude McKay's *If We Must Die* are published.

1919: October, Congress passes the Volstead Act, which prohibits the sale of alcohol—but the federal government lacks the resources to enforce it.

1919: *Harlem Unbound* begins.

UNIA Parade organized in Harlem

CHAPTER 2

HARLEM STRIDE

A GUIDE TO THE RENAISSANCE

With the spoils of reconstruction long gone, most black citizens' lives are small in focus and scope. Survival, poverty, church, and family make up almost the entirety of one's daily life. Here in Harlem, it's a bit different. It seems like everyone is a writer, painter, activist for change, or pursuing something artistic when they aren't trying to make a living. It's amazing what your life can be when you aren't so afraid for it all the time. Just take a trip to the library at 136th St. and Lenox, where there is art you didn't know was possible. Let's take a strut down Lenox and chat about the Renaissance, old sport.

EQUALITY OF ART

The lush seascapes of Palmer Hayden draw you into a coastal paradise. Malvin Gray Johnson's portraits of black people who are comfortable at home and dignified. Meta Warrick Fuller's sculptures are sophisticated and full of emotion as if her figures might come alive. There are dozens more.

Many black artists studied in Europe, France specifically. We don't have the same history there, so there is more opportunity to go to school and learn from some of the masters like Matisse, Picasso, and Bazaine. While most galleries and museums in the States won't show work by black artists, in France, there are no Negro shows—you can get your work displayed just the same as everyone else. It's all about the artists and their art. When these artists return home from abroad they bring it all back with them to Harlem, and it is beautiful. All these artists show the world that we can speak in different languages, with different tones.

We aren't just victims, nor are we so content, or so beat down, that we have no depth or elevation, no highs or lows. Now we speak a language that weaves what's happening in Europe with black folklore from America, and which also reaches back to Africa. In our work, we are a modern and cosmopolitan people. We paint images of black people that are subtle and complex, that look nothing like the sambos, clowns, and caricatures white people have been drawing for decades. Being black is something to be proud of. You can see it everywhere in Aaron Douglas' work: black people, strong and sophisticated; black people singing, dancing, building, engaging in scientific discovery. We are mythological and godlike. You can see us on the covers of *Opportunity* and *The Crisis.* Douglas will create massive, building-size murals all over the city and, eventually, across the country. In years to come, he will be one of the most remembered artists of the time.

It's hard to get there, though. Most art schools in the US do not admit black students. There's plenty of organizations working for the betterment of black people, but they don't consider art a worthwhile pursuit. You can't make a living like that, art isn't respectable, and it won't put you in a better economic bracket, so the responsible people tell you it's just a waste of time. All art in Harlem is financed by white people. Be it music, dance, paintings, books, or plays, Harlem during the Renaissance is a huge manufacturer of art; far more than the black community could ever handle alone. Black leaders partner with sympathetic and wealthy white people who are happy to trade money for art, as long as it is the *right* kind of art. The Harmon Foundation, with its annual prize, is the most influential representation of this problem.

These "Negrotarians," as Zora Neale Hurston calls them, want Negro art to have the look and feel of Africa or show black people living a simple and upstanding life. Too much honesty about the difficulties of black life makes white patrons uncomfortable. For some black artists like William Edwards Scott, Alan Frelon, and Laura Wheeler Waring, this feels like benevolent censorship. A "hostaging of creativity," where art by black artists has its blackness defined by white people. At a time in history when what constitutes

Opposite: Everyday life in Harlem

American art is still being defined, black artists often don't get to portray the complexity of being black and being American, and when they do, it is most often dismissed, not considered worthwhile by the larger, white art establishment. This is a source of tension between artists and those with a vision for a New Negro movement.

The Harmon Foundation Award for Distinguished Achievement Among Negroes supports dozens of artists, giving them the opportunity to travel and study in environments that would otherwise be impossible. Their nationally traveling exhibits of Negro art, and their influence on the art world puts the work of hundreds of black artists on display, most of which would otherwise never see the light of day. Decades later, when many of these artists are long forgotten, the still-existing Harmon Foundation will buy entire artists' collections from family members and landlords, saving thousands of works from destruction. Most of that work will be donated to the Schomburg, the Smithsonian, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and dozens of other museums.

HARLEM IS FASHION

The best thing about living in Harlem is all the beautiful clothes on everybody in the streets. Doesn't matter if you are rich or poor. Doesn't matter if you live up in Sugar Hill or down on 125th Street. Everybody is showing off their fashionable flair. We aren't enslaveed people any more. Now we get to choose for ourselves. We have to throw off those southern, rural, sharecropping roots and strut our stuff.

Josephine Baker

Tonight, once I get myself cleaned up after work, I am going to put on my bright orange chemise dress. It's got a deep v-neck and I like the way it hangs loose around my hips and sways when I dance. I wear it with my shiny patent leather Oxfords with the tall heel and the big buckle. I got a new cloche hat with a flower on it, it fits down tight on my head and if you put just a little angle on it over your eye you look trendy and mysterious. My girl has one of those berets with the tall egret feathers standing on it. It looks really nice on her but it's too much for me. I think it looks better on her because she has long hair. She is studying to be a teacher and they won't let her wear a bobbed cut like mine. They say it isn't respectable. She and I are quite the pair when she wears that blood-red dress and those bright red stockings and garter. Next payday I'm going to start paying installments on a leopard-skin coat. I think they make women look powerful. Like you are wearing Africa right there on your back. I could look like Josephine Baker!

I like being out at night. Watching all the people strutting around. The men in their zoot suits, some in black pinstripes, and some in big, bright colors. Hair brushed straight down and just a little bit shiny from the pomade. I like it when they have mustaches. My boy, he says it's important because in the south black man can't have hair on their face. Only real men can, and we don't qualify. He's got one of those thin little mustaches, looks like he drew on his lip. Like Duke Ellington, only his isn't as nice.

While folks are definitely dressed to impress in the bars and speakeasies at night, it's nothing compared to Sunday afternoon. Everybody goes walking on the "Great Black Way" Sunday after church. Seventh Avenue, between 125th and 138th, is where you will find nearly every person in Harlem dressed up in their finest. Men in their best striped suits with silk handkerchiefs poking out of the pocket. Chesterfield coats, top hats, white gloves, and walking sticks. Strutting in their custom-made brogues with metal plates on the heels or maybe spats over shiny shoes. Women in all their furs and feathers carrying gay parasols. Georgette dresses of silk and lace under brightly colored shawls with fine embroidery all over them. Those big wide hats just covered in flowers, some with a modest white veil hanging down. Just enough to cover your eyes. I like the chemises with the black-velvet collars, especially in indigo or bright sea green. You can see them even underneath those long coats with the monkey fur at the neck. I have a gingham dress that fits kind of tight and lets my knees peak out. I like to wear it with my penny loafers with a bright shiny penny in each shoe. Sunday is a sight to behold and reminds people that we have style and class. That we can come out and be just as sophisticated as white people. On Sunday, we are all royalty.

CUISINE MEANT FOR ROYALTY

You just got off work and after a long subway ride uptown, you are starving. What to eat, what to eat? Fortunately, once you're in Harlem you have plenty to choose from. The food of Harlem is the food of its people, which means down-home southern cooking and lots of fresh, spicy goodness from the Caribbean. There're lots of clubs and upscale restaurants in Harlem. The black literati set like to eat at Craig's Colony Club on St. Nicholas, but that, like most places, is too rich for you, and many of the well-known, high-end places feed only whites.

It is the 1920s, the end of the Great War means more access to the staples of daily cooking: wheat for bread, sugar to make baked goods, though fresh foods might still be canned at home, a practice encouraged during the war. Depending on your salary, there might be a slice of ham in your kitchen and some bread in the box or maybe some biscuits left over from breakfast. More likely you have a tin of sardines and a package of crackers. You may or may not have an icebox, so food generally doesn't stay around longer than a day. You can pick up apples, bananas, and, depending on the time of year, tangerines and watermelon, or an august ham from the corner stand or grocery store. Potatoes, beets, turnips, and greens are available, too.

The best meal for your money comes from rent parties. While you can find a rent party somewhere in Harlem every night of the week, the best food and the best parties are Thursday and Saturday nights. Thursday night is when the live-in domestics get to go home for the evening and most everyone is off on Sunday to go to church. So, all those good cooks aren't making food for white people, they are at home cooking up a feast. For anything from a dime to a dollar, you can get a full meal and then some. The simpler menus have boiled pigs' feet or ham hocks, cabbage, and peas and rice cooked in coconut oil (also called "hoppin' John"). Maybe fried fish or fish in a spicy sauce with rice. The closer you get to a dollar, the better the menu gets: fried chicken, pork chops, cornbread, or hush puppies might be on your plate, gumbo with okra, and definitely dessert. Lemon pie is always a favorite, or maybe a chocolate cake or peach cobbler. Regardless of where you end up, there is plenty of bathtub gin to wash it all down.

THE WRITTEN WORD

The oppressive suffering of the South left little room for artistic or thoughtful endeavors in one's daily life. Now, suddenly in Harlem, we get to be the people we imagine

Storefronts of Harlem including a seafood restaurant

ourselves to be. This is the time of the cultural rise of Negroes, of artists, novelists, poets, musicians, filmmakers, and more, all making a claim on being a modern people. Standing strong and declaring, we are here, this is our contribution. The men and women of letters in Harlem are a fundamental part of this ascent. Even if you don't know them, you know their names.

The literati and the salons are held in the boarding house up on 136th street by the park, just one of many places you can find them. Langston Hughes and that poem he wrote: "The Negro Speaks of Rivers." You can find it in the NAACP magazine by W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Crisis*, and even if you don't get it, you can feel it: Negroes coming from a long line of important moments all the way back to the beginning of history. We are ancient, we are powerful, we are of rivers. Rivers bringing us here to Harlem. You can go a few blocks east to Lenox Avenue to A'lelia Walker's house. It won't be until 1928 when she dedicates a whole floor of her house to up-and-coming artists and calls it The Dark Tower. But even now you see folks coming and going at all hours. Long, lingering discussions of politics, literature, theater, race, the troubles amongst blacks, and everything else. Zora Neale Hurston will be there, too. She, Langston Hughes, Wallace Thurman, and Richard Bruce Nugent put out a single issue of a scintillating, scandalous, brilliant literary magazine called *Fire!*. Thurman dubs them the "Niggerati" and while there won't be any commercial success in *Fire!* it will be all anyone can talk about for some time to come, for better and for worse, and no doubt helped along by Nugent's short story "Smoke, Lilies, and Jade."

Then there's *The Messenger* magazine, *Opportunity: A Journal of Negro Life*, and Marcus Garvey's *Negro World*. Journalism by black people for black people. Jessie Redmon Fauset has already challenged the sexual and social codes for women in the novel *There Is Confusion*. In 1925, Hurston's play *Color Struck* appears in *Negro World*, pushing at the tender spot that is black women and skin color and the value of the darkest among us in our community. In 1929 Thurman and Nella Walker will follow in kind with *The Blacker the Berry* and *Passing*. All of them challenge prejudice in our own community. The worlds of upper- and lower-class blacks is looked at with some hope by Rudolph Fisher in *The Walls of Jericho*. You can find the poets hanging around the salons, too. Countee Cullen and his poetry urge us not to discount our Americanism when we consider who we are. Alice Dunbar-Nelson writes about women from all walks of life and has been published all over the country. Claude McKay's poem "If We Must Die" is about the many black people killed in riots around the country, especially the most recent one in Chicago. He puts to words what every black person feels as we hear the stories of the lynchings and the riots. Do not let our deaths be in vain. Even though we are outnumbered, let us be brave. Let us die gloriously and nobly with honor. These writings create an environment for black people in Harlem to look closely at themselves and challenge the assumptions of their world.

The Indispensable Weekly
The Voice of the Awakened Negro—The Premier Paper

Guaranteed Circulation 50,000
Reaching the Mass of Negroes Throughout the World

Negro World

"ONE GOD! ONE AIM! ONE DESTINY!"

A Newspaper Devoted Solely to the Interests of the Negro Race

VOL. VIII. No. 24 NEW YORK, SATURDAY, JULY 31, 1920

GREAT WORLD CONVENTION OF NEGROES

Members of the Race From All Parts of the World to Assemble at Liberty Hall, New York, Sunday, August 1, at 10 A. M.—Biggest and Most Representative Assemblage in History of the Race

CONSTITUTION OF NEGRO LIBERTY IS TO BE WRITTEN

HON. MARCUS GARVEY, WORLD FAMED ORATOR
WILL SPEAK FOR THE "BLACK STAR LINE" AT HUGE CONVENTION AT
LIBERTY HALL 120 WEST 138th STREET
Bet. 7th and Lenox Aves., New York
SUNDAY, AUGUST 1; 3:30 AND 7:30 P. M.
SUBJECT: "OUR CONVENTION"

The front page of Marcus Garvey's Negro World

MUSIC IS LIFE

Music is life in Harlem during the Renaissance. Music wafts through the neighborhood from windows, stoops, and street corners, bringing joy and completeness to its residents that is transcendent at times. But, being a musician in Harlem is less straightforward, and a constant reminder that while Harlem is indeed special, it is still in racist America.

There are two worlds of music in Harlem: the numerous, mostly whites-only night clubs, and the speakeasies that stage many Harlem musicians. While you play your horn with the band, packing the house, and blowing the doors off the joint, you're a star but, when your set is done, the management is quick to pay your week's wages and make sure you exit fast, never setting foot in the audience. Standing in the back alley, with the door closed behind you, doesn't mean the music stops, however. There is a

difference between playing music for white people in clubs for money as opposed to black people playing music for themselves. One puts food on your table, the other feeds your soul. After-hours joints, speakeasies, rent parties, and buffet flats are where Harlemites get to strut their stuff in privacy away from prying eyes. Buffet flats are Harlem's response to a large number of whites-only hotels in Manhattan. Typically, these are houses or apartments (sometimes multiple units in the same building), where you are sure to always find a place to rest your head, get a solid meal, and hear some good music. Buffet flats also offer dancing, alcohol, gambling, and (in some places) even prostitution. In these spaces, gay and lesbian Harlemites find each other, build community, share a dance and can—for an evening—feel safe without judgment or harassment. In these tucked-away corners, you can be yourself, cut loose, and shake off the oppression of the outside world for a few hours. Here Harlem's people thrive. But Harlem is hardly isolated from the greater world of music.

If you decide to make your way out into the night life of Harlem, you might be lucky enough to find yourself in a room with James P. Johnson and a piano—Johnson at the keys is a seemingly magical thing; it's as if his fingers and hands reshape the piano itself, bringing the bottom bass to the middle of the keyboard and eliminating all space from the middle range. Surely, it's the only explanation for the complex, ambitious bass line that holds up a full, round, orchestral timbre no single player should be able to coax from a piano on their own. One day, the world will speak of this playing as stride piano style and it will be one of the most important contributions to music in the early 20th century. Johnson, considered the father of Harlem Stride Piano, is also a composer. His song "Harlem Strut" is one of the first jazz piano solos to be recorded. He, along with Willie "The Lion" Smith and Fats Waller, show the world of music what it means to break from the scripted and controlled music seen in the clubs, giving oneself wholly to improvisation in the moment, creating more and more complex patterns and rhythms. Such artists turned "stride piano" into a critical and commercial success, not just in Harlem but around the globe.

Stride also helps bridge the gap between middle- and lower-class blacks. Many middle-class blacks see jazz as

Harlem stride

vulgar and the brass bands are considered lowly and common, symbols of the south. The piano, however, is an instrument of class and refinement that generally only the wealthy can access. Stride holds the very spirit of Harlem in its notes. This is the era of the New Negro, one who is more assertive, less afraid, refusing to crawl and beg. Black musicians, as well as writers and artists, speak of a cultural rebirth and stride is at the center of it.

James "Jim" Reese Europe is the bandleader of the Harlem Hellfighters, returned to the states after traveling over 2,000 miles (3,200 km) around France, performing concerts and fighting in the trenches. Europe, like so many other artists of the era, believes that art is fundamental to African-Americans being a fully developed people. Once stateside, he plans to bring his special blend of jazz and ragtime, which spellbound audiences all over Europe, to forward the advancement of his people. Unfortunately, he doesn't get the chance, as he is killed in an argument in 1918, and the world never knows what he could have accomplished. It was said at his funeral, "That he took the colored of New York City from their poorest places and raised them to positions of importance as real musicians."

SCIENCE

The Renaissance is not just a time for the flourishing of art, letters, and culture. The beginning of the 20th century is a booming time for scientific discovery and invention, and black participants are not entirely excluded from this work.

- Madame C. J. Walker invents a hair-straightening formula on which she builds a million-dollar cosmetics empire, becoming one of the richest women of the day.
- Garrett Morgan invents a "safety hood" for firefighters to use, allowing them a few moments of breathable air. The effectiveness of the hood is demonstrated in 1916 when Morgan uses it to aid him in rescuing victims trapped in a collapsed tunnel. In due course, he secures a Navy contract and, with the success of the hood, goes on to invent a gas mask.
- Rudolph Fisher is the head research doctor at Manhattan International Hospital. He is the only specialist in roentgenology—the use of radiant energy (X-rays) or radioactive material in the diagnosis of treatment and disease. He is also a novelist.
- Ernest Everett Just is a biologist and zoologist undertaking pioneering work in the study of cellular structure and the physiology of cell development, especially in fertilization. He hopes to use his research to prove blacks are not genetically inferior to whites.
- Elmer Imes earns a Ph.D. in physics in 1918; only the second black man to ever be awarded the degree. He made significant strides in the field of quantum mechanics and, eventually, his work will be incorporated into modern physics textbooks. While he is in New York, Imes secures four patents for instruments used to measure magnetic and electrical properties. He is married to famed Renaissance novelist, Nella Larsen.
- Louis T. Wright is the first black surgeon on staff at Harlem Hospital. In another ten years, he becomes the first black surgeon with the NYPD.
- James Parsons is an engineer and inventor making advances in the field of rust-resistant and non-corrosive metals. He will be awarded eight patents in his lifetime.
- Theodore K. Lawless is a dermatologist and medical researcher studying leprosy and syphilis. Part of his life's work will focus on the poor black people of Chicago's south side. He will become an instructor and research fellow at Northwestern University and help to establish the first medical laboratories there.

TO THE STAGE!

Whites have been performing in America as Negroes on stage in "blackface" for at least a hundred years. Just as recently as the mid-1800s, minstrel shows were one of the most popular forms of entertainment and considered a national art form. Blackface, in fact, was so popular it became its own specialized type of performance and can be found on stages all over the country in the 1920s (and later) to sold-out crowds. So, while the Renaissance is a time for black art to flourish, the concept of black theatre is fraught and particularly challenging. While there are many theatrical plays performed by black actors, almost all are written by white playwrights. These are rarely serious dramas and most emphasize the exotic folk elements of black culture. Stories concerning the daily life of black people are rarely told, but when they are, such tales exploit long-standing stereotypes of black people as inherently impulsive and naive, musical, and somehow both zealously religious and overtly sexual. It is easy to appropriate the gestures, mannerisms, and language of black culture but, when staged through a white lens, these things have no meaning or value, as they are just empty and soulless. There are exceptions though. Two of the best plays are *The Emperor Jones* (1920) and *All God's Chillun* (1924) by Eugene O'Neill. Both star Paul Robeson, whose talent and beautiful voice make him a star of both stage and screen. Robeson enjoys a successful career for all of his life.

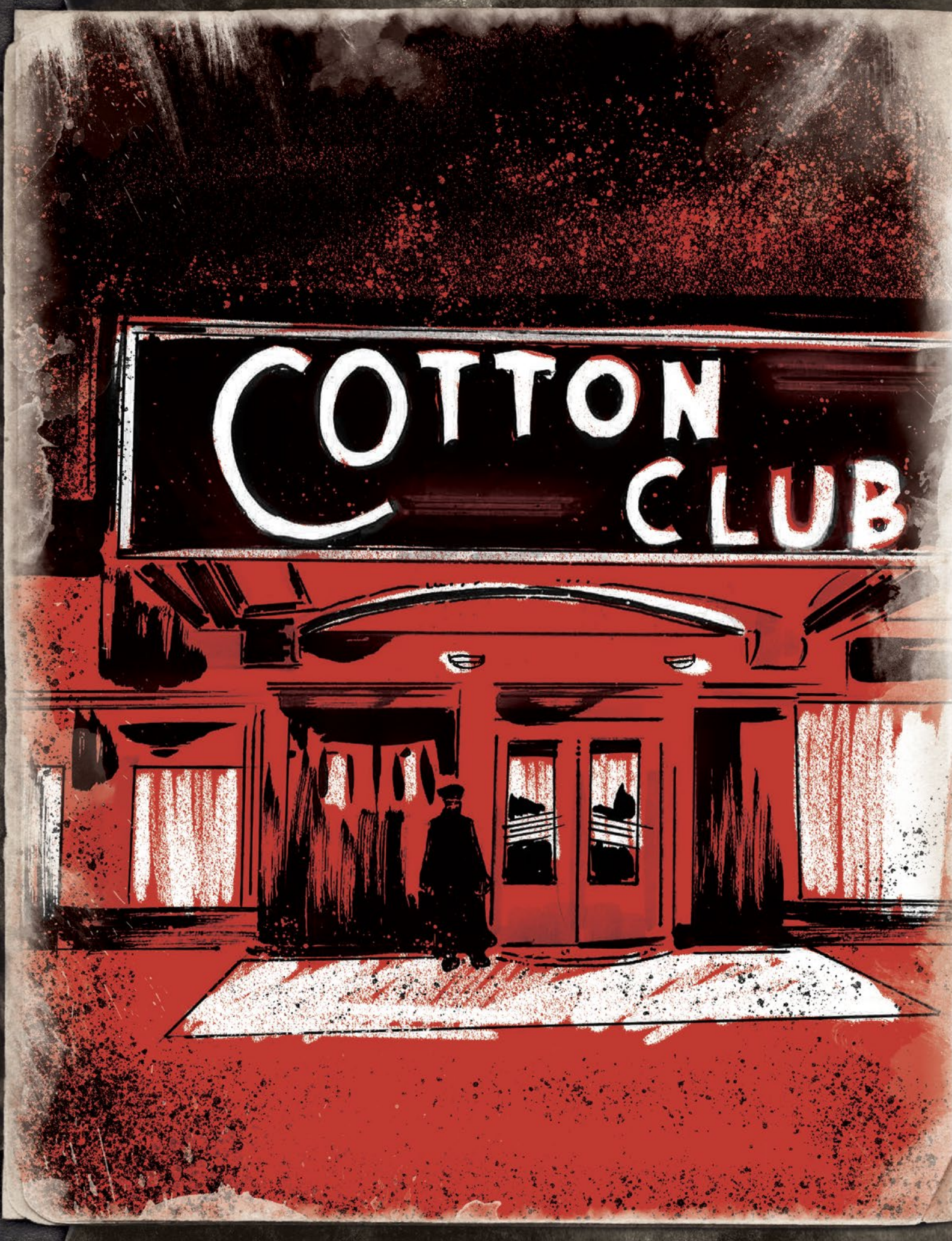
W. E. B. Du Bois says that Negro theatre is defined by being written by, made for, being about, and performed near Negroes. The most popular musical of the Renaissance fulfills most of those requirements. *Shuffle Along* (1921) becomes a Broadway hit adored by both white and black audiences. Its

Opening night for Macbeth *at the Lafayette Theater*

music is by Eubie Blake, its lyrics by Noble Sissle and its writers are F. E. Miller and Aubrey Lyles. The show features an all-black cast telling a story about two dishonest partners of a grocery store running for Mayor of Jimtown, USA, and involves a heartfelt love story. Years later, Langston Hughes calls *Shuffle Along* the beginning of the Renaissance. Thus, while the show is as Du Bois would desire: by, for, about, and performed (mostly) near black people, it has no loftier goals. Regardless, its over-simplified plot weaves together jazzy songs, fantastic dancing (it brings the Charleston to the stage), and chorus girls that keep audiences coming back. The performances "legitimize the black musical" and spawns so many imitators that "the black musical […] become[s] a Broadway staple." It even contributes to the desegregation of theaters in New York.

For Du Bois to find his serious drama, he has to go back uptown to one of the many "Little Theaters." These small troupes are comprised of black performers (mostly, if not all). They, in the main, perform exclusively black work intended for a Harlem audience. In 1917 the Negro Players staged *Three Plays for Negro Theatre*—this is likely what Du Bois has in mind when he establishes the Krigwa Players Little Theater Group in 1925. Its association with the NAACP and consistent presentation of political drama stands as one example of what black theater can aspire to become. In addition, there is the Lafayette Players, an all-black theater company staging Broadway plays to demonstrate that black actors can do the same serious work white actors are doing.

Such artistic tension is at the heart of what's happening in Harlem's theater. How do we define black theater? Where do we find our identity and self-determination? Are we trying to be one thing, only considering the black audience, being true to our heritage but limiting the scope and reach of our work? Or are we trying to be everything at once? Trying to please black and white audiences, white critics, white theater owners, and maintain the integrity of our identity all at the same time? While a number of performers will gain acclaim and even stardom out of the Renaissance, arguably the hard questions here will haunt us culturally for generations.


COTTON
CLUB

CHAPTER 3

HARLEMITES

In the setting of *Harlem Unbound* in the *Call of Cthulhu* game, players take on the roles of investigators, who run headlong into horrors of the Cthulhu Mythos with the hope that their music can play on one more day. Defending their home, dragging secrets into the light of day, and taking a stand against the horrors of the Mythos—all while the Mythos eternally churns on, crushing those who interfere with indifference at their insignificance.

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

JAZZ IS MORE THAN MUSIC

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

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

CREATING INVESTIGATORS

Harlem Unbound uses *Call of Cthulhu* and, optionally, *Pulp Cthulhu* to tell the stories of investigators pursuing and combating the Mythos. Use the standard investigator creation rules found in the *Call of Cthulhu Rulebook*, while for pulp style games, refer to the appropriate chapter in *Pulp Cthulhu*. For *Harlem Unbound* investigators and heroes, the following section provides some tailored occupations, a new skill, and backstory elements, as well as pulp talents for use in this setting.

HARLEMANIA

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

Opposite: The Cotton Club

NEW SKILL

Lore (Harlem) (01%)

Local knowledge of Harlem, its people, and places. You know Harlem like no one else. You know the up-and-comers in Harlem, and which salons and parties to network. You know old stories from times past, as well as who loves or hates who and where to find just what you need. A high skill value means you are likely to have multiple invitations each week to the best salons and parties.

HARLEM OCCUPATIONS

While any of the occupations in the *Call of Cthulhu Rulebook*, *Investigator Handbook*, or *Pulp Cthulhu* can be used in this setting, the following occupations are suitably geared for Harlem.

Conjure Woman or Man (Occultist/Researcher)

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

Examples: Doctor Jim Jordan, Aunt Caroline Dye.

- **Occupation Skill Points:** EDU × 2 + (APP × 2 or POW × 2)
- **Credit Rating:** 20–40
- **Suggested Contacts:** libraries, occult societies, occultists, and patrons.
- **Skills:** Anthropology, History, Library Use, one interpersonal skill (Charm, Fast Talk, Intimidate, or Persuade), Occult, Other Language, Science (Astronomy), any one other skill* as a personal or era specialty.

Special: *the Keeper may allow the Cthulhu Mythos skill (up to a maximum of 10% starting value).*

Dock Worker

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

Examples: Harry Pace, Evelyn Crawford Reynolds.

- **Occupation Skill Points:** EDU × 2 + (CON × 2 or STR × 2)
- **Credit Rating:** 5–20
- **Suggested Contacts:** other workers, sailors, and supervisors.
- **Skills:** Drive Auto, Electrical Repair, Fighting, First Aid, Mechanical Repair, Operate Heavy Machinery, Throw, any one other skill as a personal or era specialty.

Harlem Hellfighter (Military Enlisted/Officer)

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

Examples: Sergeant Henry Johnson, Private Herbert Taylor.

- **Occupation Skill Points:** EDU × 2 + (DEX × 2 or STR × 2)
- **Credit Rating:** 10–30 (enlisted), 15–40 (officer)
- **Suggested Contacts:** military, Federal Government, Veterans Associations.
- **Skills (enlisted):** Climb or Swim, Stealth, Throw, and two of the following: Dodge, First Aid, Mechanical Repair, or Other Language.
- **Skills (officer):** Accounting, Fighting, Firearms, two interpersonal skills (Charm, Fast Talk, Intimidate, or Persuade), Navigate, and two from Other Language, Psychology or Survival.

SOME BLACK ARMY UNITS

312th Labor Battalion
322nd Butchery Company
349th Machine Gun Battalion
365th Infantry Regiment
505th Engineer Service Battalion
598th Motor Transport Company
801st Stevedore Companies

Hornman or Singer (Musician)

You may have hit it big and work nightly at the Cotton Club, or bounce from rent party to rent party for a few dollars a week. Either way, music is your life; it makes you wake up the next day, no matter what. Most likely, you're poor and still hope for that moment when someone important spots you. Clubs are opening every night in Harlem, with crowds from around the world flooding in to see the talent. This is the Jazz Age, and it could be your moment to be a part of what's coming.

Examples: Louis Armstrong, Bessie Smith.

- **Occupation Skill Points:** EDU × 2 + (APP × 2 or DEX × 2)
- **Credit Rating:** 5–15
- **Suggested Contacts:** club owners, musicians' union, organized crime, street-level criminals.
- **Skills:** Art/Craft (Instrument or Singing), two interpersonal skills (Charm, Fast Talk, Intimidate, or Persuade), Listen, Psychology, any three other skills as personal or era specialties.

Painter (Artist)

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

Examples: Lois Mailou Jones, Archibald J. Motley.

- **Occupation Skill Points:** EDU × 2 + (DEX × 2 or POW × 2)
- **Credit Rating:** 0–30
- **Suggested Contacts:** art galleries, critics, wealthy patrons, other struggling artists.
- **Skills:** Art/Craft (Fine Art), History or Natural World, one interpersonal skill (Charm, Fast Talk, Intimidate, or Persuade), Other Language, Psychology, Spot Hidden, any two other skills as personal or era specialties.

Patron (Socialite)

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

Examples: Charlotte Osgood Mason, William E. Hurston.

- **Occupation Skill Points:** EDU × 2 + APP × 2
- **Credit Rating:** 50–99
- **Suggested Contacts:** Social peers; Dark Tower attendees; agents from galleries, museums, and libraries.
- **Skills:** Art/Craft (Any), History, one interpersonal skill (Charm, Fast Talk, Intimidate, or Persuade), Other Language, Ride, any three other skills as personal or era specialties.

NEGROTARIANS

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

HARLEM FASHION

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

Women's fashions became loose and low-cut; hemlines moved above the knee, and women sported low necklines, colorful silk stockings, and bobbed hair embodied by Josephine Baker. Men's clothing embraced tailored suits made of wool or linen in various colors, with elegant three-piece sets seeing more than church on a Sunday and becoming the norm of nightlife. The zoot suit—long coat, wide shoulder pads, and high-waisted with wide legs—hit the heights of popularity.

Of course, no outfit would be complete without headwear. For women, this meant colorful scarves or cloche hats, while men frequently wore homburgs, fedoras, or trilby hats.

UNBOUND

Rabbi (Clergy)

You have spent your life studying the Torah and are dedicated to learning and helping people. You may have just landed in America or have been the bedrock of the Jewish community in East Harlem for decades. Either way, your faith leads you. You are the community, and all eyes look to you for advice.

Examples: Father Divine, Mordecai Herman.

- **Occupation Skill Points:** EDU × 4
- **Credit Rating:** 9–60
- **Suggested Contacts:** church hierarchy, local congregations, community leaders.
- **Skills:** Accounting, History, Library Use, Listen, Lore, one interpersonal skill (Charm, Fast Talk, Intimidate, or Persuade), Other Language, Psychology, any one other skill.

Runner (Criminal)

You work in the numbers game, also known as the "policy game." A game that can turn a pauper into a millionaire, if they pick the right numbers! Well, that's what you tell people to get them to buy into a game. You know the day everyone gets paid, you know who needs a break, and you occasionally spin a number or two to help those in need. You are a "knight errant" and "robber baron" all rolled into one for your boss. You could be just starting out or an experienced hand and well known to the Harlem gambling fraternity.

- **Occupation Skill Points:** EDU × 2 + (DEX × 2 or INT × 2)
- **Credit Rating:** 15–45
- **Suggested Contacts:** anyone gambling in Harlem, bookies, patrolmen, and mob types.
- **Skills:** Accounting, Fighting, Psychology, Spot Hidden, Stealth, two interpersonal skills (Charm, Fast Talk, Intimidate, or Persuade), and any one other skill as a personal or era specialty.

Scientist

You are one of the few African-Americans to graduate from college, navigating your way through institutional racism and social divides. Possibly, you nurtured a natural talent or learned along the way, but you are changing the world through scientific innovation and determination in your chosen field of study.

Examples: Theodore K. Lawless, James Parsons.

- **Occupation Skill Points:** EDU × 3 + POW × 1
- **Credit Rating:** 5–45
- **Suggested Contacts:** academics, activists, and other scientists.
- **Skills:** Any three Science specialties, History, Library Use, one interpersonal skill (Charm, Fast Talk, Intimate, or Persuade), Natural World, Spot Hidden.

Writer (Author)

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

Examples: Gwendolyn B. Bennett, Rudolph Fisher.

- **Occupation Skill Points:** EDU × 2 + POW × 2
- **Credit Rating:** 5–30
- **Suggested Contacts:** librarians, publishers, authors, and booksellers.
- **Skills:** Art (Literature), History, Library Use, Natural World or Occult, Other Language, Own Language, Psychology, any one other skill as a personal or era specialty.

HARLEM BACKSTORY ELEMENTS

In choosing an investigator's backstory, use the following revised entries for Harlem as inspiration, or choose or roll randomly.

Personal Description

Think of a distinct look that sums up your investigator's appearance (APP). Use the following for inspiration, choose, or roll randomly.

Roll	Male	Female	Unisex
1	Rugged	Alluring	Elegant
2	Stern	Tom-boy	Youthful
3	Handsome	Mousy	Plump
4	Baby-faced	Graceful	Nimble
5	Robust	Pretty	Sneering
6	Strapping	Shapely	Slim
7	Cool	Vivacious	Ugly
8	Flashy	Dainty	Neat
9	Slothful	Vixen	Frail
10	Dashing	Glamorous	Awkward

Ideology/Beliefs

Roll 1D10 or pick one of the following. Take the result and make it specific and personal to your investigator (see following page).

Opposite: Zora and Langston against the Mythos

Roll	Ideology
1	There is a higher power who judges all.
2	Humanity can do fine without religion.
3	Everything can be explained through science.
4	You get back what you out in.
5	Honest and decency will overcome evil.
6	Stand up for those less fortunate than yourself.
7	There are more things in heaven and earth, the unseen world is all around.
8	Organize and fight, together we can make a difference.
9	I'm out to win. Someday my numbers will come up and I'll be rich.
10	There's beauty all around, just take a moment to see and hear it.

Significant People

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

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

Meaningful Location

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

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

Treasured Possessions

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

Roll	Treasured Possessions
1	An item connected with your highest skill (e.g. your masterpiece, numbers book, service pistol).
2	An essential item for your occupation (e.g. horn, paint brush, lock picks).
3	A memento from your childhood (e.g. carved toy, pocket knife, lucky coin).
4	A memento of a departed person (e.g. enslaved record of dead grandparent, a photograph in your wallet, a letter).
5	Something given to you by your Significant Person (e.g. a ring, a diary, a map).
6	Your collection. What is it? (e.g. bus tickets, stuffed animals, sheet music).
7	Something you found but you don't know what it is—you seek answers (e.g. a letter found in a cupboard written in an unknown language, a curious pipe found among your father's effects, a strange silver ball you found in an alley).

Roll	Treasured Possessions
8	A sporting item (e.g. baseball bat, a fishing rod, a ball).
9	A weapon (e.g. service revolver, an old hunting rifle, the hidden knife in your boot).
10	A pet (e.g. a dog, a cat, a tortoise).

Traits

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

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

PULP: HARLEM STYLE

For those wishing to use *Harlem Unbound* with *Pulp Cthulhu*, apply the standard pulp hero creation rules found in *Pulp Cthulhu*. Every pulp hero chooses two talents from the ones in *Pulp Cthulhu and/*or from the Harlem Talents.

TABLE: HARLEM TALENTS

Roll	Talent
1	**Born Lucky:** spend 5 Luck points and use current Luck value in place of any one skill roll (except Cthulhu Mythos).
2	**Perseverance:** reduce all Sanity losses by 1 point.
3	**Virtuoso:** gain a bonus die (or reduce the roll difficulty) on any Arts/Craft (skill) roll.
4	**Old Lore:** choose a Lore specialism and gain a bonus die (or reduce the difficulty roll) for all rolls with that skill; skill points should be allocated from personal interest skill points.
5	**Righteous:** spend 5 Luck points to gain an additional +1D4 damage to supernatural or Mythos monsters.
6	**Practitioner:** hero begins game knowing three spells chosen by the Keeper.
7	**Everybody's Pal:** you know "everyone" and can call in favors from a contact; note that favors may be called in at the discretion of the Keeper.
8	**Horrors of War:** spend 10 Luck points to ignore temporary insanity for 1D6 rounds.
9	**Hellfighter:** gain a bonus die on Firearms (Rifle) skill rolls.
10	**Hard Life:** permanently gain +5 hit points (increasing the hero's maximum hit point value).

CHAPTER 4

SOULS OF HARLEM

ABOUT THE PEOPLE

While Harlem was a mecca for change for the African-American community, it also held immigrants and people from all walks of life. During the Renaissance, three key groups can be identified: the exploding African-American community, the receding Jewish community, and the waning Italian community. This mix of peoples made Harlem an incubator of inspiration, diversity, racism, and change.

The African-American Community

African-American people, places, and associated aspects of Harlem life during the 1920s are detailed in **Chapter 1: Song of Harlem**.

The Jewish Community

By 1900, around 180,000 Jews made Harlem their home, making it the third-largest Jewish community in the world, after Krakow, Poland, and New York's Lower East Side (8 miles, 13 km to the south). Most were second-generation German Jews, children of immigrants whose families who had grown up on the Lower East Side, yet chose to flee the influx of religious, Eastern-European Jews into that area at the turn of the 20th century.

At this time, Harlem was divided into sections and such division held especially true for the Jewish population. Working-class Jews lived meagerly, east of Fifth Avenue, while the wealthy inhabited the new brownstones and French flats of West Harlem. According to Irving Howe in *World of Our Fathers*, in 1910, Harlem was called "the aristocratic Jewish neighborhood of New York… but that was true only of the blocks between Lenox and Seventh Avenues, where the better private homes were located, not of the tenements between Fifth and Lenox Avenues" where most of the Eastern-European Jews moved.

The German Jews frequently looked down on their Eastern-European counterparts who were often less worldly, more Judeo-centric in outlook, and usually impoverished. To some extent, Jews in the early 20th century were generally seeking to become "Americanized." The German Jews who had come to the U.S. before 1900 were more assimilated into American society, while the recent immigrants, the Eastern-European Jews, had yet to discard their old-world customs. As more Jewish children attended public schools, rather than the Talmud Torah (parochial religious schools for Jewish boys) and yeshivas, the once isolated became more mainstream.

The Jewish community of Harlem flourished between 1900 and 1930, as seen in the secular Harlem Workmen's Circle (a socialist welfare group for Jews), a Talmud Torah, yeshivas, kosher butchers, and many other Jewish organizations and businesses that took root. The community reflected the full spectrum of Jewish life: from the Orthodox to secular Jews (as well as some atheists), from entrepreneurs to communists, and from criminals to cops.

In 1907, the College of the City of New York (CCNY) moved to Harlem, and soon 90 percent of its students were Jewish. Around this time, the Jewish and Italian organized-crime syndicates, which had started in East Harlem, expanded their operations across all of Harlem. The new immigrant Jews often frequented Central Park, generally to visit the zoo, but tended to hesitate to venture further south (to the museums)—they didn't know where they were and didn't know enough English to ask for directions.

Up to the 1930s, Harlem continued to be a place of transition. Just as earlier German Jews moved out when the Eastern-European Jews moved in, Jews and Italians begin to move out as African-Americans and Puerto Ricans began to take up residence. In 1910, Central Harlem was about 10 percent black, increasing to 70 percent by 1930. In contrast, Greater Harlem in 1910 was 4 percent black,

Opposite: Souls of Harlem

with the black population increasing to nearly 35 percent by 1930. By World War II, most of the Jews of Harlem had moved to other areas of New York City, such as Washington Heights, the Upper West Side, and Brooklyn; around 5,000 Jews remained in Harlem.

The 1920s includes several communities of self-identified black Jews in Harlem. The most prominent group was led by Rabbi Wentworth Matthews, whose community followed Sephardic liturgy, observed Jewish holidays, practiced circumcision, and had its own kosher butcher, although Matthews' group was not accepted as part of mainstream Judaism.

The Italian Community

East Harlem became home to a large Italian community of more than 150,000 souls who were escaping poverty in Southern Italy; this population bolstered by Sicilians and a small number of Northern Italians. The first arrived in 1878, settling in around 115th Street, then growing out to encompass 96th through 116th Streets, which became known as Little Italy or Italian Harlem. These new immigrants were greeted by a mix of Irish, Jewish, and German immigrants, as well as the black residents of Harlem.

By the 1920s, the Italian population was more than triple that of Little Italy in Lower Manhattan. It seemed that East Harlem mirrored daily life in Southern Italy, with different blocks representing different regions and villages; for example, East 107th Street (between First Avenue and the East River) had villagers from Sarno, near Naples, take up residence. Italians had their own churches, banks, social clubs, and cultural infrastructure, and it was common for blocks of people to know each other's names and businesses.

Harlem's Little Italy spawned a large number of criminal syndicates into existence, like the 107th Street Gang and the Black Hand. These eventually led to the more organized Italian gang, the Mafia. In 1930, Little Italy reaches its peak with more than 100,000 Italian-Americans crammed into small apartments, running the streets, and greeting new neighbors.

HISTORICAL FOLK

ACTIVISTS, ENTREPRENEURS, AND INTELLECTUALS

Alain Leroy Locke (1885–1954), Philosopher

Alain Locke represents the term "Renaissance man" better than most: he advanced the African-American cause in nearly every field, including literature, music, theater, art, and politics. He would spend more than five decades fighting for racial equality. His work and influence are immeasurable.

The only child of a distinguished African-American family, Locke's father was a law graduate from Howard University, while his mother was an educator; both provided him a solid foundation in life. Locke graduated *magna cum laude* from Harvard University in 1907. In quick order, he became the first African-American Rhodes Scholar at Oxford University, before graduating a few years later and then attending the University of Berlin with another future distinguished figure from the Harlem Renaissance, W. E. B. Du Bois.

When Locke returned to the United States in 1912 he accepted an assistant professorship in Howard University's English department. Four years later, he returned to Harvard to work toward a Ph.D. and published his first book, *The Race Contacts and Interracial Relations*. Locke earned a Ph.D. in philosophy in 1918. He returned to Howard as chair of the philosophy department and began teaching classes on race relations.

THE FATHER OF HARLEM

Philip A. Payton is considered the "Father of Harlem." Some considered him a man trying to uplift his race, while others dismissed him as someone making money off the backs of his people. Either way, without him, Harlem wouldn't exist as the black mecca of the Renaissance.

Payton moved to New York in 1899, going through a number of jobs until he began managing black housing. When two white rival landlords were warring, one of them decided to fill his building full of black people and hired Payton as the landlord in hope of running the other man out of business. His success in handling the situation led to other landlords hiring Payton and, by 1904, he had opened his own business: the Afro-American Realty Company (AARC).

The AARC business was revolutionary. Local papers cried out about the "negro invasion," but Payton had realized more than a million dollars in assets in just a few years. All of that came to an end in 1908, though, from overextending himself, encountering lawsuits, and coming up against the lasting impact from the depression of 1907. Payton lost the business but kept working in real estate. Before his death in 1917, Payton closed a sale worth more than $1.5 million for black housing; the six apartment buildings were each named after prominent African-Americans.

In 1919, Locke turned his full focus to racial and cultural inclusion for blacks as an integrated part of American democracy, rather than as inferior beings under Jim Crow, becoming the primary intellectual rival of Du Bois. Locke embraces the concept of the New Negro, like Marcus Garvey, and brings forward talented blacks, who he believes can win what he calls the "cultural-citizenship." He advises these singers, writers, and others to find inspiration from their African and African-American heritage to fashion and create enduring works which go on to show a mastery of form and an undaunted spirit. Being gay, Locke avoids adversity (keeping his sexual orientation hidden from the public) but does actively encourage other gay African-Americans in the Renaissance.

During the period of *Harlem Unbound*, Locke is teaching at Howard University in Washington, D.C. and is some five years away from being dismissed for his teachings on race, although he is reinstated in 1928 until his retirement in 1953. Today, his influence and reach can still be felt through written words or through one of the countless people he nurtured.

LGBTQ

Harlem is not just a black mecca, it is a gay, liberal capital with the somewhat unspoken acceptance of all sexualities. Sexuality oozes out in a variety of art forms, from the written word, to paintings, and to dedicated night clubs. Freedom of thought is for all walks of life.

That's not to say there is no oppression waiting to be unleashed. For instance, Augustus Granville Dill, business editor of *The Crisis* and friend of W. E. B. Du Bois was arrested for soliciting sex in a restroom and his career was devastated. The looming threat of developing psychiatric institutions also targeted LGBTQ Harlemites and attempted to lock them away. Thus, some chose to keep their private lives to themselves, while others chose to live openly, including many entertainers who would build amazing careers as openly queer folk, such as singers Bessie Smith and Alberta Hunter.

Despite prejudice, Harlem in the 1920s provides a place to prosper, a place to meet other people, and a place to build a community. Numerous rent parties, hotspots, and nightclubs dot the streets of Harlem. The most popular is the Clam House, but not to be overlooked are Yeah-man, Garden of Joy, and the Ubangi. Not only at night clubs, but at numerous businesses, like Gumby's Bookstore and The Dark Tower, are the doors open and friendly. These hangouts create a zone of safety for people where all are welcomed.

A number of writers, actors, entertainers, and artists are known members of the LGBTQ community: Gladys Bentley, Bessie Smith, Jackie "Moms" Mabley, Countee Cullen, Wallace Thurman, Angelina Weld Grimké, and Alain Locke.

Asa Philip Randolph (1889–1979), *Labor Rights Leader*

Asa Philip Randolph was born in Crescent City, Florida to a Methodist minister father and a seamstress mother. He would become one of the key players in the civil rights movement, working for decades to desegregate the American armed forces, support anti-lynching laws, and serving as a union organizer. His minister father taught him that the color of one's skin is less important than one's character and morals, while his mother taught him the importance of education, and to defend yourself against those who would hurt you.

In the mid-1910s, Randolph moved to Harlem with his family. He studied social sciences at the College of the City of New York and read W. E. B. Du Bois' *The Souls of Black Folk*, a work that won him over to the cause of social equality. In Harlem, he became familiar with socialism and the philosophies of the Industrial Workers of the World. With these influences, Randolph came to believe that collective action would be an important and effective way for blacks to gain legal and economic equality in the future. In 1919, he becomes president of the National Brotherhood of Workers of America, a union focused on organizing African-American shipyards and dock workers. Randolph goes on to publish a magazine called *The Messenger*, which initially publishes political and socialist articles but, after 1920, as socialism fails to take root in Harlem despite Randolph's efforts, the publication becomes a literary magazine featuring black culture and writers. This failure leads him to eventually abandon the Socialist Party. The magazine never skyrockets, but does launch the careers of some Renaissance writers, and acts as a voice against injustice.

William Edward Burghardt Du Bois (1868–1963), *Historian, Writer, and Pan-Africanist*

William Edward Burghardt "W. E. B." Du Bois co-founded the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in 1910 and moved to Harlem to take a position as the organization's Director of Publicity and Research. He also founded the NAACP's magazine, *The Crisis*, to discuss "the causes and impact of racism." The magazine featured literary works as well and published many authors promoting the sentiment of black excellence.

BROTHERHOOD OF SLEEPING CAR PORTERS

Most of the Harlem community was estranged from organized labor—the American Federation of Labor (AFL) did not officially exclude black workers, although many of its affiliates did. As a result, the labor movement failed to make any advances for many years. This began to change in the early 1920s, and the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters (BSCP) becomes the first break in a majority-white union environment. The BSCP receives a charter from the AFL in 1925, making it the first black labor organization to do so.

The BSCP starts when 500 porters meet in Harlem in an effort to organize under the leadership of Asa Philip Randolph. Randolph is not a Pullman employee, a distinction that gives him relative immunity to punishment from the company. Unfortunately, a failed strike in 1933 destroys confidence in the union, and it nearly dissolves; however, the tactics developed by Randolph for collective action in this era later become vital methods for the civil rights movement.

Meanwhile, the Communist Party has been aggressively looking for black people to lead the community, and actively recruits along Lenox Avenue—at least, when the police aren't trying to arrest them. The 1928 meeting of the party's Sixth Congress passes a resolution supporting the black cause as an aspect of class issues in America. Communists focus on Harlem in the late 1920s (and again during the Great Depression) in the hope of making advances, but they make enemies in the NAACP and the BSCP due to their hostility toward the more moderate efforts of those groups.

Forming a union is difficult and ugly work, and in the wake of the Great War, it was particularly difficult in the United States. The movement faced the resistance of a federal government that had absolutely no interest in seeing Bolshevism spread to America after the anarchist bombings of 1919. With the Socialist Party refusing to recognize the issues of race intersecting with class in America, black workers (rightfully) hesitated before joining a cause that did not appear to have any interest in addressing their needs. The BSCP is one of the few early successes—and even that is a near miss.

Scenario Hook

A proto-union called "The Thousand" is making minor advances in recruitment on Lenox Avenue, but their ranks are quickly being reduced due to arrests and violence when they make public appearances. For every member arrested, it seems a replacement arrives in the next few weeks, to pick up where the other left off. New recruits are snuck into St. Nicholas Park, somehow avoiding regular police patrols, to meet the leaders of the movement in the middle of the night. Rumors hold that there are three leaders, and the eldest is the only one heard to speak at these meetings. Referenced by the title "Mother," the leader of this group gives inspirational speeches heavy on metaphor and calls for the "thousand children to work together to care for their brothers and sisters." Bathtub gin is passed around to members and recruits after the speeches, before the new recruits are asked if they wish to join the Mother's family and fight for the cause of the Thousand brethren. Few recruits seem to remember much of what happens after this, but that may be the gin talking. When asked about the Thousand, the official Communist Party of New York has no knowledge of the organization, but would like to know more—thus, the investigators are hired to find out more.

Keeper's secret: in reality, "Mother" is Ssssleyitis, a 300-year-old serpent woman.

During the early years of the NAACP, Du Bois joined the Socialist Party—though not for long, as he resigned his membership in 1912. In the mid-1920s, Du Bois was invited to Russia to observe the effects of communism in the Soviet Union, an experience that solidified his support of socialist ideas rather than communist ones. His support of socialist beliefs was based on a pragmatic understanding of society: he believed the fight for full civil rights and increased representation would be led and won by a black intellectual elite, a group he referred to as the Talented Tenth, and that education was key to developing these potential leaders.

While Du Bois was involved with the NAACP, the group provided financial support for legal defense in an effort to overturn Jim Crow statutes that legalized segregation. The organization raised awareness of black needs and circumstances through *The Crisis* and documented cases of lynching and racial violence. As editor, Du Bois influenced thousands of blacks to look past their harsh treatment and aid the war effort.

THE CRISIS: A RECORD OF DARKER RACES

Du Bois' magazine began in 1910 as the official publication of the NAACP. The purpose of the magazine was apparent with each issue—to carry on an intellectual discussion about race and to protect, elevate, and teach black people. *The Crisis* lived up to its mission, shining a light on the lynching epidemic in America, and providing a stage for talented black creatives and intellectuals. By 1918, the magazine is circulated across America and brings in nearly $60,000 per year.

Scenario Hook

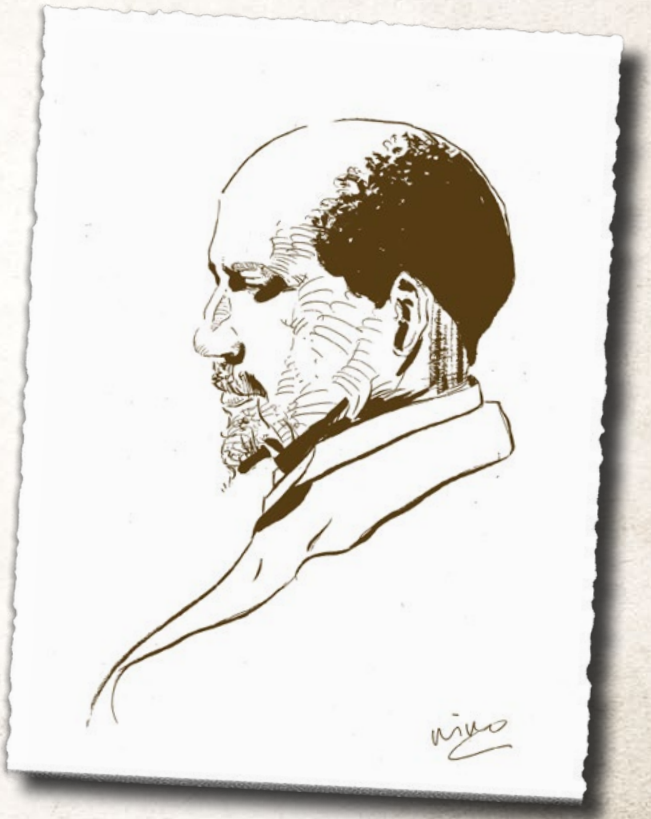
The Crisis takes unsolicited submissions, although new writers may wish to speak with Jessie Fauset first to get her input on their work. The NAACP is interested in investigating a wide range of topics, and good work by the investigators could result in an ongoing contract and further work, some of which might end up published in the organization's magazine. Given the situations investigators can often find themselves in, the NAACP may even cover bail and legal services if needed. Of course, investigator-reporters should practice caution in their investigations, as the NAACP can't help if you're dead because you got in over your head. Articles that provide citations and proof of events covered are preferred.

THE TALENTED TENTH

The term "the Talented Tenth" was created by Du Bois to describe what he believed to be the top ten percent of the black population who would be educated, affluent, and leaders. This tenth would write, continue their education, and be active in the social change that would benefit their race.

The NAACP also assisted with the appeals that led to the Supreme Court decision in Moore v. Dempsey, which expanded the federal courts' oversight of state criminal justice systems to prevent juries from passing sentences while under threat of local mobs.

Du Bois supported women's rights, although the failure of the suffrage movement to support the fight against racial injustice made it difficult for him to publicly support their movement in return.



W.E.B Du Bois

Marcus Garvey (1887–1940), *Political Leader, Orator, and Entrepreneur*

Marcus Garvey was the youngest of eleven siblings, and of those, one of two to survive childhood in Jamaica under British rule. The island had roughly 15,000 whites ruling over a population of nearly 170,000 racially mixed people and 630,000 blacks—this domination of color and power is never forgotten by Garvey, who went on to found the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) in Jamaica in 1914. Once a solid foundation had been established for the organization, Garvey toured the U.S. in 1916, lecturing and fundraising. He was outspoken about the lack of proper black leadership in America and took it upon himself to improve the situation, moving the UNIA's base from Jamaica to Harlem.

By 1919, the UNIA was 4 million members strong throughout the world, with branches in the U.S., South America, Central America, and the West Indies. In the same year, Garvey's most ambitious business venture, the Black Star Shipping Line, is started. He also founded the Negro Factories Corps, which produces commodities and provides jobs for thousands of blacks, as well as launching the most successful weekly newspaper of his entire publishing career, *Negro World*, which runs until 1933. *Negro World* serves as the voice for the UNIA and publishes poetry and articles of international interest to black readers. Some of the writers for *The Crisis* would go on to appear in *Negro World*, although most were international rather than U.S. based—writers local to Harlem included John Edward Bruce, Hubert Harrison, John G. Jackson, Joel Augustus Rogers, Arturo Alfonso Schomburg, and Eric D. Walrond.

Garvey took a hard line against the Communist Party, believing communism to be more beneficial for whites while blocking the successes of blacks entirely. In his view, the Communist Party was full of white men who wanted to manipulate black opinion to their own benefit and control. He shared similar views on socialists as well, believing that separation was the only choice that would secure a future for black people.

Garvey was a charismatic leader who appealed to many of the West Indies immigrants in Harlem, as well as black veterans of the Great War. He believed in and pushed for the development of Liberia, which had been founded in Africa in the 19th century by the American Colonization Society as a colony for free blacks from the United States. Garvey's plan was to build colleges and an industrial base in the region but a backlash from European interests ended these plans and the work was abandoned in the mid-1920s.

What started as a philosophical disagreement regarding the tactics employed by the NAACP and the UNIA quickly became a personal division between W. E. B. Du Bois and Garvey. The two men exchange pointed and vicious attacks in public, both verbal and written, and disliked one another intensely. Garvey viewed Du Bois as a collaborator in the oppression of blacks, while Du Bois saw Garvey's separatism as a concession to white supremacy, a view he felt was reinforced by the Ku Klux Klan's open support of Garvey's Back-to-Africa movement. Tensions escalated when Garvey accused Du Bois of paying to have the Black Star Line sabotaged, leading to many black leaders asking for Garvey to be investigated for fraudulent business transactions. The resultant investigation resulted in Garvey's arrest and conviction, with Garvey acting as his own defense in court. After his conviction, Garvey accused Jewish interests of sabotaging his case. Following a five-year prison term, he was deported to Jamaica in 1927.

While Garvey was in prison, his wife Amy took over the day-to-day running of the UNIA, something she was well-prepared to do as she was already involved in speechwriting and planning for the group. After the Garveys return to Jamaica in 1927, the UNIA took on a different direction under new leadership, leading to a schism in the group and a significant reduction in the influence of the UNIA. Before his death in 1940, Garvey continued to tour internationally, write, and support black interests.

THE BLACK STAR SHIPPING LINE

The Black Star Line is incorporated in 1919 to ship goods and provide easy and low-cost passage for Marcus Garvey's "Back-to-Africa" movement. The headquarters of the four-ship line is in Harlem. It is just one of the many businesses the UNIA helped to establish.

Unfortunately, the shipping line is mismanaged, reaching a $500,000 debt in four years' time due to the condition of the purchased ships being worse than advertised. One sinks within the first year and another blows a boiler, killing a crewmember. Graft (corruption) is a problem throughout the line, as are the sabotage efforts of J. Edgar Hoover and the Bureau of Investigation. On one occasion, cargo rots in the hold because Garvey insists on making ceremonial stops for political gain, instead of delivering the food goods in a timely fashion.

Eventually, Hoover charges Garvey with mail fraud, as the ships advertised by the company did not match the ships actually sailing. The Black Star Line ceases trading in 1922, with an overall loss somewhere between half a million to more than a million dollars.

Arturo Alfonso Schomburg (1874–1938), *Activist, Collector, and Writer*

Arturo Schomburg was born in Santurce, Puerto Rico to Maria Josefa, a freeborn midwife, and Carlos Federico Schomburg, a German merchant. Words from one of his teachers at San Juan's Instituto Popular inspired him and became a driving force in his life: "Blacks have no history, no heroes or accomplishments."

Schomburg emigrated to Harlem in 1881 and later worked to untangle African history from the Americas. Confronted with American racism, he joined the Revolutionary Committee of Puerto Rico and was an advocate for Puerto Rican and Cuban independence from Spain. He became a co-founder of the Negro Society for Historical Research with John Edward Bruce in 1911. Later, in 1912, Schomburg co-edited the *Encyclopedia of the Colored Race*, and in 1916 published *A Bibliographical Checklist of American Negro Poetry*, a collection of poetry by black writers.

Schomburg was a leading voice of intellectuals in the Harlem Renaissance and collected literature, art, enslaved narratives, and materials of African history. In 1925 he published, "The Negro Digs Up His Past," which was included in Alain Locke's *The New Negro*. A year later, Ernestine Rose of the New York Public Library's Harlem Branch purchased his voluminous collection of literature, artwork, and more. Subsequently, Schomburg became the curator of the Schomburg Collection of Negro Literature and Art in Harlem.

Ernestine Rose (1880–1961), *Librarian*

Named after 19th-century feminist Ernestine Potowski Rose, Ernestine Rose graduated from Wesleyan University in 1904 and began working in the New York Public Library. During her time there, she encountered Russian-Jewish immigrants, their culture, and how society treated those considered as "outsiders," which in turn led to her an understanding of the inhuman treatment of minorities in general. While the Great War raged on, she served as the director for the American Library Association.

In 1920, Rose was appointed as the branch librarian at 135th Street (the Harlem Branch) and soon recognized that many of the city's institutions were not working with the Renaissance, excluding its creatives and ideology. Realizing that more could be done, she dedicated herself to supporting the Renaissance. Her first victories were the integration of black workers into the library's staff (hiring people like Nella Larsen) and the foundation of a collection of African art.

Hubert Henry Harrison (1883–1927), *Orator, Writer, and Educator*

Born in St. Croix in the West Indies, Harrison arrived in Harlem an orphan at age 17. He took advantage of every opportunity available to educate himself and engage with the community. His shock at the terrorism of white supremacy in the U.S.—a dramatic contrast to his experience in the Caribbean—led him to activism within months of arriving in New York.

During the 1920s, he joined the Socialist Party of America and became a leading member, establishing the Colored Socialist Club to encourage black participation in the party. He pushed the party to support the Industrial Workers of the World, in contrast to the more conservative policies of the party's leadership; however, the repeated failures of the socialists to address racial issues in the context of class led him to resign from the party in 1918.

Harrison continued his work, founding *The New Negro* newspaper and writing for *The Voice*. His work sparked the New Negro Movement, which would provide the bedrock for future advocacy in Harlem. He became the head editor of Garvey's *Negro World*, and in eight months built the paper into an outstanding political and intellectual publication, although issues with Garvey's habits of exaggeration, financial mismanagement, and authoritarianism quickly led to personal conflicts. The UNIA's focus on issues of race to the exclusion of issues of class and Garvey's focus on Africa (while ignoring the context of American blacks), led Harrison to resign his position less than a year into his editorship.

While Harrison lost hope in the Socialist party and in the UNIA, he didn't lose hope in the concept of socialism or community empowerment. He turned his efforts into bypassing the gatekeepers of formal party structures and began a series of outdoor lectures, nicknamed the "Outdoor

FROM SLAVERY TO SERVITUDE

While the North offered opportunities and a less harsh reality, the people of the Great Migration did not leave oppression behind when they fled the South. Many employment agencies hiring domestic workers made black workers sign a contract, which was nearly impossible to break, no matter the conditions of service. The contracts forced travelers from the South to work for a set number of years to pay for their move northward. Breaking these contracts meant losing all of your possessions and money—they may have left slavery only to enter into indentured servitude.

University." He appealed directly to the people of Harlem, offering education and lectures on politics, literature, science, and the arts. The lectures established the Harlem tradition of soapbox speakers and became popular enough to block traffic regularly at the corner of 135th Street and Lenox Avenue.

Harrison's work in Harlem was a grassroots movement and he reached out to the community with every tool available. He published articles in any newspaper that would take his work, focusing on community empowerment and collective approaches to dealing with oppression. When radio became popular, he used it to raise awareness of race and class issues in the black community. Until his untimely death in 1927, Harrison was a prolific and well-respected book and theater reviewer, popular with intellectuals and the masses.

Mary White Ovington (1865–1951), *Suffragist and Journalist*

Ovington joined the civil rights movement after hearing Frederick Douglass speak in 1890. Over the next five years, she founded and led the Greenpoint Settlement, investigating social issues regarding black employment and housing, which in turn led her to meet W. E. B. Du Bois and (eventually) A. Philip Randolph, Jack London, and Max Eastman in 1905, as a member of the Socialist Party of America.

In 1910, she aided in the founding of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and was appointed Executive Secretary. Ovington worked to advance race and women's rights and was a pacifist opposed to the Great War. After the war, she became the Executive Secretary and Chairperson of the NAACP. Her work with the NAACP included a lengthy legal battle against segregation and racial discrimination with appeals to the Supreme Court.

Cyril Briggs (1888–1966), *Activist*

Cyril Briggs was born on Nevis Island in the Caribbean in 1888 to a white plantation overseer father and a Caribbean mother. He immigrated to the U.S. in 1907 and received his first journalist work with the *Amsterdam News* in 1912.

The Crusader, Briggs' own publication, began in 1918 and created the African Blood Brotherhood (ABB). The ABB's fought against racial discrimination, promoted voting rights, and actively combated the enduring horror of lynching. Briggs supported African-Americans in the war effort, as he hoped it would empower President Woodrow Wilson to address black voting rights (which it did not). Disillusioned, Briggs joined the Communist Party in 1921 and incorporated Marxist beliefs into the ABB, along with black self-determinism.

Briggs saw racism against blacks as something that wouldn't be solved by adhering to white laws; he preached that whites consider themselves superior to blacks, marking those with black skin as inferior; his solution was a separate existence of the races, and he subscribed to an "Africa for the Africans" stance. As a Marxist, his beliefs opposed Garvey's nationalist movement, the UNIA, leading to a rift begins between the men, with Garvey filing a number of lawsuits against Briggs, believing he wanted to take down the government.

The ABB dissolved in 1925 but returned as the American Negro Labor Congress (ANLC), funded by the Communist Party. Briggs served as the secretary of the ANLC and remained an active force in the movement.

Lillian Harris Dean a.k.a. "Pigfoot Mary" (1870–1929), *Cook and National Celebrity*

Pigs' feet aren't the most appetizing food for white diners in New York: fatty and collagen-rich, they add a serious heft to soup, and when boiled down, they melt into soft, belly-warming goodness. They're a poor person's food, a desperation food—if you've recently joined the Great Migration to escape poverty and desperation in the South, they're something like comfort food. They're cheap to make, cheap to buy, and an excellent hangover cure. Which, truthfully, is the most important thing to consider in the late hours after a bar crawl up 133rd Street in Harlem.

Pigfoot Mary served a whole host of other soul foods, but her pig's feet and corn were the main staples. Her deep voice carried along the street, and her height and heft make her an intimidating and memorable woman. She started her business in Lower Manhattan with her first paycheck in 1901. Within weeks her improvised baby carriage cart and boiler stand were replaced by a proper steam-table booth. It wasn't just her business taking off, either. By the time she upgraded her booth, she'd also married the owner of the adjoining newsstand, John Dean. The two of them moved to Harlem and set up shop together at West 135th St. and Lenox Ave.

While she was illiterate, Mary's business sense was spectacular and, with her husband's support, she quickly built a small fortune, enough to buy an apartment building at 7th Ave and 135th in 1917. Her pigs' feet saw her becoming one of the few black landowners in Harlem and, over time, her wealth continued to grow through investments in real estate throughout the Renaissance period.

Thomas T. Fortune (1856–1928), *Crusading Journalist*

Born into slavery in Florida, Fortune experienced the racial violence of the Ku Klux Klan under the guise of politics. He would become a crusading writer and editor, and three times during his long life he would be pulled back into activism and journalism.

Founded in Alexandria, Virginia in 1876, *The People's Advocate* was Fortune's first newspaper. He moved to New York in 1881 and created a new publication, *The New York Globe*; which would undergo a few name changes, survive for eight decades, and become one of the most influential black newspapers in the U.S. For two decades, Fortune rallied his paper and investigative skills, uncompromising in a quest to uncover injustices toward African-Americans, with a strong eye towards the Southern States' treatment of blacks. His words were his weapon and the paper his delivery system. In 1887, Fortune organized the National Afro-American League to provide a defense to the black community against lynching, riots, and white terrorism.

A rift with Booker T. Washington ended Fortune's career amidst ridicule in 1907. He managed a resurrection of his career for a few years but, in 1911, had to step away due to illness. In 1923, Marcus Garvey pulled him out of obscurity to make a 67-year-old Fortune the editor of *Negro World*. Fortune runs that paper until his death in 1928.

Charles William Anderson (1866–1938), *Bureaucrat*

Ohio-born Charles Anderson was a close confidant of Booker T. Washington for more than 20 years. He entered politics in 1886 in Manhattan as a ward heeler and gained votes for the Republicans in African-American neighborhoods. He rose in the ranks to become the president of the Young Men's Colored Republican Club of New York County. Washington's relationship with President Theodore Roosevelt facilitated Anderson being appointed as an internal revenue collector for Lower Manhattan, including Wall Street, a position that made Anderson one of the nation's most powerful officials and which lasted for a decade until Woodrow Wilson ousted him, unwilling to see a black man with such power. Anderson went on to serve as Chief of Inspectors for the State Agricultural Department.

Ruth Logan Roberts (1891–1968), *Suffragist*

Daughter of suffragist Adella Hunt Logan, Roberts was born in 1891, graduating from the Sargent School of Physical Education in 1911. Her field of study was physical therapy, and she worked at the Tuskegee Institute, where she began her suffrage work in 1913.

With her husband, Eugene Percy Roberts, Roberts moved to New York in 1917, where she served on multiple boards as director of the national and local YMCA. She served on the New York State Board of Social Welfare and hosted regular salons in her home at 130 West 130th Street in Harlem. Such salons hosted many powerful players in the Renaissance, ranging from those in politics to artists and other movers and shakers.

Walter Francis White (1893–1955), *Activist and Investigator*

White served the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People for a quarter of a century in different capacities, beginning as an investigator in 1918. His ability to "pass" for white, from his combined European and African ancestry, enabled him to enter places and engage in activities other blacks couldn't.

REST FOR ALL

Walter White could be friends or an acquaintance of the investigators, perhaps turning to one of them for help. A new recruit to the NAACP has gone missing and White would like the investigators to find the young man (Karl Tempest), as he has to travel down to Georgia on a different case. Investigating Tempest reveals that the young man had just moved to Harlem from Jamaica, taking up residence in Rest for All, a new and cheap housing tenement. The three-story Rest for All is actually a haunted building that traps its residents after they sign the lease. The landlord actually knows about the "curse," but he has to do the building's bidding or he will become trapped himself.

A'Lelia Walker a.k.a. Lelia McWilliams (1885–1931), *Adventuress, Millionaire, and Patron*

The only child of the self-made millionaire Madam C. J. Walker, A'Lelia Walker aided her mother in founding the Madam C. J. Walker Manufacturing Company in 1906, opening and running the New York branch. Following her mother's death in 1919, A'Lelia became the president of the company but soon began to lose interest in running the business. Instead, she immersed herself in Harlem's social life, nightlife, and the budding Renaissance movement.

A'Lelia Walker lived in Golden Edge, overlooking Central Park, near Lenox Avenue. Her position of wealth as a patron of the arts placed her in a position to play hostess to many of the best and brightest of Harlem. Exposure to classical music in her youth led her to seek out jazz and experimental musicians to play at her elegant parties. In the late 1920s, she converts a floor of her townhouse into the "Dark Tower"—named after Countee Cullen's magazine column—a permanent salon where visitors can freely share

thoughts, creativity, and forbidden interests in privacy. While those familiar with her mother's charity work may have looked askance at her daughter's "frivolous" use of money for such social gatherings, without the patronage provided by the Dark Tower, many writers and musicians would not have had opportunities to connect and be heard.

Walker's salon was integrated, though as hostess she was aware of the racial dynamics at play. She was known to play with those lines—on one occasion, serving white guests bathtub gin and chitterlings, while her black guests enjoyed champagne and caviar. Similarly, she was known to be accepting of gay and lesbian performances and guests, providing a safe environment for networking and fostering personal and artistic relationships—an attitude that contributed to her scandalous reputation among Harlem's more conservative elite.

As a result, the Dark Tower was more than a nightclub: visitors came and went at all times of day, by invitation of Mrs. Walker. At any one time, one could find famous writers in attendance including Langston Hughes, Zora Neale Hurston, and James Weldon Johnson among others. With the Great Depression, the salon was forced to close, though private groups still met at the Dark Tower after it was sold in 1930.

THE DARK HEIGHTS

Access to the upper floors of the Dark Tower is restricted to members of the Dark Heights, an elite group of writers and musicians personally sponsored by A'Lelia Walker. While Mrs. Walker is not a member, this social club's focus on writing earns them a secure meeting room at the salon.

Membership in the Dark Heights can be earned by presenting your work to A'Lelia or to a member of the Heights and impressing them with experimental art of written or musical form. Jazz poetry is a popular submission for review, but other art forms are acceptable so long as they are spoken-word or musical in nature. Membership in the Dark Heights often results in immediate and astounding success, though members are sworn to secrecy regarding the social club's private activities.

Determining who is a member of Dark Heights and who is not is difficult at best, but its members regularly attend the open salon, so that provides the best opportunity to be noticed. Known members include the well-dressed Samuel Haumza—a man who claims to be a wealthy Egyptian, though his accent is... difficult to place. Haumza is often found listening attentively to performers from his regular corner of the Dark Tower, where, in his black suit, he nearly blends into the dark background.

Twice a year—at each equinox, in March and September—the Dark Heights holds a sponsored event at the Dark Tower featuring readings, small plays, and extremely experimental music. Along with the mad cackling of the Heights members, the discordant piping of an instrument that sounds like an unholy cross of the bagpipes and a piccolo can be heard drifting from the meeting chambers down to the back stairwell.

AUTHORS, JOURNALISTS, AND POETS

Langston Hughes (1902–1967), *Writer*

Born James Mercer, Langston Hughes was the most well-known literary giant of the Harlem Renaissance. Hughes began writing poetry after moving to Cleveland following the death of his grandmother. He embraced writers like Carl Sandburg and Walt Whitman and became a contributor to the literary magazine *The Crisis*, which published one of his most influential works in 1921: *The Negro Speaks of Rivers*. In 1922, Hughes arrived in Harlem after quitting Columbia University due to the racism he experienced. He continues to write poetry and takes on a number of odd jobs for the first year, eventually serving as a crewman aboard the *S.S. Malone*.

Nella Larsen (1891–1964), *Novelist*

Nella Larsen was born in 1891 to a West Indian father (who died when she was two) and a Danish mother. Larsen was raised in all-white environments after the death of her black father, as her mother remarried a Danish man. Her first brush with black people occurred at Fisk University in Tennessee. After graduation, she journeyed to Denmark and stayed for three years before moving back to the U.S. to study nursing in New York. She worked as a nurse in Alabama from 1915 to 1921. Thereafter, Larsen moved back to New York to serve as a librarian at the New York Public Library before her first novel *Quicksand* was published in 1928. In 1929, her second book *Passing* was published, winning her the Guggenheim Fellowship a year later— the first time the award was presented to a black woman.

Wallace Thurman (1902–1934), *Novelist and Editor*

Wallace Thurman's earliest memories were of loneliness. Abandoned by his father, he was raised by his grandmother Emma Jackson, while ridiculed by his mother for his dark skin. Thurman's grandmother was deeply religious and a

member of the Calvary Baptist Missionary, the first black church in the state—the dominant religion in Utah being the Church of Latter Day Saints (Mormons). Even with the obstacles he faced, Thurman was recognized in both high school and college for his brilliance.

He arrived in Harlem in 1925, following his friend Arna Bontemps, with whom he ran the black newspaper, *The Pacific Defender*, and an art journal called *Outlet*. He quickly became a cornerstone of the New Negro Renaissance with Hurston, Hughes, and Nugent. The publication of Thurman's third magazine, *Fire!!* (1926) is widely considered to be the spark that launched the Harlem Renaissance.

Over the next few years, Thurman founds *The Looking Glass*, becomes editor of *The Messenger* (a socialist magazine), ghost-writes for *True Story*; and becomes the first black reader at Macaulay, a New York publishing company. In 1929 he publishes the first of three novels, *The Blacker the Berry: A Novel of Negro Life*.

Geraldyn Dismond a.k.a. Gerri Major (1894–1984), *Journalist*

A major in the American Red Cross during the Great War, Dismond moved to Harlem with her husband only to realize she was, in her own words, "positively miserable" with little to do in her first year there. She participated in an NAACP fundraiser in 1925, writing an announcement for the dance that brought her writing talent to the attention of Floyd J. Calvin of the *Pittsburgh Courier*. She was quickly hired as a social columnist for the paper, focusing on the elite of Harlem. Three social columns later for three different newspapers (all in publication simultaneously) and she soon had a career as a writer and publicist.

Dismond worked as a columnist, editor, and journalist, and she was also a regular guest on the *Negro Achievement*

PASSING

Set in Harlem during the 1920s, Nella Larsen's novel *Passing* revolves around the reunion of two friends, Clare Kendry and Irene Redfield. Due to Kendry's light skin tone, others mistake her for a white woman. In "passing" for a white, Kendry finds herself with access and experiences denied to her darker-skinned black friends and family, and comes to consider how race and identity factor into human connections and values.

FIRE!!!

Fire!! was born in fire and died in flames. It was a spark of genius by Thurman, Hurston, Douglas, Davis, Nugent, Bennett, Alexander, Cullen, and Hughes. As stars of the Renaissance, they did not adhere to the old mentality; instead, they wished to address African-American experiences in a modern and realistic manner. The magazine was their medium, with the first and only issue focusing on the changing attitudes of African-Americans and exploring interracial relationships, sexuality, racism, color prejudice, and prostitution.

The magazine's first issue was met with a range of reactions, from cold indifference to outright disgust. Some feared that it did not show African-American sophistication, while others were appalled by the blanket expression of ideas and vulgarity. Despite such concerns, its publication is a historic moment. The magazine's headquarters burn down after issue one was published, and the endeavor ends.

Langston Hughes

Hour, a radio variety show on WEVD and later WABC. She acted as a program director for the show, as well as a news commentator. Her column in the *Inter-state Tattler* was called "Between Puffs," which she wrote under the pen name "Lady Nicotine."

Claude McKay a.k.a. Festus (1889–1948), *Writer*

Born in Jamaica, Claude McKay was one of eight children out of eleven in his family to live to adulthood. McKay's schooling began at Mt. Zion Church and continued under the tutelage of his brother Theodore, who loved literature and introduced Claude to it. Published in 1912, Claude McKay's first two volumes of poetry highlighted his lyrical celebration of black life and political concern for racial prejudice.

The Souls of Black Folk by W. E. B. Du Bois inspired McKay to move to New York in 1914 after a failed marriage; there, he entrenched himself in Harlem and Greenwich Village. He embraced a bohemian lifestyle that saw him undertake a range of jobs, including owning a restaurant and working as a longshoreman. Shortly afterward, falling in with other writers, he wrote his first American poems, "The Harlem Dancer" and "Invocation," which garnered him instant recognition. In July 1919, during the height of the Red Summer, McKay had a two-page piece in *Liberator*, "If We Must Die," that spoke of whites killing black people in riots. McKay helps Cyril Briggs found the African Blood Brotherhood before moving to Europe.

In 1921, McKay returned to editing *Liberator*. In 1922, he publishes *Harlem Shadows*, passionately portraying black life in Harlem and infusing it with the racial outcry found in "If We Must Die."

Countee Cullen (1903–1946), *Poet*

Born Coleman Rutherford, Countee took on the last name Cullen in 1918 after being adopted by Reverend Cullen, who served as president of the Harlem Branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and who was the preacher at Salem Methodist Church. Countee became Rev. Cullen's son and a ward of the church.

Countee wrote poetry throughout his high school and college days, catching the eye of *The Crisis* and going on to win national recognition in 1925 when he is awarded the John Reed Memorial Prize for "The Ballad of a Brown Girl." It is the first of many prizes he will earn in his career, with subsequent works appearing more influenced by Americanism.

Jessie Redmon Fauset (1882–1961), *Educator*

Known as the "Midwife of the Harlem Renaissance," Fauset moved to Harlem in 1919 after leaving her teaching position in Boston to become the literary editor of *The Crisis*. In her pivotal role, she introduced the works of some of the literary geniuses of the Renaissance, including Hughes, McKay, and Toomer. Fauset not only fosters such artists but creates her own works, becoming the most published novelist of the time. Her works include numerous essays, poems, and novels, including *There is Confusion* (1924). In 1926, she leaves *The Crisis* and returns to the world of teaching.

THE WIRELESS

Radio is a new form of media in the Harlem Renaissance, leading to eager listeners gathering around "the wireless" to listen to static-filled music or news reports. It is also almost entirely unregulated, resulting in crowded airwaves and conflicting signals. After regulations are passed the situation improves, but many small stations scattered around New York continue to operate as "pirate" broadcasters. AM stations are scattered throughout New York and New Jersey and often use telephone lines to coordinate with live clubs in order to broadcast performances to their audiences. Many of the stations also run variety shows, radio plays, newscasts, and community events.

RADIO MYSTERY

Radio broadcasts are popular with Harlem residents, leading to neighbors collecting around someone's wireless to listen to music, news, or a play; the broadcasts featuring live music are particularly popular. There is one broadcast that is a mystery—coming on air around 3 am on a channel that is otherwise silent at other times of the day—that has gotten a few folks curious. Listeners hear a neutral voice, a little low for a woman and a little high for a man, reading a sequence of numbers and then carefully pronouncing somewhere between five and fifteen individual syllables. The broadcast ends with a mechanical click. The source of the broadcast remains unknown and no meaning has, so far, been discerned. Theories range from communist spies to advance notice for the next day's gambling numbers. Some of the Harlem residents with a background in math or interest in puzzles have taken to meeting every other Saturday over lunch to compare notes in an attempt to crack the code.

Floyd Calvin (1902–1939), *Radio Show Host and Journalist*

Calvin was a journalist working for the *Pittsburgh Courier* and hosted a radio talk show on WGBS (later picked up by station rival WCGU). While his show doesn't last long, soon other radio stations began to pick up programs focused on Harlem or hosted by black newscasters. Calvin becomes convinced that radio will allow messages of growth and prosperity to reach a far wider audience than previously possible, amplifying the positive effects of professional journalism and black voices.

THE WEEKLIES

In addition to *The Crisis*, Harlem residents had two other local newspapers as well—the *New York Age* and the *New York Amsterdam News*. Both printed weekly spreads and covered local news and politics, as well as featuring social columns. The *Amsterdam News* was the more conservative of the two and aimed at a middle-class audience, while the *Age* published more sensational and radical topics. The *Age* employs Ida B. Wells after her own newspaper was destroyed by a mob, enabling her articles to reach a wider audience in an anti-lynching campaign.

Dorothy West (1907–1998), *Writer*

Dorothy West moved to Harlem in 1926 at the age of 18, holding the mantle of the youngest member of the Renaissance writers, although two years earlier she was being regularly published in the *Boston Post*—she also held the title of sole-surviving member of the Renaissance in the 1990s. In 1926, West tied with Zora Neale Hurston in a writing contest with her fiction piece, *The Typewriter*. She remained a steadfast member of a group including Hughes, Paterson, and a number of other writers who traveled to the Soviet Union to make a race-relations film, *Black and White*.

Richard Wright (1908–1960), *Writer*

The eldest son of a schoolteacher and sharecropper, Wright's parents were the first generation of the family to be born free after the Civil War. At age 15, he published his first story, "The Voodoo of Hell's Half-Acre," before graduating high school as valedictorian in 1923. This moment was a test of the young man, as the principal gave him a prepared speech that did not offend the white students—Wright weathered the pressure and gave his original speech. He later arrives in Harlem at the tail end of the Renaissance to become the editor of the *Daily Worker*, a communist newspaper. He continues the work of those that have moved on, eventually publishing the books *Native Son* and *Black Boy*.

Zora Neale Hurston (1891–1960), *Folklorist, Anthropologist, and Writer*

Hurston, an enigma among luminaries, rewrote her life as she lived it. For decades, no one was sure of her birth location or her actual age. It was believed that she was born in Eatonville, Florida—one of the first African-American-only towns in the U.S. In fact, she was born in Nostalgia, Alabama and moved to Eatonville at the age of three. For all of her brilliance, work, and relationships, she died in poverty and remained largely unknown. It is only through the writer Alice Walker (in 1973) that she received proper recognition.

In 1917, Hurston attended Morgan Academy, claiming her birthday was 1901, enabling her to receive a free high-school education. In 1918, she attended Howard University and co-founded *The Hilltop*, a student newspaper. She studied Spanish and Greek, and eventually earned a degree in anthropology from Barnard. She arrived in Harlem in the mid-1920s, quickly becoming one of the voices for the movement. More of an adventurer, folklorist, and storyteller of rural African-American life, she met resistance from the Talented Tenth, who believed she should have focused on the elite rather than the rural peoples.

Zora Neale Hurston

Augusta Savage (1892–1962), *Visual Artist*

Savage was the seventh of fourteen children, born into a poor and religious household. Her carpenter and Methodist preacher father and housewife mother couldn't grasp her talent; her parents saw it as something evil, the clay figures as sinful and "graven images"—her father tried to exorcise the evil of art out of her with beatings nearly every day. Undaunted, she continued her work with clay and her talent drew the attention of her high-school principal, who encouraged her to teach art and convinced her father to allow her to do so. She earned a dollar a day for six months. At age 15, she married James Savage, had a daughter, and was widowed within five years.

In 1921, Savage arrived in New York to understudy with sculptor Solon Borglum, who turns her away. Undefeated, she completes Cooper Union's four-year course in three years, before applying successfully to a French government art program in 1923—although a racist receptionist from Alabama she was going to travel with refused to accompany her. It took another seven years before she was able to travel abroad, with a scholarship from the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Rome.

She returned to the U.S. in 1932 during the Great Depression, but given such hardships are a constant theme in her life, she continues onward, undaunted. In 1934, Savage becomes the first African-American artist of the National Association of Women Painters and Sculptors. She later opens the Savage Studio of Arts and Crafts in a basement at West 143rd Street. The studio is open to anyone who wants to draw, sculpt, or paint.

Aaron Douglas (1899–1979), *Illustrator and Educator*

In 1920, after returning from the Great War, Club Ebony commissioned Douglas to create a mural. He later graduates from the University of Nebraska in 1922. Douglas moved to Harlem in 1925 to teach art at Lincoln High School. In that same year, he is the only black visual artist featured in *The New Negro*. Over the following years, his skilled hands create art for Hughes and Johnson, and his work is featured frequently in *The Crisis* magazine.

Douglas' murals grace Harlem hotels, walls, and buildings. He becomes the President of the Harlem Artists Guild in the 1930s. The work he creates embodies the spirit of the Harlem Renaissance, earning him the title "The Father of African-American Art."

Oscar Micheaux (1884–1951), *Author, Film Director, and Visionary Producer*

Oscar Micheaux was born on a farm, the fifth child of thirteen, in rural Metropolis, Illinois. In 1911, he wrote about his experiences in his first book, *The Conquest: The Story of a Negro Pioneer*. The book was dedicated to Booker T. Washington and promoted the spirit of uplifting the black race. Using that success, Micheaux began a publishing company and released his next two books. *The Homesteader*, his third book, appealed to him as a powerful story for film and, in 1918, he began studying the craft of filmmaking; ultimately, this is what he would become known for—earning himself the nickname "The Father of Afro-American Cinema."

In 1918–1919, Micheaux produced *The Homesteader* as a silent film from his own company; it was distributed to nearly 800 theaters. Hot on the heels of his first movie, and the only feature-length film by a black company, he released *Within Our Gates* (1920) as a direct response to D. W. Griffith's racist film *Birth of a Nation* (1915).

WITHIN OUR GATES

Micheaux's second film explores the tale of a beautiful, mixed-raced black woman who moves north in the hope of raising money for a school in the South. The film portrays a complex black relationship not previously seen onscreen, and highlights the deadly violence of the Jim Crow South, with flashbacks of the woman's family being killed by a white mob after a wrongful accusation.

A REEL MYSTERY

Oscar Micheaux has traveled to Harlem to promote his upcoming film, *Within Our Gates*, by showing a copy of *The Homesteader*, but every person he shows it to seems to vanish shortly after seeing the film. That's four missing Harlemites, and Micheaux is getting worried. He doesn't know what's going on and is afraid potential backers will be scared away.

In truth, the reel of film onto which this copy of *The Homesteader* was copied is made of material derived from the Dreamlands. Anyone who views the film other than Micheaux (because he made the reel, somehow unconsciously connecting it to his dreams), is pulled into the film. If the reel is destroyed, all of the victims die.

Evelyn (Jarvis) Preer (1896–1932), *Actress and Singer*

Known in black circles as "The First Lady of the Screen," Evelyn Preer was born in Vicksburg, Mississippi and moved to Chicago with her mother after her father's death. She began acting in vaudeville and minstrel shows at an early age. *The Homesteader* in 1919 was her debut film role, and she undertook numerous personal and public appearances to promote the film. At the time of her *Homesteader* appearances, she was months away from her biggest role as the lead in Oscar Micheaux's *Within Our Gates*, a role that showcases her versatility and skill. Applauded by both black and white press, in the mid-1920s she became known for her ability to appear in "crossover" films and stage work.

COMPOSERS, MUSICIANS, AND SINGERS

Noble Sissle (1889–1975), *Musician and Playwright*

Best known for the musical *Shuffle Along* (1921) with its most popular number "I'm Just Wild About Harry," Noble Sissle was born in Indiana to a pastor father and schoolteacher mother. In 1918, he joined the 369th Infantry Regiment—the Harlem Hellfighters—and served under bandmaster James Europe in the regimental band, playing the violin and drum. Leaving the army as a Second Lieutenant after the Great War, he joined Europe's civilian band that featured many of the members of the 369th band and performed Vaudevillian music with Eubie Blake as the Dixie Duo. In May of 1919, Noble found himself leading Europe's band after a disgruntled band member murdered the original bandleader. In the 1920s, Sissle and Blake together run Europe's band, while working on a musical they hope to produce one day.

Duke Ellington (1899–1974), *Musician and Leader of Jazz Orchestra*

Born Edward Kennedy "Duke" Ellington started taking piano lessons at six and developed a love of Ragtime music. His parents' love of manners, food, clothes, and music fostered his natural talent and style. These traits earned him the nickname "The Duke." In 1917, Ellington formed his first band, Duke's Serenaders, who played dancehalls throughout the D.C. area. Five years later, the band was re-named The Washingtonians and made the jump to Harlem. Sensing the changing musical dynamic, Ellington focused on jazz and recruited some of the greatest talents in the country, "Tricky Sam" Nanton on trombone, and Johnny Hodges on saxophone. Ellington goes on to become a legend in his own lifetime.

SHUFFLE ALONG

Shuffle Along is a monumental feat and achievement of its time. It is the first musical composed by blacks, featuring an all-black cast and direction. Its first performance is in March 1921, at Howard University in Washington, D.C., and two months later, it premieres in New York at Cort's 63rd Street Theatre.

The near-instant success of the show exceeds expectations and proves to theater managers that white audiences will embrace a black musical, something that has not happened in more than a decade on Broadway. It becomes known as an "actor's show." The musical renews public interest in black theatricals and is a turning point for black entertainment in the U.S.

Shuffle Along weaves the stories of two men, Sam and Steve, both vying to become mayor of Jimtown USA, with the losing candidate being appointed to chief of police by the other. Sam wins the race with the help of a crooked campaign manager and keeps his word to Steve, but the duo quickly finds themselves at odds. The situation leads to a humorous and dramatic fight scene between the two with a newcomer, Harry Walton, running for mayor. Harry wins the next election, and runs both Sam and Steve out of town to the most popular number from the musical, "I'm Just Wild about Harry."

Jackie "Moms" Mabley (1897–1975), *Comedian*

Born Loretta Mary Aiken in North Carolina, one of 16 children, Jackie Mabley suffered early tragedies when her father died volunteering with the fire department, while her mother was run over by a truck on Christmas a few years later. She was also raped twice, by two different men, before the age of 14. Mabley fled to Ohio and joined a Vaudevillian minstrel show, during which she got her big break.

Her rising star took her to New York, and by 1920, and she hit her stride as a nightclub act. She played the Cotton Club and Connie's Inn and headlined with people like Cab Calloway and Duke Ellington. Mabley developed a character act that sees success over six decades: Moms is an elderly black woman in a flower-print house dress with the catchphrase, "My children." At 27, she came out of the closet and was one of the first openly gay comedians.

Jackie "Moms" Mabley

Mabley was also the first African-American woman to reach national status as a stand-up comic. Despite her act being known across the country, her pay—as with so many black performers of the time—was miserly.

Bessie Smith (1894–1937), *Singer*

Born to a part-time Baptist preacher father, Smith grew up in the Church and began touring in her teens. Her personal magnetism and powerful singing voice left audiences speechless. Bouncing from place to place, she met and performed with Ma Rainey. During the 1920s, she is well known in Harlem, and could be found performing at the Lafayette or Lincoln Theaters when she was in town. Smith was a foul-mouthed, bisexual, and an alcoholic, whose close friends could confirm that no one messed with Bessie. In the early part of the decade, she is dubbed the "Empress of Blues," and her Columbia record deal sells nearly 800,000 copies.

Ferdinand Lamothe "Jelly Roll" Morton (1890–1941), *Pianist*

Born in downtown New Orleans, music oozed from every pore of Ferdinand Morton, who began making music as a toddler. He mastered the guitar but loved the piano, and by age 12 was earning $100 a night playing in brothels. While he was a skilled musician, Morton was also a skilled pool shark, comedian, and gambler. In 1915, *The Jelly Roll Blues* was the first jazz arrangement ever published, allowing Morton to tell people that he invented jazz. His first records were produced in 1922, and a few short years later, Jelly Roll Morton's Red Hot Peppers form, playing as an eight-piece band schooled in New Orleans ensemble style. His music and band gain national recognition, leading to numerous requests and bookings, ensuring that Morton kept playing, bouncing back and forth between the East and West coasts. During the 1920s, Morton's reputation tended to precede him in multiple ways—most notably that he was brilliant on the piano keys and a force to be reckoned with, but had an ego to match, making it difficult to find people willing to work with him.

STRIDE AND CUTTING CONTEST

Stride is a rhythmic piano technique using the left hand, giving rise to musical battles between two pianists going head to head, with one of their jobs on the line. If the challenger beat the style of the house pianist, the house pianist got cut and the new player had the gig until bested.

Cutting contests took on the opposite meaning from the word's use in stride battles. In cutting contests, to be cut is to be victorious. The first pianist starts a tune, and then the second cuts in and adds a level of complexity to the music. It bounces back and forth until one of them is bested. Willie "The Lion" Smith and James Johnson were known for their legendary cutting contests. Popular at rent parties, such contests were played out in friendly rivalry with status as the only reward.

Willie "The Lion" Smith (1897–1973), *Pianist and Innovator*

Born William Henry Joseph Bonaparte Bertholoff in New York, by six years old Smith was already playing the piano. He mastered Ragtime six years later, playing in saloons, dance halls, and wherever else he could, including bars. Not only skilled at the piano, he began dancing while playing to gain extra tips. By age 14, he was known for "stride piano." He enlisted in the armed forces at the age of 19 and went to fight on the front lines in France. Fearless in battle, he earned his nickname, "Lion." With the close of the Great War, the Lion returned to the U.S. One of the greatest piano players of all time, Smith continued to play, although in the 1920s, his career was in the doldrums; he could be found bouncing around Harlem looking for gigs, as well as battling it out in cutting contests.

Mary Lou Williams "The Lady Who Swings the Band" (1910–1981), *Performer*

Composer, teacher, and mentor to many of the biggest names in music, Mary Lou Williams was an amazing musician. She taught herself to play the piano at three years-of-age and was performing publicly by seven in a wide range of styles including blues, classical, and jazz. Her career started in vaudeville at age 13 and she traveled regularly for shows. During the 1920s, she was a teenager still in the early stages of her career, but she'd already composed arrangements for the likes of Benny Goodman and Duke Ellington. Her star was still rising and her potential unmeasured.

While Williams could usually be found in Pittsburgh and Kansas City, she visited Harlem on tours and played with Duke Ellington's Washingtonians. Treated like a beloved little sister by those with whom she performs, her bandmates often acted as her protectors on the long trips to performances, tagging along to ensure her safety from the dangers of the road.

Louis Armstrong (1901–1971), *Musician*

New Orleans-born Louis Armstrong grew up in a poverty-stricken section of the city called "the Battlefield." He left school in fifth grade to work for a Jewish family, the Karnofskys, collecting junk and transporting coal. The Karnofskys encouraged him to sing and invited him for dinner frequently. After an arrest in 1912 and 18 months spent in the Colored Waif's Home for Boys, he discovered his love of the cornet and music.

After his release, Armstrong's talent drew the attention of Joe "King" Oliver, the best cornet player in town, who began to mentor Armstrong and occasionally invited the young musician to stand in for him. Armstrong was married to Daisy Parker by the age of 18, and the couple adopted his 3-year-old mentally impaired nephew Clarence after his cousin died. Unfortunately, the marriage quickly failed. That same year, he replaced his mentor Oliver in Kid Ory's band, and a year later Armstrong began playing the riverboat circuit. He cuts his first record in 1923 with his old mentor and marries again in 1924 to pianist Lillian Hardin.

In 1924, Armstrong arrived in New York and made a big impression on the music scene with his solos, bringing swing music to the Fletcher Henderson Orchestra. While there, he makes dozens of records, but never feels at ease in the city, prompting him to leave for a three-year stint in Chicago before eventually returning. Even after his departure, his impact had a legacy, with Harlem bands attempting to imitate his style.

Chick Webb (1905–1939), *Musician and Bandleader*

Chick Webb moved to New York in 1925, at the height of the jazz boom. He grew up drenched in music, having played with bands since age 11, and, as a teen, he played on cruise ships with the Jazzola Orchestra. In New York, Webb formed the Harlem Stompers, with himself as drummer. Webb was "discovered" while playing at the Black Bottom Club, and by 1927, the Harlem Stompers were playing all of the major venues. including the Cotton Club and Rose Danceland. In 1929, the Brunswick label released the Stompers first record, under the name The Jungle Band.

Adelaide Louise Hall (1901–1993), *Entertainer and Singer*

Born and raised in Harlem, Adelaide Hall grew up surrounded by music and steeped in religion. Her father, Arthur, was a music teacher and pianist, and Hall and her sister Evelyn sang in the church choir. As a young girl, she was inspired by Florence Mills, and she and Evelyn formed a band, the Hall Sisters. In 1920, Evelyn died from pneumonia, devastating Hall but steeling her determination to embrace music. Her big break happened in 1921 when she was cast in the musical *Shuffle Along*. A seven-decade career followed.

Louis Armstrong

PATRONS, PERFORMERS, AND PRACTITIONERS

Paul Robeson (1898–1976), *Activist and Actor*

Paul Robeson is the epitome of a Renaissance Man; an athlete, singer, actor, and civil rights activist. His career spanned decades and his influence felt for generations. After the death of his mother when he was six, Robeson's pastor father moved the family from Princeton to Somerville, New Jersey. By age 17, Robeson had earned a scholarship to Rutgers University, becoming the third African-American to attend. He excelled academically, became known for his debating skills, and won more than 15 letters in four different sports. He capped these achievements off by joining *Phi Beta Kappa* and becoming class valedictorian.

Robeson played pro football, graduating from Columbia Law School in 1923. Despite many years of study, his practice of law only lasted a few months, his career crushed by the unbridled racism at his firm. His wife Eslanda, whom he married in college, supported the family. The pair frequented events at the Schomburg Center, spurring Robeson to begin his transition to the stage. In 1925, Robeson tackled *The Emperor Jones* and stared in Oscar Micheaux's *Body and Soul*. His performances in these productions skyrocketed him forward in a successful career of singing and acting, and his increasing role in civil rights activism around the world.

Paul Robeson

Josephine Baker (1906–1975), *Performer, Spy, and Activist*

One of the headline performers at the Plantation Club and called the highest-paid chorus girl in vaudeville, Josephine Baker rose to stardom in Harlem. Her performances on Broadway gave her opportunities that few dancers before her had known. With a talent for introducing comedy into her routines, Baker refused to perform for segregated audiences. Her success in Harlem launched an international career, seeing her later move to Paris.

RECLAIMING SELF

Visual artists in Harlem have the task of reclaiming the visual representations of themselves and their people from white interpretation. This is no small task, with differing artists taking multiple approaches to reclaiming their visual expression. Many artists in Harlem bring African and Haitian influences to their work as part of that effort, while it creates a unique visual motif for these artists, it also creates the philosophical double-bind known as "Primitivism."

Some white audiences interpret the work as "folk art," and relegate it to positions of lesser worth. Some black audiences feel the use of these themes perpetuates stereotypes and artificially limits black expression, while others take pride in updating historical themes within a Modernist context, embracing non-white influence in their work. This ambiguous relationship between history, culture, and art becomes a consistent theme for Harlem artists, such as the following:

- Charles Alston—painter, illustrator, and sculptor. A college student at the time, his later work with the WPA shows Harlem influences.
- Henry Bannarn—sculptor and painter.
- Richmond Barthé—sculptor.
- Selma Burke—sculptor.
- Beauford Delaney—painter. He arrives in Harlem around 1929.
- Sargent Claude Johnson—painter, potter, and sculptor.
- Richard Bruce Nugent—writer and painter.
- James Van Der Zee—photographer.

Nora "The Mamma Who Can't Behave" Holt (1890–1974), *Critic*

Born Lena Douglas, Nora Holt became the first African-American woman with a master's degree in the U.S. Her recognition from the Chicago Musical College was one of many successes, which included working as a music critic for numerous black publications, primarily *The Chicago Defender*. Thereafter, she began publishing her own magazine, *Music and Poetry*, from her foundation, the National Association of Negro Musicians. During her fourth marriage to an elderly and wealthy businessman, she changed her first name to Nora and took his last name. When George Holt passed, Nora inherited a fortune in Liberty Life Insurance Company stock.

Holt's personal life was well known; she had numerous lovers, both single and married. Her reputation was the inspiration for Carl Van Vechten's haughty Lasca Sartoris in his controversial novel *Nigger Heaven* in 1926—and her nickname, "the Mamma Who Can't Behave." Holt frequented the Harlem nightclub scene and could be found working or relaxing about town, usually surrounded by her entourage.

Grace Nail Johnson (1885–1976), *Activist and Patron*

The wife of James Weldon Johnson, Grace Johnson was an activist and advocate for social change. A founder of the NAACP Junior League, she acted as a mentor for many black women in Harlem. Known as the "Grand Dame of Harlem," she also hosted events and arranged the social niceties required to support her and her husband's work. Johnson was the only black member of the feminist debating group Heterodoxy based in Greenwich Village. The group included many lesbian and bisexual members who were involved in the radical wing of the suffrage movement, often being arrested for their actions at protests.

Fanny Brice

Fayard (1914–2006) and Harold Nicholas (1921–2000), *Acrobats and Performers*

Fayard and Harold Nicholas combined dancing, acrobatics, and jazz into a tap style unlike any ever seen. The duo came from the vaudeville tradition. Working at the Strand Theatre in Philadelphia. Growing up in the wings allowed the brothers to develop skills to match their ambitions, and in 1931 they hit it big. The pair appeared on *The Horn and Hardart Children's Hour*, tapping out a rhythmic beat to an audience that couldn't see them but who are astounded by the sound. That same year, the brothers could be found working at the Cotton Club in Harlem.

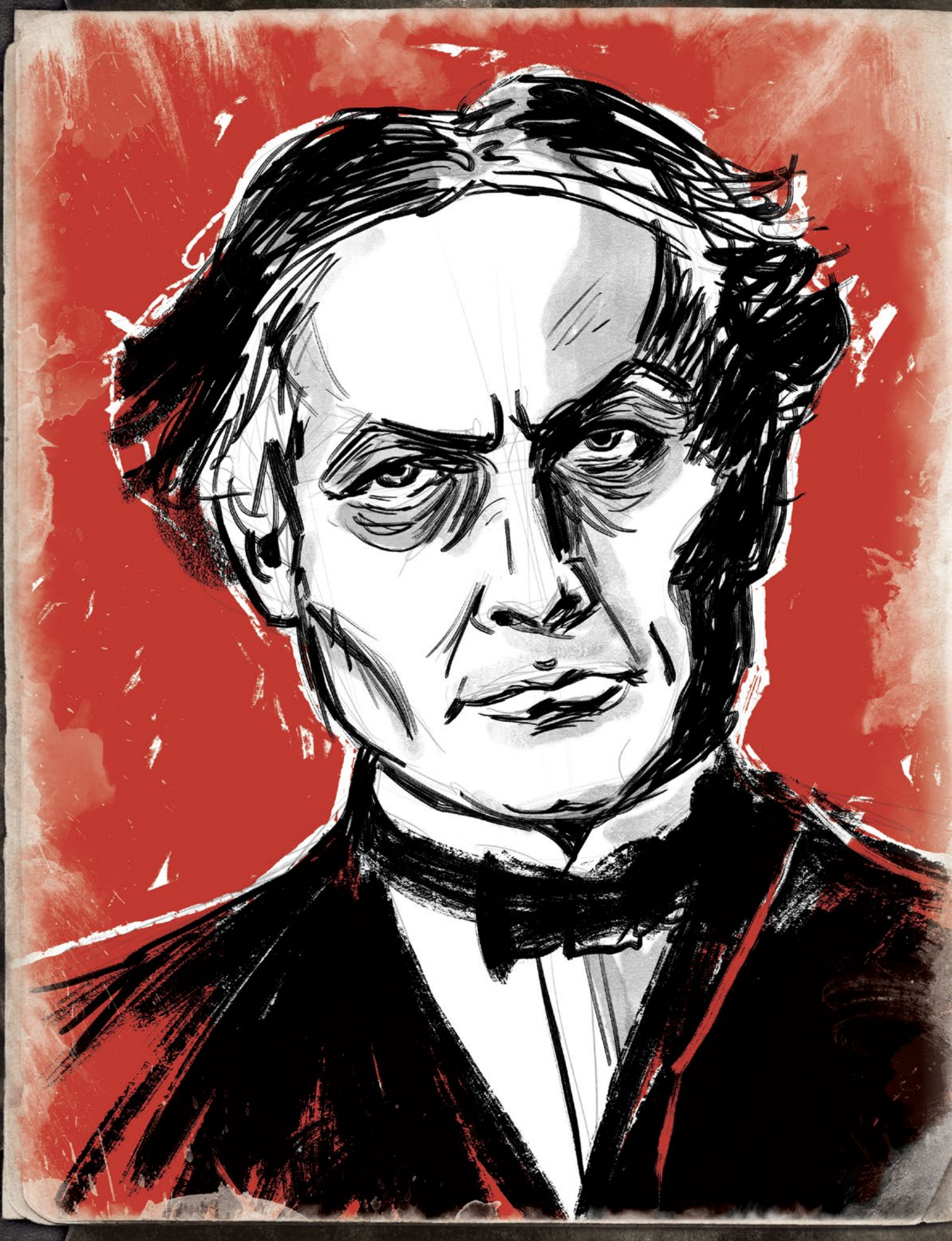
Fanny Brice (1891–1951), *Actress and Comedian*

Fanny Brice (born Fania Borach) was raised on the Lower East Side. She first took to the stage at age 13, where she won an amateur night contest at Keeny's Theatre in Brooklyn by singing "When You Know You're Not Forgotten by the Girl You Can't Forget." Fanny earned $5 and numerous coins hurled by the audience, and from that night on, she gave up school for the stage. Her success eventually led to Florenz Ziegfeld offering her $75 per week to join the Ziegfeld Follies for the duration of the 1920s. When she left, after introducing the song "My Man," Ziegfeld gave Brice a check for $2,500 and said, "You've earned it." Her weekly salary reached $3,000 per week after leaving the Follies' stage.

Harry Houdini (1874–1926), *Illusionist, Escape Artist, and Debunker*

Harry Houdini (born Erik Weisz, later Ehrich Weiss or Harry Weiss) was the most famous magician in the world, without question. His beginning was somewhat humble; born in Budapest to a Rabbi father, he grew up in squalor and immigrated to America at the age of 3 years old. Houdini turned to magic at age 17, as an escape from working in the factories. While his first years spent trying out all manner of magic tricks were a succession of failure after failure, he eventually created the act that would make him a legend—the Challenge Escape.

After his big break, Houdini quickly became known for his daring escapes and illusions. Using his fame, he turned his attention toward what he saw as the scourge of fake spiritualists (and their taking advantage of people who lost their loved ones). He battled and railed against such "mystics" in honor of his dead mother. With great stage success,



multiple films contracts, and millions of dollars, his name became known worldwide. During the 1920s, Houdini is the President of the Society of American Magicians, and also a Freemason.

William Elmer Harmon (1862–1928), *Patron and Business Mogul*

Real-estate developer William Harmon founded the Harmon Foundation in 1922 to support causes close to his heart; however, the one the Foundation became best known for was its support for the visual arts. Harmon's father was an officer in the 10th Cavalry, the Buffalo Soldiers. As a result, Harmon grew up surrounded by his father's regiment and became interested in supporting them after meeting a black artist unable to sell his paintings because of his race. In 1925, the Harmon Foundation began presenting cash awards for black achievements in various fields, including the fine arts. Within a few years, the Foundation received so many submissions of high-quality art that it established an exhibition to show and sell the art on tour.

Benjamin Rucker a.k.a. Black Herman (1889–1934), *Magician and Adventurer*

A magic man, literally. Rucker was a stage magician and illusionist, and one of the best. His illusions included the Asrah Levitation, rabbits from hats, and a buried-alive act that involved his apparent interment for three days before his "revival" for the rest of his show. His stage banter included a strong separatist and political message, influenced by the philosophy of Marcus Garvey. His performances saw the casting out of demons from a planted collaborator in the audience and "psychic" cold-reading of marks. The advice, oils, amulets, roots, herbs, and other tools used during his show were, of course, offered for sale afterward to his audience.

Offstage, Rucker was a Freemason, an Elk, and was deeply involved in his community, establishing scholarships and performing for free to fundraise for churches. His book, *Secrets of Magic, Mystery, and Legerdemain* was sold at all of his shows as an autobiography, and also included a guide to simple illusions, astrology advice, and a scattering of hoodoo folk-magic practices.

Hubert Julian a.k.a. The Black Eagle (1897–1983), *Aviation Pioneer and Colonel*

A pilot from Trinidad, Julian moved to Harlem in the early 1920s where he took on a stage name and had a pseudo-military uniform designed for his exhibition stunt parachute shows. His most famous jump involved a bright red jumpsuit and a saxophone on which he played "Runnin' Wild" on his way down, earning him the nickname "The Black Eagle of Harlem." In addition to his stunt shows, Julian was the first black person to earn a pilot's license in the U.S. and hired himself out for private flights (one of his patrons is Father Divine—see **The Black Mecca**, page 83). Later, he becomes the first black man to fly coast to coast in the U.S., breaking the world record for the longest non-stop and non-refueling flight of over 84 hours.

MAGIC SHOW

Black Herman puts on a good show but anyone with sense can tell that it's just that—a show. The problem is it's sometimes a little too convincing. For the last few weeks, the magician has been dealing with unusual characters showing up to his performances and throwing the rhythm of the act off, as well as creeping out audiences. His next show is planned to include his burial-reviving act, but a series of threatening objects have been found left in his private rooms, worrying him that he's somehow angered someone who aims to see him buried alive—this time for real.

HOLY ROLLERS, PLAYERS, AND THE LAW (BOTH SIDES)

Samuel J. Battle a.k.a. The Man (1883–1966), *First Black NYC Police Officer*

White officers' policing black communities dealt out an often-brutal justice for any crime, real or perceived, and police departments of the era were rife with corruption. The New York Police Department was entirely white until 1911, when Samuel Battle was officially accepted to the force as the city's first black officer. He was just over 6 feet (1.8 m) tall and weighed more than 250 pounds (113 kg), and was a member of the NAACP. He enjoyed the full support of Harlem's ministers and newspaper editors, who had hopes that an integrated force would temper police violence against blacks in New York City.

As the first black officer, Battle endured the abuse of white citizens and police officers. Treated on the one hand as a threat, and on the other as an amusing performance, he patiently commanded respect from those around him—though he rarely received it. He was assigned to Harlem during the 1920s, as the need for policing increased with the expanding population. He became something of a minor

Opposite: Harry Houdini

NEW YORK MAYORS

John F. Hylan

Mayor from 1917 to 1925, Hylan came from a hardworking rural background in the Catskills. His experience laying track for railroads and operating train engines gave him a workman's perspective on politics. His ambition and tenacity provided him contacts with Tammany Hall, and a close, four-way race in 1917 landed him the mayor's job. His campaign focused on the issue of the rising cost of subway tokens; he promised to keep the token at five cents. The pragmatic need to keep the subways cheap so blacks could travel out of Harlem to work drove voters to the polls. In consequence, Hylan was the first Democratic candidate to receive a significant portion of the black vote in New York (over 70 percent). He rides this success for another election in 1921.

Unfortunately, Hylan was not the brightest, intellectually speaking, although his political allies at Tammany Hall were smart enough to do the thinking for him. He spent most of his time as mayor railing against outside corporate and banking interests, which he saw as controlling the leaders of political parties, newspapers, and other public institutions while stomping on the rights of the people and meddling with elected officials. As a Tammany Hall-supported candidate, the irony was lost on him. Thankfully, the leader of Tammany Hall at the time, Charles Francis "Silent Charlie" Murphy, was personally dedicated to reforming Tammany's reputation for corruption. During Hylan's career, Murphy pushed the Democratic party in New York to encourage black voters and attempted to widen the influence of the organization over the other boroughs. The passing of Murphy in 1924 ended Tammany Hall's focus on fighting corruption.

Under Hylan's leadership, his friend Robert Moses initiated multiple city-planning projects, while other large-scale endeavors received funding and broke ground. The expansion of the city's subway systems and elevated tracks started during Hylan's first term. Remarkably, the cost of a subway token actually remains at five cents until Hylan leaves office.

James John Walker

John Hylan is succeeded in 1925 by the flamboyant James "Beau James" Walker, who came from a successful family and grew up in Greenwich Village. He was not a dedicated student and dropped out to follow a very short career in music. This brief experience with music would serve him well later, as Walker was a frequent attendee at high-class theaters, as well as less-than-legal speakeasies. His glad-handing and swagger made him an appealing candidate to the working-class voter. The new leadership at Tammany Hall all but guaranteed Walker's win.

Under his leadership the city founds the Department of Sanitation, the city's public hospitals unify, parks and playgrounds are built, and the subway continues to expand. His campaign promises appealed to the voters and included legalizing boxing, condemning the Ku Klux Klan, and opposing Prohibition. At his direction, enforcement of Prohibition plummeted when he undermined the position of the police commissioner, cut efforts to fight bootleggers, and told the police to ignore all but the most egregious violations of the law. A popular mayor, Walker engaged with voters and was often seen at the very speakeasies he's allowed to flourish in the city. He even kept the price of subway tokens at five cents, risking a worker strike to do so.

Despite being re-elected in 1929 by an overwhelming margin, his success doesn't last long when the stock market crashes in October. As unemployment and unrest rose, Walker's administration became subject to multiple investigations into corruption and police abuse. Ultimately, the Seabury Commission called him to testify on suspicion of bribery for municipal contracts. The governor of New York, Franklin D. Roosevelt, asked Walker to explain multiple large "donations" he had received over the years (into his personal accounts), and by 1932 Walker was forced resign his position. The following day, Walker left for Europe and didn't return for three years—until the risk of prosecution had passed.

celebrity, meeting the elite of Harlem and integrating himself into the community. His status is such that even those being arrested ask for his autograph.

James Evans (1895–1965?), *Legendary Pool Player*

At the height of Prohibition, if were you're looking for an evening out and not in the mood for dancing and music, you might find yourself sauntering into a smoke-filled pool hall. Snooker and eight-ball were extremely popular games, and some of the best games could be found in Harlem. Arguably the best player was James Evans. Hustler, pool shark, and the best shot in New York, he owned a pool room in Harlem where he would gladly take on challengers. Under segregation, while Evans was not allowed to compete in other tournaments, he had a reputation for challenging winners after competitions.

Giuseppe "The Clutch Hand" Morello (1867–1930), *Crime Boss*

After fleeing Italy as a murder suspect in the 1890s, Morello founded the 107th Street Mob less than a decade later. He ran the gang with a murderous zeal, killing those who opposed him and leaving their dismembered bodies in large barrels that were dumped in the ocean, left on street corners, or shipped to fake addresses in other cities. The gang extorted, robbed, counterfeited, loan sharked, and ran an Italian lottery, becoming the most powerful Sicilian crime family in New York. In 1909, Morello was caught and sentenced to 20 years for counterfeiting; his brother Nicolo took over the gang in his absence.

Nicolo was killed in 1916, with Giuseppe's two half-brothers, Vincenzo Terranova and Ciro Terranova taking over control. Giuseppe returned in 1920, only to be considered a threat by a former captain now turned mafia boss, Salvatore D'Aquila. In consequence, Giuseppe fled the country for a few years, returning later to serve as consigliere to Joe the Boss Masseria.

Giuseppe "Joe the Boss" Masseria (1886–1931), *Crime Boss*

Masseria was born in Menfi, Sicily, moving to the U.S. in 1902. He quickly joined the Morello crime family as a captain, working out of Harlem. After avoiding serving prison time for a burglary conviction in 1909, he entered into a power struggle with fellow captain Salvatore D'Aquila. By 1920, the pair were in an all-out war, with Masseria escaping a point-blank hit unscathed—although the straw hat on his head got two bullet holes. After that feat, he was christened "The Man Who Can Dodge Bullets." Masseria eventually emerged victorious and ran the Morello crime family throughout the Prohibition era.

Robert "The Master Builder" Moses (1888–1981), *Bureaucrat*

A powerful man in New York State government, Robert Moses was never elected to office. Instead, he cultivated powerful connections and was appointed to positions that give him extensive decision-making power over the city's planning and construction. While this influence brought him into conflict with other power peddlers (such as Tammany Hall), he was hailed for his park and parkway planning. His influence in the city's design was both pervasive and strongly influenced by his own racism. Many of his parkways ran through minority neighborhoods, Harlem was shortchanged on parks and pools, and exit ramps dumped traffic directly onto the already-clogged Harlem streets. His decisions built his racism into the landscape of New York and Harlem.

Arnold "The Brain" Rothstein (1882–1928), *Kingpin, Gambler, and Mastermind*

Arnold Rothstein was born in 1882 to wealthy Jewish parents in Manhattan. He had a talent for numbers but little interest in school; he was gambling by the age of ten. In 1910, Rothstein opened a casino in the Tenderloin area

NEW YORK MAYORS

Joseph V. McKee

With the resignation of James Walker in 1932, Joseph McKee became the acting mayor. McKee was a teacher, municipal judge, and was elected president of the New York City Board of Aldermen before his unexpected promotion to mayor. McKee works as mayor for a span of three months during which the city holds a special election. His leadership in this role was limited, consisting mostly of answering many pointed financial questions and filling out paperwork in the wake of the Walker scandal.

McKee's name does not go on the ballot during the special election; amazingly, he still received twelve percent of the vote, entirely in write-in votes—the highest percentage NYC elections had seen for a write-in candidate, and especially for one who wasn't even trying to run. Tammany Hall's candidate, John P. O'Brien, won the special election but served for only one year before losing re-election.

of Manhattan and invested in horse-racing tracks. Those ventures plus establishing a network of informants from his father's banking community led to Rothstein becoming a millionaire by age 30.

Prohibition opened another door for Rothstein, who turned his talents to bootlegging and narcotics. He smuggled contraband from Canada across the Great Lakes, via the Hudson River and into New York. Using his political connections and money to become a player in Tammany Hall, Rothstein then turned gangs from the streets into an organized criminal corporation. By 1925, he was one of the most powerful criminals in the U.S. and was worth more than $10 million.

Casper Holstein (1876–1946), *Mob Boss*

In 1915, a criminal by the name of Peter H. Matthews was arrested for his involvement in Harlem's first major racket (also called "*bolito, bolita*," the numbers game, the Italian lottery, and a few other variations). At the beginning of the 1920s, shortly after the establishment of Prohibition, a U.S. Navy veteran from the Danish West Indies was responsible for the return of "the numbers" to Harlem. While Casper Holstein's fame as one of the great bookies of Harlem was eventually eclipsed by his rival Stephanie "Queenie" St. Clair, in the early 1920s he was known as the "Bolito King" and sometimes even as "Harlem's favorite hero."

Casper Holstein

Casper Holstein returned from the Great War to work a variety of menial jobs before finally becoming the head messenger for a commodities brokerage. Apocryphally, his introduction to the stock market was what led him to create a new "policy game" in Harlem, where numbers aren't randomly generated by the bookie (which allowed the policy racket to cheat if it lost too much money), but rather drawn from unrelated published statistics, like the New York Stock Exchange daily share volume. This change encouraged participation in the game since the players could see that it wasn't rigged. Incidentally, both Holstein and St. Clair took credit for using these publicly available random numbers.

Like many successful Harlemites, Holstein gave back to the community. His philanthropy included extending patronage to artists, writers, poets, and musicians, and by the late 1920s includes building dormitories at black colleges. He was a vocal supporter of Marcus Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association (see page 78) and later bought the mortgage for their headquarters so it could continue to operate. He was also a contributor to the NAACP's newspaper *The Crisis*, and his charitable works extended internationally to Liberia and his native Virgin Islands.

Despite his role as a philanthropist, he was still a mobster. In 1928, he was kidnapped by five white men, but is released a few days later (allegedly without the $30,000 ransom being paid). When Dutch Schultz began his consolidation of *bolito* operators in the 1930s, Holstein largely bowed out of the game, claiming that violence would undermine his political principles. Despite his diminished influence on Harlem's numbers rackets, he was finally arrested in 1937, retiring (more or less) from criminal activity until his death.

NUMBERS GAME

The numbers game is an illegal lottery played in poor neighborhoods throughout Harlem. It is also known as the "policy racket" or the "daily number." Numbers are sometimes selected randomly or taken from the New York Stock Exchange—bets are placed on the order of numbers or the value of the ending number, of a given stock. Runners pass the numbers from headquarters, the "policy bank," and distribute them to bookies throughout the area for players to check in and collect winnings.

Jack "Legs" Diamond (1897–1931), *Mob Enforcer*

Diamond joined the Irish gang known as the Hudson Dusters in 1914, which led to his first of many arrests for burglary. He joined the army to serve during the Great War but was convicted for desertion in 1918. Once out of jail (in 1919), he became Arnold Rothstein's bodyguard and personal thug. Called "Gentleman Jack," Diamond was known for his flamboyant lifestyle; his nickname "Legs" came from his dance moves and the speed he used to escape enemies when things went south.

Stephanie "Queenie" Saint-Clair (1886–1969), *Crime Boss, Philanthropist, and Activist*

Prohibition created an opportunity for crime that left empires in its wake. Harlem was not immune to this phenomenon. Speakeasies rely on bathtub gin, booze runners, and numbers games to entertain guests, while the police need bribes to look the other way. The key to such matters in Harlem was Stephanie St. Clair, known to some as "Queenie"—although Harlem residents preferred the more respectful "Madame St. Clair." Her career in Harlem was notable for two things: first, that she was the only woman in the numbers game; and second, she was the only independent player (other operators having been intimidated or bought out by the Italian mafia). By 1925, more than thirty numbers games operated in Harlem, most of them under the control of Madame St. Clair.

Since many banks would not accept black customers, the numbers games provided an informal financial service for customers, and an earning opportunity for those with a bit of change to spare. In fact, St. Clair made efforts to educate the residents of Harlem about their legal and voting rights and called out police brutality against her operations and her customers by running regular advertisements on the topic in the local newspapers. Her bold approach earned her eight months in a workhouse following her arrest in 1929, at which point she testified to the kickbacks she received, forcing the Seabury Commission to fire more than a dozen police officers in 1931. At the height of her career in illegal gambling, St. Clair lived on Sugar Hill and held Harlem in her grasp.

St. Clair's right-hand man was an ex-rival known as Bumpy Johnson. Dutch Schultz, a Bronx mobster known as the "Beer Baron of the Bronx," attempted to move in on the numbers racket in Harlem in the early 1930s. St. Clair and Bumpy resisted the effort, leading to a violent and destructive street war between the rival gangs. St. Clair held firm and Schultz was unable to force her to abandon her territory—later, she passed the work to Bumpy, who negotiated an agreement with Lucky Luciano and the Italian mafia after she had retired. St. Clair and Bumpy's partnership effectively locked Schultz out of Harlem; Schultz being murdered later to clear the way for the Italian families.

Stephanie "Queenie" Saint-Clair

Morris Raphael Cohen (1880–1947), *Lawyer*

Born to Bessie and Abraham Cohen in Minsk, Morris moved to New York in 1892 with his family. He received an education from City College of New York and Harvard and obtained his Ph.D. in 1906. Six years later, he accepted a position as Professor of Philosophy at CCNY. He established himself as a philosopher, competent lawyer, and keen linguist.

WANDERING DIAMOND

Alice Diamond knows her husband Jack is a womanizer and a playboy, but she doesn't care. What she cares about is their family and Jack's recent strange behavior. He's been coming home late at night and has stopped drinking and dancing. His boss, Rothstein hasn't noticed yet, but when he does, he may well cut Jack loose. Alice needs to find out what is wrong with her husband.

Investigating Jack uncovers a series of odd behaviors, including nightly outings to Mount Morris Park and frequently unusual places for a man in his position (like bookshops). The truth of the matter is that Jack has become the pawn of a serpent person, who is using the Dominate spell to get Jack to carry out certain secret plans.

Yossele Rosenblatt (1882–1933), *Cantor and Superstar*

In 1882, a dirt-floored house in Ukraine welcomed the birth of the man who is the equivalent of Cab Calloway for cantorial music. Rosenblatt was a wunderkind, earning money by the age of 8 from his singing, with tales of his heavenly voice already beginning to circulate. In 1912, he Immigrated to New York and was soon singing to filled synagogues. He was a rock star before such things existed.

Rosenblatt turned down an offer to join the Chicago Opera in 1918 as he felt the position would not allow him to cantor properly, and he did not wish to sing on stage with women. The decision actually increased his popularity, as people wanted to see the man who turned away $1,000 a night to sing. During the 1920s, Rosenblatt was in demand, singing to packed houses, and recording albums. In 1927 he performed as himself in *The Jazz Singer*, the first feature-length motion picture with synchronized singing and speech, heralding the start of the "talkies."

Wentworth Matthew (1892–1973), *Rabbi*

Matthew immigrated to New York from the British West Indies in 1913, finding work as both as a carpenter and a prizefighter. He was known for his scrappiness and relentlessness. After studying Christianity and Judaism during the Great War period, he resided in Harlem and preached from street corners, slowly building a congregation. Influenced by Judaism and identifying with the Beta Israel of Ethiopia, Rabbi Matthews founded the Commandment Keepers of the Living God in 1919, a black Hebrew congregation. During the 1920s, Matthew's congregation is just coalescing. On most days, one could find Rabbi Matthew preaching and promoting an ideal similar to Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association, but through a more religious lens.

Mary Edward Chinn (1896–1980), *Doctor*

The first black woman to graduate from Bellevue Hospital Medical College, Chinn was also the first to intern at Harlem Hospital—she attended ambulance calls during her internship. Her time with the ambulance crews sent her into some of the poorest and most violent areas of Harlem in response to medical emergencies, stabbings, and

THE SILENT ONE

One evening, the investigators are called to Yossele Rosenblatt's home. The man smiles and invites them inside with a wave to some chairs. He picks up some paper and a pen, all without speaking, and writes out a request for their help. Something strange has happened to his voice—it appears to have been stolen. All he knows is that two strange and burly men have been following him for a week. Then, this morning, he woke up and couldn't speak, and found this—he presents a doll fashioned in his image with the throat cut out. Who are the two men? Who made the doll? Can the investigators help him before his concert tomorrow?

BETA ISRAEL (ETHIOPIAN JEWS)

Ethiopian Jews lived for centuries in the area of the Kingdom of Axum, dating back to the 10th century BCE. Queen Sheba of Ethiopia and King Solomon of Israel conceived a son, Menelik I, during her visit to meet the King. Returning to Ethiopia, Queen Sheba gave birth to Prince Menelik, who in adulthood would steal the Ark of the Covenant from his father and return to Ethiopia with the holiest of relics. Menelik I eventually became Emperor of Ethiopia, making Judaism the official religion of his empire. It remained so until King Ezana of Axum converted (his empire along with him) to Christianity, in 327 CE. Pockets of people claiming descent from Menelik still remained.

During a 50-year span, a number of key events occurred. Daniel Ben Hamdya, an Ethiopian Jew, traveled to Jerusalem in 1855 for a conference with a number of rabbis. A decade later, Azriel Hildesheimer, the Rabbi of Eisenstadt, Germany, pleaded with the Jewish press for the people of Ethiopia (the Beta Israel) to be spiritually rescued. In 1867, Professor Joseph Halevy was the first European Jew to travel to the Beta Israel and became their staunch advocate going forward. In 1904 one of Halevy's students, Jacques Faitovitch, dedicated his life to reconnecting the community, and created the first "pro-Beta Israel" committees in the U.S., Britain, and Palestine (then under the control of the Ottoman Empire), and took the first Ethiopian Jewish students to Europe and Israel to expand their Jewish education. By 1908, rabbis from 44 countries proclaimed Ethiopian Jews to be authentic Jews. It isn't until the early 1980s, however, that the Israeli government and religious leaders recognize the Beta Israel as Jews.

other injuries. After her internship, she refused practicing privileges, and instead set up a private practice in Sugar Hill to tend to patients, as well as seeing patients at Edgecombe Sanitarium. Without admitting privileges, her patients often had to endure surgery at their homes wherein Chinn had to improvise an operating room. The grinding poverty and desperate conditions in Harlem led her to carry a gun when answering calls. Eventually, Chinn pursued a master's degree in public health. While practicing in Harlem, her patients included white folk (from her time at Harlem Hospital), the families of other black doctors, and the wives of a small population of Mohawk steelworkers.

Arnold Josiah Ford (1877–1935), *Rabbi*

Originally from Barbados, Arnold Ford came to Harlem in 1910 after joining the music corps of the British Royal Navy. His musical training served him well as a composer and musician in the jazz-rich environment of Harlem, and he quickly became a staple of the scene, joining the Clef Club Orchestra. When he met Marcus Garvey, his career and spiritual efforts both took off. He learned Yiddish and the practices of the Jewish faith, eventually taking on the title of rabbi. He also became the music director for the UNIA and composed many of the UNIA's songs. He co-composed The Universal Ethiopian Anthem with Benjamin Burrell, publishing a hymnal in 1920.

After Garvey's arrest and as the UNIA faded in influence, Ford's religious dedication grew to fill the gap. Rabbi Ford opened the short-lived Beth B'Nai Israel, later reformed as Beth B'Nai Abraham, in a small storefront at 459 Lenox Avenue, one of many small religious communities peppered throughout Harlem. Rabbi Ford was a dependable soul, providing pragmatic leadership until the 1930s brought financial ruin to the real-estate business that sustained the synagogue. He would leave Harlem for Ethiopia at the invitation of Emperor Selassie, where he passed of natural causes just a few years later.

Because of his lack of formal rabbinical training and his race, the Sephardi and Ashkenazi Jewish population of Harlem generally refused to recognize Ford as a rabbi,

BLACK SALVE

Dr. Mary Chinn is dedicated to the health of her patients and is deeply interested in the cause of and development of cancerous growths. She is currently tracking cases of skin cancer and other related lesions. The geographical area she is focusing on is populated by recent West Indies immigrants, who, like many of the other locals, are using a caustic herbal remedy called "black salve" to burn away skin cancers and warts. Despite her best efforts, Dr. Chinn has found it difficult to find patients before they have applied the black salve. The only patient she was able to get a good look at was so riddled with lesions that his face was greatly distorted; after her first visit, she hasn't seen the man again, and no one in the apartment building now admits to the man's existence. She can only assume he died, since using black salve to burn the lesions off would certainly have killed him if the cancer didn't first. Her worry is that the cause of the disease is environmental; perhaps a result of chemical exposure from construction or water run-off? Or perhaps there is something else going on?

KAHNAWAKE SKYWALKERS

New York City was growing in leaps and bounds during the 1920s and nowhere was that more apparent than in Lower Manhattan where the first skyscrapers are going up. Healthy black men in Harlem could find plentiful work in construction, working on what would become some of New York's iconic buildings. Such folk were not the only ones able to take advantage of the high demand for labor, indeed the Kahnawake Mohawk people made working at great height appear easy. Some of the most daring work in building skyscrapers involved riveting on the steel structure, often without any safety lines or gear to prevent lethal and messy falls.

Mohawks from the Kahnawake reservation in Quebec had a tradition of steel working dating back to 1886. Their comfort with being at great heights and expertise with steel were invaluable to the construction trade, giving them a reputation for taking on dangerous "daredevil" work at the very tops of buildings. Thankfully, under the Jay Treaty of 1794, the Mohawk of Kahnawake were allowed to work in the U.S. without additional work visas or paperwork, and the work was plentiful. The "Skywalkers" established a small community in North Gowanus, Brooklyn, making weekend trips back home across the border. The Mohawk and their families became regular clients in Harlem under the care of Dr. Mary Chinn, whose familiarity with native medicine was recognized and welcomed by her patients.

though they respected his work. Likewise, his black Jewish congregation faced difficulties. The black Jew was treated as a deluded oddity by the white community and with suspicion by the wider Jewish community in a time where the definition of ethnic Jewishness was beginning to expand to include whiteness; in short, they represented a complicated subject that would only become more complicated in the coming decades.

CLUBS, ORGANIZATIONS, AND TEAMS

THE NEW YORK RENAISSANCE

While growing in popularity on college campuses, basketball was still in its youth, first played at the Summer Olympics of 1904. The first National Intercollegiate Tournament was played in 1922, with six participating teams. In the time between basketball's first introduction on college campuses (1904) and the integration of the National Basketball Association (1950), black professional basketball teams were creating their own leagues.

All-black basketball teams were popular throughout New York City, and dozens were founded in other major cities throughout the U.S. They were often sponsored by businesses, social clubs, churches, and newspapers; with games scheduled with friendly members of other white leagues.

Harlem's very own professional basketball team formed in 1923. The New York Renaissance—a.k.a. the Renaissance Big Five, or simply "the Rens"—played at the Renaissance Ballroom & Casino on 137th Street. This large entertainment complex held a ballroom large enough to serve as a court for the team. After each game, the court was cleared for a dance, giving a reason for game attendees to stay in their seats—win or lose. Thankfully, most of the time the home team won, as the Rens were very good players.

The Rens' first game was against an all-white team, a pattern that became a regular one in their career. Interracial games drew the largest and loudest crowds. Their team rivals were the Original Celtics (no relation to the Boston Celtics) who played out of Madison Square Garden. The Rens beat the Celtics in 1925, two years after forming as a team, to claim the title of the Colored Basketball World Championship. In that season, the Rens won 88 consecutive games, a streak yet to be challenged by any other professional basketball team.

Many of the original and longest-active players of the Rens came from other sports (usually baseball, but in one case,

The Rens basketball team

tennis). Well-known members of the team included Charles "Tarzan" Cooper, Clarence "Fats" Jenkins, Pappy Ricks, Eyre Saitch, "Wee" Willie Smith, and Bill Yancey. Their coach was Robert L. "Bob" Douglas and, under his guidance, the Rens were willing to play any team—black or white.

Social Clubs

There were many social clubs already to be found in Harlem before new residents came in—fraternal orders quickly set up lodges in the city, the Prince Hall Freemasons among them. This fraternal order operated in parallel to the more traditionally well-known Freemasons and had a friendly relationship with its brother organization. The Prince Hall Freemasons championed education rights and community service, although its members were somewhat secretive about what goes on behind closed doors (as the other Freemasons are), leading to the occasional wild speculation. That the majority of meetings are social or focused on planning community charity would be a disappointment to most of the curious. Still, if one slipped into a meeting, the politics of wealthy and influential members of Sugar Hill could well be revealed. The Prince Hall Freemasons regularly took their show on the road, providing entertaining band music for parades, church festivals, and fundraising.

Similar activities could also be found at the YMCA and YWCA, though perhaps with a less elite membership. The YMCA provided a vital service to those newly arrived in Harlem who had yet to figure out where they would be staying. The social clubs available through YMCA and YWCA programs provided much-needed interaction, and an easy opportunity to make friends outside of church services or speakeasy environments.

The Summit

One private club, called the Summit (on St. Nicholas Avenue near 145th Street), is less fond of the changes in the neighborhood. This men's club features elite social gatherings and quiet rooms to catch up on the news of the day or indulge in cigars and drinks. Women are not allowed. The club dates from 1897 when it opened to more than a hundred exclusively white members. The changing demographics in the area dismays the club membership, leading to fewer attendees as of the early 1920s—but the club is not willing to move. This tension leads to an ongoing standoff with neighbors.

The neighbors across the street have a standing offer of five dollars to the first person who can sneak into the Summit and wave at them from the top floor of the house. Membership in the Summit is mostly a matter of looking the part, and perhaps knowing the right dirt on a current member; sometimes, it's as easy as winning membership through a hand of poker in a speakeasy the night before. The members are nothing if not beholden to their word—sure, such membership may only be temporary, but the opportunity to get to poke around in the Summit's private clubhouse is hard to resist. That said, many of the members do have influence, and while distasteful, they can be valuable to have in your corner if you get into legal trouble. Of course, favors done are favors owed, and these men didn't get where they are for ignoring the usefulness of an under-the-table deal, regardless of who they make it with.

TEAM DYNAMICS

The odds of being picked for a professional team are not good, but, it is possible if you can get a coach to watch you play, or if you get lucky enough to play a pickup game with one of the Rens at the Renaissance Ballroom & Casino. The team is friendly, for the most part, and they enjoy interacting with their fans.

In essence, if you can get four other people together for a game at the local YMCA—and you're good enough to convince someone to pay for uniforms and a ball—then you can call yourself a team. Go play. More casual clubs can be found at the local YMCA and YWCA as well. Now, successfully playing at a professional level takes work, practice, and observation of other teams, as well as a good coach and even more practice. And maybe some more practice on top of that. Scratch that "maybe"—definitely more practice. Even so, if you schedule the Rens (they'll probably say yes), then prepare to get walked over… but it'll be fun along the way.

The Harlem YMCA amateur scene is dominated by a pack of young players calling themselves the Crossroads Deal, and they accept any challenge thrown at them. They'll gladly make the game more challenging by playing down a man, or half the team one-handed, or even outnumbered two to one. When all five players are on the court, they move as if a single entity, easily anticipating the moves of teammates, even if they aren't looking in the same direction.

The Crossroads Deal also accept one-on-one challenges to replicate their challenger shot for shot, through the odd synchronicity of the team is not present at such times. Sharp observers may see a look of relief on the team, far exceeding the apparently casual nature of the game, when the challenged player wins. None have lost the challenge yet.

Gumby's Bookstore

Levi Sandy Alexander Gumby has a hobby. To be exact, he scrapbooks everything and has done so for almost his entire life. Thankfully, his life turns out to be both interesting and relevant to documenting the history of Harlem. Also known as "the Count," "Mr. Scrapbook," and "the Great God Gumby" for his approach to running an intellectual salon, he runs a popular shop called Gumby's Bookstore in Harlem, near 131st Street.

The bookstore quickly becomes a regular gathering spot for writers and artists, and Gumby documents every last moment. Gumby is also openly gay and a dandy, and as a result, his bookstore and intellectual gatherings become places for the LGBTQ community in Harlem to gather. In many cases, he is the only one to preserve these personal moments and speeches in his scrapbooks. His work may not follow traditional archival methods, but they are invaluable primary sources, and future historians owe him a great debt for his thoroughness.

Gumby's Bookstore also serves as an art gallery for local artists. Harlem's visual artists sell pieces through the store, or simply get them noticed there, before they go to private collectors.

The shop is a studio, gallery, gathering space, and ultimately a pretty decent bookstore as well. Most of the books displayed are not for sale; Gumby has faith in the long-term historical value of his collection and wants to preserve them. His collection is, however, something of a fire hazard—and by the end of the 1920s, Gumby is forced to rent a second space to continue storing his collection safely.

Gumby is always on the watch for unique books and documents related to black history and experiences. Diaries, records of sale, and books on niche topics are often discarded after estate sales and lost to the garbage bin because they are of little interest to most buyers. Except for Gumby. If he is brought books rescued from such a fate, expect a delighted hug followed by a thorough interrogation, allowing Gumby to document the location the book was found in and its condition before cataloging it in his collection. With his thanks comes an open invitation to tour the shelves, and he gladly answers any questions.

In an effort to preserve history, Gumby even makes a point of collecting works that look like they may match his interests, including those written in languages he doesn't know. He keeps an eye out for clues about the "Oddities Collection," as he calls it. If a visitor lets slip that they know more about a mystery book, they can expect to be plied with tea, cookies, and questions. For his own sake, not knowing exactly what is on his shelf is probably for the best. Not all books are safe to read—and certainly not out loud.

The Well-Lit Stage

During the Renaissance, theater in Harlem is dominated (for the most part) by two groups: the Lafayette Players and the Krigwa Players Little Theater Group.

The Lafayette Players are associated with the Lafayette Theater, they perform Broadway and traditional dramas to resist the racial stereotypes popular at the time, which are more commonly found on stage and in vaudeville. The Lafayette Players are a serious and formal acting troupe, and their performances at the Lafayette Theater grow in popularity during the 1920s, spinning off more than one traveling group, in addition to the local company. Their repertoire emphasizes traditionally white plays but with all-black cast members. This choice, while serving to keep the troupe popular and counter stereotypes, is criticized for not supporting the work of black playwrights.

The second group is the short-lived but extremely influential Krigwa Players Little Theater Group. They are named for the acronym CRIGWA—Crisis Guild of Writers and Artists—and are founded in 1925 by W. E. B. Du Bois and Regina Anderson, partially in response to concerns regarding the Lafayette Players and their choice of plays. The Krigwa Players require all plays they perform to meet four requirements, all of which serve to promote the work of black playwrights, artists, and culture. *The Crisis* supports this effort by establishing an annual literary contest for submissions for new material. The players are initially successful, making modest profits in their first year. Unfortunately, the Krigwa Players split after their third year, when the actors enter a tournament and win—but see no money from the prize coming to them (it goes to cover the cost of the production). Other theater troupes attempted to take up the mantle afterward, to varying degrees of success.

Backstage Props

While the Krigwa Players are a small group, the Lafayette troupe is large, and prop making and stage skills are in demand for both. Truth be told, viewing a play from the catwalks while fiddling with lights, or from a little past exit left, is not the best view—nor the best pay. But it is an opportunity to get closer to the scene, and learn the basics of theater and prop design.

Joining the stagehands is usually as simple as showing up when they need help and being sober enough to be trusted with hammering together a set. New stagehands are set loose backstage to learn on the job, with the first and only formal lesson being how to correctly name the "Scottish Play." Stagehands come and go quickly, and most members of the troupe are too busy working on lines or refitting costumes to be overly concerned about a new face. This makes the theater a good place to lay low if you've gotten yourself into hot water elsewhere in Harlem.

Local 147: The Sandhogs

New York City is growing fast and elevated tracks aren't the only project under construction. Tunnels are being dug throughout the city for subways and under the rivers to connect the boroughs. The work is dangerous and incredibly hard, all of it is done by the same people: the Sandhogs. Formally called the Local 147, the Sandhogs specialize in urban mining and river tunnels.

The Local 147 is an integrated union in defiance of objections from other unions in Chicago, its members including Southern and West Indies blacks, Irish, and Italians (who hold both member and leadership positions). Their work on the Brooklyn Bridge has led to a reputation for toughness and bold enterprise that is generally accurate. Given the hellish conditions of the work, high pressure, extreme heat, icy water, noise, and questionable air, the Sandhogs have to be tough to get the job done.

TUNNELING TROUBLE

Tunnel digging is a hard business and those new to the job have been known to crack under pressure, literally. Two of the Sandhog's new workers digging the tunnels through Harlem's bedrock have reported strange sounds when the drilling pauses, and one swears on his mother's grave that he saw someone watching them from deeper within the tunnels during a shift change. He wasn't able to describe who it was, save that "he didn't look right, like he been stretched like taffy."

A scene from "Horse Play," at the Lafayette Theater

CHAPTER 5

HARLEM HERSELF

The island of Manhattan is bounded by the East, Hudson, and Harlem Rivers, and is one of the five boroughs of New York City. In the early 1920s, the city is a center point of migration, making New York City the world's most populous city by 1925. An economic boom after the Great War has created more opportunities as the city grows into surrounding farmland, while in the late 1920s, Lower Manhattan begins growing into the sky with the completion of the Chrysler and Empire State buildings in the 1930s.

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

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

Between 1900 and 1920, the black population in central Harlem triples, taking advantage of the economic opportunity created by a demand for workers during the war. The changing demographics are not welcomed by white residents, leading to attempts a few years before the start of the war to resist the influx. Financial, political, and journalistic pressure sought to establish Lenox Avenue as an informal color line. By the 1920s, this effort fails under pressure from the AARC and the opportunities presented by a thriving and growing population. By 1930, the neighborhood is 70 percent black as far south as Central Park.

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

RAGTIME

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

Opposite: Feasting ghouls

SUGAR HILL: 145TH TO 155TH STREETS

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

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

These massive buildings give physical weight to the wealth of their residents, forming solid blocks of brick and stone divided by shared walls and backed up to access alleys. Central courtyards are common to six- and seven-floor apartment buildings, providing light and air to the interiors of apartments that may take up a full quarter of each floor. In 1928, the 500-unit Dunbar Apartments is completed, a five-acre complex between 149th and 150th Streets, built by John Rockefeller, Jr. and run by a cooperative association. The building provides additional middle-class housing to make up for shortages in the area. Unfortunately, the Great Depression strikes the next year, leading to the foreclosure of the complex.

The only black-operated bank in Harlem is located in the Dunbar Apartments—the Dunbar National Bank was founded by John Rockefeller, Jr. and has an all-white board,

TALISMAN

One of Harlem's upper-crust needs a private eye for a case. A family antique has been stolen—not something of value to the world, but a talisman that was handed down through familial separation and slavery. It provides the one holding it protection from what the client calls "the forces of chaos." They need it back, and they need it done quietly.

A wealthy Harlemite couple

NIGHT CROAKS

The Old Croton Aqueduct runs through Sugar Hill, from under Tenth Avenue down to Central Park. The 9-foot (2.7 m) diameter iron pipe is due to be replaced by the New Croton Aqueduct because it is no longer able to keep up with the demands of the growing city. In the meantime, the shallow-buried pipe remains both a source of German cockroaches (locally called "Croton bugs") and the occasional oversized frog. Persistent rumors of a large frog population living in the pipe are reinforced when language-like croaking can be heard echoing from pipe vents during the deepest parts of the night.

but the managers and tellers are blacks local to Harlem. The bank provides a valuable service to residents of the Dunbar Apartments, though it also does not survive the Great Depression.

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

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

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

For the performers, the Cotton Club offers a higher paycheck than most establishments, as well as the opportunity to star in live radio shows that might launch their careers; however, the club doesn't welcome them in the house. Madden's emphasis on light-skinned women, as well as his penchant for "jungle" and plantation themes, telegraphs to entertainers exactly how he sees them. If you want to actually catch up with the talent, you'd do better to catch them next door at 646 Lenox, where they let off steam in the basement after the show.

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

Because Harlem Hospital refuses to hire black doctors, a group of seven doctors comes together to form their own clinic, becoming the Edgecombe Sanitarium, on the corner of 137th Street and Edgecombe Avenue. The sanitarium is a small surgical center that also offers treatment for tuberculosis.

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

THE VALLEY: 130TH TO 140TH STREETS

To the south and east of Sugar Hill, between 130th and 140th Streets and particularly east of Seventh Avenue, one enters an area called "the Valley" or the "Harlem Plain." The

ALLIGATOR!

Alligator sightings become popular in Harlem, with reports in newspapers from the early to mid-1930s. The climate is a little cold for reptiles of that size, though, so this urban legend is easily dismissed. The witnesses' descriptions of the gators are mutable at best, describing them as anywhere from 5 to 15 feet (1.5 to 4.5 m) long, scaled or soft skinned, with glowing red or green eyes. Were it not for the snow shovel with a bite-shaped chunk taken out of it, one would assume they had encountered a figment of their own imagination. As it is, whatever it sounded less like an alligator and more like the after-effects of bad gin.

STRANGE CARGO

After the collapse of the Black Star Line and the arrest of Marcus Garvey in 1925, strange noises have been heard coming from the basements of three of the warehouses owned by the UNIA in the 112th and 113th Street area. On inspection by concerned locals and police, nothing is found out of the ordinary; the warehouses are full of crates of cargo and little else. While the Garvey trial is ongoing, the warehouses and their contents are considered evidence, and orders are to leave them untouched. Strangely, a lingering scent of cinnamon and cloves can be traced to the warehouses. The police have increased security after finding one of the crates broken into, reportedly by robbers looking for an easy score. What was not included in the official report is that the crate appeared to have been clawed open from the inside! Numerous local people have (subsequently) reported a feeling of being watched and the heavy scent of cinnamon and cloves in the air.

Valley swells with life, laughter, and music. The buildings here are smaller and were built on speculation, intended for middle- and lower-class residents. The apartments here are generally tenement buildings and walk-ups above shopfronts and small businesses.

Unfortunately, with the construction of the el and the Lenox Avenue IRT subway line, the area was overlooked by new residents (who moved further north); thus, there were many empty apartments in the Valley. The owners were approached by Philip A. Payton and the Afro-American Realty Company, who proposed moving black families into these apartments in 1904; Payton's plan was not merely meant to uplift the race, but to line his pockets by charging the black families a higher rent than their white counterparts. These unoccupied apartments become the heart of migration to Harlem, quickly filling with new residents from the South and the Caribbean. The apartments are small, though city regulations at the time insisted on fire escapes and air shafts to provide light and air to residents, making the newer buildings far more livable than the older tenement housing to the south. Still, in the summer, these residences are sweat-filled hotboxes, driving most occupants to socialize on fire escapes and the streets for a breath of cooler air.

Despite their relatively new-built stature, the apartments in the Valley are soon overpopulated. The residents often sublease their spaces illegally to family and friends in order to make rent. The financial uncertainty makes for a transient population unable to put down reliable roots. Taking on additional lodgers is another common way to make rent, but this practice increases the issues of overpopulation in an already dense part of Harlem. As a result, illnesses (such as the flu) can spread quickly through the Valley. Many families are a single injury or major illness away from being unable to make rent and, consequently, children are often called to work from a young age in order to make ends meet. Since child labor is legal, and parents are otherwise faced with homelessness, many children quickly find work in the various garment factories and sweatshops of New York. In many cases, families only manage to make it to the end of the month with all members contributing fully.

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

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

SALONS

Writers, artists, activists, and members of the Harlem Renaissance frequently gather in salons to discuss ideas, works, and the movement. These meetings are often called salons and vary in formality by group and purpose. They can cover a broad range of affairs, from ritual and tradition to freeform thought sessions. Such environments foster like-minded and talented people, and offer a degree of mentoring for younger members, as well as the chance to meet luminaries one would otherwise not encounter.

High rent and poor living aren't the only challenges residents of the Valley face. Just south of Sugar Hill (between 142nd and 143rd along Lenox to Seventh Avenue) lies what is known as a "lung block." Tuberculosis infection is estimated at 3 percent of Harlem's population, and the rate of death in the lung block is double that of the rest of Manhattan. Crowded conditions and lack of quality medical care contribute to the ongoing issue.

When economic necessity forces both parents to work out of the home, childcare is a concern—over half of Harlem's mothers must work in order to make ends meet. Older children may work or be lucky enough to attend school, but younger children and babies require attendance by friends, relatives, or nurseries. A cottage industry of childcare, called "baby farms," pops up in Harlem to meet the need. Despite the economic necessity, mothers that use baby farms are often condemned for it, leaving no good option for those caught in this situation. Still, parents are wise to practice caution with these services, as there are few regulations for training or standards of care, and half or more have no permits. Even organized crime has gotten in on this gig, using baby farms as a front for gambling dens and moonshining.

DEAD DANCE

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

Coming to Harlem from the South or the West Indies with little more than a dream and a prayer can be difficult. If you're a young woman traveling alone with no local contacts, Harlem can be overwhelming. The White Rose Mission was co-founded by Maritcha Lyons, a Brooklyn teacher, and Victoria Matthews, an activist and former enslaved person. They commit their lives to helping other women safely restart theirs. The Mission (262 West 136th Street) offers a safe place to sleep, simple meals, job placement, and training for women newly arrived in the city. A small library, as well as lectures by Hubert Harrison, provide more educational opportunities for residents and dues-paying members. Mission volunteers meet ships and trains to provide services to young women before they can fall foul of the ever-present dangers of the street.

The Wiley Wilson Sanitarium (138th Street and 7th Avenue) offers hospital services to the residents of Strivers' Row and the Valley. The small hospital includes a surgical center. The founder, Dr. Wiley Wilson, is the ex-husband of cosmetics millionaire A'Lelia Walker.

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

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

Strivers' Row (138th and 139th Streets) is a series of row houses known to be some of the finest homes and apartments in New York; they were intended for upper-middle-class whites, but sit empty until 1920 when the owners finally agreed to sell to blacks. The houses quickly attract up-and-coming professionals, the "strivers" the area becomes known for. Just a little to the south,

LA BOURGEOISIE NOIRE

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

SWITCH

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

the public Harlem Hospital, including an ambulance station and nurses' home, occupies the block between 136th and 137th Streets on the east side of Lenox Avenue. Although two-thirds of its patients are African-American, and it has begun hiring African-American doctors and training African-American nurses, the hospital's leadership and staff remain mostly white.

The Universal Negro Improvement Association

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

GETTING NOTICED

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

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

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

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

ICE DELIVERY

The Colonial Ice and Coal Company is on Eighth Avenue and 151st Street. Put simply, the company is a wholesale ice seller. Icemen in Harlem cart orders to buyers throughout the neighborhood or store them in cold cellars pending delivery. Most buildings in Harlem lack any other form of cooling or refrigeration, so the ice delivery is critical for food safety and to cool drinks in hot summers. While most icemen are Italian, there are some black icemen as well, although as a group, the Italian icemen have locked in their customers by making agreements with janitors and building supervisors for exclusive access.

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

If seeking community, culture, and edification, head over to 135th and Lenox where the modest (1919) building for the Harlem branch of the YMCA stands (from 1932, the building becomes a soaring brick structure). Unlike unintegrated YMCAs around the city or the nation, the Harlem branch serves as a haven for African-American men, providing athletic equipment, rooms to rent by the night or month, and spaces where men can express themselves and encounter others. Here, a traveler from Vermont, newly arrived to the city and looking to make his future, might sit down to a communal meal next to an elderly man born into slavery in Alabama who has lived here (and in the previous "Colored Men's Branch") since it opened. You never know who you'll meet at the YMCA.

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

On the western edge of Harlem can be found St. Nicholas Park, extending from 141st Street to 128th Street, with a playground along 129th. It lies on craggy and rough terrain, and the southernmost area of the park is known as the "Point of Rocks," having served as a military campground for General Washington's men during the Revolutionary War. The "Point" looms over surrounding buildings in winter when it's not covered with greenery. On the other side of the park is the College of the City of New York, a free public institution of higher education. The college was founded on the principle of educating all who qualified solely on academic merit, admitting students both rich and poor, so long as they were men (women are not admitted until 1930). The college welcomes all; black, Jewish, or Irish, it doesn't matter.

WAR GHOSTS?

St. Nicholas Park saw action during the Revolutionary War with the Battle of Harlem Heights, in which Knowlton's Rangers played a pivotal part. In the depths of winter, local residents have claimed to see flickers of concealed lanterns along the craggy rock face, and heard chanting echoing off the heavy stone. Daytime inspection has revealed no obvious source for such strange phenomena, while the proximity of the College of the City of New York has led some to assume such events arise from the behavior of a fraternity—but so far, no one has stepped forward to claim responsibility

In 1913, A'Lelia Walker purchased the property at 108 West 136th Street. The Stanford-White-designed townhouse expanded the salon business and school into New York. A few years later, she purchased 110 (next door) and employed Vertner Woodson Tandy (one of the first African-American architects) to remodel the twin Harlem townhouses into one luxurious manor, which would eventually become The Dark Tower (at 108–110 West 136th Street and Lenox Avenue). The

remodeled mansion is fashioned in a Neo-Georgian brick with limestone. Lelia College of Beauty Culture classes are held in the basement, while the Walker Hair Parlor operates out of the first floor. The remaining levels of the mansion are dedicated to a library, The Dark Tower itself, and living quarters. Eventually, Walker moves out of the manor and into an apartment on Edgecombe Avenue. The mansion's name takes inspiration from Countee Cullen's poem of the same name (published in *Opportunity* magazine), and the place is dedicated to a creative salon, providing opportunities for writers and musicians to attend readings and performances every evening. Exquisite rosewood furniture fills the salon, as well as a grand, gold-painted piano and a sky-blue Victrola, while two poems are mounted on the walls: "From the Dark Tower" by Cullen, and parts of "The Weary Blues" by Langston Hughes. Membership to The Dark Tower isn't free—the initial invitation to join states there is a one-dollar annual fee. The costs associated with a visit vary (15 cents to check a coat and 50 cents for a sandwich, for example). The Dark Tower closes its doors in November 1928, as Walker leases the mansion to the City of New York.

STRANGE ROOTS

The Tree of Hope provides luck to the neighborhood, but at what cost? When a young hoofer goes missing, the last place anyone can recall seeing him is at Connie's. Strangely, the tree's roots, which twist through the sidewalk, have expanded recently. Some say that they have seen the roots "pulse" out of the corner of their eye.

At 133rd Street stands the Clam House, a long and narrow nightclub tucked in between other far less notorious clubs. Known properly as Harry Hansberry's Clam House, Gladys Bentley headlines, performing in tails and a top hat with a chorus line in drag. Her rich alto and obscene, improvised lyrics lend an energy to an evening's entertainment that is hard to find anywhere else. While the club has a reputation for gay activity, the patrons still practice discretion—even in the relatively flexible nightclub scene of Harlem, police entrapment can and does occur. A block over on 133rd Street, Pod's and Jerry's Catagonia Club is always hopping with Willie "The Lion" Smith and "Little Jazzbo" blowing the roof off the joint. A few steps away is the Band Box Club, known for its spontaneous jam sessions at the bar.

At 132nd Street and Seventh Avenue, the Lafayette Theatre (known to locals as the "House Beautiful") becomes desegregated in 1913, allowing black theatergoers to join the white audience in the orchestra seats, instead of being restricted to the balcony. Here, African-American audiences can attend performances of the black Lafayette Players. The venue specializes in presenting mainstream Broadway shows, primarily by white playwrights, with an emphasis on the equal quality of black acting rather than spotlighting the works of African-American writers. The theater hosts live bands when between plays and musicals, and saw the New York City debut of a 24-year-old Duke Ellington. Unfortunately, the theater goes through two management changes in the 1920s, leading to more comedy and vaudeville rather than serious drama—until the Lafayette becomes home to the Works Project Administration theater programs. In 1920, the play *The Emperor Jones* by Eugene O'Neill blends Surrealism and Expressionism in a metaphorical take on the exploitative sugar-based reign of Henri Christophe in Haiti. It is also an indirect critique of the U.S.'s occupation of Haiti in 1915. The play sparks a fascination for Haiti and Haitian imagery in Harlem that carries through the Renaissance, often in answer and counterpoint to the play's own racist and patronizing themes. By the mid-1930s, the Lafayette Theatre again enjoys regular audience attendance, reaching its height with Orson Welles' staging of *Macbeth* in 1936. Known as the "Voodoo *Macbeth*" for the reframing of the play's setting from Scotland to a mythical island in the

THE OTHER MACBETH

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

Caribbean, this production provides the coda to the themes initiated by *The Emperor Jones*.

On Fifth Avenue and 132nd Street, Edmond's Cellar, owned by Edmond "Mule" Johnson, has a seven-year run from 1915–1922. This basement cabaret frequently features Ethel Waters with a three-piece band. The crowd is composed of drug dealers, prostitutes, cross-dressers, and gamblers. The club is known for its so-called "pansy" entertainment. Elsewhere, the Corner (at 131st Street and Seventh Avenue) is a frequent hangout for musicians—it is literally a quiet corner to discuss, play tunes, and bond.

PANSY CRAZE

During the 1920s, LGBTQ performances are often referred to as "pansy" entertainment. Fueled by illegal liquor, several clubs in Harlem, Times Square, and Greenwich Village specialized in such acts and would frequently sellout the house. Along with the shows, parties, dances, and beauty pageants could be enjoyed, all catering to a diverse and accepting community where people were able to express themselves.

Like the Cotton Club, Connie's Inn (at 131st Street and Seventh Avenue) is owned by bootleggers—the three Immerman brothers—and specializes in African-American performers. Like Owney Madden, the Immerman brothers segregate the house, but unlike the Cotton Club, Connie's also opens after hours to African-American audiences from the neighborhood; in the small hours of the morning, performers improvise sets, rising talents showcase their chops, and the people of Harlem enjoy their own music. Connie's Inn is also a front for a silent partner, Dutch Schultz the Bronx mobster uses the club to sell smuggled alcohol. Directly above Connie's, The Barbecue boasts the first jukebox in all of Harlem and the best ribs. Between the Lafayette Theatre and Connie's Inn, one might pause to touch the Tree of Hope—a large chestnut tree whose roots force up the sidewalk. Out-of-work or aspiring black performers touch the tree for luck when headed to a gig, kiss it when finding work, or more practically, gather around it to talk about possible gigs and form new acts. Lottie Joplin, the wife of Scott Joplin (famed composer, pianist, and "King of Ragtime Writers"), runs Joplin Boarding House (at 163 West 131st Street.) Lottie opens the boarding house in 1920 to provide housing for entertainers; some of the current residents include Ferdinand "Jelly Roll" Morton and Eubie Blake.

PUBLIC EDUCATION

There are five public elementary schools in Harlem, and two junior high schools; however, continuing to high school requires leaving Harlem. The area's public schools are so overwhelmed that they run double sessions, such that students are in school only for half days before swapping for a second shift of students. Teachers are overwhelmingly white, while students are predominantly black. Many of the classes focus on vocational training instead of higher-level academic courses. Three Catholic schools are also in the neighborhood and gladly accept black students.

JUNGLE ALLEY: 133RD STREET

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

The Nest nightclub is at 169 West and 133rd, its main floor is filled with the Barbecue Club, but the basement is where

ASK FOR CLARENCE

Clarence can get you anything—*anything*. It's probably better if you don't ask how. But sometimes Clarence needs a favor in return, and he's not afraid to ask for help. Just who Clarence is, where he comes from, and what his connections are remain a mystery. Those in the know say that you shouldn't ask for Clarence's help if you can't afford it, and laugh if the questioner replies that they have enough money, saying "ain't money he asks for."

AN EXPLOSIVE GAME

Traditional billiard balls were made of ivory but, as pool became wildly popular, worries about the supply of ivory drove a search for cheaper materials. A newly developed plastic, celluloid, seemed like a perfect solution. It weighed the same, bounced the same, and in all respects behaved the same as ivory—except one. Celluloid is explosive. When the balls hit each other with enough force they can produce a small explosion that sounds exactly like a pistol shot, often provoking defensive reactions from everyone in the room. They don't particularly agree with fire either. Celluloid billiard balls are eventually replaced by the end of the 1920s with another new and much safer plastic—Bakelite.

it's at. Downstairs is a private club with paying members that neatly avoids Prohibition. The owners, Mal Frazier and John Carey, make sure their bribes keep trouble away. The club's cook is Tillie Fripp, who makes a killer ham and eggs; Tillie later opens her own place, becoming an anchor for the entire row serving the hungover or soon-to-be-hungover party crowd. The shows at the Nest feature loud and fast dance music and scantily dressed girls, while similar entertainment goes with the illegal drinking and gambling (over pool tables) in the back. Like most pool halls, this one is full of cigarette smoke and hustlers looking to make a quick buck off an easy mark.

All told, more than 125 establishments of various repute fill Jungle Alley with a wide array of entertainment. But such establishments come and go quickly! Clubs here are subject to the fickle demands of the restaurant and entertainment business, while also dealing with the corruption and bribery rampant during Prohibition. Almost all of the establishments have basement operations tucked into the bottommost floors of buildings, with a shop above and apartments above that. It makes for a tight environment, and a dangerous one should the police decide to mount a raid. Thankfully, many of the speakeasies have tunnels to allow the alcohol and bartender (at least) to slip out the back while the police break their way in through the front door.

Evan's Place is a small pool hall tucked between a nightclub on one side and a speakeasy on the other. Evan's is where you go if you're looking for a challenge. It's owned by James Evans and, if you're not careful, you'll walk out short on money and dignity, as he's the best pool hustler around. But if you don't bite off more than you can chew, you might be able to convince him to teach you a few trick shots or give you advice on your technique. The hall is small, with only three tables, but almost always full of cigarette smoke and the clatter of balls. Evans pays off the police in bribes and game advice, making it a fairly safe place to spend time.

By day, Jungle Alley is a diverse area, with African-American, Jewish, Latino, and Italian families (and more) going about their business; many who live in the five-story apartment buildings that flank the clubs. Despite the daytime appearance, when walking through the alley at night, there is a far greater chance of running into white folk (from all around town) than in most other parts of Harlem. Such visitors are generally accompanied by the police who come out to make sure the white folks don't feel threatened. While club curfew is 3:00 a.m., some of the clubs on 133rd have greased the right palms to stay open later, and late-night audiences tend to be local. A discreet word to waitstaff in most clubs can get you a stiff, if possibly adulterated, drink—and a quarter can get you two reefer cigarettes from the corner man (marijuana will remain legal until the late 1930s).

Dressed for dancing and drinking, guests of the nightclubs of Jungle Alley are often less conservative than partygoers in the wealthier areas of Harlem. If white, they are seeking a taste of "real" Harlem, unfiltered by the carefully sanitized performances of the Cotton Club. If black, they likely live in the Valley and are tolerating the day trippers. Here is where you find the flappers—young women with the newly minted right to vote, though being able to actually use this right is difficult if the woman in question is anything but white. Still,

BOOZE-A-GEDDON

An uptick in poisonous alcohol has caused worry among the smugglers who provide bathtub gin and cheap booze to the speakeasies in Harlem. The bootleggers in Harlem haven't been able to find the source. Victims report queasy stomachs, and blood and other matter when they cough up their drinks. Rumor holds that it's good old J. Edgar Hoover himself, Head of the General Intelligence Division—nicknamed the Radical Division—trying to kill off the alcoholics who are defying Prohibition. Other rumors hold that if you look at the tainted alcohol in just the right light, it shimmers on the top, as if oil is laying on the surface. So far, no one has died, but it could be just a matter of time.

hemlines are up, heels are tall, short hair is in, and finger waves are popular. The short hems of flapper dresses make it easy to take to wild dance steps, and the flapper's reputation for fast living, drinking, smoking, and other scandalous behavior celebrates the independence of the free woman.

At the edge of this neighborhood (on 135th Street near Fifth Avenue) is the Sugar Cane Club, a cabaret venue featuring jazz performances late into the night, well after the curfew, and both white and black patrons. During Prohibition, the club functions as a speakeasy as well as a nightclub. Despite being small, it's popular enough to attract some of the best musicians and has enough patrons to allow Ed Smalls to open a second club: Smalls' Paradise (1925) after closing the Sugar Cane Club. Smalls is one of the few black nightclub owners in Harlem, and he keeps all of his clubs integrated. In addition to the stage performers, Small's Paradise features dancing waiters and roller-skating waitstaff; there is even a breakfast dance for the late-night crowd willing to stay till the sun comes up.

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

THE BLACK MECCA

While Clam House is a well-known venue, a nightly affair at the Hamilton Lodge (at 155th Street) holds the largest annual drag ball in all of New York. Thousands upon thousands of spectators make their way to view the hundreds of mostly young, working-class men all dolled up. The event is reported in numerous newspapers.

At 125th Street stands the building that will become the Apollo Theater in 1934. Through the 1920s, it is a burlesque theater featuring bawdy variety shows, striptease, dances, and

GRISLY OPERA

In 1924, a number of locals claim to hear strange noises originating from inside the Harlem Opera House. Mama Moses swears she saw strange blue lights in the building last night, but Mr. Schiffman refuses to hear such nonsense, and won't look into it. If the investigators break in for some sleuthing, they unleash an unknown horror bound into the building long ago by Schiffman and uncover a string of murders leading back to 1889.

Gladys Bentley, a pianist at the Hamilton Lodge

The Harlem Opera House, 1889

HUDSON'S ANGELS

Father Divine periodically charters a boat, making a long trip up the Hudson with a select group of his "angels." He always returns with gold but none of the angels he left with. On some occasions, he returns with a small canister marked with intricate patterns, which can be seen at his service on the following Sunday (but it is never seen again afterward). What happens to the angels? Where is gold coming from? And, just what is going on with the canisters?

comedy. Owners Jules Hurtig and Harry Seamon strictly enforce a whites-only policy. The banning of burlesque in 1933 sees their business go under, and the theater is left abandoned for a year before new owners reopen it as the Apollo. Meanwhile, on 280 West 155th Street and accessible via subway, is the Manhattan Casino, a 6,000-seat hall that hosts baseball games for the ever-growing crowds.

Built by Oscar Hammerstein in 1889, the Harlem Opera House (at 211 West 125th Street) was his first theatre. The venue changed hands and names multiple times; during the first years of the 1920s, it serves as a haunt for the vaudeville circuit. Frank Schiffman buys the property in 1922 and promptly closes it, with the building remaining closed for nearly a decade before becoming a movie theatre in the 1930s. It is demolished in 1959.

The Temple Israel of Harlem congregation purchased a building at Fifth Avenue and 125th Street to be dedicated as a synagogue; the building was originally constructed in 1887 for a congregation of German Jews. In 1907, the congregation, led by Rabbi Dr. Maurice Harris, built a synagogue at 201 Lenox Avenue before permanently moving to 201 West 91st Street. Half a decade later, the Lenox synagogue becomes the Mount Olivet Baptist Church.

Enter the Heaven of Father Divine (at 152 West 126th Street) and hear his public addresses nightly at 11:00 p.m. The religious leader and deity, Father Divine plants his Heavens around the country and throughout Harlem, but the 126th Street building is his headquarters. Each Heaven is a reconstituted hotel, with dormitories, open both to members of the sect (his "angels") and to the public at $2 a night. At Heaven, anyone might obtain a meal with meat for only 15 cents. Father Divine demands that his followers renounce government assistance, as well as more carnal pleasures, but runs a variety of businesses on a cash basis. Outsider attempts to learn more about the full scope of Father Divine's investments have, so far, failed.

SUFFRAGE 101

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

STROLLING

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

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

Lenox Avenue is a popular street for public speakers, from this block down through the poorest areas of Harlem. Often found standing on soapboxes, such speakers may be preachers gathering new recruits to their flock, communists attempting to spark a revolution among the workers of Harlem, or even cultists in disguise offering the downtrodden something no one else has... hope. While religious speakers are tolerated, left of center politics isn't and such speakers are actively

rounded up by the police as a public nuisance. At 272 Lenox Avenue is the neo-Grecian rowhouse of James Van Der Zee Studios, which opens in 1930.

Relations between African-Americans and Jews before World War II are mainly of three kinds: Jewish employers with black employees, Jewish landlords with black tenants, and Jewish small businessmen with black customers. Indeed, integration is resisted by many in Harlem, including many Jewish businesses. Blumstein's, founded by a German Jewish immigrant in 1898, resists racial integration even as the African-American population of Harlem grows in the 1920s. In 1929, a few African-Americans are hired as elevator operators and porters, but higher-paying jobs are not available to them. Over the next few years, as the Great Depression deepens, calls for boycotts of stores like Blumstein's will be unsuccessful until 1934 when Reverend John H. Johnson begins a "Buy Where You Can Work" campaign, which is (ultimately) backed by the *New York Age* newspaper. When that campaign starts, 75 percent of Blumstein's customers are African-Americans, and by July, Blumstein capitulates due to the economic pressure, pledging to hire 35 African-Americans in clerical and sales jobs. A 1,500-person parade celebrates the victory, and Blumstein's becomes the first to hire a black Santa Claus and use black models and mannequins. Indeed, the store also successfully appeals to cosmetic manufacturers to produce makeup for darker skin tones. Blumstein's transformation is so successful that in 1945, Harlem's largest newspaper, the *Amsterdam News*, profiles Arnold Blumstein as one of Harlem's top ten businessmen.

The Bernheimer & Schwartz Pilsener Brewing Company shuttered its doors after the passage of Prohibition. The firm's building stands between 126th and 128th Streets (purchased just before Prohibition took effect) and remains empty until the Interborough Fur Storage Company buys it in 1930. During the decade the building stands empty, it is little more than a pretty-looking red brick shell. Not far away, the Hollywood Cabaret (on 124th Street) becomes known for its "pansy" entertainment, drawing in large crowds.

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

Aging tenements sag with their load of Harlem's weariest souls, those who keep the city running but are under-compensated, and whose work goes unnoticed until it goes undone. The buildings on the south end of Harlem are a mix of old tenement housing and warehouses, usually laughably out of date from health codes. Too often, one encounters a mother with the bloody cough of consumptive, pulling herself out to work because she has mouths to feed. A family of six hangs out a sign saying "BOARDER WANTED" so they can make next month's rent. Along the streets, one encounters more of the same, just in greater poverty. This is the land of desperate people, who are willing to take desperate chances. Looking to recruit those down on their luck to join in an underground battle for the very soul of Harlem? This is where you come.

La Marqueta lies under the el (between 111th Street and 116th Street on Park Avenue) and is an open-air market. The market is not officially sanctioned but few officers care enough to shut it down save for the occasional raid for counterfeit or stolen goods. The market is full of haggling customers and the majority of goods for sale consist of fresh fruit and vegetables.

BLACK MARKET

The police generally ignore La Marqueta as long as it doesn't cause any disruptions to the neighborhood. The market is one way to get hold of things you're not legally allowed to have; the "black market" is alive and well here—if you know the right words or slip a dollar or two into the right person's hand. Someone familiar with the meanings behind certain veves (Vodou symbols) displayed in the market might identify the right table to ask for assistance with more spiritual concerns.

BREWERY FIGHTS

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

Some of the fruit sold is specific to the Caribbean islands or specialty spices for Creole or Haitian customers. Mixed in with the produce stands, other goods can be found including traditional medicines, books, and odds and ends better suited to a flea market. Customers might find protection charms or supplies for curse making. In this less-than-legal open market, it is wise to watch for pickpockets.

Greenberg's Groceries (at 116th and Madison Avenue) is owned and operated by Shmuel and Celia Greenberg and their son Richard. The corner grocery store covers 1,030 square feet (96 m^2), with a three-bedroom apartment upstairs for the family. The building, constructed in 1899, now resides in a neighborhood of mostly Jews plus a few Irish immigrants. The store specializes in the charge and delivery trade, markets to the upper class in the Harlem Jewish community, and is something of a neighborhood community center. It is rarely empty, with kids buying sweets and the elderly dropping in for a chat. The basic layout of the store has not changed much since 1907. The meat department occupies most of the back of the store, while the one-time side entrance (between the produce and dairy departments) is blocked off and filled with shelving. Wooden grocery shelves line the opposite wall and are filled with canned goods. Every clerk is armed with a pole that has clamps to reach items on the upper shelves. The store caters not only to customers who either drive or walk to the store but also to those who telephone in orders. Richard Greenberg is the primary driver of the store's only delivery truck. Shmuel is proud of his full-service meat department, which only carries prime and top choice meats. Greenberg's Groceries employs a number of positions: a produce manager, several clerks, a slew of butchers, and two drivers (one of whom is Richard).

A sprawling brownstone of 6,008 square feet (558 m^2) at 278 West 113th Street is the Houdini House. In 1904, Harry Houdini purchased the home in a large German Jewish community for $25,000. The brownstone was

HOUDINI'S GHOULS

Countless rumors swirl around about what mystic artifacts may be hidden away in Houdini's brownstone. Unbeknownst to Houdini, a maze of tunnels lies beneath his home, home to a dozen ghouls who have taken up residence around the crypt of a long-forgotten medicine man of the Wappinger of the Lenni Lenape. What effect are the ghouls having above?

Harlem, 1923

constructed in 1895 but remained unfinished until Houdini had it completed. His lavishly furnished home provides him plenty of living space, including a sunken tub to practice his underwater act (his pride and joy) and a library stocked with thousands of books, which surrounds his office at the center. Houdini can frequently be found here.

THE GOLDEN EDGE: 110TH STREET

The southernmost "Golden Edge" (along 110th Street) gains its desirability from its position facing Central Park. Here, members of the African-American professional class live in neat rowhomes, seemingly with their backs to the neighborhood; however, the neighborhood opens its arms to them, providing services their money might not be able to buy in the same establishments as their white peers. The residents of the Golden Edge are doctors, lawyers, and successful show-biz sorts. The residents of the richly appointed apartments are a healthy mix of black newcomers and Eastern-European Jewish residents. It is these families, then, whom one encounters making the long streetcar or el ride north to 135th Street.

The grand Hotel Theresa can be found at the corner of 7th Avenue and 125th Street—Seventh Avenue is Harlem's widest street, a graceful boulevard with a median planted with trees. Thirteen stories tall, Hotel Theresa is mostly an apartment hotel providing long-term lodgings for residents and comfortable temporary lodgings for celebrities. Because the hotel occasionally hosts noteworthy guests, all of the major newspapers of Harlem—the *News*, the *Age*, and the *Courier*—have a reporter assigned to cover activities there. In addition, the *Pittsburgh Courier*'s Harlem offices are directly across the street from the hotel. The *Amsterdam News* offices are at 2271 Seventh Avenue, and the *New York Age* is at 230 West 135th Street.

While the Theresa caters to the rich and wealthy of Harlem, Hotel Olga (697 Lenox Avenue and 145th Street) is open to all, as the establishment is not segregated and is open for tourists and other travelers, as well as longer-term residents.

The Frogs Clubhouse (at 111 West 32nd Street) is just a block down from the Golden Edge. The Frogs are a charity organization originally formed to support the efforts of black actors and other performers locked out of white theater networks. Later, the organization expands to include other professionals outside of the theater. The Frogs were led by Bert Williams, a vaudeville comedian popular enough to be considered a superstar. The Frogs continued after he unexpectedly passed due to pneumonia. Every August the club holds a charity event called "The Frolic of the Frogs" featuring comedy routines, dances, and charity raffles—all for a cover of fifty cents at the door.

At the corner of 5th Avenue and 110th Street (on the far end of the Golden Edge) is the soapbox corner known as "Trotsky Square," in front of the Young Men's Hebrew Association building. This corner is one of the most popular locations for public speech-making and political meetings. Every day passersby can take a moment to listen to Harlem's political leaders speak on matters of class and race. The location is not a coincidence, many of the Jewish families in the Golden Edge recently immigrated from Eastern Europe and are sympathetic to socialist and communist politics.

THE QUIET HOUSE

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

The same windows with curtains pulled tight—save for the one on the left that twitches after the house is watched for more than five minutes, before going still again. The same half-dead flowers in the same flower pot; even if a friendly neighbor attempts to replace them, the old and dead flowers are back by the next morning. And the same newspaper sits on the front stoop; if taken, it dates to three years ago, and come morning, a new copy of the same paper sits on the stoop. Like clockwork, the house never changes. No one answers to a knock on the door, either. Whoever lives there, at least they make for quiet neighbors.

POLITICAL WORDS

A careful word here or there can connect you with the underground Communist Party operating in Harlem. Less discreet words are likely to get you recruited to any number of socialist organizations, unions, or community-service groups—or targeted by their enemies.

CHAPTER 6

STORYTELLING

To be able to use *Harlem Unbound*, the Keeper needs to have a basic understanding of racism, Jim Crow, the Great Migration, and segregation. This chapter explores such topics and provides advice, as well as some scenario seeds to develop and inject into games.

THE STRUGGLE

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

Let's establish two basic principles:

- Racism is real and its impact is immeasurable. It was the mainstream during the Harlem Renaissance, and it's alive and kicking now.
- There is **no such thing as reverse racism**. Black people can't be defined as racist. Prejudiced? Yes. Racist? No.

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

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

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

CHECKLIST OF DON'TS

- "Black" Accents
- N-Word
- Stereotypes

Opposite: American realism

RACISM: REALITY AND THE GAME

THE BASICS

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

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

CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS

BATTLING BLACKFACE

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

JIM CROW LAWS

Starting in the 1870s, Jim Crow laws ran rampant in the South. The laws enforced at both state and local levels pushed racial segregation as a new form of the Black Codes that suppressed blacks.

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

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

CAN I USE THE N-WORD IN MY GAME?

Short answer? No.

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

Let's assume that everyone who would want to say that word in the game is not racist or bigoted (that laughing you hear is my internal cynic). Even if all of that remains true, what does using the word really bring to a scene? Is it impact or shock you're looking for? If so, that can be conveyed by the actions of your antagonists. For instance, let's say you are running a *Call of Cthulhu* game set in the Deep South of the 1850s. The racist white plantation owner (in reality) would likely use the word, but could just as easily call black people "slaves," "colored," or other still-insulting words. The horror and intensity come from his actions, through violence, like whipping people or having dogs chase the black investigators. Using actions to portray the plantation owner's racism (rather than words, and more specifically the N-word) provides a strong alternative that allows the Keeper to use third-person to illustrate the scene. Both approaches generate tension, but being action-oriented allows focus on the tension within the game. The group of players who are assembled need to feel comfortable with each other and the Keeper. By using the N-word, the Keeper automatically creates a divide in the room.

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

DOUBLE CHECK THE CAST OF CHARACTERS

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

People, no matter the color of their skin, can be good, evil, or without a particular motivation in one direction or another—one of the keys to creating a more realistic world is to have that conveyed through the game. Give each race a healthy mix of motivations and don't just stereotype them into roles. Don't accept the line, "There were no black people here/in/who did X." History is full of examples that provide any blanket statement like that wrong.

WHITE KEEPER/BLACK PLAYER

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

Some possible suggestions:

- Explain how you plan to run the game.
- Give a few possible examples of how you will handle different scenes.
- Explain the three levels of play and the one the game will use.
- Agree on a covert sign that the player can give if things get uncomfortable, and find ways to ensure no one harasses the player about it.

If the rest of the group is not black, these suggestions are even more important, as the other players may turn and look to the black player for signals as to how to play, ignore the player, or worse yet, try to explain what it means to be black to a black person—something that has happened to me a number of times; trust me, this never leads to a good outcome. It's your job as the Keeper to get a sense of what enables your player to be comfortable while enforcing suitable boundaries for the group. It should not be the players' responsibility—do not place any emotional labor or burden on the player.

APPLICATION IN PLAY

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

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE BLACK IN AMERICA?

Submit! Submit! Plainly stated; life is "FUCKED!" Apologize! Smile more! You're too aggressive! Know your place! Respect my badge! Serve! Submit! Submit! Submit! This is the message constantly played to African-Americans. Being black in America means an unending struggle of enduring racism. Bring them to heel!

One way to help players who may not want the full history is to just tell them that there are consequences for their actions. Let's create a tiered system of "reality." The first is for the player who wants to play, but is wary of the history, the "Passing Player." The next tier is for the player who wants to play and wants a better understanding of what the world may have been like, we call them "Harlemites." Lastly, is the player who wants a serious exploration of history, the "Purist Player." Each progressive tier includes all the elements of the previous tier. The most important thing to do is talk to your players. Judge their comfort level with these issues, and discuss how they want to play.

RISE OF THE KU KLUX KLAN

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

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

The Passing Player

This level of player is looking to hang out in Harlem, try to cheat Dutch Schultz, take a spin in the Clam House, and uncover deep one plots on the Harlem River. At this level, I suggest not using the **Racial Tension Modifier** (see box nearby). At this level, tread lightly, implying the setting and backdrop.

- Being black means living with a presumption of guilt.
- Being black means surviving under the unspoken assumption you are wrong.

Non-black characters (on the whole) consider them slow, even if they are the smartest person in the room and have been right 99 percent of the time—people focus on that 1 percent, and you have to constantly work from the basis that they believe this is your first time doing this thing. Even when surrounded by white counterparts and friends, it could be subconscious, but if you tell them something, they doubt it until it is confirmed by another white person. Say you stumble upon a body and call your buddy on the force. He may not think you killed the victim, but if their wallet is missing, he may search you and your car, and then apologize.

The Harlemites Player

My hope is that most gamers fall somewhere within this range or higher. At this level, introduce the **Racial Tension Modifier** (see box nearby) and add a moderate level of the backdrop features listed above in addition to the ones here.

- Wealth and class do not protect a black investigator (at any social level) from racism.
- The police's normal response is to threaten or to use outright violence against black investigators.

The Purist Player

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

RACIAL TENSION MODIFIER

To aid in playing the game and making sure it feels balanced for the players and Keeper, I have created the Racial Tension Modifier. The modifier gives players a window into the mechanical aspect of racism found within the game and also helps make everyone feel safer and less targeted at the table. The Racial Tension Modifier adds a new level of play and complexity that may be welcomed by Keepers and investigators alike.

When the investigator and a non-player character (NPC) are of different races or cultures, increase the difficulty of the roll (such as social skills) by one level (Regular becomes Hard, Hard becomes Extreme). If necessary, at the Keeper's discretion, an additional penalty die may be applied for particularly challenging encounters, dependent on the circumstances. The mechanic reflects the mistrust between the different groups for control of the area or power in a general sense.

Harlem Unbound provides seven ready-to-play scenarios. All written in the standard *Call of Cthulhu* style and do not include the Racial Tension Modifier, allowing the Keeper to apply the mechanic to their games as they wish. For ease of reference, the modifier appears in a callout box at the beginning of each scenario.

REAL WORLD TALK

I have had a number of white Keepers come to me to say they love *Harlem Unbound* but would never run it. They do not want to mess up or never really imagined how hard it would be to do this. That acknowledgment of the difficulty is excellent but the response to not do something because it's hard is not.

By not using *Harlem Unbound* or keeping the conversation about it to yourself—or occasionally me at a convention (when no one else is around)—doesn't help change the environment at the gaming table. It does not help create a welcoming and safe space for others. Think about how hard and frequently dangerous it is for that "other" person to be a gamer. Yet they persevere. Saying, "at my table, we are accepting to all," but at the same time not living those principles in larger spaces, is counterproductive.

It's on you to battle that feeling of insecurity and fear of what other white people may think of you, and run games by diverse creatives. Promote diverse creatives. Talk about the issues presented and become an advocate for a better gaming world. That active choice may help make it easier on the next non-white heterosexual cisgender man who wants to play.

THE MYTHOS VS. HUMAN EVIL

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

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

SCENARIO HOOKS

Looking for quick ideas for a night or two of gaming? The following two scenario hooks are spines from which to develop and build a game. Also, see the **4D6 Scenario Generator** (page 99), providing a quick inspiration for some scenario building blocks, as well as three shorter seeds, and a host of Mythos and supernatural creatures to insert into games.

LYNCHING

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

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

THE QUEEN'S GOT YOUR NUMBER

The Hook

Madame Queenie just gave you two choices: look into her two-timing accountant or spend the rest of the Renaissance looking over your shoulder for jilting the Queen. Harlem nights are dark, cold, and deadly for those without friends. The investigators find themselves pressed into service by a criminal pillar of the community.

Behind the Curtain

Stephanie St. Clair (see page 65), the Queen of Harlem, calls the investigators to her home one night, or has them dragged there if they refuse. She has heard about their unusual investigative habits and needs people with their unique skill set. She could ask Bumpy, her bodyguard and partner—but things would get bloody fast, and that's bad for business.

Harold Weston, St. Clair's trusted accountant has been with her for years, but recently he has been acting strangely. She believes he is skimming money but needs to know the reason why before acting. With Dutch Schultz circling her operation, any misstep could provide her enemies an opening for attack.

Following Weston for a few days turns up the information that he is an early riser, very friendly, and quite charming. If asked, his friends and colleagues from his job at the bank say he's undergone a total change in behavior. Previously, he was sullen and always kept to himself, like he had some kind of secret. Since the change, he's been outgoing and charming. In fact, they all love whatever has happened to him.

Snooping around, the investigators discover local newspapers have reported two missing people over the last week, and the discovery of a dried-out husk of a body, all of which are within four blocks of Weston's home.

The investigators then discover that something went down at the Harlem docks one night, just over a week ago. Digging deeper, they find out that Aaron Johnson tried to kill Weston for Dutch Schultz during a meeting at the docks. On catching up with Johnson, he is shocked to hear that Weston is still alive (after all the bullets he pumped into him); Johnson attempts to keep his reaction to himself and tries to escape the investigators, possibly with a heated gun battle or chase ensuing.

Putting it Together

As the case unfolds, the investigators match wits against an ancient evil. Harold Weston was infected by a vampiric entity, one of the kargh-el, and is transforming into an unholy abomination. The kargh-el was buried at the bottom of the Harlem River when its space vessel crashed centuries ago. Since then, it and the remaining shard of its vessel have

been trapped under tons of earth. Weston was meeting with a supplier on the docks when Aaron Johnson hit: the assassin shot Weston, who fell into the water. Sinking, he sunk low enough to become infected by the kargh-el, "saving" both of them in the process.

Weston has blackouts when the creature takes over and feeds. While it has minimized its feeding until it can take full control of Weston's body, it has accidentally overfed and killed a few times. The thing only wants to find a way home (the void of space), but it will kill anyone to get what it wants.

Weston has no idea that he is infected, and is suffering from partial amnesia since the incident at the docks. He doesn't remember the fight at the docks and doesn't know that he has been having blackouts. The creature takes control of Weston during the blackouts to feed and carry out its plans. So far, it has killed four people; three have been discovered, and the fourth is its minion.

Retaliation

The Weston-Thing is not ready to act, it will take time for it to fully control its host body. For now, it considered it is in the best host possible to advance its plan—should an even better host present itself, it may move bodies. The entity won't risk a direct assault if the investigators get too close, preferring to set traps and send others to go after them, rather than confront them directly.

A Better Tomorrow

Weston is already doomed, as there is no mundane way to remove the kargh-el without killing the host. Wily investigators may be able to trick the creature into changing hosts to trap it, but Weston's original wounds from the dockside attack reemerge, and only immediate access to a skilled surgeon has the possibility of saving him. The primary options for success are to kill Weston and anyone he has infected or to trap them all. For investigators versed in the lore of the Cthulhu Mythos, an alternative resolution might have them using a spell to cast out the parasite or using the even more risky option of spontaneous use of the Cthulhu Mythos skill to banish the creature back into space.

Weston-Thing, apparent age 44, *accountant infected with a kargh-el*

STR 175	**CON** 150	**SIZ** 75	**DEX** 65	**INT** 75
APP 45	**POW** 110	**EDU** 63	**SAN** —	**HP** 23
DB: +2D6	**Build:** 2	**Move:** 6	**MP:** 22	

Powers

Transformation: spending 10 POW allows the Weston-Thing to rearrange its mass; this visible difference in stature increases its STR by lowering DEX by a corresponding amount.

Energy Blast: can fire a blast of concentrated, crackling dark energy with the expenditure of 3 magic points, delivering 1D6 damage. The target may attempt to Dodge a blast with a penalty die.

Life Force Drain (mnvr): can grab and hold a living creature (person or animal), allowing it to drain the life energy from the victim at a rate of 1D6 POW and CON per round; the victim's STR and APP also decrease by 2 points per round of feeding. Drained POW and CON are added to its own characteristics. The target of this attack may attempt to break free with an opposed STR or DEX roll per round held. If the Weston-Thing suffers the loss of half of its hit points, it releases any victim currently held.

Psychic Possession: those fed upon but not killed become psychically linked to the Weston-Thing. The creature may view scenes through psychically possessed victims' eyes. An opposed POW roll allows an investigator to sense their connection and what the creature is doing, provoking a Sanity roll (1/1D6 loss), while a Hard POW roll by the victim suppresses such psychic possession for one hour.

Infection: if a victim's POW is reduced to zero, they are killed and become a zombie-like husk under the Weston-Thing's complete control. The possessed husk must feed on life (HP) equal to its SIZ daily or crumble into dust. Victims of such attacks, if not killed outright, become infected and the Weston-Thing may view scenes through their eyes, although if the victim succeeds with a POW roll, the connection is severed permanently.

Once fed, the possessed husk resembles its former living self, requiring a Hard Spot Hidden or Hard Psychology roll to notice subtle clues that something about the person is not right. If a "refreshed" possessed husk is medically examined, the results show that the "person" is deceased (Sanity loss 1/1D3). Possessed husks do not possess any of the special abilities of a kargh-el.

Combat

Attacks per round: 2 or 1 (melee and/or life drain, or 1 energy blast)

Fighting	40% (20/8), damage 1D3+ 2D6
Energy Blast	55% (27/11), damage varies (1D6 minimum, see note)
Life Drain (mnvr)	40% (20/8), held then life drain (see note)
Dodge	32% (16/6)

Skills

Accounting 75%, Intimidate 50%, Law 55%, Library Use 60%, Listen 45%, Other Language (Italian) 25%, Other Language (Spanish) 33%, Own Language (English) 63%, Persuade 75%, Spot Hidden 60%, Stealth 55%, Throw 40%, Track 80%.

Armor: none; can only be injured by a hit to the solar plexus (requiring a called shot with a penalty die).
Spells: none.
Sanity loss: 1/1D8 Sanity points to see a kargh-el's true form.

PULP ADJUSTMENTS: WESTON-THING

Hit Points: 46
Add/Adjust Skills: Fighting 70% (35/14), Energy Blast 65% (32/13), and Life Drain 60% (30/12).
Minions: three possessed husks act as bodyguards.

Possessed Husk, *ages vary, infected minion*

STR 140 **CON** 100 **SIZ** 80 **DEX** 50 **INT** 50
APP 05 (50)* **POW** 45 **EDU** 45 **SAN** — **HP** 18
DB: +2D6 **Build:** 3 **Move:** 6 **MP:** 9
**Number in parentheses shows "refreshed" value.*

Combat

Attacks Per Round: 1 (melee)

Fighting	50% (25/5), damage 1D3+2D6
Dodge	25% (12/5)

Armor: none.
Spells: none.
Sanity loss: 1/1D6 Sanity loss to see an unrefreshed (decrepit) possessed husk; no loss for a refreshed one.

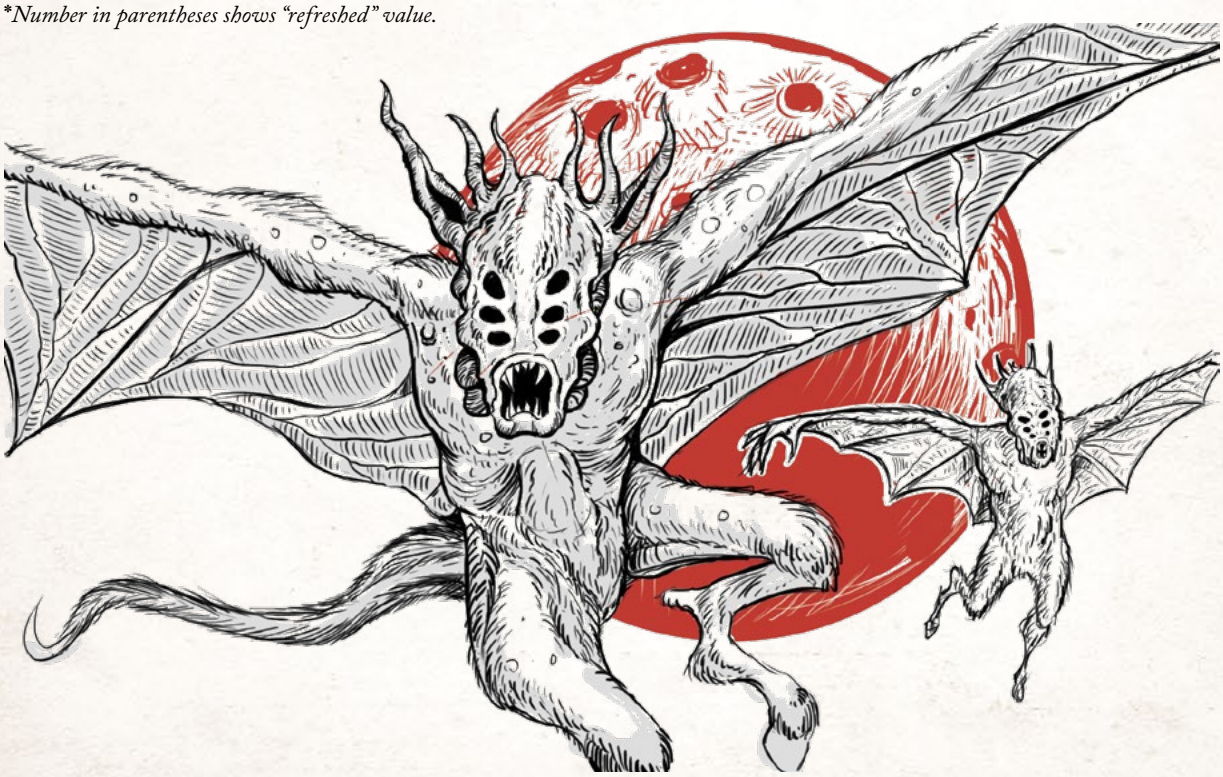
WINTRY NIGHTMARE

The Hook

Harlem's ice business is booming and a few savvy black Harlemites have managed to break into the primarily Italian-controlled business. It's "all Jake" until Trey Williams goes missing. His friend and fellow ice dealer, Noah Kent, hires the investigators to find out what happened to his friend.

Behind the Curtain

Trey Williams overheard that Ricci Ice is making daily deliveries for triple the standard price. His curiosity got the better of him and he saw too much. Mark Huey and his two associates are cultists of the "One in Fire," and attempt



Kargh-el

to contact the Great Old One with a massive machine that generates too much heat for any human to use for more than a few minutes. The ice deliveries extend how long they can use the machine each day. The cultists sacrificed poor Trey to the One in Fire; his ashes can be found in various vases.

Putting it Together

Investigating Williams' room in a boarding house turns up his customers and route; these show that he recently expanded his route out by two blocks into East Harlem.

Questioning the customers reveals that Williams was friendly, never late, and that he's a truck of a man who can carry heavy ice blocks great distances. Someone also mentions that last week, Williams said something about a new customer and how he recently stole a customer from Ricci Ice on 117th Street. Meanwhile, checking the newspapers turns up that six other people have gone missing over the last two months.

At Ricci Ice in East Harlem, the investigators learn that Mark Huey did stop using their services for about three weeks, but then had a double order yesterday. Their previous delivery person for the route mailed in his resignation letter a few days ago.

If questioned, Huey claims to know nothing and refuses to let the investigators inside his carpentry business on 123rd Street. Investigating the location shows that Huey began renting it about six months ago and that it receives daily deliveries of ice. Further inspection notes that Huey greets the ice deliveries at the door but never lets anyone inside the building. Other than the ice deliveries, two other people (each with scarred hands and faces from severe burns) come and go daily and appear to be associates of Huey.

Finding a way into the building and then down into the basement, the investigators discover the strange machine and confront the cultists.

Retaliation

If Huey believes the investigators are becoming an issue, he uses his Mythos machine to summon a hunting horror to dispatch them.

A Better Tomorrow

The investigators need to stop the cultists before they perfect their machine, contact the Great Old One, and kill anyone else.

Mark Huey, *age 33, engineer turned cultist*

STR 45	**CON** 75	**SIZ** 55	**DEX** 50	**INT** 75
APP 60	**POW** 80	**EDU** 68	**SAN** 0	**HP** 13
DB: 0	**Build:** 0	**Move:** 4*	**MP:** 16	

**Right leg is burned and injured from his heat experiments.*

Combat

Attacks per round: 1

Brawl	25% (12/5), damage 1D3
.38 auto	45% (22/9), damage 1D10
Dodge	55% (27/11)

Skills

Art/Craft (Technical Drawing) 65%, Charm 75%, Cthulhu Mythos 18%, Electrical Repair 45%, Language Own (English) 65%, Library Use 45%, Mechanical Repair 85%, Occult 35%, Science (Engineering) 65%, Spot Hidden 55%, Stealth 40%, Throw 50%.

Backstory

- **Description:** young-looking white male with a noticeable limp.
- **Traits:** friendly but detached.
- **Ideology/Beliefs:** an unquenchable desire to learn and seek forbidden knowledge.
- **Treasured Possessions:** his tool belt with his own-designed "non-Euclidean" tools.

Spells: Brew Space Mead, Cause Blindness, Curse of the Putrid Husk, Summon/Bind Hunting Horror.

PULP ADJUSTMENTS: MARK HUEY

Archetype: Mystic
Core Characteristic: change POW to 100
Hit Points: 26
Add/Adjust Skills: Handgun 75% (37/15), Occult 60%, Science (Engineering) 90%.
Spells: Awaken Inner Light, Barrier of Pain, Deflect Harm, and Sense Life.

Talents

- **Weird Science:** may build and repair weird science devices.
- **Arcane Insight:** halve the time required to learn spells and gains a bonus die to spellcasting rolls.

Armor: none but uses Deflect Harm spell (caster may deflect successive attacks by expending magic points equal to the rolled damage for each attack).

Hunting Horror, *viperine flyer*

STR 145 **CON** 50 **SIZ** 210 **DEX** 70 **INT** 75
APP — **POW** 105 **EDU** — **SAN** — **HP** 25
DB: +3D6 **Build:** 4 **Move:** 7/11*MP: 21
**Flying.*

Grasp (mnvr): the tail can be used to wrap around the victim, preventing movement; the hunting horror may then fly off with its victim or keep fighting. The victim can break loose with a successful opposed STR roll. When a victim is caught in the tail, the hunting horror may only make a bite attack, nibbling at the dangling victim with a bonus die to hit (since the victim's arms are usually pinioned).

Attacks Per Round: 2 (bite, crush, tail whip)

Fighting	65% (32/13), damage 1D6+DB
Grasp (mnvr):	65% (32/13), target held
Dodge	35% (17/7)

Armor: 9-point skin.
Sanity loss: 0/1D10 Sanity loss for seeing a hunting horror.

OTHER HARLEM HORRORS

"Pops,"
apparent age 55, barber and avatar of Anansi

"Pops" is a nickname, it's what everyone calls him and no one can seem to remember what his real name is, so it's not a big deal. If pressed, he offers any name people want to hear and laughs it off saying, "When you're as old as me, names don't matter. Just deeds and deals." If asked where he is from, he gladly tells them about his home in southern Nigeria, and that he is one of the Igbo people.

The rather portly, grandfather-like barber has three people working for him and a couple of kids who sweep the floor. The shop is open from 10:00 to 18:00 and is usually busy; it's a great place to catch up on what's going on. After hours, he can usually be found drinking in a cheap dive bar and rarely makes it to the fancier places.

Secret: Pops is an avatar of Anansi—the spider-like deity of West African and Caribbean folklore.

Roleplaying Hooks: Pops is friendly and always ready with a joke, weaving in serious topics among the humor. He's a trickster and always gets more than he wagers. He is trying to collect all the wisdom of the world.

Brad T. Walker, *age 33, cursed dockworker*

Walker's flat feet got him booted out of every army recruitment office he approached. He wanted to fight in the Great War like his three brothers but was classified 4F (rejected). His white Italian family was not happy with him and considered him too weak to be any good. In the end, he gave up and got a job down at the docks doing paperwork, figuring if he couldn't fight, he could at least make sure the boys over there got their mail and food. Everyone around the docks nicknamed him "True Blue."

After the war ended, Walker turned his talents for getting items overseas into a more lucrative concern. He began smuggling exotic items and animals. It was a beautiful life and he started living very well on the profits. All that changed a few months ago when he got bit by a massive gray dog he smuggled in from overseas for a customer. Since then, he has dreamt of running the streets of East Harlem, killing and eating people he encounters. Every couple of weeks he reads about some animal attack in the papers, like the young couple who got mauled. Then, last week, he found a half-eaten hand in his icebox, was overwhelmed with hunger, and ate it. The memories flooded back to him and he learned he could control the change that was affecting him. He felt more powerful than ever before but now had a hunger that only fresh flesh could satiate.

Walker was bitten by a werewolf and is now cursed. He is growing more primal and desires to be in his half wolf-half human form all the time. He can change between forms, requiring a successful POW roll to do so (as his subconscious does not want to change). If not stopped, his killing increases until he is hunting every night.

The Haunted Apartment

Apartment 7D has been empty for a few weeks… again. The flat is a spacious one-bedroom affair in Strivers' Row; the perfect place for either a hard working up and comer or a crash pad for a group of underpaid workers. The last occupant was Alice Riser, or at least that was the name on the lease. Alice and her six friends all lived there without incident. The neighbors loved them; they were warm, friendly, and always ready for a laugh.

The apartment's white manager, Elias Wilson (a good person who treats everyone fairly) is seeking to rent it out again. Alice vanished without paying him, so he sold off all of the possessions in the apartment—just like the last time. This is the eighth time in five months that renters have left without paying what they owe. Wilson knows the rent is high, but it's still better than the four other places nearby. He is ready to cut the rent again to get it filled and has no idea why no one will stay there. The neighbors have complained about noises at night despite the apartment being empty. So far, no one has seen anything strange there.

4D6 SCENARIO GENERATOR

Build a scenario with 4D6 for an evening of play. Use the following four steps, rolling or choosing from each to determine a basic storyline.

Step 1: Who Involves the Investigators?

1. Family member
2. Criminal organization
3. A friend
4. A rival
5. Authorities
6. Newspaper article

Step 2: The Hook

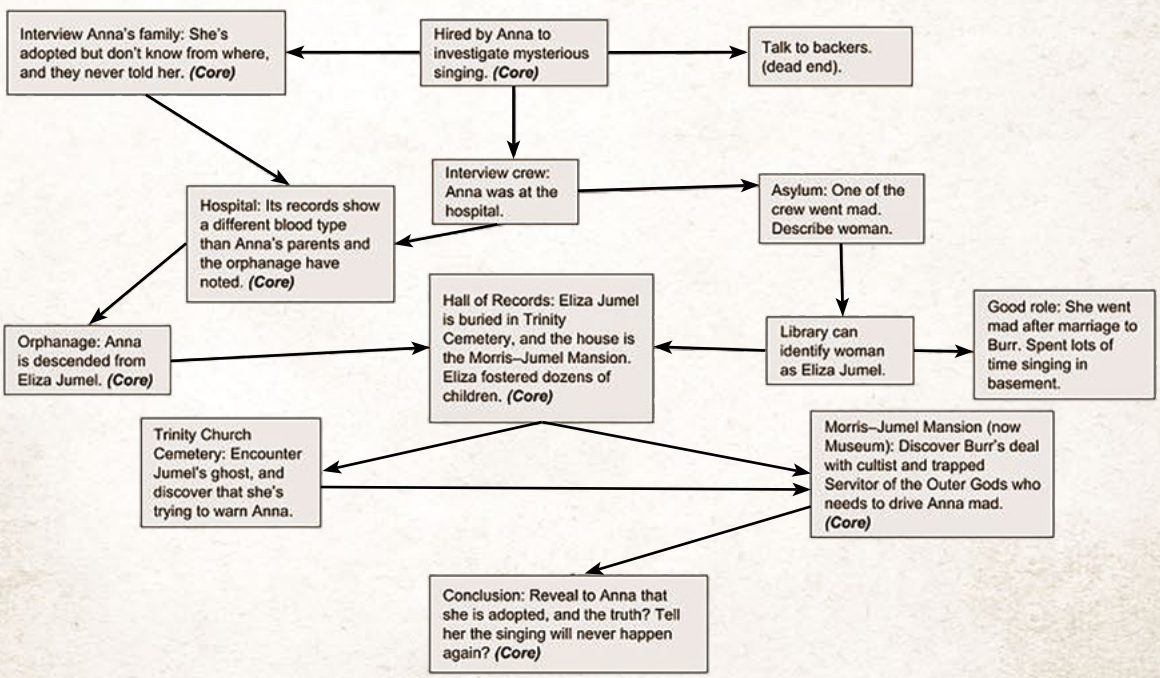
7. Person is killed
8. Object disappears
9. Someone is seeking revenge
10. Find an ancient artifact or tome
11. Notice someone's strange behavior
12. Hired by a patron to do something

Step 3: Antagonist

13. Human, Mundane (Mafia, Klan, or criminal)
14. Supernatural entity (non-Mythos: vampire, ghost, werewolf)
15. Human, Mythos (wizard, cultist, artifact-wielding, possessed)
16. Bizarre spell or artifact effect (changes people, causes events)
17. Mythos Entity
18. Great Old One or their agent

Step 4: Resolution

19. Capture
20. Fight
21. Skill use (music, art, negotiation)
22. Banishment
23. Magic use
24. Artifact use



Example scenario structure plan

SAMPLE MYTHOS AND SUPERNATURAL ENTITIES

Baron in Blues, *avatar of Azathoth*

Standing over 6 feet (1.8 m) tall, the Baron in Blues usually can be found wearing an expensive blue suit and holding a six-valve horn in his left hand. Atop a humanoid body, his face, at first, appears to be a mass of writhing tentacles, but is actually the void of space, drawing in all who view it. When in close proximity or if touching the Baron, a deep and overwhelming sense of cold is evident (colder than the far reaches of space), draining vitality (CON and POW) from those around him.

Certain lore suggests the Baron in Blues is one of the incredibly rare avatars of Azathoth—the seething nuclear chaos at the center of the cosmos. The Baron is apparently the manifestation of one broken writer's will, whose researches led them to lose pages from an unknown tome dedicated to Azathoth. With a connection established between the writer's fevered mind and the cosmic will of madness, so was born the avatar, who now seeks to gather a cult of followers. Of the few who have heard of the Baron, they recall something about a deal being offered in a horn cutting contest. Some going on to say that if you can blow your horn and best the Baron, he shakes your hand and fades away. As to the price paid by those losing the contest, nothing is known.

BARON IN BLUES, *avatar of Azathoth*

STR 125	**CON** 700	**SIZ** 100	**DEX** 110	**INT** 100
APP —	**POW** 200	**EDU** —	**SAN** —	**HP** 80
DB: +2D6	**Build:** 3	**Move:** 10*	**MP:** 40	

**Able to phase through solid impediments, leaving a frosted outline behind.*

Powers

Cacophony of the Damned: the Baron greets all in the same fashion, raising his the six-valve horn to his "face" and playing. Each tune seems to last an eternity, although it really lasts but a few moments, and each tune can cause different effects upon the listeners. One tune (costing 1 magic point per round), catches listeners in an effect much like the Mind Cloud spell. Depending on the Baron's intent, the music's effects can be harmless or devastating. For those who would cross him, the horn's tune is deafening and maddening (costing 3 magic points per round)—the music targeting a single person of the Baron's choosing, rupturing their eardrums and inflicting 1D10 damage per round while the music plays. Playing a different tune (costing 2 magic points per round), the Baron's music causes all within 20 yards/meters to suffer a penalty die on all actions if an opposed POW roll is failed; if unable to hear the music, the penalty is negated.

Herald of Endless Night: a different tune in the Baron's repertoire, this piece of music (costing 2 magic points per round) starts as a distant buzzing, growing louder as it builds while all light sources in the vicinity begin to dim and go out, leaving only the cold twilight of distant stars over a 50-foot (15 m) area. Those listening suffer a Sanity roll (1/1D8 loss) and the permanent loss of 1D4 points of CON and POW per round, although a successful Hard POW resists the POW loss (but not the CON loss). Those falling insane to this tune's effect are liable to gain a fear of darkness and night (scotophobia).

Opening the Void: here, the Baron turns his full attention to playing a melody so sweet that everyone is left speechless for a moment. Every note burns away the veils of the universe, opening a portal to another dimension or place. The tune costs the Baron 5 magic points, for each additional 5 magic points spent, the Baron can also call forth 1D6 creatures from the portal's destination to fight on his behalf, such as moon beasts from the Dreamlands, byakhee from space, or servitors of the Outer Gods from Azathoth's court.

Big Goodbye: if the Baron's physical form is destroyed, it explodes in a blinding and deafening flash of darkness, leaving behind a 12 foot-square (1 m^2) portal into the cold void of space. The portal begins to sucks in everything within 20 yards/meters for 1D10 rounds. Each round, a successful STR roll opposed by STR 75 is required to resist its pull, with those failing being sucked into space to face a cold death. Otherwise, those within 100 yards/meters of the portal suffer 1 point of freezing damage per round.

Combat

Attacks Per Round: 1 (melee or music)

Fighting	90% (45/18), 1D4+2D6
Dodge	70% (35/14)

Armor: 3-point protection from his multidimensional makeup.
Spells: all Call and Contact spells, and others as the Keeper desires.
Sanity loss: 1D4/1D10 Sanity points to see the Baron in Blues.

Duppy, malevolent spirit

The word "duppy" in Caribbean Hindustani means ghost or spirit and these malevolent spirits play a major role in folklore. Duppy frequently haunt locations and people, with most manifesting at night. The spirit is usually considered to be the soul of a dead person, which can assume a human or animal form. Different African folktales ascribe their creation in various ways, such as the Obeah, who believe

people have two souls: the first soul is a heavenly one that ascends in death, and the other being an earth soul that can escape at death to become a duppy—unless trapped in a coffin for three days, with proper rituals.

DUPPY, *malevolent spirit*

char.	*averages*	*rolls*
STR*	50	3D6 × 5
CON*	50	3D6 × 5
SIZ*	65	(2D6 + 6) × 5
DEX*	50	3D6 × 5
INT	60	(2D6+5) × 5
POW	110	(3D6+12) × 5

HP:** n/a (110)
Average Damage Bonus* (DB): n/a
Average Build*: n/a
Move*: 6
**In human form only (based on averages).*
***If reduced to zero POW, the duppy is destroyed.*

Combat

Attacks Per Round: 1 (see special attacks, below; if in human form, uses standard melee)

Fighting (human form)	30% (15/6), damage 1D3 or weapon (see Beyond the Pale, below)
Dodge (human form)	25% (12/5)

Special Attacks

Frightening Assault: attacks use an opposed POW roll; the creature manifests before its target in its chosen form (a dead family member, a vicious-looking animal, or any horrific visage)—the method of attack varies by the creature's form (claws, energy discharge, heat that melts flesh, and so on). If the duppy wins the opposed roll, the target suffers the temporary loss of 2D10 points of POW (points are regained at the rate of 1D6 per 25 hours thereafter). If the duppy loses the contest, it suffers the loss of 2D10 POW. If either the target or duppy is reduced to zero POW they die.

Especially malevolent duppy can cause great terror, increasing the POW loss by +1D10, at the Keeper's discretion. While the malevolent duppy's attack is increased, it still only loses 2D10 POW if failing to win the opposed POW roll.

Beyond the Pale: some duppy can manifest powers that affect the world, such as localized telekinesis (slamming doors or holding them shut, hurling pottery, or even lifting people off of the ground and moving them around the ceiling). Such effects may inflict physical damage, ranging from 1D2 up to 1D10 points, dependent on the manifestation of power and circumstances. Such attacks are hard to see coming, imposing a penalty die to Dodge rolls and so on.

Putting to Rest: to banish a duppy requires a specific set of items relating to the spirit's past life, as well as what is keeping it bound to the earth. Perhaps the duppy is seeking closure or the completion of a deed, which if performed dismisses the spirit. Each duppy is different and the Keeper should decide beforehand on clues as to how investigators may discover what they need to perform such a banishment. In addition to the items mentioned, banishment may center on a successful opposed POW roll; others may contribute to the ritual, providing up to two bonus dice to the roll.

Armor: none.
Spells: none.
Sanity loss: 1/1D8 Sanity points to see a duppy's true form.

Golem, silent Guardian and relentless hunter

The word "golem" comes from the Hebrew language, meaning something that is incomplete or unfinished. Golems are frequently clay creatures brought to life through magic and belief. Lore suggests they are created through Kabbalistic Jewish mysticism. There is the well-known story of Rabbi Loew in Prague, who is said to have created a golem to defend the Jewish community against anti-Semitic attacks in the 1540s; after some time, the golem became too violent, and the Rabbi was forced to destroy the creature for the good of all involved.

GOLEM, *silent Guardian and relentless hunter*

char.	*averages*	*rolls*
STR	115	(5D6 + 6) × 5
CON	80	(3D6 + 6) × 5
SIZ	90	(3D6 + 8) × 5
DEX	20	1D6 × 5
INT	20	1D6 × 5
POW	55	(2D6+5) × 5

HP: 17
Average Damage Bonus (DB): +2D6
Average Build: 3
Move: 6

Powers

Savagery: each week there is a cumulative 5 percent chance that the creature's creator will lose control of the golem. Once free, the golem's first action is usually to destroy its creator. The creator may regain control of the golem by re-performing the lengthy rituals that first gave the thing life, a process taking many days, and requiring the creator to stay well-hidden from the golem. Alternatively, the creator (or another) may scratch out or attempt to remove the magical letters bound into the creature (usually written on paper within the golem's mouth or inscribed on its forehead), which instantly destroys the creature.

Combat

Attacks Per Round: 2 (crush, smash, strike)

Crush	60% (30/12), damage 1D6+DB
Dodge	12% (6/2)

Armor: 9-point clay (varies by material); minimum damage from firearms.
Spells: none.
Sanity loss: 0/1D6 Sanity points to see a golem.

The Monstrosity, horror beyond description

A generic monster for Keepers to use as is or adapt as they require. This unnamable monstrosity is roughly the size of a gorilla, equipped with elongated features and the smell of the grave, while its flesh and muscle mass undulates in a particularly unpleasant manner.

THE MONSTROSITY, *horror beyond description*

char.	*averages*	*rolls*
STR	110	(5D6 + 5) × 5
CON	80	(3D6 + 1D10) × 5
SIZ	100	(4D6 + 6) × 5
DEX	60	(3D6 + 2) × 5
INT	10	(3D6 + 3) × 5
POW	50	3D6 × 5

HP: 18
Average Damage Bonus (DB): +2D6
Average Build: 3
Move: 10

Combat

Attacks per round: 2 (claw, bash, smother)

Fighting	60% (30/12), damage 1D6+DB
Dodge	40% (20/8)

Armor: 3-point hide.
Spells: none.
Sanity loss: 0/1D6 to see the Monstrosity.

Soucouyant, *shapeshifting vampiric fiend*

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

The soucouyant is a shapeshifting vampiric witch, frequently taking the form of an elderly man or woman during the day. While most would be unfriendly at best, it passes for human until nightfall, at which point it unleashes its true nature. The creature sheds its human skin (hiding it in a place of safety), revealing an animal, ball of fire, or some other grotesque form that hungers for blood. After hunting and feasting, the creature returns to its skin.

Soucouyant, *shapeshifting vampiric fiend*

char.	*averages*	*rolls*
STR	105	6D6 × 5
CON	105	6D6 × 5
SIZ	40	(2D6+1) × 5
DEX	50	3D6 × 5
INT	50	3D6 × 5
POW	50	3D6 × 5

HP: 14
Average Damage Bonus (DB): +1D4
Average Build: 1
Move: 8

Powers

Salting: the unprotected skin shell of a soucouyant can be its weakness; if the empty skin is found and filled with salt, it shrinks, and the creature can't fit back into it. As well as causing intense pain, the soucouyant is forced to reveal its inhuman nature. If the creature is exposed to the sun without its skin for more than a moment, it bursts into flames and dies.

Counting: some legends recall that placing a heap of rice, peanuts, or sugar before a soucouyant requires it to stop and pick up each item or grain one at a time; whether such folklore actually works should be determined by the Keeper.

Bite: causes 1D4 damage and victim is held, allowing the creature to automatically drain blood at a rate of 2D10 STR points per round thereafter; the victim may attempt to break free with an opposed STR roll. If the soucouyant suffers any damage while attached to a victim it immediately releases its hold.

Combat

Attacks per round: 2 or 1 (2 melee or 1 bite)

Fighting	50% (25/10), damage 1D4+DB (or weapon)
Bite	70% (35/14), damage 1D4 + special (see above)
Dodge	45% (22/9)

Skills (in human form)

Fast Talk 45%, Psychology 60%, Track (Scent Blood) 75%, Stealth 70%.

Armor: 2-point hide or similar.
Spells: none.
Sanity loss: 1/1D8 to see a soucouyant true form; 1/1D4 to witness its transformation from human to monster.

Zonbi, the living dead

The origins of the zonbi are rooted in slavery. The word "zombie" is a variant of the Haitian words "zombi" or "zonbi." In the 17th century, the ruling French colonists of Saint-Domingue (now the Dominican Republic) kidnapped Africans and forced them into slavery on sugar plantations. Such enslaved people died in droves from their mistreatment, forcing the French to steal more people. Some enslaved people believed dying would set them free, though those who committed suicide would not be released, and were instead trapped in their own bodies in a form of limbo of eternal slavery. This belief became interwoven with parts of the Voodoo religion, with folklore saying a zonbi was an animated corpse brought back to "life" by a bokor, a sorcerer using necromancy, and held under their command.

The zonbi of *Harlem Unbound* are the living turned into near-dead creatures. The victim is turned into a silent servant by the use of a combination of drugs, magic, and occult knowledge. These poor souls are trapped inside of their own bodies, with no self-control.

ZONBI, *the living dead*

char.	*averages*	*rolls*
STR	70	3D6 x 5
CON	80	3D6 x 5
SIZ	70	(2D6 +6) x 5
DEX	60	3D6 x 5
INT	05*	n/a
POW	05*	n/a

**Zonbi have minimal willpower and intelligence, being under the control of another.*

HP: 15
Average DB: +1D4
Average Build: 1
Move: 8

Combat

Attacks per Round: 1 (tear, bite)

Fighting	45% (22/9), damage 1D3+DB (or weapon)
Dodge	*lacking volition, this is not an option*

Skills

Obey Command 95%.

Armor: none; major wounds delivered to the body result in loss of a limb; otherwise all damage is halved, except to the head (one penalty die to rolls targeting the head).
Sanity loss: 1/1D6 to see a zonbi; (1D4/1D6+2 if the victim is known).

GENERIC NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

Patrolman, cop on the corner

That cop just gave you the side-eye; you better get gone before he hauls you downtown for "walking while black."

PATROLMAN, *cop on the corner*

STR 50	**CON** 65	**SIZ** 55	**DEX** 55	**INT** 50
APP 50	**POW** 50	**EDU** 55	**SAN** 50*	**HP** 12
DB: 0	**Build:** 0	**Move:** 8	**MP:** 10	

**Special:* *no SAN loss for witnessing violence or dead bodies.*

Combat

Brawl (nightstick)	40% (20/8), damage 1D6
.41 revolver	45% (22/9), damage 1D10
Dodge	35% (17/7)

Skills

Credit Rating 25%, Intimidate 30%, Persuade 55%, Language (English) 55%, Law 25%, Listen 40%, Psychology 45%, Spot Hidden 55%, Throw 40%.

Gangster, local goon

No matter who they are working for, one thing is for certain: you better steer clear unless you want a gut full of lead or a drop in the Harlem River with cement shoes.

GANGSTER, *local goon*

STR 60	**CON** 60	**SIZ** 60	**DEX** 45	**INT** 50
APP 50	**POW** 50	**EDU** 40	**SAN** 45*	**HP** 12
DB: 0	**Build:** 0	**Move:** 8	**MP:** 10	

**Special:* *no SAN loss for witnessing violence or dead bodies.*

Combat

Brawl	50% (25/10), damage 1D3 or knife 1D4
.38 revolver	50% (25/10), damage 1D10, attacks per round 1(3)
Thompson SMG	40% (20/8), damage 1D10+2
Dodge	40% (20/8)

Skills

Charm 50%, Drive Auto 50%, Intimidate 55%, Language (English, Italian, etc.) 40%, Locksmith 40%, Spot Hidden 40%, Stealth 45%.

CHAPTER 7

SCENARIOS

HARLEM HELLFIGHTERS NEVER DIE

Harlem Hellfighters Never Die begins on December 20, 1920, with Prohibition in full swing. This scenario is intended as an introductory adventure for a team of two or more investigators of any experience level and aims to familiarize them with some key locations and Harlemites. Investigators with prior military service may fair better than others during the climactic final battle.

With a little work, the scenario can be moved to a different location or time period; the Keeper will need to change the motivation of the primary antagonist and the target of their wrath. For instance, the scenario could be brought to the modern day, dealing with Iraq war veterans returning home, and terrorists with a mi-go brain cylinder seeking revenge. Most of the scenario would play out the same, just with a modern-day layer. Racial tension has evolved over time and is still very present, so the Racial Tension Modifier can be applied to a lesser extent—acts of racial injustice are generally subtler but can intensify to deadly in a moment. The police are just as deadly as any Mythos threat.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

As an African-American Iraq War veteran and gamer, this scenario has significant meaning for me and I want to thank everyone who purchased this book and it is my privilege to present it. This scenario briefly touches on segregation in the U.S. Army and one of the greatest military units to ever serve, the Harlem Hellfighters, who have also, unfortunately, been mostly forgotten.

My hope is that this material educates people about the Hellfighters' sacrifice and heroism, which persisted despite the racism that plagued them at every turn, making all of their accomplishments that much more incredible.

BACKGROUND

The month-long Battle of Belleau Wood in 1918 saw the Harlem Hellfighters serve under the French 16th Division. During the battle, a German scientific division, *Germanenorden Walvater des Heiligen Grals* (GWDHG), executed a diabolical plan to tap into the Mythos through retrofitted mi-go technology, while chanting and using an "Ethereal Hümmelchen" (a small German bagpipe outfitted with mi-go technology). The ritual warped the harmonic resonance holding the cosmos together (and which keeps the Great Old Ones dreaming), opening a small tear in the fabric of reality. Three previous tests under controlled conditions killed all participants; however, the radiation dissipated in moments, allowing people to access the area without fear of contamination.

GWDHG believed this technology would win the war for Germany, and Belleau Wood was designated as the first official field test. Moments after the ritual began, the Hellfighters attack—and Phoenix Squad, along with its two French commanders—destroyed most of the equipment and killed every GWDHG they encountered. The ensuing explosion bathed the brave fighters in Mythos energy and marked them with radiation. Unaware of what had happened, all of the soldiers served with honor for the rest of the war.

Opposite: Harlem Hellfighters never die

Lab assistant *Vizefeldwebel* (Staff Sergeant) Hans Wächter survived the explosion and battle with the nearly incinerated *Oberstleutnant* (Lieutenant Colonel) Karl Metzger, the lead scientist. Metzger, knowing death was fast approaching, instructed Wächter to place his brain in a scavenged mi-go brain cylinder. The duo continued with their master plan, but after a year of failing to perform the ritual correctly, Metzger deduced that the Hellfighters had absorbed a fraction of the finite energy that resonated with the universe—if the remaining Hellfighters could be killed, the energy would be released, providing the ritual with the power needed. The Allies may have won on the battlefields, but Germany may still, ultimately, reign supreme.

Metzger and Wächter knew the French forces that had attacked them and located the Phoenix Squad's last surviving member. Wächter tortured and then butchered the man. They then desecrated the grave of the other white French commander, releasing his energy back into the universe. This accomplished, the German cultists set sail for New York to dispatch the rest of Phoenix Squad. Upon arriving after the month-long voyage, Wächter was forced to register himself and the "artifact" he is carrying with U.S. Customs.

WORLD WAR I AND THE SEGREGATED ARMY

Racism was a way of life; it was immutable and as natural as breathing. The straight white male was unquestionably king, and this mentality bled into life inside the armed forces. African-Americans served with honor in every U.S. combat engagement, with their contributions quickly and repeatedly forgotten or stolen. The glory of African-American service is often replaced with the narrative that the soldiers were incompetent, incapable of higher thought, and considered as little more than pack animals good only for menial labor; their deeds were credited to white soldiers to bolster the false narrative.

World War I erupted across Europe on July 28, 1914, and raged on for four years. One of the catalysts was the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand by Gavrilo Princip, a Serbian nationalist with ties to the secretive military group known as the Black Hand. President Woodrow Wilson, with Congressional approval in April 1917, declared war on Germany. Wilson cited Germany's violation of submarine warfare in the North Atlantic and the Mediterranean, in addition to attempts to recruit Mexico into an alliance against the U.S., as justification.

African-Americans generally stood behind America's move to war, as it was a crusade to secure the rights of democracy and self-determination on a global scale, which became a rallying cry and seen as an opportunity to win the respect of their white neighbors, end the segregated society, and stop African-Americans from being considered second-class citizens. Despite their eagerness to fight and volunteer, African-Americans were turned away from military service in droves.

HARLEM HELLFIGHTERS

Emmett J. Scott, former secretary of Booker T. Washington, was appointed Special Assistant to the Secretary of War and advisor on all matters related to the 10 million African-Americans and their role in the war. He established a special training camp for black officers and formed the 369th Regiment from the National Guard's 15th Regiment in New York. Before that, African-Americans wanting to fight in the war had to enlist in either the French or Canadian armies.

The 369th Infantry entered federal service on July 25, 1917, at Camp Whitman, New York. During their time at Camp Whitman, the Hellfighters learned basic military

HELLFIGHTERS SUMMARY

The 369th Infantry Regiment of the United States Army fought in both World War I and World War II. The 369th consisted solely of African-Americans and African-Puerto Ricans and was known for being the first African-American regiment to serve with the American Expeditionary Force under the command of General "Black Jack" Pershing.

The regiment acquired many nicknames during its long and honorable service during World War I, such as the Harlem Hellfighters, the Black Rattlers, and the Men of Bronze (given to the regiment by the French). The nickname "Hellfighters" was given by the German forces due to the regiment's toughness, plus the fact that they never lost a man through capture, or lost a trench or a foot of ground to the enemy. The 369th Infantry Regiment helped to alter the opinion of African-American soldiers held by the American military—and paved the way for future African-American soldiers.

practices, including how to stay low and out of sight during attacks, stand guard, and march in formation. The unit then served in New York for a short time, providing security, after which they traveled to Camp Wadsworth in South Carolina for combat training designed to mirror the realities of the French battlefields. Racism was ever at their heels, and even at Camp Wadsworth, they suffered discrimination from the local community and other army units.

The 369th shipped out for France on December 27, 1917, to join the 185th Infantry Regiment. Upon arrival, the unit was assigned to labor service instead of combat operations. In March, the 369th was transferred to French command for the duration of the U.S.'s presence in the war. The men were issued French weapons, helmets, and brown leather belts and pouches, although they continued to wear their U.S. uniforms. This decision originated from many white American soldiers refusing to perform combat duty with black soldiers, believing they would flee at the first signs of combat.

Even after being assigned to the French Army, the American Expeditionary Forces HQ issued a notorious pamphlet titled "Secret Information Concerning Black American Troops" to their allies, which warned French civilian authorities of the alleged inferior qualities and supposed rapist tendencies of African-Americans. The black soldiers lived under constant racial threat and harassment.

Once under French command, the 369th was treated the same as any other French unit. The French did not discriminate nor promote any racism toward the black soldiers, and for the first time, the men of the 369th were treated as equals. The French were less concerned with race than the Americans, and they were short on troops. The Hellfighters ignored the German propaganda targeting them. Such propaganda alleged that the Germans had done nothing wrong to blacks and that black soldiers should fight against the Americans who had oppressed them for years. These statements only made the Hellfighters even more devoted to the U.S.

The 369th finally had their chance to serve and did not hesitate, fighting alongside French Moroccans to hold one of the widest sections on the Western Front. On September 25, 1918, the 369th excelled in heavy fighting against enemy forces, while sustaining severe losses, as they captured the important village of Sechault. The regiment fought so bravely they outpaced the French troops on their right and left flanks and risked being cut off. When the regiment reorganized, it had advanced over 8.5 miles (14 km) through massive German resistance, earning them the name "Hellfighters" from their beleaguered German enemy. The Hellfighters went on to perform numerous impressive feats, both individually and as a regiment. Pvt. William Henry Johnson, a former rail station porter, and Pvt. Needham Roberts fought off a 24-man German patrol, though both were severely wounded. The pair expended all of their ammunition, with Roberts forced to use his rifle as a club, while Johnson battled with a bolo knife. Johnson became known as the "Black Death" for killing at least four German soldiers and wounding 30 others.

During moments of downtime, when away from the battle and the trenches, the regimental band played for the French public and thrilled them with American-style music; the music of the soul, the music of Harlem: jazz. Lieutenant James Reese Europe of the Hellfighters would later become one of the first African-Americans to perform at Carnegie Hall.

Black achievements and valor usually went unnoticed by Americans, but for their service and performance in combat, the entire regiment received the *Croix de Guerre*, the French government's highest military honor. Despite the Hellfighters service being the longest of any American regiment in World War I, they were not allowed to march in the Paris parades due to pressure from the U.S. government. They were also disallowed a place in the French National War Memorial due to the U.S. interference.

Upon the Hellfighters' return home, they were greeted by military police, all of whom had orders not to salute any of the 369th Infantry soldiers. Additionally, they were not invited to join in the 1919 Victory Parade and had to conduct their own march later—their parade made headlines throughout the country, and despite the U.S. government's efforts to stop it, the 369th made its mark on America.

Lt. James Reese Europe and the regimental band

While many African-Americans believed that fighting for the U.S. in the Great War would help eliminate racial discrimination, it did not. Ironically, their service, pride, and dreams were greeted by a higher level of racism than before the war, and in its aftermath, racism continued to intensify, as African-American veterans were denied benefits that their white counterparts received.

BATTLE OF BELLEAU WOOD

Under General Pershing, the Battle of Belleau Wood was the first large-scale engagement of U.S. armed forces and was the most important battle since the U.S. Civil War. The third German offensive of 1918, in late May, penetrated the Western Front to within 45 miles (72 km) of Paris. This push came dangerously close to breaking Allied lines protecting Amiens and Paris. In their massive push, the Germans moved outside of their supply lines, forcing them to stall at Amiens. While stalled and awaiting additional supplies, they constructed heavy defensive positions, and one such position was Belleau Wood.

The retaking of Belleau Wood was composed of two related pushes—the first at Chateau-Thierry, and the second at Belleau Wood. The Chateau-Thierry push took two days, June 3 and 4. While the fiercely defended Belleau Wood, which provided access to vital rail lines, took the Allies three weeks to recapture, from June 6 to 26.

Reclaiming the strategically important position of Belleau Wood came at a high cost with 9,777 U.S. casualties (1,811 of which were fatalities). There are no clear numbers of German casualties, due to a mass withdrawal of their forces from the area; it is assumed they suffered high casualties, and more than 1,600 of their soldiers were captured.

NIGGERATI

The term "Niggerati" is a combination of two words—"nigger" and "literati"—and was used with deliberate irony by Wallace Thurman to describe a group of prominent African-American intellectuals and artists in the Harlem Renaissance. The group included Zora Neale Hurston (who labeled their rooming house Niggerati Manor), Richard Bruce Nugent, Jonathan Davis, Gwendolyn Bennett, Aaron Douglas, and Langston Hughes.

INTRODUCING THE INVESTIGATORS

The scenario opens with a scene during a rent party in North Harlem. The investigators could be locals or visiting a friend, or perhaps they have heard that some of the Harlem Niggerati would be in attendance. The plot assumes that the investigators arrive at the party and give the magic word "Deuce" to be allowed access. The morning after the events in this opening scene has Celestina and Ralph, who hosted the rent party, asking the investigators to look into what happened to the Hellfighters as a favor.

The easiest route into the scenario is to ensure that at least one of the investigators served with the Hellfighters or is friends with someone who did. Either way, all of the investigators have heard about a rent party, and it's going to be hopping! People from all walks of life attend for the entertainment, and such parties are an excellent way to see some nightlife and possibly make a few connections.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

ALLIES

Samuel Wright, *age 30, retired army captain*

- **Link:** his address is found at the Armory (**Touring the Armory**, page 119).
- **Link:** he puts the article in the paper to draw out Hans (**Hell's Legion**, page 130).

Wright was born in Attucks and moved to Harlem in 1910 searching for work. He volunteered for the Great War and served in the 93rd Division under French command. The horrors—natural and unnatural—of the trenches, changed his life after seeing things not meant for humanity. He made a promise to himself in those blood-soaked trenches. Scarred but not shattered, he returned home to a country that rejected his service. He got a job at the hospital and reestablished the **Knights of Ouroboros** (page 109), a group dedicated to combating the Cthulhu Mythos.

- **Description:** striking and athletic, frequently found dressed in his work uniform.
- **Traits:** commanding and decisive.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** Wright is a man who has suffered much and came out the other side. He has seen the horrors of both the Mythos and humanity and, rather than retreating, he chose to stand firm. He wants to keep Harlem and everyone

in it safe; he'll risk his own life to save others. He is the self-proclaimed protector of Harlem and a potential friend of the investigators.

Javier Jordán, *age 27, dock worker in peril*

- **Link:** he is arrested at the party (**Rent Party... Rat-A-Tat-Tat**, page 111).

Jordán is the oldest of four kids and was born and raised in Harlem. He was a star runner in school until he was forced to go to work in a factory. Two of his siblings died in a factory accident, followed by his parents a few years later, leaving him and just his sister, Celestina. He jumped at the chance to fight for his country and sent all of his pay home to Celestina. Since returning home, he got a job at the docks and is just making ends meet.

- **Description:** an Afro-Puerto-Rican man. His smile is disarming and he wears old clothes that are too large for him now.
- **Traits:** charming and calming presence.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** Jordán is a good guy just trying to make it to the next day. He doesn't like Ralph Bleacher, believing he won't help anyone when the chips are down. If Jordán thinks he is doomed, he asks the investigators to get Samuel Wright or Fredric "Bex" Williams to look out for his sister. If released, he considers the investigators to be close friends and would take a bullet for them. He needs proof that Ralph Bleacher is a good guy.

James Smithson, *age 25, friend in peril*

- **Link:** he is arrested at the party (**Rent Party...Rat-A-Tat-Tat**, page 111).

Smithson was a middleweight boxer of some note before the war, but seeing death on such a great scale has soured him on violence. That choice has left him unemployed, living on floors of friends, and attempting to gain some of the benefits he earned for his service.

- **Description:** a towering wall of a man, who favors the color blue in his suits.
- **Traits:** intimidating but kind.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** Smithson knows people are afraid of him and works hard to counter that with his actions. He'll help those in need, as long as it does not require metering out violence.

INDEPENDENTS

Lawrence Lance, *age 43, lieutenant and pr officer*

- **Link:** provides tours of the armory and provides Hellfighter addresses (**Touring the Armory**, page 119).

Lance is stationed at the 369th Armory and is more of a press secretary than a soldier.

- **Description:** always smiling, baby-faced, fit, and clean-shaven in a pressed uniform.
- **Traits:** friendly and happy.

KNIGHTS OF OUROBOROS

The Knights of Ouroboros—their original name is lost to history—were among the first defenders of humanity against the Cthulhu Mythos. The group rose up on the continent where all life on Earth first originated: Africa. Some believe they simply rose up to fight, one by one, telling tales of those who had come before them. Others say they were a band of people who joined together against the dark in prehistoric times. Regardless of its origins, those first defenders sought to uncover and battle the unknowable horrors that lie beyond human comprehension. Like all things, their exploits are lost to history, but fragments of information lived on through stories passed down the generations. Over the years, the stories have inspired the descendants of the first few, as well as others, to reestablish the group.

In the 1690s, one such "rebirth" of the group came to America. Yonas, an Ethiopian pirate on the run from a brood of spider monstrosities, found a home and obscurity in Harlem. When Yonas passed, the rebirthed group also died but was re-founded time and time again over the centuries. The group's current incarnation was born in 1919 with Samuel Wright, one of the Harlem Hellfighters who had encountered the Mythos in the trenches of the Great War. Scarred but not shattered, Wright returned home to Harlem and discovered some of Yonas' writing and artifacts. Together with a few other veterans and close friends, Wright established the Knights of Ouroboros as a twelve-person team. The current group now has eight surviving members, who use the shuttered Bernheimer & Schwartz Pilsener Brewing Company premises as their command center. They are always on the lookout for new and trustworthy members.

- **Roleplaying hooks:** Lance is trying to support equality through being a model soldier and an active community organizer.

Rocco Mastroianni, *age 24, shattered private*

- **Link:** has information to impart (**Flowers for Rocco**, page 124).

A young and vibrant man cut down in the prime of his life by the Mythos.

- **Description:** athletic white man in a catatonic state.
- **Traits:** insane, with a vacant expression.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** Mastroianni can only form coherent thoughts for a few minutes at a time, after which he stares into the distance.

Celestina Jordán and Ralph Bleacher, *ages 25 and 23, lovestruck couple*

- **Link:** the pair ask for the investigators for help (**Cupid's Couple**, page 115).

Ralph Bleacher has been working three jobs and trying to earn enough cash to ask Celestina to marry him. Celestina's brother Javier refused to grant his blessing the first time Ralph asked because he thought the young man was nothing more than a lazy layabout who did not even volunteer to fight.

Jordán and Bleacher want to start a life together, but Javier is having none of it. While the pair want Javier's permission, they are throwing rent parties to make enough money to leave New York for Chicago if he doesn't ultimately agree.

- **Description:** a stylish couple who are frequently found in colorful secondhand clothes.
- **Traits:** friendly but in need of help.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** they stress how important it is for the investigators to help Javier Jordán and say that Ralph convinced them. They do not know much about the Hellfighters but can get the investigators into most clubs, or secure a bottle of hooch.

Arnold Josiah Ford, *age 43, musical director of UNIA band*

- **Link:** he knows Fredric "Bex" Williams is investigating something (**Faith in the Darkness**, page 115).

Arnold Ford (see his write up in **Historical Folk**, page 67) is the musical director at Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) and uses his offices there for his spiritual pursuits.

- **Description:** a serious man dressed in a black suit and yarmulke, with a salt and pepper beard.
- **Traits:** esoteric and religious.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** Ford is a font of knowledge and is glad to share information to help the community. His beliefs are similar to those of Marcus Garvey, and he is proud of his Jewishness.

ADVERSARIES

Hans Wächter, *age 36, loyal henchman and cold-blooded killer*

- **Link:** attacks the Hellfighters at the party (**Rent Party... Rat-A-Tat-Tat**, page 111).

Wächter is little more than Karl Metzger's muscle. He enjoys inflicting pain and does whatever Metzger asks of him. See the **Background** section (page 105) for Wächter's part in the events leading up to this scenario.

- **Description:** a scarred and muscular white male, his face has a hollowed-out appearance, and his hair is falling out. People remember seeing him if questioned. Wächter suffers from radiation poisoning and is kept alive only by a mi-go bio-web chemical mixture. He always wears a long trench coat and hat to conceal his features.
- **Traits:** loyal German nationalist and dedicated to his mission.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** He does not consider himself a bad man, just someone who is going to make the world better for his people. He will kill the investigators if they get in his way. Above all else, he believes Metzger knows what to do.

Karl Metzger, *age unknown, brain in a jar*

- **Link:** Metzger gives orders to Hans Wächter and remains in the hotel (**Three-Pound Brain in a One-Pound Case**, page 124).

Metzger no longer remembers his human life and is becoming more alien-like daily. He knows that Hans Wächter is dying and is actively looking to replace him after they leave Harlem. See the **Background** section (page 105) for Metzger's part in the events leading up to this scenario.

- **Description:** a pulsating brain in an alien cylinder.
- **Traits:** coldly brilliant and devious.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** Metzger does not care about the original mission and wishes to use the energy he can release by killing the Hellfighters to contact the mi-go in the hope of gaining a new body.

SCENES

RENT PARTIES... RAT-A-TAT-TAT

Ralph Bleacher and Celestina Jordán are old childhood friends living in tenement housing at 151st and Macomb Place, apartments 101 and 201. The duo wanted nothing more than to take to the stage, but neither had the talent or willingness to learn the trade; however, they did have one talent, the ability to throw a party! Their parties are slowly becoming known throughout North Harlem. While not lucrative yet, they do provide a little extra money, and tonight is no different. It's December 20 and the party is in full swing. A large glass jar sits on the table by the band, in view of everyone, and has a few dollars in it. The investigators know everyone gives what they can and those that don't are remembered as the cheapskates.

War Stories

Assuming the investigators arrive in time for the party, they see two men entertaining 30 partygoers while the band is setting up behind them. The smaller and lighter-skinned man, Javier Jordán, smiles as he regales the crowd with a story of running toward a trench as a machine gun ate up the earth all around him; a successful **Psychology** roll notes his excitement at reliving the past, as well as his friend's (James Smithson) discomfort. Javier rushes over to the investigators, bringing them into his recounting of the tale. If they are not receptive, he moves on to another group of people to finish the reenactment. Either way, afterward, he pours everyone a drink of the good stuff.

Talking with Javier Jordán garners the following information:

- This is Javier's little sister's (Celestina) party; he is keeping the crowd warmed up until the band is ready.
- His silent and grumpy friend is James Smithson.
- "Yeah, we both served in the war; it was a different world."
- "The French treated us better than our own side. If my sister didn't need me, I might have stayed in France."
- "It is still strange being back Stateside."

Kings of the Night

One of Celestina's friends is Reece Williams, one of the Charleston Kings, who she has convinced to play at their party. No one outside of Harlem has heard of the seven-piece band, but their musical skills are without question (and their fee is cheap). The band begins to play around 21:00 in apartment 101—Ralph Bleacher's apartment. The music is jumping and calls people to the small dance floor. Almost subconsciously, the investigators are walking in time with the music as they move towards the few available seats, pushing through a dozen people dancing the Texas Tommy. Celestina's partner, Ralph, is a busboy at P. J. Clarke's (55th and 3rd). Ralph began stealing a bottle of hooch each week since Prohibition started; he didn't care what kind of booze, as long as it was strong. In consequence, there is plenty of alcohol to go around. Some partygoers are crowded around the makeshift bar in the kitchen, watching a pair of rail-thin black men pour drinks and sing along with the music. The crowd seems to vibrate with energy and the confined space of the apartment is alive with laughter, song, and talk.

If the investigators battle their way through Ralph's crowded place into the connected apartment, 201 (Celestina Jordán's residence), they find it is even more crowded. Over two dozen people are dancing, with many also cramped against the walls, bobbing in time with the beat that vibrates

RENT PARTIES

Rent parties arose from the need to make rent, with cheap apartments being overly expensive due to white landlords doubling and tripling the prices charged to black tenants. A four-or-five-room apartment might be packed to capacity, frequently with two or three families living together and sleeping in shifts. Getting a few friends together to pay for a party helps pay the bills (and rent parties costs less than going out on the town). Such parties become a second business for some people, who even start making business cards and calling in favors for better bands and booze, even though Prohibition is in full swing.

RACIAL TENSION MODIFIER

When the investigator and their target are of different races or cultures, increase the difficulty of the roll (such as a social skill roll) by one level (Regular becomes Hard, Hard becomes Extreme). If necessary, at the Keeper's discretion, an additional penalty die may be applied, dependent on the circumstances. This modifier reflects the mistrust between different groups.

THE TEXAS TOMMY

This dance is a two-step with a swing-out release of the partner to a single handhold; it simplified the footwork from three steps into one. In 1928, it was renamed the Lindy Hop by George Snowden and was captured on film in 1929 in *After Seben*.

through the walls. Eagle-eyed investigators may notice and recognize **Bessie Smith** (page 56) crashing the party and getting ready to take to the stage.

Where Heroes Roam

At some point, the investigators see James Smithson and Javier Jordán stand up and wobble toward the door without taking their coats, walking out into the freezing night air. A successful **Psychology** or **Medicine** roll detects the awkward, almost mechanical, way they are walking—if either was encountered earlier, their movement now seems uncharacteristic). A successful Hard **Listen** roll catches the faint echo of some pipe music coming from outside, but the investigators are bumped by one of the many dancers, and the sound quickly fades.

If following the two men outside to hand them their coats, the snow is falling fast and the men are now some distance away. Ahead of the pair, the investigators see a group of what looks like soldiers slowly advancing toward them. A successful Hard **Spot Hidden** roll notices the soldiers appear to be shuffling more than walking, while a successful Hard **First Aid** or **Medicine** roll deduces they are badly injured or suffering from frostbite.

When the two Hellfighters are 20 feet (6 m) ahead of the investigators, they stop moving and appear to be staring at the oncoming soldiers. The classical-sounding pipe music suddenly spikes in volume and drowns out the sound of the party behind. The soldiers lift heavy-looking objects and suddenly a hail of bullets erupt from them. Quick-thinking investigators may attempt a Hard **Dodge** roll to avoid the danger; otherwise, they suffer 1D4 damage from a glancing bullet. The oncoming soldiers keep firing at the two men directly in front of the investigators. Both Hellfighters dive for cover and then return fire on their unknown assailants. James Smithson takes cover behind one of the many snow-covered cars on the street, while Javier Jordán sprints to hide behind a tenement building. Investigators succeeding with a Hard **Spot Hidden** roll notice the soldiers are wearing tattered and mud-stained German uniforms, while their faces are mangled, torn, and scarred (**Sanity** roll, 0/1D6 loss) realizing these are undead German's from the trenches of the Great War!

Keeper note: if the investigators remained inside, a successful **Listen** roll hears the sound of gunfire outside; each round thereafter grants a bonus die to the roll.

The battle rages on and the undead soldiers (controlled by Hans Wächter) advance—see **Hell's Legion** (page 130) for the group's profiles. Each round, the soldiers move 5 feet (1.5 m) closer. If the investigators and the Hellfighters gain the upper hand, a number of partygoers stumble outside, or police sirens are heard close by, causing Wächter to retreat while still playing his **Ethereal Hümmelchen** (see page 114) until he is out of sight. Later, Wächter reaches out to his Ku Klux Klan contacts for assistance (see **Men of Paper**, page 117).

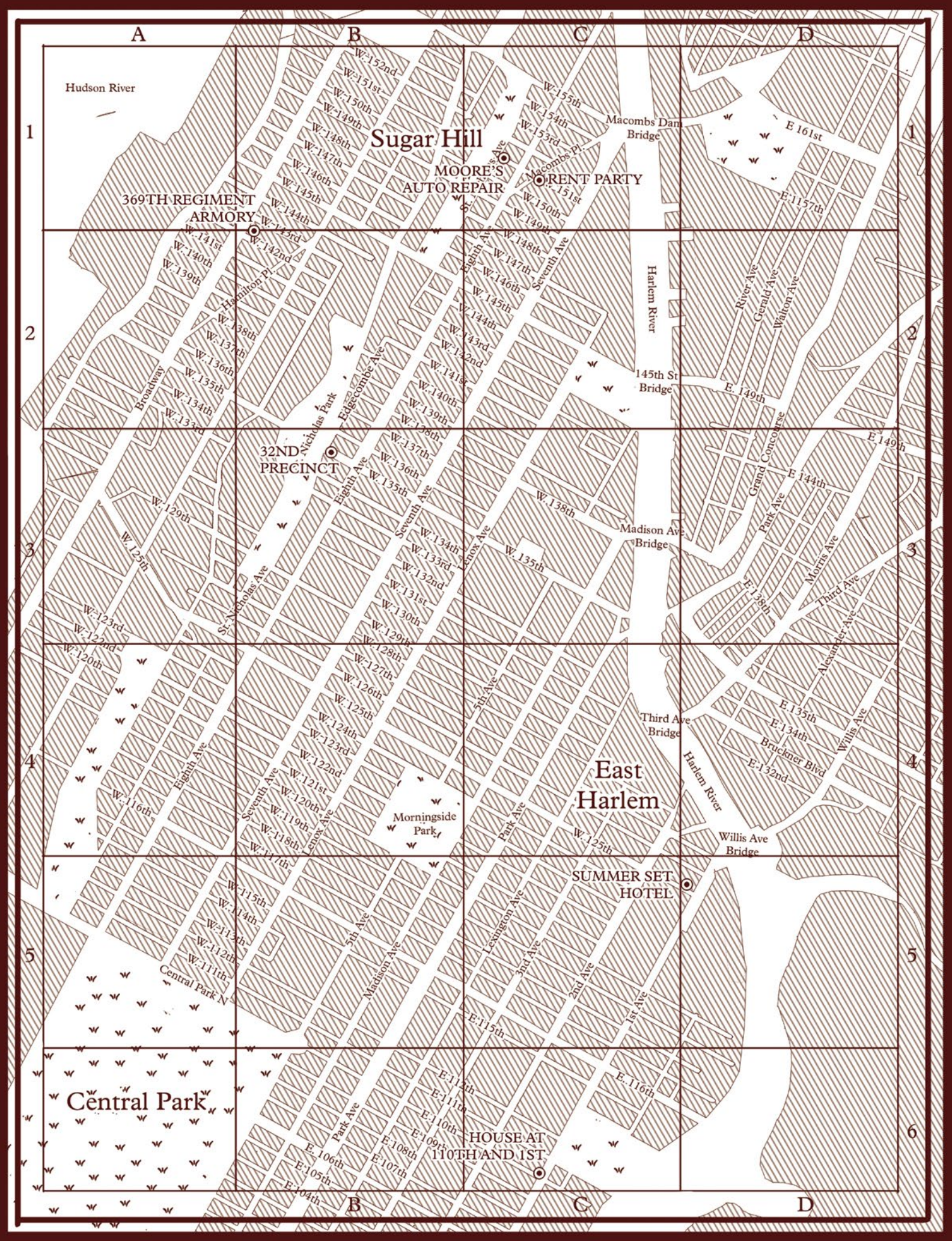
KEY LOCATIONS

Macomb's Place: 151st and Macomb Place.
32nd Precinct: 135th Street and Edgecomb.
Summer Set Hotel: East 125th Street and First Avenue.
Moore's Auto Repair: 151st Street and Bradhurst Avenue.
369th Armory: 142nd Street.

SNOW AND SLICK STREETS

The recent snow, icy streets, and lack of concern from the city hampers movement rates. Any rapid movement (MOV 3+) incurs a penalty die to physical actions. The streets also increase the difficulty level of **Drive Auto** rolls if traveling over 15 mph (24 kph). The falling snow increases the difficulty of **Spot Hidden** rolls to see more than 10 feet (3 m) away.

Opposite: Harlem Hellfighters Never Die Keeper map


A
B
C
D
1
2
3
4
5
6
Hudson River
Sugar Hill
MOORE'S
AUTO REPAIR
RENT PARTY
369TH REGIMENT
ARMORY
32ND
PRECINCT
Macombs Dam
Bridge
145th St
Bridge
Madison Ave
Bridge
Third Ave
Bridge
Willis Ave
Bridge
Harlem River
East
Harlem
Morningside
Park
Central Park
Central Park N
SUMMER SET
HOTEL
HOUSE AT
110TH AND 1ST
W. 152nd
W. 151st
W. 150th
W. 149th
W. 148th
W. 147th
W. 146th
W. 145th
W. 144th
W. 143rd
W. 142nd
W. 141st
W. 140th
W. 139th
W. 138th
W. 137th
W. 136th
W. 135th
W. 134th
W. 133rd
W. 129th
W. 125th
W. 123rd
W. 122nd
W. 120th
W. 116th
W. 155th
W. 154th
W. 153rd
W. 151st
W. 150th
W. 149th
W. 148th
W. 147th
W. 146th
W. 145th
W. 144th
W. 143rd
W. 142nd
W. 141st
W. 140th
W. 139th
W. 138th
W. 137th
W. 136th
W. 135th
W. 134th
W. 133rd
W. 132nd
W. 131st
W. 130th
W. 129th
W. 128th
W. 127th
W. 126th
W. 125th
W. 124th
W. 123rd
W. 122nd
W. 121st
W. 120th
W. 119th
W. 118th
W. 117th
W. 115th
W. 114th
W. 113th
W. 112th
W. 111th
E 161st
E 157th
E. 149th
E 144th
E. 138th
E. 135th
E. 134th
E. 132nd
E. 125th
E. 116th
E. 115th
E. 112th
E. 111th
E. 110th
E. 109th
E. 108th
E. 107th
E. 106th
E. 105th
E. 104th
Eighth Ave
Seventh Ave
Lenox Ave
St. Nicholas Ave
Edgecombe Ave
Nicholas Park
Hamilton Pl.
Broadway
Macombs Pl.
St. Ann's Ave
River Ave
Gerald Ave
Walton Ave
Grand Concourse
Park Ave
Morris Ave
Third Ave
Alexander Ave
Willis Ave
Bruckner Blvd
5th Ave
Madison Ave
Park Ave
Lexington Ave
3rd Ave
2nd Ave
1st Ave

Street Battles

Keeper note: if Wächter and the undead soldiers are obviously outmatching the investigators, have police sirens drown out the pipe music, causing the soldiers to vanish, provoking a **Sanity** roll (0/1 loss).

ETHEREAL HÜMMELCHEN

The Ethereal Hümmelchen is a bagpipe supplemented with mi-go-technology. The device was created in the days before the Battle of Belleau Wood during the war (and used during the engagement unbeknown to the Allies). When it is properly played, with the musician expending 1 magic point, it summons a squad 1D8+2 of dead German soldiers. The soldiers appear with whatever equipment they had in life, and follow the simple mental commands of the musician. With the expenditure of an additional magic point, another undead squad can be summoned for every two rounds the pipes are played. Those witnessing this strange, unnatural magic and seeing a squad of soldiers appearing should make a **Sanity** roll (1/1D4 loss).

The undead soldiers remain for as long as the musician plays the device, which if stopped for any reason, causes the soldiers to vanish back into the void one round later. The musician must start playing anew to summon a new squad, requiring a new expenditure of magic points. It is imperative that the summoned soldiers also continue to hear the music, meaning that the musician must remain close by. It is possible for a rival musician to outplay the summoner with a normal instrument, decided by an opposed **Art/Craft** roll for the instruments concerned. For every round the summoning-musician is bested, one of the soldiers vanishes into the void. It is also possible that a louder sound (i.e. a big band, some vehicles, and so on) can drown out the enchanted music, causing all of the soldiers to vanish if the summoning-musician does not succeed with a Hard **Art/Craft (Hümmelchen)** roll each round—a significantly louder sound may apply a penalty die to the summoning musician's roll, as the Keeper sees fit.

Keeper note: only Hans Wächter know how to properly operate and play the device. If it falls into the hands of the investigators, the Keeper should decide whether having the ability to summon undead soldiers is something they can learn to control. Such use, however, should carry a minimum Sanity loss of 1D6+2 per use.

After a few rounds, when the Keeper determines, three police patrol cars pull up—their sirens drowning out the pipe music and causing the soldiers to vanish. Seeing the soldiers suddenly vanish provokes a **Sanity** roll (0/1 loss). Six policemen exit their cars with weapons drawn, barking at the Hellfighters and the investigators to get down on the ground quickly—the policemen brutally assist, pushing everyone face down in the snow and demanding to know what is going on. In the ensuing chaos, Wächter escapes through the falling snow.

Two of the officers force anyone who has come outside from the party back into the house; dependent on the actions taken by the investigators, some might be closer to the party and so a successful **Luck** roll means they escape being manhandled by the police. Otherwise, if captured and forced to the ground, those concerned are asked some questions.

What is your name?
The two Hellfighters cooperate, with Javier Jordán answering all of the questions. The investigators must decide whether to give their real names.

Why are you shooting up the area?
What do the investigators say? If necessary, Jordán says, "We saw some... thieves trying to steal a car."

How many of you are there?
Jordán answers, "Just us."

A successful **Persuade**, **Charm** or **Fast Talk** roll at Hard difficulty peacefully ends the situation with the police. The investigators are released with a warning, any weapons previously used or brandished about are confiscated, and a hefty five-dollar fine is imposed (payable to the 30th Precinct). A successful **Law** roll knows the fine is excessive and that the weapons can be released the following day, once the persons concerned have "sobered up." The investigators are told to go home and stay off the streets tonight (see **Cupid's Couple**, page 115).

If the investigators are unable to avoid arrest, the police call in a patrol wagon to gather up the prisoners. Two more officers walk into the rent party and break it up, sending everyone home. It takes over an hour for the patrol wagon to arrive and the prisoners are told to "be quiet or else" (standing outside for so long in the freezing night air inflicts 1 point of damage). If anyone speaks, they are given a swift kick (1D2 damage) until quiet. The 30th Precinct patrol wagon arrives, along with a patrol car from the 32nd Precinct, with the officers gathering together in a group and holding a hushed conversation. Every so often, one of the officers from the 32nd Precinct points over at the investigators. A Hard

Listen picks up snippets of the conversation: "You can't take them. They are our arrests, and it is illegal for us to turn them over to you… really… the… okay."

The two officers from the 32nd Precinct put the two Hellfighters into their patrol car and leave (see **Police Station Blues**, page 116). If arrested, the investigators are instead loaded into the patrol wagon and taken to the 30th Precinct. Over the next two hours, they are processed and tossed into a cell. If the investigators fight or protest at all, they endure a long night of brutal treatment from the police, resulting in 1D4 damage and a **Sanity** roll (0/1D3 loss).

CUPID'S COUPLE

Keeper note: if some or all of the investigators avoided incarceration, this scene occurs after the 32nd Precinct officers leave with the Hellfighters.

The next day, the investigators are tracked down by Ralph Bleacher and Celestina Jordán. The couple exits their battered Model-T Ford and gives hugs of friendship and solace. They ask how the investigators are doing and wait for answers before Ralph speaks. *"Damn. Those pounders were all over you like rug-cutters. I felt bad for you all, as you were helping out and got pinched. I called in my last favor with a guy I know, and he got you all out."*

Celestina glances around quizzically, saying, *"Where are Javier and James? We thought you all got locked up together."* A successful **Psychology** roll notes Bleacher's concern as he looks toward his love. Allow the investigator to relay what they know. Ralph and Celestina then continue, riffing together as they share their tale in perfect unison.

"We want to get married." A weary smile passes between them. *"We have for ages. But Celestina's brother Javier is against it. At first, we were too young, and he was right. Then the war came and changed everything."* Ralph looks down, as Celestina continues, "*Javier went and fought in the war. Ralph didn't apply, and he stayed here. With me."* Jordán lovingly touches his arm.

"Javier doesn't think I'm a reliable, standup guy," says Ralph. *"I thought if I could make enough money, it would prove to him that he can depend on me. That I am good enough. But if we could get Javier and his friend out of jail, save them, then he would really know."*

Celestina looks at the investigators, saying, *"The only chance we have to stay in Harlem and be together is if you can help Javier… and let him know it was Ralph's plan to send you. What do you say?"*

If the investigators are not interested in their plight, the couple changes tact, asking them to consider helping the Hellfighters, who deserve respect and the community's assistance. *"They are local heroes, Celestina's family, and they fought for us, so we need to fight for them."*

Once the investigators agree to help, the couple shares the following information:

- All the officers who came inside the apartments were from the 30th Precinct, but someone mentioned seeing a couple of cops from the 32nd precinct (see **Police Station Blues**, page 116).
- Maybe *Javier's* old army buddies know a lawyer or have money for bail? Best try at the Armory (see **Touring the Armory**, page 119).
- At least (Fredric) Bex Williams' wasn't caught up in the trouble. It's strange he did not swing by the party. Maybe he got held up at the UNIA? Bex has spent a lot of time there recently, best to ask for Arnold Ford who probably knows where Bex is at (see **Faith in the Darkness**, page 115).

THE MORNING AFTER

If the investigators return to Ralph and Celestina's apartments during the day to investigate the scene, a few clues await them. A successful **Spot Hidden** roll uncovers multiple holes on the side of the snow-covered apartment building, but no amount of searching discovers any bullets or casings other than those from the Hellfighters pistols (and any the investigators may have fired). Local residents can be questioned with a successful **Charm** or **Persuade** roll, uncovering the following:

- A few people say they heard strange music last night, like pipes playing, but it was drowned out by the arrival of the police.
- One couple confirms that Ralph Bleacher and Celestina Jordán are madly in love; they spend all of their time together.

Keeper note: if the investigators have Fredric "Bex" Williams' box (see **In Tesla's Footsteps**, page 121, and **The Bex Box**, page 123) and return to use it here, it picks up a faint radiation signature.

FAITH IN THE DARKNESS

- **Link:** Celestina Jordán and Ralph Bleacher mention Bex Williams and Arnold Ford at the UNIA (**Cupid's Couple**, page 115).

Arnold Ford is at the UNIA—Universal Negro Improvement Association (see **The Valley: 130th To 140th Streets**, page

75)—in his office doing paperwork. The spacious office is full of books about religion, music, and the occult. Ford is happy to spend the afternoon in discussion with the investigators but requires a successful **Charm**, **Persuade**, or **Occult** roll to get him to speak about Bex Williams.

- Bex recently lost his job at the college due to his obsession with some scientific pursuit; Ford admits he asked Marcus Garvey if they could hire Bex but was turned down.
- Bex has spent the last couple of weeks undertaking research at the *New Amsterdam News* (see **Knowledge is Power**, page 123); he mentioned something about visiting a shell-shocked soldier.
- Bex was supposed to come by the UNIA today for his weekly chats with Ford (he never misses them) but he hasn't shown up (see **In Tesla's Footsteps**, page 121).

POLICE STATION BLUES

- **Link:** Investigators were arrested (**Rent Parties... RAT-A-TAT-TAT**, page 111).
- **Link:** Celestina Jordán and Ralph Bleacher ask for help (**Cupid's Couple**, page 115).

James Smithson and Javier Jordán were taken to the 32nd Precinct; a successful **Law** roll notes this is unusual, as the incident occurred in West Harlem. The 32nd Precinct is a French-Second-Empire-style brick building (135th Street and Edgecomb) constructed in 1871. The precinct has an attached building serving both as a stable for horses and also a garage for a few police cars and wagons. The jail cells are located in the bottom of the station, making it nearly impossible for prisoners to escape or be accessed without proper documentation (and passing a station full of armed police officers).

John Grison, the thin, white desk sergeant is working his fourth 18-hour shift and is under orders to stop anyone from talking to last night's "incident" prisoners. Grison is an honest cop, just trying to make a living while keeping a little of his integrity; he doesn't want to lose his job. Prohibition has more cops on the take than Grison can count, all of whom feel uncomfortable with Grison's honesty. When the investigators ask after the prisoners, Grison says, "They have been moved to another precinct and I don't know which one." A successful **Psychology** roll detects the lie and notes the desk officer seems to be under duress. A successful **Charm**, **Fast Talk**, or **Persuade** roll encourages Grison to follow his instincts and tell the truth, saying the two men are in the cells below. With this, he leads the investigators down to the cells without interference. On the way down, Grison warns that there will be a shift change and cell inspection soon. While Grison won't admit it, a successful **Law** or Hard **INT** roll deduces that the shift captain must have put the word out to not let anyone talk to the prisoners. Grison leaves the investigators with Smithson and Jordán, saying, "*Make it quick*."

Men of Bronze

The cells stretch down both sides of the long, dank hallway that extends some 50 yards/meters. All the cells are empty, save for one that holds the two beaten forms of Jordán and Smithson; placed in the smallest cell available in the otherwise-empty underground jail. Their clothes are covered in dirt, blood, and waste. A successful **First Aid** or **Medicine** roll indicates the wounds are (at most) an hour old and made by a blunt-force object. Both men convey a silent dignity.

- Unless the investigators are former soldiers or aided the men last night in the gun battle, neither of the prisoners are very motivated to speak. If the investigators mention that they could arrange a lawyer (a successful **Law** roll, or a Hard **Fast Talk** or **Persuade** roll) gets the duo talking, at which point they explain their current plight.

If the pair recognize the investigators from the night before, the investigators gain a bonus die to any social skill used with Jordán and Smithson. Asked to recount the events of last night, the pair recall that the music was good, the dancing fast, and the booze was flowing. Each remembers hearing a weird piping sound, and they stepped outside to clear their heads. Even then, though the music was pouring out of the two apartments next door, they could hear pipe music over the jazz. Based on the investigators' questions, use the following responses:

- Once they were outside, the bullets started flying and they ducked for cover, before firing back at the attackers.
- Each swears they hit at least three of the gunmen in the chest and head, but the men seemed to keep advancing slowly, with no concern about cover. They finally dropped one of them, but it seemed to take four or five bullets to do so.
- The attackers wore some kind of uniform; it was hard to make them out in the darkness.
- Jordán believes one of the attackers had a machine gun, although a successful Hard **Firearm (Rifle or SMG)** roll notes that from the description of the automatic fire, the attackers were not using Thompsons.
- "*The crazy thing? I could still hear that eerie music over the haul of bullets.*" The duo attempts to imitate the sound, as best as they can. Smithson is more successful given his love of the harmonica.

- *"Doesn't Thomas Moore's kid play an instrument? Maybe he might know something about pipe music?"* (Jordán gives the investigators Moore's address, see **Bloody Business,** page 118).
- Smithson hopes Bex Williams is ok. It's strange no one saw him, as Bex lives close to the party. *"Could you check on Bex to make sure he didn't get clipped last night? He lives in Strivers' Row."* (see **In Tesla's Footsteps,** page 121).
- Maybe Samuel Wright knows something? Not sure where he is working these days? Maybe Lawrence Lance at the Armory knows how to find him? (see **Touring the Armory,** page 119).

Men of Paper

As the investigators are finishing up talking with Jordán and Smithson, a successful **Listen** roll hears heavy footfalls and whispers of two approaching officers. If the roll is failed, the officers turn the corner quickly and hear the last question asked by the investigators. Officers Mathews and Ostertag demand that the investigators leave before they toss them into a cell for "instigating the prisoners"—visiting hours are over. A successful **Psychology** roll recognizes the lie, but the investigators know the officers could easily arrest them on any charges they want to make up, such as a mopery charge. A successful **Spot Hidden** roll notices the same tattoo on the policemen's arm, an emblem of the Ku Klux Klan. Unless the investigators immediately leave, call for a group **Luck** roll, with failure indicating they have fallen foul of Officers Mathews and Ostertag—they are thrown in a cell and held for 24 hours before being hoisted out onto the street with no charge (and told not to come back).

Avoiding being held, as the investigators leave, they see Officer Ostertag pulling out a billy club and begin tapping the Hellfighters' cell door. The policeman laughing and saying something—a successful Hard **Listen** roll picks up one word, "noose."

Unbeknownst to the investigators, both imprisoned Hellfighters are dead men unless they are released within 48 hours of their arrest. The two men continue to be beaten regularly over the next two days. Jeremiah Burton, captain of the 32nd Precinct, has assigned two of his trusted men to deal with the veterans. Wächter met with him days ago and secured his assistance with German gold. Burton is happy to make some good money for himself while bolstering white supremacy by killing the two American heroes.

At 10:30 on the night of December 23, Officers Mathews and Ostertag load the two Hellfighters into the back of police wagon #6. The men are transported to the grounds of St. Philip's Protestant Episcopal Church, the wealthiest church in Harlem (at West 134th Street). A group of fifteen hooded Ku Klux Klan members are gathered and waiting. A ring of six trucks aim their headlights at two massive crosses, gasoline-soaked and ready to be kindled. The Klansmen tie the two men to the crosses.

Captain Burton leads the ceremony, ranting about how the "New Negro" has lost his way and should be compliant and obey Jim Crow, and how these men set an example for their weak-willed kin. He then lights the crosses ablaze. This grisly scene plays out over the course of an hour, provoking **Sanity** rolls for any investigator witnesses (1/1D6 loss). Once the sadistic execution is over, Hans Wächter appears from the edge of the circle and begins to chants the words to rip the harmonic energy from their bodies, releasing it in the same manner as when he dug up Jean Wolfe's grave.

Saving Jordán and Smithson

The investigators can save the two men, dependent on the route they take.

- The first method uses legal means in protesting the men's transfer from the local precinct, requiring a successful **Law** roll, hiring a lawyer, or having the Armory step in on their behalf. It is unlikely that a white lawyer would take this kind of case for anyone of color—in addition to a Racial Tension Modifier, an additional penalty die would apply. Another legal option is to have the charges thrown out or prove that their arrest was unjustified. While this won't free the men in time, it'll place a spotlight on them, making it harder to transport the men to their deaths, and essentially buying some time.
- The investigators could rally the local neighborhood and lead a peaceful march on the police station. Once the march is underway, a successful Hard **Persuasion** roll keeps the police from attacking the crowd and prevents a riot from breaking out. Either way, the march does not free the prisoners but makes it nearly impossible to transport or harm them, as they now have a high public profile.

MOPERY

Mopery (to mope—wander aimlessly) is a minor offense, and while a charge that was mostly used to arrest vagrants, it was frequently used by policemen as a "suits all" charge to bring in just about anyone they wanted.

- The investigators may attempt to break the pair out of prison, although this option should prove to be a very difficult and potentially lethal undertaking.

The investigators may wish to convince Jordán and Smithson to leave Harlem or go into hiding while their lives are at risk. While Smithson can be convinced with a successful **Charm** or **Persuade** roll (grant a bonus die if the investigators also offer him some money to start over elsewhere), Jordán refuses to hide or leave and no amount of persuasion can convince him otherwise.

If the investigators fail to save Jordán and Smithson, the Hellfighters' bodies are discovered on December 24; their killers go unpunished. However, if the pair is freed, Wächter is unforgiving and comes after Captain Burton; a day later, an article appears in all of the local newspapers about the butchered body of the police captain being found in the trunk of his police car.

BLOODY BUSINESS

- **Link:** James Smithson and Javier Jordán think Thomas Moore may be able to help (see **Police Station Blues**, page 116).

Keeper note: the following scene is gruesome and requires careful consideration about how to present it. The events of the scene demonstrate human evil driven to the extreme by hate. The Keeper can adjust the scene and minimize the horror by removing the child from the scene: have a note pinned to the refrigerator from Wendy, Moore's wife, saying she has taken Tommy to her folks in Wilmington, DE for the month. In this scene, the investigators arrive too late to prevent the murder of Thomas Moore and his family by Hans Wächter.

Thomas Moore started Moore's Auto Repair (151st Street and Bradhurst Avenue) before going to war. His business and home were left in the capable hands of his wife and his stepbrother. The small auto shop is spacious enough for three cars and has a gas pump outside. The family lives above the shop in a two-bedroom apartment, equipped with a small kitchenette and a den.

The shop is closed when the investigators arrive. All of the blinds are closed, everything is locked, and a hastily written note hangs in the window: "Visiting Family in Georgia." The note's handwriting looks like someone was in a hurry. A successful **INT** roll notes that a visit to Georgia is unusual, as anyone from the Great Migration would be unlikely to go back down South.

The entrance door is sturdy, requiring a Hard **STR** roll to break through, otherwise, a successful **Locksmith** roll does the trick (gaining entrance via a window necessitates a similar roll). Once inside, and casting a light source around, it becomes apparent that something terrible happened here. A trail of blood leads from the apartment stairs toward one of the cars on the far side of the shop. If the investigators follow, the blood leads to a 1917 Detroiter Touring roadster. On the left side of the car, the investigators discover a mangled body whose head has been crushed repeatedly with the metal door. A pool of dried blood and brain matter cover both the floor and car. The grisly scene warrants a **Sanity** roll (1/1D4 loss). Looking closer, a successful **First Aid** or **Medicine** roll notes the man was stabbed multiple times, at least twenty, in non-vital locations, and was dragged down to the car while still alive, where his head was crushed and death occurred; from the state of the body, it took multiple hits with the metallic door to finish him off.

Moving upstairs from the shop, the stench of death fills the air. Entering the apartment, the investigators are greeting with the sight of a woman sprawled out on the kitchen table, as if her body was a sack tossed aside with little care. The woman has been stabbed repeatedly in a similar fashion to the man downstairs (in non-vital locations), as if to slow her down and make her suffer before death; it is obvious that she bled out. Her dried blood cakes the table legs and the floor around her (**Sanity loss** 1/1D4). Nearby, a bloodstained guitar case rests in the corner; it has been cracked open. Closer inspection reveals the shattered and butchered remains of the Moores' child shoved inside the case (**Sanity loss** 1/1D6).

In the master bedroom lies another victim, former Sergeant Thomas Moore. The body is physically painful to look at, calling for a **Sanity** roll (1/1D6 loss); twisted and gnarled into an impossible shape sickening to view, his skin seems to have erupted from all sides, and yet the flesh looks fresh. Inspection of the rotting corpse reveals, (if one can get past the smell) one stab wound in the center of the back, likely an instantly fatal wound.

A successful **Spot Hidden** roll detects the bathroom window was forced open; the lock is broken, and the wall

has scuff marks. If a Hard success, the investigator also finds brittle blonde hairs around the window, and then finds more of these hairs throughout the apartment.

A full search of the apartment and auto shop reveals that they were untouched; thus, the purpose of the break-in was murder rather than robbery. The cash register remains locked, the keys to the cars are still on their nails on the wall, none of the tools have been stolen, and Moore's double-barrel shotgun still rests in a case. On a wall hangs a photograph of Phoenix Squad from the Great War; the image shows a squad of five men, all smiling aboard a boat bound for France. A note attached to the picture's frame says, *"Remember to donate it to Lawrence Lance at the Armory"* (see **Touring the Armory,** page 119). Looking closely at the soldiers in the image notes six names penciled in the margin: Wright, Williams, Moore, West, and Smithson.

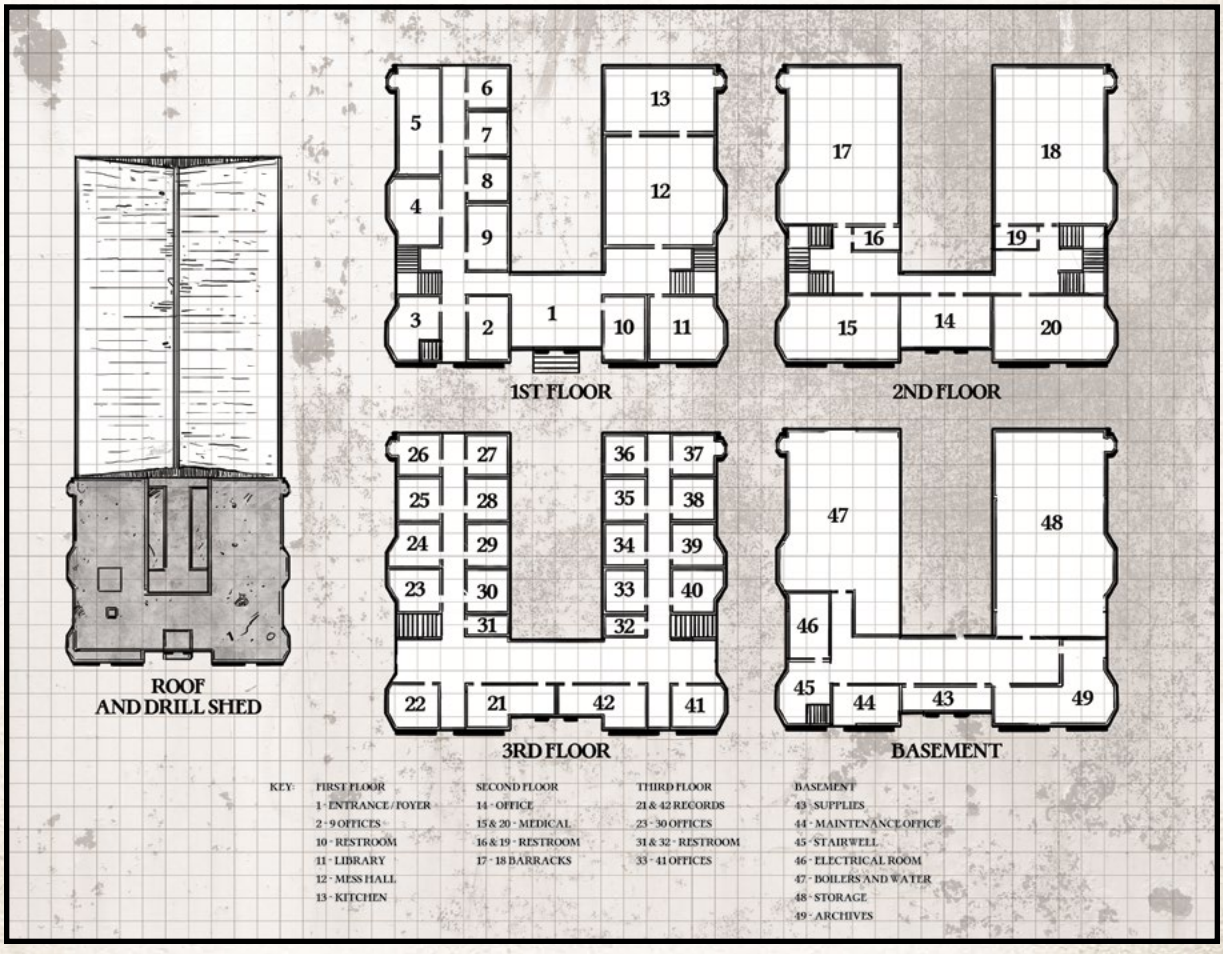
Keeper note: if the investigators have Fredric "Bex" Williams' box (see **In Tesla's Footsteps**, page 121, and **The Bex Box**, page 123) and return to use it here, it picks up a faint radiation signature.

TOURING THE ARMORY

- **Link:** Celestina Jordán and Ralph Bleacher suggest the army might help with a lawyer (**Cupid's Couple**, page 115).
- **Link:** James Smithson and Javier Jordán mention Samuel Wright and Lawrence Lance (**Police Station Blues**, page 116).
- **Link:** photograph found in Thomas Moore's home (**Bloody Business**, page 118).

The 369th Regimental Armory occupies half a block, bound by West 142nd Street and West 143rd Street, just off the Harlem River. It is one of the first complexes built to accommodate motorized transport and was the largest armory in New York in the 1920s. The premises are composed of two buildings built by two different architectural firms: the Art-Deco-style administration building was built between 1930 and 1933 and is attached to a medieval-inspired drill shed, which was constructed in 1920. Both buildings are made of brick, and together measure more than 50,000 square feet (4,645 meter^2).

The drill shed is a two-and-a-half-stories high, with three tiers of balconies on all four sides, seating up to 7,000 soldiers. The rectangular administration building is three-and-a-half



Armory Map

stories tall and features terracotta parapets, chevron designs, and stylized eagles. The Armory is currently understaffed, with only six soldiers on active duty, who work in shifts of two for eight hours at a time. The Armory is open daily from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm.

Lieutenant Lawrence Lance is in charge of the Armory; he is happy to discuss the history of the regiment, what the 369th did during the war, and that he once met the Special Assistant to the Secretary of War, Emmett Scott. In fact, it was Scott who made him head of operations (even though Lance did not serve in the war). While not a seasoned soldier, Lance is respectful. Asking about any of the Hellfighters get polite but unhelpful answers from him—a successful **Charm**, **Persuade**, or **History** roll gets him to open up and crack a smile, followed by an offer to help. Of course, Lance instantly opens up to any 369th veteran and immediately offers to assist.

Lance can grant the investigators supervised access to the Armory and its various paperwork. A successful **Library Use** roll uncovers **Hellfighters Handout 1: French Officers' Fate**, while another **Library Use** roll turns up three of the Hellfighters' addresses:

- Samuel Wright at Harlem Hospital (see **Wright's War**, nearby).
- Fredric "Bex" Williams' home address (see **In Tesla's Footsteps**, page 121).
- Thomas Moore's auto-shop and home address (see **Bloody Business**, page 118).

Keeper note: if they have not already contacted him, Lance reaches out to the investigators (before the day of the assault) after he sees the newspaper piece (**Hellfighters Handout 4: Wright's Challenge**, page 126).

Hellfighters Handout 1: French Officers' Fate

Le Petit

Monday, October 25, 1920

GREAT WAR OFFICERS KILLED AND DESECRATED

From the desk of Coralie Descoteaux

It is with great sorrow we report that a national hero, retired Lieutenant de Vaisseau Macon, was found murdered in his home yesterday. Lieutenant de Vaisseau Macon was a decorated French citizen who served honorably in the Great War as Commander of the United States forces of the 369th Infantry Regiment. A regiment which played a vital role in the liberation of Belleau Wood.

While police have kept the state of the body undisclosed, from witnesses interviewed by this reporter, it was believed to be mutilated in some fashion. It has also come to our attention that another officer, Jean Wolfe, who served with Lieutenant Macon, unfortunately, passed a year ago, and whose grave was dug up, and the body was desecrated. The police are keeping the details to themselves, but this is truly a sad day.

WRIGHT'S WAR

- **Link:** Samuel Wright's work address (**Touring the Armory**, page 119).

Harlem Hospital (136th Street and Lenox Avenue) provides 390 beds and is primarily white-staffed with only a handful of African-American employees, although only a third of the patients are white. This public institution is woefully insufficient for the size of the community it serves.

Asking for Samuel Wright at the front desk garners a blank stare from the white receptionist, although she does confirm there are no doctors with that name. Maybe they have the wrong hospital? If the investigators mention Wright is on the staff, she suggests that they go around the back entrance and speak to the staff there.

Asking at the rear entrance to hospital gets a nod of acknowledgment from Janet Fielding, the assistant electrician, who leads the investigators downstairs into a massive, gray-walled room. Wright is in the center with a partially assembled boiler, which looks to have seen better days (and probably should have been replaced a decade ago). He is currently fixing and putting the boiler back together.

A successful **Charm**, **Fast Talk** or **Persuade** roll, or if an investigator is a fellow veteran, has Wright warming to the investigators. If told about the predicament of James Smithson and Javier Jordán, Wright's concern is noticeable, but he does not have the money to bail them out nor does he know any lawyers. If not already suggested, Wright mentions

that the Armory might be a good place to seek help with legal assistance (**Touring the Armory,** page 119), he also can provide the following information.

- Wright's squad was composed of four other fellows from Harlem (Moore, Smithson, Williams, and Jordán) and two white French officers (Macon and Wolfe).
- The U.S. troops did not want to fight with black soldiers, so they handed the Harlem soldiers to the French, who didn't care about skin color. Lawrence Lance at the Armory still gets a kick out of talking about it (**Touring the Armory**, page 119).
- Wright has to stay to finish the boiler, but asks the investigators to find and give Bex Williams a heads up about Smithson Jordán, and supplies Williams' address (**In Tesla's Footsteps,** page 121).

Wright won't reveal any information about the **Knights of Ouroboros** (page 109) unless he completely trusts the investigators. If the investigators show him any Mythos artifacts (such as the brain cylinder, see **Three-Pound Brain in a One-Pound Case**, page 124) or can link Williams' death to the Mythos, he admits to having encountered weird and horrific "things" while in France. He has made it a personal mission to combat the hidden terrors of the world. A successful **Psychology** roll confirms Wright believes everything he is saying.

Keeper note: depending on timing, if informed of Bex Williams or Thomas Moore's death, Wright's anger is obvious, and a **Psychology** roll detects he is likely to take some form of action, although he refuses to talk about what he has in mind, only saying he is forming a plan (see **Final Battle**, page 126).

PULP CONSIDERATIONS

If using *Pulp Cthulhu*, Hans Wächter has been watching the Armory and begins to trail the investigators, allowing him to launch a surprise attack at a time of the Keeper's choosing. He may attempt to shoot them from a distance, use a grenade, or unleash **Hell's Legion** (page 130). While his primary objective is to scare the investigators off, he is happy to kill one or two to show he means business.

If Wright is asked to leave or hide out for an extended period of time by the investigators, he refuses to leave Harlem. He tells the investigators that the 369th never retreated. If needed, he can call together a number of veterans—but fears that with the recent Klan activity, it is now or never, to take a stand.

Keeper note: Wright cannot sit by while others are dying. On December 24, he issues a challenge in an attempt to draw out the Hellfighter's murderer—see **Final Battle**, page 126.

IN TESLA'S FOOTSTEPS

- **Link:** Jordán and Smithson mention Bex Williams did not show up for the party (**Police Station Blues**, page 116).
- **Link:** Samuel Wright asks the investigators to check on Bex Williams (**Wright's War**, page 120).
- **Link:** Bex Williams' address is found at the Armory (**Touring the Armory**, page 119).
- **Link:** Arnold Ford thinks it's strange that Williams missed their meeting (**Faith in the Darkness**, page 115).

Frederick "Bex" Williams was a brilliant young man, and was one of the lucky and determined African-Americans who graduated from college. He lived in apartment 709 on 151st Street and Macombs Place (the same building as Celestina Jordán and Ralph Bleacher). Most of the people in the building called him "Professor" because he had a college degree and was always reading. Williams' time in the war had shaken him, and he began regularly attending the Commandment Keepers (see **Wentworth Matthew**, page 66), and in time became fast friends with Arnold Ford.

Williams was the radio operator for his unit during the war. Shortly after the Battle of Belleau Wood, he noticed that the radio was always filled with static whenever he used it; no amount of repair seemed to fix the issue. Despite the poorly functioning radio, Williams managed to get through the war, but in the years since, a curiosity about the cause of the radio's static stayed with him. Over time, he began to believe that the static had somehow been caused by the events of the Battle of Belleau Wood. Williams spent his time researching wavelengths, signal transmissions, and radio technology to such an extent that he lost his job at the university. He now survives on the last of his savings and is forced to live in tenement housing.

Six months ago, Williams was reading a book on radiation and everything just seemed to fall into place. He calculated that every member of his squad must have been "washed" in some sort of German radiation experiment during the events of Belleau Wood, somehow saturating them. Clearly, the radiation was not deadly, as otherwise he and his friends would all be dead by now. Based on his deductions, Williams built a device that could track the vibration of that particular

radiation to which the Hellfighters had been exposed. He called the device his "Bex Box," and planned to patent it.

Williams finished testing the Bex Box just days before his death; he was going to tell Javier Jordán and James Smithson about it at the rent party— Williams invited Javier Jordán (who did not know about his sister's party) and James Smithson to the rent party to share his discovery. Alas, Hans Wächter found Williams on the night of December 20, the night of the rent party; the young inventor was awakened by the sound of the Bex Box going off louder than it ever before, and the last thing he saw was the man who killed him.

The Situation Now

The door to Williams' apartment is locked. An examination notes that the door seems to be slightly ajar but somehow remains shut. A successful **Locksmith** roll opens the lock, while a **STR** roll may force the door open. Whoever opens the door must make a **Luck** roll: Hans Wächter has booby-trapped the door with a grenade. If the **Luck** roll is successful, the grenade is a dud and falls harmless to the floor; otherwise, a Hard **DEX** roll is required, enabling the investigator to catch the live grenade before it hits the floor. If the grenade explodes, it deals 2D6+2 damage and destroys much of the interior of the apartment—a kind Keeper might allow the investigator who succeeds with a Regular (rather than Hard) **DEX** roll to suffer only half of the blast damage.

Keeper note: if they grab the grenade before it explodes, the investigators now have a World War I German stick grenade (Model 24). A successful **Demolitions** or Hard **History** roll notes that this type of trap was a German tactic frequently used in the Great War, when Allied soldiers were retaking German-occupied territories. Obviously, whoever the killer is, he is either a studied tactician or a veteran and is very dangerous. Indeed, Wächter recognized there were many technical devices in the room, but could not destroy them without making a lot of noise and being discovered; hence, he left the grenade to do the job once he was clear of the building.

Remains of the Dead

Inside the apartment, Williams' body is discovered twisted and gnarled into an impossible shape; his bones seemingly interwoven and reorganized. The sight is painful to look at, provoking a **Sanity** roll (1/1D6 loss). The skin seems to have erupted, and yet the flesh looks very fresh, despite the dried blood stains on the bed sheets. The sheets are also singed and blackened where the body lies as if they had been near a fire. Examination of the body reveals a large stab wound in the neck.

A successful **Spot Hidden** roll finds brittle blonde hairs scattered throughout the apartment, and dozens of books lining the walls, on topics including radio repair, physics, and radiation. With these discoveries, the investigators may attempt a **Medicine**, **Science (Biology)**, or an Extreme **Know** roll to deduce that the blond hairs (of the killer?) could be from someone who is suffering from radiation exposure. If they also figure out how to use the Bex Box (see following), then they could possibly track that person down.

Under the bed is an empty file folder from the *New York Amsterdam News* dated to be returned in three days (see **Knowledge is Power**, page 123). A Hard **Spot Hidden** roll may note a strange, sticky yet brittle substance on a bookshelf; if examined with a successful **Chemistry** roll, the organic compound can't be identified, but based on its rate of degeneration, it must have been as strong as steel at one time for the investigators to have found the sample now. A few hours later it crumbles to dust.

Williams' Bex Box lies on the floor (see **The Bex Box**, nearby); it survives should the grenade explode, although it is heavily damaged—it remains just about functional, with

The corpse of Williams

a reduced range of 30 feet (9 m), and a successful combined **Mechanical Repair** and **Electrical Repair** roll restores the device to full working order (increasing its range to 100 feet; 30 m), while an Extreme success actually enhances the range to 150 feet (46 m). Williams has enough supplies for one repair attempt, taking four hours per attempt.

KNOWLEDGE IS POWER

- **Link:** Arnold Ford mentions Bex Williams' research (**Faith in the Darkness**, page 115).
- **Link:** empty folder from *New York Amsterdam News* (**In Tesla's Footsteps**, page 121).

The *New York Amsterdam News* is one of two weekly African-American newspapers in Harlem. The newspaper's offices can be found in a small, two-story building on 17 West 135th Street. Published every Wednesday, there is a never a dull moment, with its few employees constantly hunting for stories, editing, and getting ready to print.

A stern, light-skinned black woman named Flora Tarver guards the front desk. She complains softly about too many visitors when the investigators enter the building. She is friendly to any published journalist or investigators with writing credentials; otherwise, a successful **Charm**, Hard **Fast Talk**, or **Persuade** roll cools Flora's steely demeanor. If the investigators ask about and describe Bex Williams, or show her the empty file folder, she tells them about a young man that had been coming in for the last few weeks researching something at night. She didn't know his name but recognizes Williams' description. Flora provides access to the newspaper's archive (for 5 cents an hour) and can answer a few questions about the neighborhood (including the best places to eat in a three-block radius).

The archive keeps newspapers going back three years, and then transfers them to a warehouse. A successful **Library Use** roll covers four hours of research and uncovers two articles—**Hellfighters Handout 2: Recruitment Office**—as well as **Hellfighters Handout 3: Hellfighters Arrested**.

THE BEX BOX

The Bex Box is a shoebox-sized, stout wooden box. Inside, a variety of mechanical and electrical components have been cobbled together. The box functions as a rudimentary Geiger counter but attuned to the radiation signature of the Harmonic Resonance. It only detects those items and people bathed in radiation from the Battle of Belleau Wood. The device normally has a range of 100 feet (30 m) and makes a clicking noise that increases in proportion to the strength of the radiation signature.

The investigators may decide to wander the city following the signals provided by the Bex Box. Wandering in this fashion allows the investigators to locate Metzger's hotel room (see **Three-Pound Brain in a One-Pound Case**, page 124) within two days. By improving the device (with a successful combined **Mechanical Repair** and **Electrical Repair** roll at Hard difficulty) or cross-referencing their findings (with a successful **Science (Mathematics or Physics)** roll), the investigators can narrow their search, reducing the search time by six hours. If they realize they can track Williams' murderer (Hans Wächter) from his radiation signature, then the search time is reduced by twelve hours.

- **Armor** 3
- **Hit Points** 10

Hellfighters Handout 2: Recruitment Office

ATTACK ON RECRUITMENT OFFICE

Friday, December 17, 1920

A terror that reminded people of the Red Summer of the Great War struck last night! An army recruitment office close to the New York Harbor was brutally attacked by what can only be called a team of gangsters. These Tommy-gun-wielding mad men assaulted the station in the dead of night, killing two of the three servicemen guarding the building. The one surviving soldier, Private Rocco Mastroianni, has been placed on leave and sent home to his mother in Italian Harlem. It was only thanks to that young man's bravery that the gangsters did not take anything of value. According to police reports, the culprits just stole some records of the blacks that dug ditches in the Great War. The names of the deceased have yet to be disclosed.

by Tobin Harris
NEW YORK TRIBUNE

FLOWERS FOR ROCCO

- **Link:** newspaper article (**Knowledge is Power**, page 123).

Private Rocco Mastroianni is being cared for by his widowed mother, Gia. The small, one-story house at East 110th Street and First Avenue is weathered and dirty. Gia spends most of her days at the bakery (down the street) to make enough money to feed herself and Rocco. The army has promised a stipend that starts in 30 days, but that doesn't help them right now. If the investigators visit during the day, ask for a group **Luck** roll to determine if she is home. If she is not home, the door is locked and those looking through the windows spot the young soldier sitting on the couch, unmoving and looking directly ahead.

If the investigators visit at night, Gia is home and is very worried about her son, but she will not let just anyone see him. Access to Rocco happens only with a successful **Charm** or **Persuade** roll, proof of service in the army, or if the investigators can offer to help her financially during this difficult time (with at least two dollars).

Rocco is insane; he fell into a catatonic state after witnessing the attack on the recruiter's office. His condition will not improve without proper treatment. A successful **Psychoanalysis** roll or Hard **Psychology** roll brings him to a conversational state for a few brief minutes. Rocco can impart the following information:

- Bex Williams had been coming in for the past two months and had left just hours before the attack.
- He was patrolling the building at 11:00 pm when he heard the sound of gunfire and pipe music.
- He discovered the other two soldiers gunned down by a bunch of German soldiers.
- "It was like being back in the trenches." He fired multiple shots, but they kept coming.
- "I could smell the rot of them, and that music… I can never forget the music. I could it over the gunfire."
- "I saw the balding piper play."

Keeper note: if the investigators use the Bex Box on Rocco, it picks up a faint radiation signature.

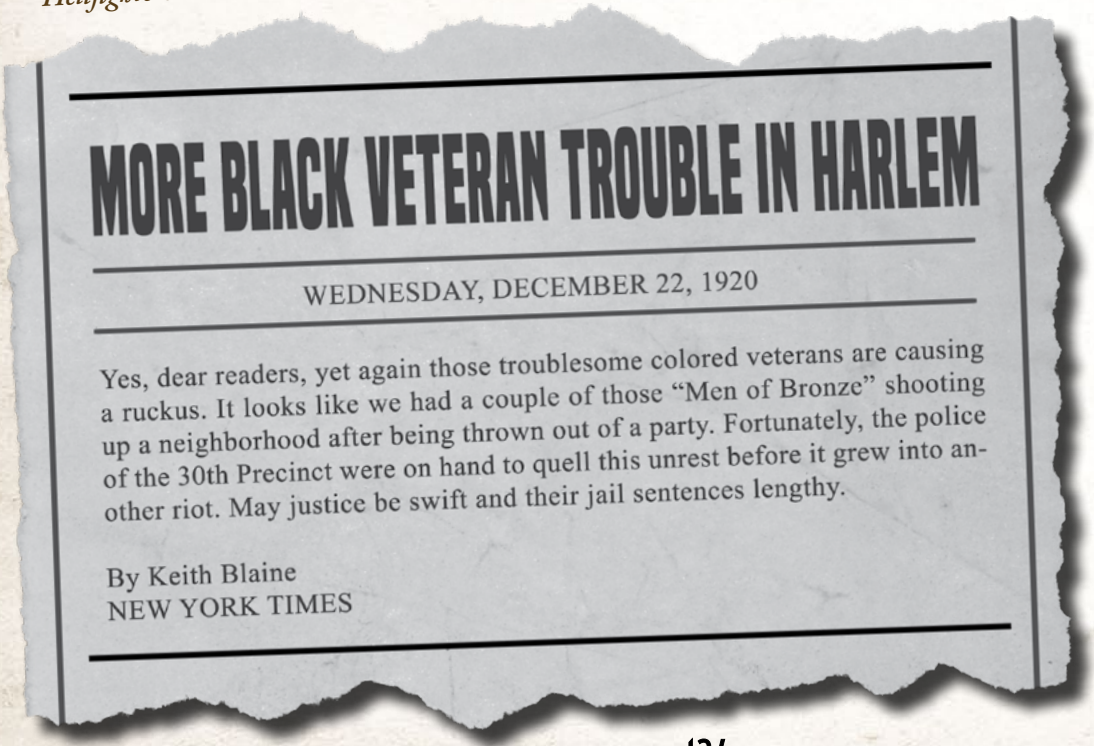
THREE-POUND BRAIN IN A ONE-POUND CASE

- **Link:** using the Bex Box to search for radiation (**In Tesla's Footsteps**, page 121).

The Summerset Hotel (East 125th Street and First Avenue) is a three-story rat's nest; it's cheap and out of the way. A large "No Colored, Irish, or Catholic" sign greets visitors in the front window. The building is not up to fire-code standards; the metal fire escapes are rusty tetanus traps awaiting someone brave enough to use them. A heavy sheet of snow coats the fire escape and the escape's steps sway slightly when weight is put on them—anyone using the fire escape should attempt a **Luck** roll to determine it if collapses under the weight; impose a penalty die for every two investigators, to a maximum of two penalty dice. If it collapses, investigators concerned fall and suffer 1D6 damage if at a low level, or 2D6 damage if higher up.

The hotel is staffed with 33 personnel who work in three shifts of 11, with the owner, Mason Willis, constantly lurking around. Each shift is composed of one concierge, two bellhops, a cook, three security guards, two waitstaff, and two maids. One of the three guards is stationed on the ground floor, while the other two patrol the building. Willis

Hellfighters Handout 3: Hellfighters Arrested



MORE BLACK VETERAN TROUBLE IN HARLEM

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 22, 1920

Yes, dear readers, yet again those troublesome colored veterans are causing a ruckus. It looks like we had a couple of those "Men of Bronze" shooting up a neighborhood after being thrown out of a party. Fortunately, the police of the 30th Precinct were on hand to quell this unrest before it grew into another riot. May justice be swift and their jail sentences lengthy.

By Keith Blaine
NEW YORK TIMES

offers free meals and coffee to all policemen who pop in; this usually means that at least one cop is onsite 24/7, wandering around downstairs. Anyone sneaking around the building must succeed with a Hard **Stealth** roll to avoid detection. Willis is an aged man in his late 60s and a miser. He calls the police the moment anyone crosses him or ignores his demands.

Keeper note: Hans Wächter' and Karl Metzger are staying on the second floor in Room 205. The door is locked and the curtains are closed. Anyone passing by the room may notice a faint green glow from under the door with a Hard **Spot Hidden** roll, noting that no other rooms have that same glow.

The investigators can discover Metzger and this location in a few ways:

- They may deduce that whoever has been killing the Hellfighters has radiation poisoning, which the Bex Box can trace.
- Inquiries at the New York Customs Department can get a young woman named Doris to happily provide them with Hans Wächter's name, description, and the location of his first hotel stay (the Summerset Hotel)—if they succeed with a **Charm**, **Fast Talk**, or **Persuade** roll. Doris mentions that her brother died in the Great War, and all those Germans are the same.
- If neither of the above options are explored, the Keeper could have Wächter spotted while the investigators are going around Harlem. Wächter may already be trailing the group or they may overhear his German accent and put two and two together. In either manner, the investigators could follow Wächter back to his hotel and this encounter.

Spider's Den

Room 205 is a spacious, if crumbling, space. The hotel room contains a large steamer trunk stood on its side against the far wall. On the top of the trunk is what remains of Karl Metzger, inside a glass-sided mi-go brain cylinder. His pinkish, three-pound brain floats in the cylinder in a greenish, glowing liquid substance that provides the only light in the room. The golden, metallic cylinder seems to undulate in rhythm with each pulse of the brain inside. Seeing Metzger provokes a **Sanity** roll (0/1D2 loss). A successful **Cthulhu Mythos** roll recognizes the mi-go brain cylinder and its implications, while a Hard **Mechanical Repair** roll might deduce that the device is preserving the brain, although there is no discernable power source. A successful **Medicine** roll notes that the brain remains fresh, and seems to be alive and well. The rest of the room is empty, other than a radio pouring out static. An open door leads into what is likely a bedroom.

Metzger does not directly engage the investigators; he waits to hear what they have to say, observing them through a strange ocular and audio transceiver. If they make any moves toward him or recognize what the brain cylinder is, he strikes; otherwise, if the investigators ignore Metzger, the villain allows them time to search the empty room and move into the bedroom before he strikes. Once the investigators enter the bedroom, he animates his skeletal remains (hidden inside the bedroom), gaining a surprise attack on the first investigator who enters the room. In addition, seeing the animated skeleton calls for a **Sanity** roll (0/1D6 loss)—see **Animated Corpse of Karl Metzger**, page 131. Once the investigators are engaged with the skeleton, Metzger casts the Dominate spell on the rearmost investigator or the one who looks the most capable, ordering them to attack the other investigators. After this, he aims to cast Wrack or Dominate as necessary; Metzger shouts the words of the spells through the speakers fitted into the brain cylinder, his metallic German voice echoing through the room.

If the skeleton is bound or destroyed, Metzger can be forced into conversation with a Hard **Intimidate** roll; if the investigators are all African-Americans, apply a penalty die—although this may be negated by threats to his being, such as holding him out of the window (granting a bonus die). Metzger does not want to die but has lost dedication to his original cause; he now hopes to use the energy released from killing the Hellfighters to barter with the mi-go to create a new body to house his brain. If their rolls are unsuccessful in getting Metzger to talk, persistence pays off, an hour spent intimidating Metzger lowers the difficulty of the Intimidate roll to Regular, and if two hours are spent in this manner, success is automatic—such delaying tactics are part of Metzger's plan, as it gives Wächter more time to complete the mission or to return and save him. An Extreme **Psychology** roll deduces Metzger is playing for time.

Unfortunately for the investigators, Wächter did not understand the process of putting Metzger into the brain cylinder. Every hour the investigators are with Metzger they must make a **CON** roll: nothing happens immediately, but two failed rolls mean they are exposed to low-level radiation poisoning. In the following days, their hair begins to fall out, they tire quickly (forced to make a **CON** roll when engaged in physical exertion, such as combat), and they suffer a penalty die to all actions for a week.

If Wächter returns during the interrogation of Metzger, he rallies the three white security guards or policemen to charge into the room (use the **Klan Member and Bad Cops** profiles, page 131). Wächter is willing to kill the security guards and blame their deaths on the investigators (if they escape). After calling for assistance, Wächter attempts to rush into the room to save Metzger. Once he has the brain cylinder, he attempts to flee; if he fails, he fights to the death.

Keeper note: a full search of the bedroom undercovers the Hellfighter's service records, a list of the Ku Klux Klan members Wächter is working with, six ingots of German gold (each ingot is worth $100), Wächter's weathered clothes, and a few well-read romance novels.

FINAL BATTLE

- **Link:** Wright or Lance contacts the investigators
- **Link:** See and translate the article in the newspaper

There are two possible finales for this scenario. The first happens on the fourth day (December 24), when Wächter and Samuel Wright have a showdown at the Armory, spurred on by Wright's notice placed in the local newspapers (**Hellfighters Handout 4: Final Battle**). The second occurs if the investigators discover Metzger and confront the scientist in his hotel room (per the events of **Three-Pound Brain in a One-Pound Case**). This final battle is written assuming the first option, with the investigators battling Wächter at the Armory.

Once he knows of Bex Williams' death and believes that someone (Wächter) is hunting down the remaining Hellfighters, Samuel Wright concocts a plan to bring his enemy out into the light. If the investigators have gained his trust, he asks them for their assistance. If not, the investigators notice **Hellfighters Handout 4: Final Battle** in December 24's morning newspapers; Wright has had the notice printed in all the local papers, in the obituary columns. The notice is written in German, requiring the investigators to translate it with a **Language (German)** roll, or simply to ask Wright what it says. Wright has issued a challenge to whomever the killer is, to put an end to all of this unpleasantness at midnight tonight at the 369th Armory.

Hellfighters Handout 4: Final Battle

"DON'T TREAD ON ME"

Friday, December 24, 1920

I am Captain Samuel J. Wright (Ret.), of Phoenix Squad of the 369th Infantry. I am calling you out, you racist son of a bitch. I did not run during the war, and am not running now. Let's end this like soldiers and not cowards, if you can even call yourself that, tonight at midnight at the 369th Infantry Armory, 2360 5th Ave, New York, NY 10037.

Wright contacts the remaining Hellfighters, asking them to join him at the Armory. Javier Jordán and James Smithson agree if they have not already left Harlem by the investigators' suggestion. Wright recruits whoever he can persuade to help, with 2d10+2 black Harlem residents coming to his banner. Investigators wishing to play Cupid's helpers may elect to speak to Ralph Bleacher to let him know what is going on and that this is his chance to prove he is a standup guy (he readily jumps at the chance). They can also gather more help for the battle to come if they can convince Harlem residents to help with suitable social skill rolls.

Challenge Accepted

Wright and his allies arrive at the Armory at 21:00, taking up positions around the building; everyone is armed with a pistol or rifle. At least one soldier is located in each of the cardinal directions and there is at least one positioned on the upper floors to provide sniper cover. Wright remains on the ground floor until the battle starts. A successful **Psychology** roll notes the excitement about the prospect of a battle—not for the fight itself, but for a chance to take some control of the situation.

Keeper note: the Hellfighters are likely tougher and more experienced than the investigators, overshadowing them in terms of combat ability. The investigators' knowledge of the situation has the Hellfighters willing to accept orders from them unless the orders are obviously suicidal in nature. While that runs counter to the military, the soldiers are all retired and fighting an unknown enemy, making the investigators the most knowledgeable combatants in the scene. Every order issued by an investigator requires a successful **Fast Talk**, **Firearms**, **Persuade**, or **POW** roll for the Hellfighters to follow it. A successful **Psychology** roll indicates the current status of the

troops, and whether the undead soldiers are about to break their ranks. If necessary, a successful **Psychoanalysis** roll enables the Hellfighters to keep fighting for one more round.

Wächter gleefully accepts the challenge. He dons mi-go web armor, walks toward the Armory, and starts playing the Ethereal Hümmelchen a few blocks away, summoning as large a force of undead soldiers as possible. He enters the battle with only 3 magic points remaining, after using 10 to bring forth his army. He walks in the back of the undead soldiers; the sound of pipe music can be heard in the distance. Through the falling snow, the advancing, shambling army of the dead provokes a **Sanity** roll (1/1D10 loss).

Once Wächter arrives at the Armory, he does not stop until he has killed Wright and all of Phoenix Squad, thereby completing his mission. If not stopped, he then returns to Metzger and the two leave Harlem that night with everything in place for their ritual to work.

Keeper note: during the course of the battle scene, focus down on the investigators' actions, rather than trying to run the full scale of the battle. At the end of the day, it's the investigators that matter and their role in the scene. Ultimately, they must find a way to take down Wächter, probably requiring them to go through a line of undead soldiers. Reward ingenuity and cunning, especially if they try to stage a distraction for the soldiers guarding Wächter, allowing others to move in and capture or kill Wächter. Meanwhile, the brave folk of Harlem, led by the Hellfighters, take on the full might of the undead. Depending on how the scene plays out, significant loses could have consequences. For example, Ralph Bleacher could be killed or, if he survives, Javier Jordán finally recognizes him as a brother in arms, granting him his blessing to marry his sister.

REWARDS

- Returning the military records of the African-American soldiers: +1D4 Sanity points (and their eternal gratitude; while their records do not reflect all of their accomplishments, finding and returning the records is still a landmark victory).
- Saving Javier Jordán and James Smithson from execution: +1D4 Sanity points.
- Defeating Hans Wächter: +1D6 Sanity points.
- Capturing or killing Karl Metzger: +1D4 Sanity points.
- Helping Rocco Mastroianni to receive treatment: +1D4 Sanity points (and a place to stay when in Italian Harlem).
- If Javier Jordán and James Smithson are executed: –1D8 Sanity points.
- If Hans Wächter escapes: –1D6 Sanity points.
- If Karl Metzger escapes: –1D4 Sanity.

CHARACTERS AND MONSTERS

For ease of reference, the Keeper may wish to copy or print out these pages as a handy reference when running this chapter. NPCs, monsters, and others are gathered by type or distinct groupings.

Note: certain NPCs have Luck values, as well as talents for *Pulp Cthulhu* games; ignore these if playing regular *Call of Cthulhu*.

ALLIES OR INDEPENDENTS

Samuel J. Wright, *26, retired captain and leader of the Knights of Ouroboros*

STR 65	**CON** 70	**SIZ** 60	**DEX** 60	**INT** 70
APP 50	**POW** 70	**EDU** 61	**SAN** 61	**HP** 13
DB: +1D4	**Build:** 1	**Move:** 8	**MP:** 14	**Luck:** 35

Combat

Brawl	50% (25/10), damage 1D3+1D4
Blessed Saber	55% (27/9), damage 1D8+1+1D4
30-06 bolt-action rifle	50% (25/10), damage 2D6+4
Dodge	40% (20/8)

Skills

Credit Rating 32%, Cthulhu Mythos 8%, Electrical Repair 45%, Language (English) 61%, Language (French) 25%, Language (German) 40%, Mechanical Repair 60%, Persuade 60%, Psychology 45%, Occult 46%, Spot Hidden 45%, Stealth 50%, Swim 35%.

Equipment: blessed saber (acts as enchanted/magical weapon).

Pulp Talents

- **Tough Guy:** may spend 10 Luck points to shrug off up to 5 hit points worth of damage taken in one combat round.
- **Hellfighter:** gain a bonus die on Firearms (Rifle) skill rolls.

Javier Jordán, *27, brother and patriot*

STR 45	**CON** 70	**SIZ** 40	**DEX** 80	**INT** 70
APP 60	**POW** 65	**EDU** 45	**SAN** 65	**HP** 11
DB: 0	**Build:** 0	**Move:** 9	**MP:** 13	**Luck:** 32

Combat

Brawl	25% (12/5), damage 1D3
.38 revolver	60% (30/12), damage 1D10
Dodge	80% (40/16)

Skills

Charm 60%, Climb 35%, Credit Rating 11%, History 40%, Language (English) 40%, Language (German) 30%, Locksmith 60%, Sleight of Hand 40%, Stealth 80%.

Pulp Talents

- **Smooth Talker:** gain a bonus die to Charm rolls.
- **Fast Load:** choose a Firearm specialism; ignore penalty die for loading and firing in the same round.

RETIRED HARLEM HELLFIGHTERS

All of these retired soldiers are good men who come to the aid of an old war buddy if called. They range in age from early 20s to early 40s; all are in excellent shape from working as manual laborers upon their return to the U.S.

	1	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*
STR	70	55	65	60	80	50
CON	70	65	75	75	70	80
SIZ	70	65	75	75	70	80
DEX	65	60	60	55	75	70
INT	55	40	65	60	60	55
APP	40	60	55	50	50	70
POW	55	65	45	85	45	50
EDU	50	60	55	70	65	55
SAN	49	58	45	76	45	48
HP	14	13	15	15	14	16
DB	+1D4	0	+1D4	+1D4	+1D4	+1D4
Build	1	0	1	1	1	1
Move	8	7	6	7	9	7

Combat

Brawl	58% (29/11) damage 1D3+DB
Service pistol	50% (25/10) damage 1D10
Improvised weapons	48% (24/9) varies (1D4 or 1D6)+DB
Dodge	49% (20/8)

Opposite: Harlem Hellfighters

James Smithson, *25, loyal friend*

STR 80	**CON** 80	**SIZ** 80	**DEX** 45	**INT** 50
APP 50	**POW** 55	**EDU** 54	**SAN** 55	**HP** 16
DB: +1D4	**Build:** 1	**Move:** 8	**MP:** 11	**Luck:** 27

Combat

Brawl	55% (27/9), damage 1D3+1D4 or knife 1D4+2+1D4
Shotgun	50% (25/5), damage 4D6/2D6/1D6
Dodge	22% (11/4)

Skills

Art/Craft (Harmonica) 20%, Credit Rating 5%, First Aid 75%, Language (English) 54%, Stealth 55%, Survival (Temperate) 37%, Throw 50%.

Pulp Talents

- **Tough Guy:** may spend 10 Luck points to shrug off up to 5 hit points worth of damage taken in one combat round.
- **Hardened:** ignores Sanity-point loss from attacking other humans, viewing horrific injuries, or the deceased.

ADVERSARIES AND MONSTERS

Hans Wächter, *37, bloodthirsty cultist*

STR 80	**CON** 80	**SIZ** 70	**DEX** 55	**INT** 55
APP 35	**POW** 60	**EDU** 37	**SAN** —	**HP** 15
DB: +1D4	**Build:** 1	**Move:** 8	**MP:** 12	**Luck:** 30

Combat

Brawl	47% (23/9), damage 1D3+1D4
Luger	63% (31/12), damage 1D10
Grenade (thrown)	50% (25/10), damage 4D10/2D10/1D10
Dodge	40% (20/8)

Skills

Art/Craft (Hümmelchen) 72%, Climb 35%, First Aid 70%, Language (English) 20%, Language (French) 30%, Language (German) 45%, Mechanical Repair 60%, Occult 20%, Psychology 50%, Spot Hidden 70%, Stealth 70%, Survival (Temperate) 30%, Throw 50%.

Equipment: Ethereal Hümmelchen, 3 grenades.
Armor: 6-point degraded mi-go bio-web armor; degrades with use, losing 1 armor point per 6 points of damage absorbed.

Pulp Talents

- **Tough Guy:** may spend 10 Luck points to shrug off up to 5 hit points worth of damage taken in one combat round.
- **Hardened:** ignores Sanity-point loss from attacking other humans, viewing horrific injuries, or the deceased.

Hell's Legion, *undead German soldiers*

These rotting corpses are infused with the will of the summoner. They continue to fight until hacked to pieces or sent back to the void from which they came. Use this profile for all of the undead.

STR 80	**CON** 80	**SIZ** 70	**DEX** 55	**INT** 05
APP —	**POW** 05	**EDU** —	**SAN** —	**HP** 15
DB: +1D4	**Build:** 1	**Move:** 8	**MP:** 1	**Luck:** —

Combat

Attacks per round: 1 (melee or firearm)

Fighting	40% (20/8), damage 1D4+1D4
Saber	40% (20/8), damage 1D8+1D4
Model P08 Luger	30% (15/6), damage 1D10
Mauser Gewehr 98	30% (15/6), damage 2D6+4
Wechselapparat*	40% (20/8), damage 2D6 + burn
Dodge	*commanded to attack, they do not dodge*

**Small flamethrower.*

Armor: none; major wounds delivered to the body result in loss of a limb; otherwise all damage is halved, except to the head (one penalty die to rolls targeting the head).
Sanity loss: 1/1D6 Sanity points to see the undead soldiers.

Karl Metzger, *brain in a jar*

Metzger was a handsome, brilliant scientist and occultist who believed in the Axis' cause. Even after the death of his body, that crazed belief kept him relatively stable and focused until recently. His brain cylinder is releasing low levels of radiation (the same radiation that washed over the Battle of Belleau Wood).

STR —	**CON** —	**SIZ** 5	**DEX** 55	**INT** 85
APP —	**POW** 80	**EDU** 90	**SAN** 00	**HP** 3
DB: —	**Build:** –1	**Move:** —	**MP:** 18	**Luck:** —

Skills

Anthropology 33%, Cthulhu Mythos 21%, History 67%, Library Use 72%, Occult 71%, Persuade 83%, Science (Physics) 70%.

Powers

Control Corpse: by expending 1 magic point, Metzger can animate his own corpse; spending an additional magic point maintains control for a further 10 minutes.

Equipment: mi-go brain cylinder.
Armor: 15-point brain cylinder casing.
Spells: Animate Self, Barrier of Pain, Call Lightning, Cloud Memory, Dominate, Maggots, Nightmares, Wrack.

Pulp Talents

- **Weird Science:** may build and repair weird science devices.
- **Arcane Insight:** halve the time required to learn spells and gains bonus die to spell casting rolls.

Animated Corpse of Karl Metzger, *skeletal puppet*

STR 70	**CON** —	**SIZ** 65	**DEX** 50	**INT** —
APP —	**POW** —	**EDU** —	**SAN** —	**HP** 16
DB: +1D4	**Build:** 1	**Move:** 6	**MP:** —	**Luck:** —

Combat

Attacks per round: 2

Fighting	70% (35/14), damage 1D6+1D4
Dodge	*does not dodge*

Skills

None.

Armor: none; major wounds delivered to the body result in loss of a limb; otherwise all damage is halved. Must be hacked to pieces to fully destroy the thing.
Sanity loss: 0/1D6 Sanity points to see Metzger's headless walking corpse

KLAN MEMBERS AND BAD COPS

	1	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*
STR	40	55	80	55	60	50
CON	70	65	55	75	40	60
SIZ	60	55	50	45	70	60
DEX	80	50	60	55	70	50
INT	60	50	45	55	60	65
APP	55	50	35	55	70	50
POW	50	50	80	65	50	50
EDU	55	60	40	55	70	50
SAN	50	50	80	65	50	50
HP	13	12	10	12	11	12
DB	0	0	+1D4	0	+1D4	0
Build	0	0	1	0	1	0
Move	8	8	9	9	8	7

Combat

Attacks per round: 1

Brawl	40% (20/8), damage 1D3+DB or club 1D6+DB
Service pistol	50% (25/10), damage 1D10
12-g shotgun* (2B)	35% (17/7), 4D6/2D6/1D6
Dodge	40% (20/9)

**Klan members only.*

THAT JAZZ CRAZE

It's the dawn of the Jazz Age, but all the gramophone recordings so far have been by white artists. A musician from Harlem is trying to change that, but now he has disappeared under mysterious circumstances. This scenario is ideal for a team of three to five investigators of any experience level.

BACKGROUND

This scenario is set anytime between 1919 and early 1921. Wendell Young is a musician of modest talent who has always seemed to be one step behind the trends of the day. Recently, he borrowed a large sum of money from Casper Holstein, Harlem's "Bolito King," (see **Numbers Game**, page 64) to privately finance the creation of the first jazz record by a black musician. Young's time in the studio yielded an incomprehensible song that has been touched by madness.

Young, desperate for a hit, began unsavory explorations into occult lore brought back from Europe during his time in the war. Through his studies, he hit upon the notion of a "Devil's bargain," through which he could sell his soul to achieve the fame and fortune he desired. Perhaps hearing Young's desire, the Baron in Blues arrived, as if on cue (see **Baron in Blues**, page 100). A deal was struck, with Young believing he had negotiated an exchange of his soul for unparalleled musical ability. Unfortunately, the musician didn't quite get what he expected. Young became patient zero of a magical curse that he passed on via song, first to his bandmates and recording engineer, and then to anyone who listened to the resulting gramophone disc.

The Wendell Young Deluxe Jass Orchestra (the common spelling of "jazz" wasn't really formalized until the mid-to-late 1920s) recording "Two-Step Blues," opposite "Wendell Jumps In" on the B-side, contains the Baron's curse. Anyone listening to the recording rapidly loses the ability to communicate or understand language. The cursed music has already been pressed to disc at a nearby production facility, with a thousand copies in a warehouse waiting to be distributed. The curse is irreversible, and the isolation of losing not only the meaning of words but the complete breakdown of any and all ways of communicating reduces the poor listener to an incomprehensible state, which then inflames irrational (and possibly violent) behavior.

By unfortunate coincidence, the recording studio Young chose was targeted by an extortion ring (a "black hand" scam), and when the studio couldn't pay the protection fees, the criminals established themselves as (unwanted) business partners. While Young, his band, and the engineer present at the recording session struggle with the contagious curse the song has unleashed, the gang has continued with all projects already in the works, including the mass production Young's recording. The gang has, of course, shut out Casper Holstein from his share of the future profits, which is where the investigators probably come in.

BIRTH OF JAZZ

The Original Dixieland Jass Band's "Dixie Jass Band One Step" and "Livery Stable Blues" from 1917 has often been held up as the recording that started the 1920s jazz craze. A convincing case could be made that the first jazz recording was, in fact, Collins and Harlan's "That Funny Jas Band From Dixieland," which was released a few months earlier on wax cylinder rather than shellac disc, but which failed to achieve success due to being on a format that was rapidly becoming obsolete.

Both recordings were of white musicians, rather than the black musicians who pioneered the new style. Black jazz recordings were considered financially unviable, and it wasn't until 1921 when Kid Ory's Sunshine Orchestra released "Ory's Creole Trombone" and "Society Blues" that a black musician was first recorded. In the context of this scenario, Wendell Young's recording would have been historic if not for its supernatural intervention.

Opposite: Cthulhu over Harlem

INTRODUCING THE INVESTIGATORS

OPTION ONE: PROBLEM SOLVERS

Casper Holstein, a Harlem mainstay, is the money behind Wendell Young's recording project. As the original mastermind behind the policy racket (aka "the numbers" or "Policy Banks") in Harlem, he is a part of daily life for many Harlemites. Without official recourse (the white police force certainly doesn't care about a "missing negro musician"), Holstein may turn to investigators with a reputation for being nosy, in the hopes of them finding Young and recouping his money.

OPTION TWO: COMRADES IN ARMS

Wendell Young was a bandsman during the Great War, serving as part of the Harlem Hellfighters (369th Infantry). Bandsmen primarily served as stretcher-bearers in the war, but the Hellfighter's marching band accompanied them on their campaigns and saw plenty of action. If an investigator served with the 369th, Young might have been a buddy during the conflict. His disappearance after recording the cursed disc may be the event that triggers the investigators to look into the situation.

OPTION THREE: SESSION PLAYERS

Musician investigators might know Wendell Young or any of his band personally. Maybe they've had a cutting contest with Young, or have sat in with Moreno, Kerns, or Jackson. Any local musician would know these characters by reputation, and their sudden disappearance—shortly after the high hope of a black jazz record coming out of Harlem—could put astute investigators on the trail.

OPTION FOUR: A HARLEM CAMPAIGN

It should be an easy transition to incorporate existing investigators who have played through the other adventures in *Harlem Unbound* into this story. Maybe the investigators meet Casper Holstein during the rent party that starts **Harlem Hellfighters Never Die** or similarly cross his path in one of the other adventures. With this option, when meeting Holstein, have him foreshadow that he's interested in bankrolling a local musician's recording project. Alternately, the investigators may catch Wendell Young's band firsthand in a speakeasy during another case before they make the cursed recording. Finally, rumors of the mysterious Baron in Blues could lead a particularly Mythos-savvy group straight to Young himself, who then goes missing before anyone has a chance to talk to him.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

ALLIES AND INDEPENDENTS

Wendell Young, *age 28, cursed pianist and singer*

- **Link:** Young's disappearance starts the investigation.
- **Link:** Young's non-communicative state indicates something is afoot (**The Man Himself,** page 143).

Wendell Young is a talented—if not particularly inspired or visionary—musician and composer who served in the Harlem Hellfighters as a bandsman and stretcher-bearer. Although he's always been slightly behind the latest musical trends, he plans on being the first black jazz recording artist and is willing to dabble in forbidden lore to ensure his success. Unfortunately, he has unwittingly become a mouthpiece for Azathoth.

- **Description:** disheveled in a cheap suit.
- **Traits:** suffering from the effects of the Baron's curse; unable to communicate.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** desperate to make it big.

Young's Band

- **Link:** finding the ultimate fate of these musicians reveals that their recording session was ground zero for the curse (**Finding the Band**, page 144).

Young's band members were:

- **Buddy Moreno** (age 24), drums.
- **Fred Kerns** (age 29), trombone.
- **Anthony Jackson** (age 21), cornet/trumpet.

Casper Holstein, *age 44, Harlem's "Bolito King"*

- **Link:** may bring the investigators in to locate Young and the records (**Talking Numbers,** page 148).

Holstein is the man who put up the money for Young's recording, and the mastermind behind the Harlem numbers racket.

- **Description:** expensive black suit (easily costing a year's salary for some).
- **Traits:** elegant and pristine.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** wants to make sure his investment is protected.

Cliff Perkins, *age 42, owner of Blue Moon Gramophone Company*

- **Link:** interview (**At the Studio**, page 138).
- **Link:** directs the investigators to the record-fabrication facility (**Record Fabrication**, page 146).

Perkins is the owner of the recording studio where Holstein and Young arranged to record their groundbreaking record. Considering himself above the day-to-day functions of recording (he leaves the actual work to others), and due to his disinterest in music by black musicians, he manages to avoid the Baron's curse up until around midway through the scenario.

- **Description:** middle-aged white male who dresses plainly.
- **Traits:** judgmental and frustrated.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** trying to keep his head above water and needs money.

Paul Scarlotti, *age 25, extortion racket boss*

- **Link:** gets involved when the investigators start looking into Blue Moon Gramophone Company (**Vandalism**, page 147).

Scarlotti is a second-generation Italian-American who began his criminal career with a variety of petty scams and schemes and worked his way up to extortion. He's not, by nature, a violent man, but he recognizes the power that a threat of violence has, and isn't afraid to leverage it.

- **Description:** muscular man in a cheap suit.
- **Traits:** practical and determined.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** open to discussion, but ready to do what it takes to make some cash.

THE BLACK HAND

The "black hand" refers to a type of extortion scheme practiced in the early 20th century, mostly perpetrated by Italian immigrants and largely targeting their community. It's not a particularly subtle form of crime, which boils down to basically threatening harm, kidnapping, arson, or murder if the victim doesn't pay up. These threats were commonly delivered via letters that specified bringing payment to a particular place and time and were usually decorated with violent imagery (such as smoking guns, nooses, skulls, pierced hearts, or the eponymous black hand). Over time, the act of sending a "black hand letter" became conflated with the people sending it, and the general populace began referring to any extortion gang as the "Black Hand."

SCAT SINGING

While later musicians were eager to attribute the origin of "scat" singing to Louis Armstrong's 1926 recording of "Heebie Jeebies," a deeper exploration reveals recordings by Al Jolson and Gene Greene dating back to 1911 and 1917 respectively. Also, Jelly Roll Morton stated that he and Tony Johnson were scatting in 1906. While Louis Armstrong may have brought the style to mainstream music, the form had existed for many years, even predating jazz. Wendell Young's use of nonsensical syllabic lyrics would have been unusual, but not unheard of.

TIMELINE

Three weeks ago: Wendell Young approaches Casper Holstein about bankrolling a recording of Young's newly formed band. Young persuades Holstein that financing the first gramophone recording by a black jazz musician is a prestigious and lucrative opportunity.

Four days ago: Holstein is finally able to put the money together to pay for a "vanity recording" to be recorded and pressed by the Blue Moon Gramophone Company (BMGC). The agreement ensures that the disc will but not released under BMGC's imprint, and will instead be labeled with "Holstein Recording Company, Harlem NY."

Three days ago: Young encounters the Baron in Blues. Trying to forget about the whole experience, Young drinks heavily at a nearby speakeasy before going to the recording studio. The

resulting drunken "scat singing" is infected with madness; with all witnesses to the recording session becoming infected with the Baron's aphasia-like curse.

Two days ago: the master disc is sent to the production facility to be copied, sleeved, and released. Simultaneously, a crime ring (misidentified as "the Black Hand") seized control of BMGC as part of an extortion scheme. The gang pockets what remains of Holstein's payment, and aim to release the recording, keeping any proceeds for themselves.

One day ago: the recording engineer, George Farino, unable to comprehend his own thoughts, takes his own life.

The present: the investigators enter the story.

SCENES

The first place to investigate is almost certainly either Young's most-frequented spot (see **Speakeasy**, page 140) or the recording studio where he was last seen (**At the Studio**, page 138). The Keeper can start the investigators already on the trail by opening with either of these two scenes. The latter works best for groups employed by Holstein, while the speakeasy is an ideal opener if the investigators are simply trying to find Young, either because he's their friend or because he is rumored to have some insight into forbidden lore.

KEY LOCATIONS

Blue Moon Recording Studio: 49 Sherman Ave, The Bronx.
Farino's apartment: 185 E 162nd St, The Bronx.
Blue Moon Fabrication Facility: 251 W. 154th St.
Unnamed speakeasy: 3646 Broadway, Harlem.
Wendell Young's apartment building: 471 W 147th St, Harlem.
Paul Scarlotti's business office: 2151 E. 2nd Ave, East Harlem.
Casper Holstein's business office: 234 W. 138th St., Harlem.

WHAT HAPPENS IF THE INVESTIGATORS LISTEN TO THE RECORDING?

Investigators listening to the cursed gramophone recording are felled quickly and permanently. At first, they begin forgetting how to say certain words (increase the difficulty level of social and mental skill rolls or apply a penalty die). Next, they start to forget what certain common words mean when they are heard or seen (provoking a **Sanity** roll, with 1/1D4 loss). As the mind of the afflicted begins to unravel, soon the ability to read, write, speak, and understand the spoken or written word vanishes completely. All language skills drop to zero percent (social skill rolls are impossible), while all intellectual skills are made at a Hard difficulty with a penalty die, and also require a **Sanity** roll (1/1D4 loss) each time they are attempted. The curse isn't finished yet, however. Body language next becomes confusing, then alien, requiring a successful **Psychology** roll to understand. Finally, the curse makes the internal thoughts of the afflicted entirely incomprehensible as well, leaving only a being kept alive by instinct and autonomic functions, completely devoid of intellect or capacity to productively perceive the world. The full descent can take anywhere from a few hours to a few days (at the Keeper's discretion). The effects are permanent and irreversible.

Options

A charitable Keeper can allow a Hard **POW** roll to resist the effects of the cursed recording, with a penalty die if a repeat exposure (further repeat exposures come with two penalty dice).

While the curse is normally irreversible, the Keeper may prefer to offer some hope through a magical cure. Perhaps a spell or ritual, appealing to the Baron in Blues or Azathoth itself, can break the curse? Finding such magic may be a race against time, with the affected investigators deteriorating rapidly. Perhaps spontaneous use of the **Cthulhu Mythos** skill could provoke a cure? Or perhaps the investigators can make their own bargain with the Baron, although just what nasty recompense the Baron will desire is anyone's guess. Given the curse was born of Azathoth's messenger, any restoration probably rests upon a **Luck** roll to determine the whim of the Outer God.

Opposite: That Jazz Craze Keeper map

Unnamed Speakeasy
Sugar Hill
Hamilton Heights
Wendell Young's Apartment Building
BlueMoon Fabrication Facility
Blue Moon Recording Studio
Farino's Apartment
Casper Holstein's Business Office
Harlem
Harlem River
Paul Scarlotti's Office
ST. NICHOLAS PARK
MORNINGSIDE PARK
MOUNT MORRIS PARK
CENTRAL PARK
RANDALL ISLAND
Macombs Dam Bridge
145th St Bridge
Madison Ave Bridge
Madison Ave Bridge
Third Ave Bridge
HARLEM RIVER DR
Grand Concourse
Park Ave
Morris Ave
Riverside Ave
Amsterdam Ave
Broadway Ave
EIGHTH AVE
SEVENTH AVE
LENOX AVE
5th Ave
Madison Ave
Park Ave
Lexington Ave
3rd Ave
2nd Ave
THIRD AVE
Jerome Ave
Gerard Ave
Macombs Pl
Nelson St
Summit Ave
University Ave
Walton Ave
Sheridan Ave
McClellan St
W 160th St
W 159th St
W 158th St
W 157th St
W 156th St
W 155th St
W 152nd St
W 151st St
W 150th St
W 149th St
W 148th St
W 147th St
W 144th St
W 143rd St
W 142nd St
W 141st St
W 136th St
W 145th St
W 138th St
W 130th St
W 128th St
W 127th St
W 126th St
W 123rd St
W 122nd St
W 121st St
W 120th St
W 119th St
W 118th St
W 117th St
W 115th St
W 114th St
W 113th St
W 112th St
W 111th St
W 112th St
W 111th St
W 165th St
W 166th St
W 164th St
E 168th St
E 167th St
E 164th St
E 165th St
E 161st St
W 160th St
E 153rd St
E 151st St
E 144th St
E 149th St
E 147th St
E 145th St
E 143rd St
E 142nd St
E 140th St
E 141st St
E 138th St
E 134th St

RACIAL TENSION MODIFIER

When the investigator and their target are of different races or cultures, increase the difficulty of the roll (such as a social skill roll) by one level (Regular becomes Hard, Hard becomes Extreme). If necessary, at the Keeper's discretion, an additional penalty die may be applied, dependent on the circumstances. This modifier reflects the mistrust between different groups.

AT THE STUDIO

- **Link:** Casper Holstein tells the investigators about the recording session.
- **Link:** staff at the speakeasy where Young's band was known to play (**Speakeasy**, page 140) direct the investigators to the recording studio.

There are no African-American-owned recording studios or record labels anywhere in the U.S. at this point in history. Young sought out a white-owned studio willing to do business with him, telling the studio that he could finance his own production and distribution.

BMGC is the recording studio and record label where Young recorded the master disc containing the Baron's aphasia-like curse. It's really just a tiny office in a nondescript building across the river in the Bronx, equipped with a modestly sized, acoustically treated room with a Steinway grand piano. There's no advertising; the only thing differentiating it from the other offices in the building is a simple sign on the frosted glass door. The owner is Cliff Perkins, but he wasn't the engineer who was working at the time—that was George Farino, who hasn't been seen since the recording session.

Perkins is a casual racist; he's not violent or necessarily even rude, just dismissive and disdainful. He is troubled about Farino not showing up to work. A successful **Psychology** roll detects Perkins is really concerned about lost income rather than for Farino's well-being. Certainly, Perkins couldn't care less about the musicians who made the recording (the successful Psychology roll also detecting a mix of racism and disdain for musicians in general, who Perkins considers to be "degenerates and bums").

Money is clearly on Perkins' mind. He's behind on the bills, and even with the cash from his exorbitant price gouging of Holstein and Young, he doesn't have enough to pay the extortionists who are targeting his business. Perkins is genuinely afraid of the "Black Hand ring" because he assumes the scale of their criminal reach is more extensive than it really is, and also because they broke into his house and left a cow's heart with a knife driven through it on his coffee table. He won't share any of this information with strangers, of course, but should they manage to sneak a peek at his account book (see **Post Chat Consequences**, following), the investigators can confirm his money worries.

A successful **Spot Hidden** roll lets the investigators spot Young's contract on a desk, which has his address written on it (**Wendell's Flop**, page 143). Unless resorting to a distraction to grab the paperwork, a bribe or a successful **Charm**, **Fast Talk**, or **Persuade** roll encourages Perkins to show the recording contract to the investigators (**Craze Handout 1: Recording Contract**), but he won't let them take it with them—note that Casper Holstein's name and address are on the contract as well (**Talking Numbers**, page 148). Likewise, a successful **social skill** roll gets Perkins to reveal George Farino's address (**Farino's Apartment**, page 144), although he may simply offer up the address as he'd like the investigators to pass the word to Farino that he's been fired for missing work.

Perkins hasn't actually heard Young's record yet. He sent it to the fabrication facility to have a thousand copies pressed. He muses that the record will be a flop since he can't fathom why anyone would buy "negro music," but mentions that his new business partners have forced the issue. A successful **Psychology** roll reads between the lines, allowing the investigators to suspect that Perkins has some less-than-reputable partners and that their involvement is both recent and unexpected.

If questioned about Holstein's money, Perkins points out that some of it went to pay for the recording session, some of it kept the lights on, and the rest covered the pressing of Young's records. A Hard **Charm**, **Fast Talk**, **Persuade**, or **Intimidate** roll gets him to admit that any profits from the deal or from the record's subsequent release will go to his "silent partners," and that Young and Holstein will lose out entirely. If pushed further, Perkins recalls that the "new plan" is to sell Young's record out of the backs of trucks, rather than through any sort of official distribution. He also says he does not have a copy of the recording in question.

Post Chat Consequences

As soon as the investigators leave the studio, Perkins contacts Paul Scarlotti by telephone, telling him that some folks were asking about the Wendell Young record. Scarlotti assumes it was Young himself and orders his guys to visit the musician's apartment to rough him up. Once off the phone with

Opposite: Studio Madness

Scarlotti, he picks up Young's disc and gives it a listen, which begins his gradual degradation into insanity.

If the investigators come back to the studio for any reason, Perkins (who has now listened to the cursed disc) is tearing page after page out of ledgers, magazines, and newspapers while loudly moaning incoherently. The needle on the still-rotating gramophone is endlessly bumping off the tail at the end of the groove of Young's record. If left to his own devices, he descends further into madness and eventually tears his own eyes out.

Although there is no obvious incentive to do so, returning to the studio after visiting a few other locations provides the investigators a chance to search through Perkins' paperwork. They easily find the contract (**Craze Handout 1: Recording Contract**), while a successful **Spot Hidden** roll turns up a hidden ledger. Reviewing the ledger with an **Accounting** or **Science (Mathematics)** roll reveals the address for the production facility (**Record Fabrication**, page 146), the address of warehouse where the records are stored (**The Warehouse**, page 148), the state of the studio's finances (not great), and paperwork transferring co-ownership to one Paul Scarlotti (**Craze Handout 2: Ownership Transfer**).

SPEAKEASY

- **Link:** Wendell Young often played at this speakeasy.

Young and his band are no strangers to this dive, built by and for black Harlemites, set in the basement of a medical-supply company and geared specifically for local clientele. Alcohol is smuggled in through the business upstairs, disguised as crates of bandages and other consumable products. Since alcohol is still legal for medicinal purposes, more than one bottle of bathtub gin has been passed off as "isopropyl alcohol" at this particular joint.

Admittance is through the storefront. The price of entry is some small piece of medical paraphernalia determined by the management (so that the store can justify the large number of people going in and out). The doorman, also a salesman in the store, takes pleasure in assigning bizarre purchases for new visitors. If any of the investigators are medical doctors, they are actually treated with greater courtesy, since they lend legitimacy to the whole farcical operation—in fact, they may be able to restock medical supplies at a discount.

Conversing with Uriah Metheny the doorman requires a successful **Charm**, **Fast Talk**, or **Persuade** roll. He reveals that neither Moreno, Kerns, or Jackson have been around for at least a week, although he can confirm they played on Young's record (**Finding the Band**, page 144). Young visited three days prior, just before his recording session at Blue Moon (**At the Studio**, page 138). Metheny remembers the haunted look in Young's eyes when he entered ("Like he had seen a ghost"), and that when he left, he was staggering due to inebriation. Metheny doesn't know anything about the recording session; to him, it was just another night when Young was a customer and not a performer.

The speakeasy is at the bottom of the stairs located in the back office of the store, down a brick hallway leading to the boiler room and an adjacent storage room for the building. The storage room has some small tables set up, and there's a makeshift bar in front of the door to the boiler room where the inventory is kept—if there is ever trouble with the boiler, the whole building is likely to go up like a box of matches. A black-painted wooden platform has been set up in the corner of the storeroom, and an upright piano sits improbably on it. Depending on the time of day when the investigators

RECORDINGS

Electric microphones were not used in recording music until the mid-1920s. The period before was more or less an entirely mechanical process, with musicians gathered around a single diaphragm, which etched a wax disc based on its vibration. There was no way to amplify or attenuate any element of the process, so musicians were required to play very loudly and arrange themselves in a small recording room with their distance to the recording device as the only way to regulate their relative volume.

Pre-1925 recording techniques had a hard time picking up certain frequencies, which is why old-time recordings have a "telephone" effect. Orchestral strings were hard to record, so brass and reed instruments were favored. Low instruments, in particular, didn't translate well, so tubas and sousaphones replaced string basses and cellos while hitting a block of wood replaced the bass drum in many recordings. Incidentally, this is the reason why people in recordings from the era speak with a "transatlantic accent" that we associate with period radio and newsreels. The contrived accent was developed to enunciate in a way that could be recorded clearly.

The originally recorded soft wax disc was coated with a thin film of graphite before being used to make a mold that could stamp out duplicates onto heated "biscuits" of shellac. Unlike the vinyl records from the later eras, shellac records were extremely brittle and fragile, and they were also limited to three minutes in length (on each side), dictating a certain type of musical arrangement.

Blue Moon Gramophone Company

The Bronx, New York City

1. This contract is for an exclusive recording agreement between Wendell Young, from here on known as "artist" and Blue Moon Gramophone Company, from here on known as "production company."
2. This contract is for 1 complete, two-sided gramophone discs, to be recorded by the artist for the label under the Holstein Recording Company, Harlem, NJ imprint, under the conditions provided for in this contract. That is, _____ complete recording sessions of no more than 8 hours, resulting in a master gramophone disc.
3. Production company will produce 1000 duplicates of the master recording, complete with Standard cardboard sleeve cardboard sleeves, and deliver them to Casper Holstein 234 W. 135th St. Apt _____.
4. Artist agrees not to record the same repertoire through other recording studios. Production studio agrees not to duplicate or distribute the results of the recording sessions, which remain the sole property of Wendell Young and Casper Holstein
5. Production company is not responsible or liable for any criminal or civil charges arising from the recording, production, or distribution of these sessions.
6. Session musicians are provided by the artist, and are not due compensation or royalty payments. These musicians include Buddy Moreno, drums Fred Kerns, trombone Anthony Jackson, cornet/trumpet.
7. Sessions will be recorded by George Levine, who is solely responsible for the quality of recordings. By accepting the master recording, the artist absolves themselves of the right to contest the quality of performance, recording, or duplication.
8. Duplication will occur at Blue Moon Duplication 251 W. 154th St. NY.

Signed,

"Artist"
Wendell Young
141 W. 152nd St
Harlem

Cliff Perkins
Cliff Perkins
Blue Moon Gramophone Company
300 Canal Pl. NY, NY 10451

REVELATIONS

Choice quotes from the Book of Revelation (King James version).

8:6 And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.

8:7 The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up.

8:11 And the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter.

9:6 And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them.

enter the speakeasy, a small band is playing, a single Ragtime pianist is ripping it up, or the "stage" is home to a few more tables to maximize space. The management only pays for entertainment if they know the place will be packed, so there's really only music in the late afternoon or evening. At peak hours, there are two staff members running the place; during the day, there's only one. At all times, there's one armed ringer among the patrons, just in case someone tries to rob the joint.

The patrons don't usually give their real names, but that doesn't mean people are unfamiliar; they absolutely know Wendell Young and his band by their names and description. If adequately motivated (bribery or a social skill roll), they happily recount their last encounter with Young. Three nights ago, Young came into the speakeasy and began drinking strong grain alcohol at a prodigious rate. He was clearly upset, and the server eventually cut him off. Before he reached that point, he made some cryptic comments about having "met the Baron," although when asked for clarification, he just began to quote from the Book of Revelation, talking about "angels and trumpets" (see box nearby for some quotations). If asked, either staff or patrons can provide the address of Young's apartment (**Wendell's Flop**, page 143).

Craze Handout 2: Ownership Transfer

Blue Moon Gramophone Company

The Bronx, New York City

This legally binding contract transfers partial ownership of Blue Moon Gramophone Company and all it's subsidiary assets and holdings to Paul Scarlotti and the East Harlem Construction Company. Cliff Perkins will henceforth in legal documents be referred to as "owner" and Paul Scarlotti will be referenced as "business partner."

Signed.

Cliff Perkins
Owner, Blue Moon Gramophone Company

Co-Signed.

Paul Scarlotti
2151 3rd Ave

Anthony LaRochelle
NOTARY PUBLIC
ID Number
23689623123356
Comm. Expires
Oct 29, 1927
Qualified in New York County
STATE OF NEW YORK

WENDELL'S FLOP

- **Link:** Young's address is on the BMGC contract (**At the Studio**, page 138).
- **Link:** staff or patrons at the speakeasy provide Young's address (**Speakeasy**, page 140).

Young lives above a boarded-up storefront; the original store has been cordoned off into apartments on the upper floor and rehearsal spaces on the ground. Accessing the rooms is via a locked door down the side of the store (**STR** or **Locksmith** roll). Young rents one of the rooms on the upper floor, but which one is not clear, requiring the investigators to search around the apartments. Young is not in his apartment; he is tucked away in one of the rehearsal spaces on the ground floor, trying to make sense of his jumbled thoughts.

Young, being a musician, is not a wealthy man. His apartment is a cheap room with a shared communal bathroom at the end of the hall. The flimsy door to his apartment has been kicked in and hangs ajar. The investigators can quickly ascertain that this is Young's room, which serves as his kitchen, dining room, living room, and bedroom. Since he rarely entertains, he hasn't bothered to collapse the Murphy bed that folds into the wall. The place has obviously been "tossed" by others looking for something. The room has a sickly sweet smell of rotting produce. Like most people in the 1920s, Young has no refrigeration in the apartment; a bowl of moldering apples has attracted a horde of fruit flies. Young's prize possession is a gramophone that sits proudly in the corner next to a stack of five gramophone records. The albums include "Livery Stable Blues" by the Original Dixieland Jass Band, a few Vaudeville "minstrel" recordings by Al Jolson, and an old comedy record by Cal Stewart.

Young doesn't have much in the way of clothes or personal belongings (he pawned most of his things when he needed cash), but what he does have is scattered around the room. The people who ransacked the apartment left not too long before the investigators arrived, which is apparent by the still-warm cigarette that has been stomped out on the hardwood floor near the door. The "Black Hand" didn't find anything incriminating, and they didn't think it odd that a professional musician wouldn't have any musical instruments or sheet music in his apartment, so Young's rehearsal space on the ground floor was left alone. An **Art/Craft (Music)** roll or Hard **INT** roll brings this discrepancy to the attention of the investigators. Young's spare keys to his rehearsal space (marked with a tag saying "Rehearsal Room 3") are hanging on a hook next to the front door, unnoticed and untouched by the gangsters.

THE MAN HIMSELF

When the investigators make their way to Rehearsal Room 3, they find the broken shell of Wendell Young. He's in a small, windowless practice room, plunking slowly at a junky piano with increasing frustration. He can't speak and can't understand language (verbal, written, or physical), and to add a particularly tragic twist, he doesn't understand how music works either. The notes from the piano are entirely random to him, but he has just enough of a grasp of his former self that he's trying desperately to remember what they once meant.

Young isn't dangerous in this scene, but encountering him should be extremely unnerving, especially if it is the first time the investigators have encountered the effects of the Baron's aphasia-like curse. Seeing him in this state may warrant a **Sanity** roll (0/1 loss), although if any of the investigators were previously acquaintances or friends of Young, the outcome is increased to 1/1D6 **Sanity** loss. The musician can't even express confusion when the investigators talk to him; unlike some victims of the Baron's curse, Young is completely silent. His eyes dart around the room as if trying to make sense of the scene, and he doesn't respond to any attempt to communicate on the part of the investigators. Those who may have known him previously are struck by how little of his personality is reflected in his movements; like someone in the advanced stages of senile dementia, he's just not himself anymore.

Aside from Young's troubling state, there are a few other clues in the room. Scattered across the floor are pages of handwritten sheet music, mostly arrangements of popular songs from the last five years, but also unfinished original melodies and chord changes. If examining the sheet music, an **Art/Craft (Music)** or Hard **INT** roll enables the investigator to understand the decay of Young's musical

ability; some of the pieces he's written have errors in key and time signature, with the most recent being nothing more than random scribbles on the bar lines.

Keeper note: a successful **Occult** or Hard **Art/Craft (Music)** roll deduces patterns in Young's early music suggesting a familiarity with occult principles; a Hard success with the Occult roll hints at some sort of summoning spell. A successful **Cthulhu Mythos** roll detects that magical workings are embedded in musical Young has written: chaotic chord changes, bizarrely modulating ostinatos, and disturbing and discordant melodies. The magical notations are suggestive of magic attuned to the so-called Outer God Azathoth.

A successful **Spot Hidden** or **Accounting** roll finds a copy of the recording contract from Blue Moon Gramophone Company amongst the mess (**Craze Handout 1: Recording Contract**). The contract has the address for the Blue Moon Fabrication Plant (**Record Fabrication**, page 146), as well as the recording studio (**At the Studio**, page 138). Young's bandmates are also listed, which might lead investigators to try to track them down (**Finding the Band**, page 144).

FINDING THE BAND

- **Link:** Young's bandmates' names are on the recording contract (**Craze Handout 1: Recording Contract**).
- **Link:** the staff of the speakeasy know the band (**Speakeasy**, page 140).

Locating Moreno, Kerns, and Jackson is challenging. Their personal addresses aren't listed on any of the contracts or session rosters at the studio, fabrication facility, or Young's house, and the staff at the speakeasy (**Speakeasy**, page 140) haven't seen any of them for a while. Asking around, with a successful **Lore (Harlem)** or an appropriate social skill roll, allows the investigators to discover the group's whereabouts.

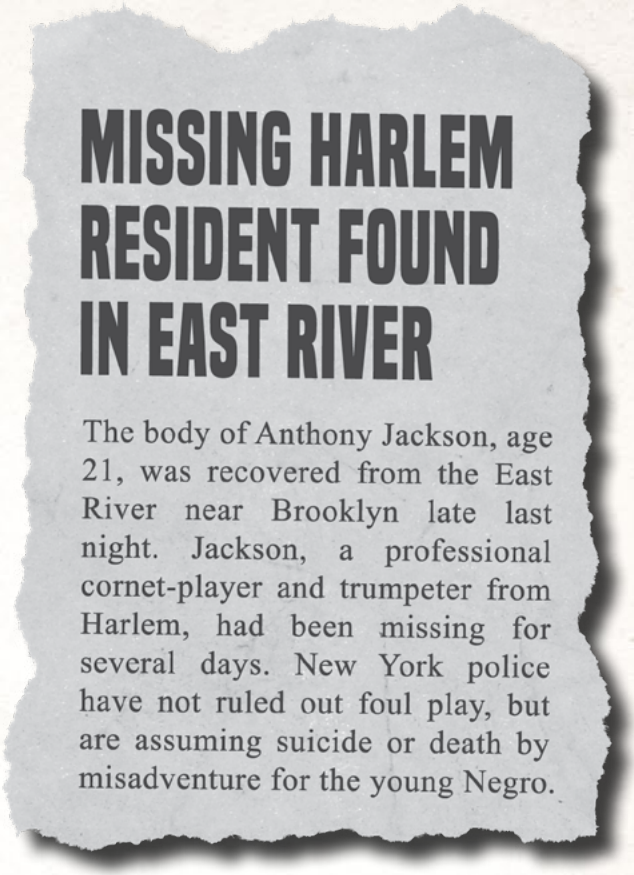
Buddy Moreno

Moreno is currently in police custody as a "John Doe." He was picked up when found yelling incoherently in the middle of a street. Initially, the authorities thought he was drunk, but when he failed to make any more sense after "sleeping it off," they have assumed he is a lunatic. If no one identifies him, he will become a ward of the state, living out his days in obscurity in a psychiatric ward of the nearby Bellevue Hospital.

Fred Kerns

Kerns is lost in midtown Manhattan. He has been wandering the street following the fateful recording session. His shoes are worn through and his feet are bruised and bloody. He shuffles from block to block, staring at signs and billboards, trying to make sense of them. Eventually, he dies of exposure or starvation.

Craze Handout 3: Death Announcement



MISSING HARLEM RESIDENT FOUND IN EAST RIVER

The body of Anthony Jackson, age 21, was recovered from the East River near Brooklyn late last night. Jackson, a professional cornet-player and trumpeter from Harlem, had been missing for several days. New York police have not ruled out foul play, but are assuming suicide or death by misadventure for the young Negro.

Anthony Jackson

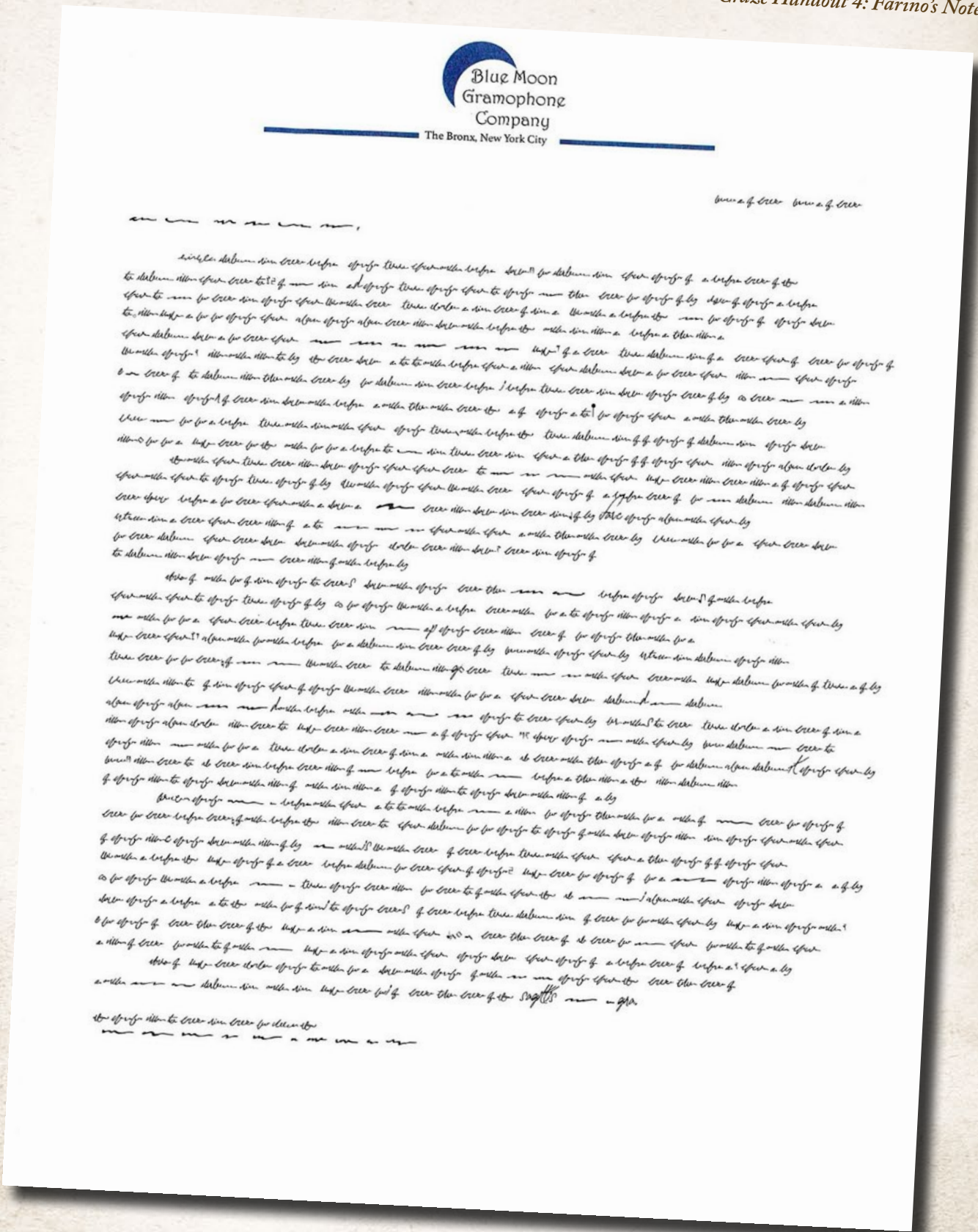
Jackson, like George Farino (**Farino's Apartment**, following), took his own life, leaping to his death off a bridge into the East River. His body surfaces when desired by the Keeper (**Craze Handout 3: Death Announcement**).

FARINO'S APARTMENT

- **Link:** Farino's name is mentioned on Young's recording contract (**At the Studio**, page 138).

George Farino, the recording engineer from BMGC, killed himself after leaving a totally incoherent suicide note. If the investigators haven't already found Young (**Wendell's Flop**, page 143), this scene may be the first indication that there's a supernatural element to the story. Farino's third-floor apartment isn't too far from the studio, just across the river on the edge of Harlem. His neighbors keep an eye out

Craze Handout 4: Farino's Note


Blue Moon
Gramophone
Company
The Bronx, New York City

for one another, increasing **Stealth** and **Locksmith** rolls to Hard difficulty to break into his apartment. If canvassed, the neighbors are happy to chat with friendly investigators who are not obviously breaking the law and can help locate the superintendent, who might allow the investigators into the apartment if convinced that Farino might be in danger.

Upon entering, they see Farino has hanged himself in his living room, provoking a **Sanity** roll (0/1D3 loss). A nonsensical and scrawling note on BMGC stationary lies below his feet. The note superficially resembles English, although there is no punctuation, and is in fact gibberish (**Craze Handout 4: Farino's Note**). It appears to be a suicide note that no one can possibly understand. A successful **First Aid** or **Medicine** roll confirms that there doesn't seem to be foul play involved, while looking around the apartment notes no sign of a struggle. The apartment was locked with the windows closed.

RECORD FABRICATION

- **Link:** Blue Moon's record fabrication facility address is on Young's contract (**Craze Handout 1: Recording Contract**).

Blue Moon's fabrication facility is a small industrial workspace in the Bronx. The facility produces copies from master plates, prints album sleeves, and the results packaged for distribution and sale.

Bob Grieg, John Mortimer, Esther Pollock, and Christopher Irvine are the employees of BMGC. They are middle-aged white folks in varying states of insanity due to the Baron's curse. Currently, Pollock is wedged in a corner, sobbing; Grieg and Mortimer are yelling at each other incoherently while wielding improvised weapons; while Irvine just wanders around the facility, staring off into space. Grieg and Mortimer are crazed with mindless aggression, unable to read enough body language to know what is threatening and what isn't—as

Craze Handout 5: Production Ledger

Blue Moon Gramophone Company
The Bronx, New York City

Blue Moon Duplication 241 W. 154th St, New York City, NY

Production Ledger

Order #	Artist Name	Recording Name	Units	Details	Shipped to
SR816	The Bronx Crooners	For My Sweetie/Shut Up and Kiss Me	500	Standard Sleeve	Warehouse, 1572 Webster Ave, The Bronx
			5	Promotional Copies	The Bronx Crooners, c/o Blue Moon Offices
			1	Promotional Copy	Cliff Perkins, Blue Moon Offices
SR823	Freddie Fairfax Comedy Cavalcade	Circus is in Town/Because I Said So	2000	Deluxe Sleeve	Warehouse, 1572 Webster Ave, The Bronx
			1	Promotional Copy	Frederick Fairfax, c/o Blue Moon Offices
			1	Promotional Copy	Cliff Perkins, Blue Moon Offices
SR824	The White Brothers' Singers	Blue Skies/Champtown Races	1000	Deluxe Sleeve	Warehouse, 1572 Webster Ave, The Bronx
			1	Promotional Copy	James White, c/o Blue Moon Offices
			1	Promotional Copy	Cliff Perkins, Blue Moon Offices
SR825	Jubilation Marching Band	Enjoy the Parade/Proud American	1000	Deluxe Sleeve	Warehouse, 1572 Webster Ave, The Bronx
			1	Promotional Copy	Harold John Chapman, c/o Blue Moon Offices
			1	Promotional Copy	Cliff Perkins, Blue Moon Offices
SR826	Deluxe Jazz Orchestra	Two-Step Blues/Mendell Jumps in	1000	Standard Sleeve	Warehouse, 1572 Webster Ave, The Bronx
			1	Promotional Copy	Paul Scarlatti, 2151 3rd Ave, East Harlem
			1	Promotional Copy	Cliff Perkins, Blue Moon Offices

a result, they are extremely dangerous (to each other if nothing else)—left to their own devices, one eventually kills the other. If the investigators haven't yet witnessed the effects of the Baron's aphasia-like curse, the whole scene is quite shocking, calling for a **Sanity** roll **(**1/1D6 or 0/1D3 if the investigators have already witnessed the curse's effects).

A thorough search of the small office with a successful **Library Use** or **Spot Hidden** roll reveals that the warehousing and shipping address is not far away, at a storage space in the Bronx closer to the train tracks. Luckily, the office's records have been immaculately kept, the last entry in the ledger is a shipment of 1,000 records, listed as "Deluxe Jas Orchestra: Two-Step Blues/Wendell Jumps In" (**Craze Handout 5: Production Ledger**). The ledger also shows one promotional copy of Young's record was sent to Cliff Perkins at the home office (**Post Chat Consequences**, page 138), and one was sent also to a Paul Scarlotti (**Approaching the Black Hand**, page 148). Notably, Young was not sent a promotional copy.

Sharp investigators may notice the record player in the unit; a copy of the cursed record was on the turntable and, although too late to stop its effect, Mortimer smashed it in his growing madness. Mortimer and Grieg also destroyed the soft-wax master recording, but they were unable to destroy the mold, which is still in the press (looking like a giant waffle maker).

Keeper note: Grieg and Mortimer both have keys to the storage facility, and there is a spare key in the office (Cliff Perkins also has a key, as does Paul Scarlotti). The storage space is owned by BMGC and, thus, now under the control of Scarlotti's gang (**The Warehouse**, page 148).

When the investigators exit the premises, they note they are being watched by two suited men seated inside a car, which pulls away too quickly for the investigators to catch it. The men are from Paul Scarlotti's crew, who report back about the investigator nosing around the fabrication unit, which provokes Scarlotti's interest (**Vandalism**, following).

VANDALISM

- **Link:** reaction scene—occurs if Paul Scarlotti's gang get suspicious of the investigators' actions.

Paul Scarlotti's "Black Hand" crew is a relatively small gang of extremely dangerous individuals. At best, Scarlotti's bunch might be paying a small percentage "up the chain" to a larger organized-crime syndicate, but are basically outsiders to the real organized crime of New York.

If Scarlotti learns that some black folk (the investigators) are looking into one of his businesses, he's pretty sure it has something to do with the Wendell Young gramophone record and Casper Holstein. He assumes (accurately or not) that the investigators are connected to Holstein, so he sends his goons to intimidate the "Bolito King." Holstein returns to find his office smashed up and doused with gasoline, and a knife through a cow's heart on his desk.

Holstein isn't the kind of person to be cowed by some two-bit crooks, so he redoubles his efforts to find Young and get his money back. If Holstein introduced the investigators to the story, he contacts them to let them know that some, "Italian hood from East Harlem" has been making a noise (**Talking Numbers**, following).

If the investigators have no connection to Holstein, he puts out the word that he'd like to meet the folks poking around BMGC, while also sending some of his own crew to keep a watch on the BMGC studio and Young's apartment building, in case the investigators show up. These gentlemen aren't necessarily unfriendly, but they are definitely insistent that the investigators need to meet with Holstein immediately. They politely escort the investigators to the wrecked remains of Holstein's office (**Talking Numbers**, following).

Paul Scarlotti

TALKING NUMBERS

- **Link:** if hired by Casper Holstein, he requests a meeting with the investigators after his office is wrecked or seeks them out anyway due to their involvement (**Vandalism**, above).

Depending on the reason for the investigators to see Holstein, he is either concerned about his money or furious at the destruction of his office. Either way, he knows Paul Scarlotti must be involved. Holstein encourages the investigators to look into Scarlotti (and may even offer them more money to do so). The Keeper can use this scene with Holstein to fill in any information gaps, should the investigators have missed an important clue along the way.

APPROACHING THE BLACK HAND

- **Link:** Paul Scarlotti's name and business address are listed on the ledgers at the production facility (**Record Fabrication**, page 146).
- **Link:** searching Cliff Perkins' office finds paperwork establishing Scarlotti as a co-owner in the business (**At the Studio**, page 138).

Scarlotti operates his extortion ring out of a construction office in nearby Italian Harlem (2151 3rd Ave), which is where he had the promotional copy of Young's gramophone record sent. It's a small office on a lot where a large building is slowly going up. The only noteworthy thing is a number of young white guys who sit around doing nothing during the middle of the day, and that the building is locked up at night, unguarded. The white guys are dressed like construction workers, but the management seems oblivious to the fact that they are playing cards or napping instead of helping to construct the building behind them.

Keeper note: Scarlotti and his buddies have extorted themselves a job that just requires them to be present to collect a regular paycheck. If that wasn't enough, the "Black Hand" has turned the whole construction site into a clubhouse, much to the chagrin of the actual workers, who are intimidated by Scarlotti and his goons.

Despite the lack of a visible work ethic, the only indication there's anything illegal going on are the bundles of cash in the office safe. If able to sneak in at night, cracking open the safe requires a **Locksmith** or Hard **Mechanical Repair** roll. The safe is pretty heavy (SIZ 250), but an organized group could move it to break into later. Investigators taking Scarlotti's money not only run afoul of the gangster but also potentially angering Holstein if they do not return his money.

There are three more layabouts than the number of investigators, but they are more bark than bite. If the investigators are pushy or aggressive, the men's card game ends and the goons coalesce into a small mob, brandishing whatever tools are nearby as weapons. They won't attack unless provoked but make it really clear the investigators are not welcome (they won't shy away from a fight). If the investigators are diplomatic, rather than antagonistic, they might be able to work out a deal with Scarlotti. If it's merely a matter of getting all the copies of the cursed record from the warehouse (and possibly even the promotional copy that Scarlotti set aside for himself), the Black Hand can be bought off. The price is steep, with Scarlotti asking for $1,000, although this can be bartered down to $500 with a successful **Charm** or **Persuade** roll at Hard difficulty.

Getting Holstein's money back is another matter. Scarlotti is unlikely to believe any stories of the supernatural, and he certainly doesn't care much for the fortunes of a hustler from Harlem. Nothing short of a life-and-death choice results in Scarlotti agreeing to return Holstein's money or give up the records without something in exchange. He'll protect his interests with force if necessary.

THE WAREHOUSE

- **Link:** the warehouse's address is in the ledger (**Record Fabrication**, page 146).
- **Link:** address can be found searching the BMGC recording studio (**At the Studio**, page 138).

The storehouse for BMGC isn't much larger than a train shipping container or a modern self-storage unit. It's a 10 feet by 20 feet (3m by 6 m) windowless concrete box, on a long loading dock shared with seven other similar rooms owned by other businesses. There is a padlock on the large metal loading door, and Scarlotti has left a single armed guard (fearing that Perkins or his employees would try to steal back their inventory). The lookout is certainly not expecting trouble—unless more than an hour has passed since the **Vandalism** (page 147) scene, in which case he's extremely alert and on the lookout for dark-skinned strangers.

Once inside, the investigators find a number of cardboard boxes, all containing assorted records. The boxes are labeled with the music title they contain. In addition to the 1,000 cursed records, there is a fair amount of unsold backstock. which Scarlotti plans on finding "alternative distribution" for (i.e., selling out of the back of a truck at bargain-basement prices). Destroying the records ends the spread of the Baron's curse, but doesn't necessarily end the story.

CONCLUSION

There are a number of ways to conclude the story. Some of the most likely are summarized here.

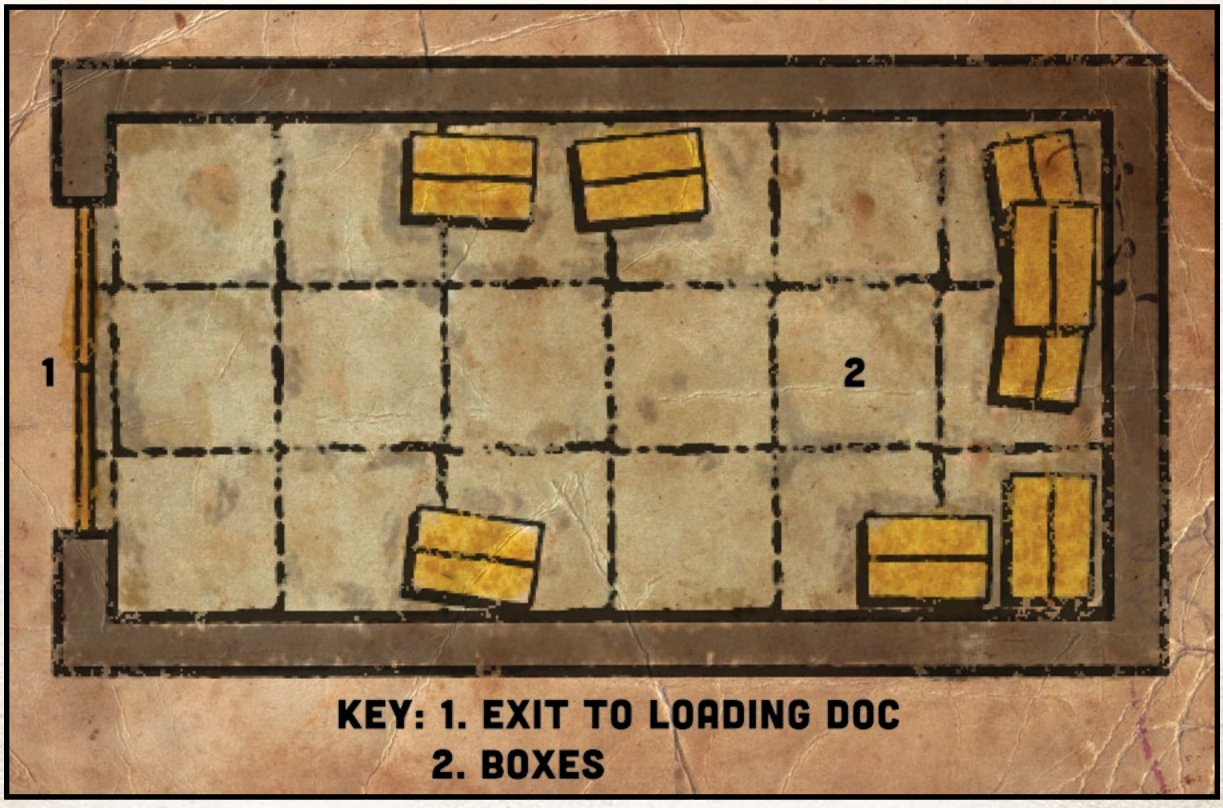
If the cursed records are destroyed and Scarlotti has identified the investigators—particularly if they spoke with him personally (**Approaching the Black Hand**, page 148), then they are marked for death by his gang. How such a consequence occurs is up to the Keeper, but keep in mind that Scarlotti's gang is small. If the records were destroyed, but the investigators maintained a low profile throughout the story, Casper Holstein may become the target for Scarlotti's ire, and a small gang war erupts.

If Scarlotti has a copy of Young's recording, he eventually listens to it. If the investigators have neutralized the greater threat by destroying the cursed records before they come to market, they just need to lay low while Scarlotti' descends into madness and his gang implodes (or is destroyed by Holstein's hired guns).

If the cursed records remain untouched, either Scarlotti's gang or Holstein's gang distributes them, causing an epidemic of insanity. Should this happen—and the investigators learn of it—they suffer a Sanity loss (see **Rewards**, below). If they remain unaware… well, ignorance is bliss. Luckily, shellac records are notoriously brittle, wear and tear will eventually reduce the number of them in circulation. As for any further repercussions from the cursed records being loose, that's up to the Keeper, and perhaps a story for another day.

REWARDS

- If the records are destroyed or otherwise neutralized: +1D8 Sanity points.
- Helping to find care for those affected by the curse: +1 Sanity point per person (to a maximum of 6 points).
- If the records reach the market and cause mass insanity: –1D8 Sanity points.



Warehouse map

ADVERSARIES AND MONSTERS

Note: certain NPCs have Luck values, as well as talents for *Pulp Cthulhu* games; ignore these if playing regular *Call of Cthulhu*.

Paul Scarlotti, *age 38, boss of a small mob*

STR 50	**CON** 80	**SIZ** 60	**DEX** 70	**INT** 70
APP 45	**POW** 45	**EDU** 50	**SAN** 45	**HP** 14
DB: 0	**Build:** 0	**Move:** 8	**MP:** 9	**Luck:** 22

Combat

Brawl	60% (30/12), damage 1D3 or knife 1D4+1
.38 auto	50% (25/10), damage 1D10
Dodge	40% (20/8)

Skills

Accounting 30%, Charm 40%, Fast Talk 55%, Intimidate 60%, Mechanical Repair 40%, Psychology 60%, Spot Hidden 40%, Stealth 50%, Throw 70%.

Pulp Talents

- **Alert:** never surprised in combat.
- **Rapid Attack:** may spend 10 Luck points to gain one further attack in a single combat round.

SCARLOTTI'S GOONS AND CURSED VICTIMS

Use these profiles for both gangster goons and frenzied cursed victims.

	1	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*
STR	50	55	65	70	80	80
CON	70	65	60	60	60	80
SIZ	70	50	55	60	65	75
DEX	50	55	60	65	75	70
INT	45	50	55	60	60	55
APP	35	45	55	50	50	50
POW	40	45	50	50	50	55
EDU	50	45	55	60	65	50
SAN	40	45	50	50	50	55
HP	14	11	11	12	12	15
DB	0	0	0	+1D4	+1D4	+1D4
Build	0	0	0	1	1	1
Move	7	9	9	9	9	8

Combat

Attacks per round: 1

Brawl	40% (20/8), damage 1D3+DB or club 1D6+DB or knife 1D4+DB	12-g shotgun* (2B)	30% (15/6), 4D6/2D6/1D6
.38 auto*	50% (25/10), damage 1D10	Dodge	30% (15/6)
		*Goons only.	

King & Carter Jazzing Orchestra, Houston Texas

Lieutenant James Reese Europe with his regiment the 369th Infantry

THE CONTENDER: A LOVE STORY

Stefano Rossi is a decent fighter and a decent man. He has made his way in life as best as he can—as a boxer, soldier, husband, and father. He has worked hard, and it seems that, at last, he is getting his break; however, unlike the other residents of Harlem, for whom there is hope, Rossi bears an inescapable curse that dooms him and threatens those around him. In the very essence of his being, Rossi bears the strain of the terrible deep ones, and unbeknownst to him, he is already changing.

The scenario is set in 1923 and is suited to a group of three to five investiagtors. The majority of the investigation consists of interviews with those associated with the fighters presented. The timing is constrained by the fact that Rossi's fight with Jimmy Harris is on Friday, with the investigation beginning Monday night.

BACKGROUND: AN INNSMOUTH LOVE STORY

Our story begins not in the crowded streets of Harlem, but in a seaside community in New England. In 1887, Nunzio Rossi, a Sicilian laborer down on his luck and desperate for work, found his way to an out-of-the-way seaside community called Innsmouth. There, he found work in a fish-packing factory owned by the Eliot family. A handsome and robust man, Rossi attracted the eye of Rhoda Eliot, the naïve, sheltered daughter of the patriarch Meshach Eliot.

Having been raised by a very protective father, Rhoda found the rough Rossi very intriguing, and the two began meeting in secret. This went on for some time, but before long their liaison was discovered. Rossi was apprehended by Rhoda's brother and father; the pair were taking Rossi to the Esoteric Order of Dagon when he broke free. Rossi pummeled both of his captors and escaped from Innsmouth. Compounding this embarrassment, a few days later Rhoda slipped away and fled Innsmouth to meet her love.

Rossi and Rhoda eventually found their way to New York City, where they married and settled into life in Harlem. After two years, the couple was blessed with a child, whom they named Stefano, after his paternal grandfather. Stefano completed the family and, despite being relatively poor, they were happy. Alas, such happiness did not continue for long. Rhoda developed a strange skin ailment, along with other maladies that puzzled medical explanation, causing both her and her husband great concern. Rossi did not deal well with this development and turned to drink. His rapid descent into alcoholism, Rhoda's illnesses, and the stresses of raising a child drove a divisive wedge into their marriage. The situation grew steadily worse, and finally, Rossi left, taking Stefano with him.

Rossi raised the boy on his own, with help from his family. He lost contact with Rhoda, whose illness grew steadily worse. Having not seen her for several months, Rossi assumed his estranged wife had succumbed to the disease consuming her. Rossi was not a good father, as his drinking was a constant problem, but despite this, Stefano grew into a good man. While Stefano was overseas during the Great War, Nunzio Rossi died. As far as Stefano knows, his mother is also dead.

THE ELIOT FAMILY IN INNSMOUTH

The dark history of the town of Innsmouth is well-chronicled and best explained in H. P. Lovecraft's novella *The Shadow Over Innsmouth*. The author of this scenario assumes the Keeper is familiar with that story—if not, please read it posthaste.

During Innsmouth's halcyon days, the Eliots were considered—along with the Waites, Gilmans, and Marshes—to be pillars of the community, contributing much to the town's economic and cultural growth. When turbulent times befell the town, the Eliots—represented by Captain Marsh's first mate Matthew—saw their fortunes fall. Matthew Eliot vocally opposed Marsh's radical plans, the least of which was subsuming the Innsmouth Masonic Lodge into the Hall of the Esoteric Order of Dagon. When Matthew disappeared shortly after publicly denouncing this plan, the rest of the family was left scrambling to mend fences and salvage their standing in the face of stern opposition. This effort was laborious and plagued with setbacks.

Matthew's wife Myrna was a pretty girl, born into a middling family. She was a shameless social climber, who was proud of marrying into one of Innsmouth's finest families. When her husband disappeared, she was far more concerned with preventing the collapse of the Eliot family's social standing than with Matthew's safe return. Myrna eagerly took the first and second oaths of Dagon, but her pride and vanity balked at the noisome third oath. Her efforts slowed but did not stop the decline of her family's fortunes. It was her son, Meshach, who managed to arrest the decline by marrying a human-deep-one hybrid girl and fathering two children with her. These children were Absalom and Rhoda.

Absalom was his father's son and aspired to elevate the family through his every action. He was involved in business and given a great amount of responsibility. His sister, on the other hand, was sheltered and pandered to, and kept in the dark about Innsmouth's secrets and her own true nature. The situation bred resentment between the two siblings, each jealous of the other's treatment by their parents.

Opposite: Stefano Rossi's tainted heritage

NAHUM AND JOAB ELIOT

Nahum and Joab are Absalom's sons, and the boys were in trouble when their telegrams to their father requesting more money went unanswered. Having some experience in petty crime and no morals to speak of, the pair presented themselves to the lieutenants of every criminal organization they could find, in the hope of scraping together some income.

After being rejected by all of the crime families, the brothers decided working for others would be foolish anyway, and with the last of their money, they established a small gang of their own. During this time, the brothers visited O'Brien's Gym and, having conducted their business there, happened to see Stefano Rossi. Sensing a kinship with Rossi from their shared inhuman heritage, the brothers approached him and, after talking to him for a while and making inquiries about his "people," they realized they had stumbled onto their cousin—and that Rossi was unaware of his breeding and his fate. The brothers realized this acquaintance could be beneficial to them; they could tell that Rossi was beginning to undergo certain physiological changes, and soon these would be accompanied by urges that presaged his return to the sea. If they could insinuate themselves into Rossi's life, they could steer him back to Innsmouth. Such a reunion would greatly please their father and allow the brothers back into his grace.

In addition to this long-term plan, the brothers concocted a more immediate plan that would score them some much-needed cash. They would assume management of the journeyman fighter. The Innsmouth natives, so familiar with the effects of their peculiar heritage, knew that Rossi would continue to evolve into a physical specimen no normal man could best. Eventually, this change would be impossible to disguise but, for now, it would be thought of as an unlikely late-career surge.

Nahum and Joab took steps to execute their scheme. Using magical coercion, they managed to wrest control of Rossi's boxing career from his manager. Since then, they have changed the course of his career. Rossi has fought six times for them, winning all of his bouts by knockout. During each bout, the Eliots bet all of their money and, thereby, increase their small gang's influence with each win.

INTRODUCING THE INVESTIGATORS

The investigators are contacted and brought into the scenario by the former heavyweight champion, Jack Johnson. Ideally, Johnson is known to one or more of the group; perhaps, an investigator used to train at a gym and came to know the heavyweight, was a fan or has connections to Johnson's family. Otherwise, Johnson has heard of the investigators (perhaps from their involvement in the other scenarios in this book) and his sources say they are reliable and trustworthy.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

ALLIES AND INDEPENDENTS

Jack Johnson, *age 45, former heavyweight champion*

- **Link:** hires the investigators (**Sparring with the Champ**, page 157).

Larger than life, this generally congenial man is angered over the death of his friend and protégé. By day, Johnson oversees operations for the Cotton Club, auditioning talent for shows and seeing to the various necessary minutiae. Evenings typically find him mingling with guests, many who come to see him as much as the other acts.

- **Description:** a large handsome man, impeccably dressed.
- **Traits:** enormous presence, draws the attention of everyone around. Bold, assertive and utterly unintimidated.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** usually gregarious and lighthearted; when the investigators encounter him, he is in a foul mood.

Butler Jones, *age 37, Lance Rawls' manager*

- **Link:** encountered at the Cotton Club (**Sparring with the Champ**, page 157).

Jones is an established boxing manager who deftly guided Lance Rawls' career until his untimely death. He is convinced his fighter could never have lost to Stefano Rossi, who he believes is a journeyman at best. He suspects Rossi's new managers, the Eliot brothers, of having a hand in his charge's demise.

- **Description:** a small, fiery man who is never still.
- **Traits:** angry, grief-stricken, and vengeful.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** Jones knows the local boxing scene well, he can provide relevant information to the investigators.

Stefano Rossi, *age 31, tainted-blood contender*

- **Link:** interviewed by the investigators (**Going the Distance,** page 162).
- **Link:** asks the investigators to place a bet **(The Upcoming Fight,** page 172).

A good man, unknowingly carrying a terrible burden: he is cursed with the taint of a deep one bloodline. Rossi

innocently goes through his life trying his best to provide for his family. As a boxer, he has the very pedestrian record of 34—13, with 19 knockouts; however, he is currently enjoying a winning streak. He loves his family above all else.

- **Description:** well-built white man, though no Adonis. His physique is not well defined; he has a sloping shoulder and possesses doughy muscle.
- **Trait:** a gentle giant (outside the ring).
- **Roleplaying hooks:** Rossi is innocent, naïve, friendly, and welcoming. His kindness belies his profession and the terrible taint that is consuming him.

Juanita Rossi, *age 29, beloved wife and mother*

- **Link:** interviewed by the investigators (**Going the Distance,** page 162).

Juanita (De La Cruz) Rossi is an immigrant from the Dominican Republic. She and her husband Stefano have a remarkably happy marriage, free of trouble and strife. They are genuine friends and their affection is obvious to anyone. Juanita is a loving mother to three children, who are simply adorable. She and Stefano live simple lives devoted to one another and their family. The only dark cloud in her life stems from her dislike of her husband's cousins and her distaste of the violence inherent in boxing.

- **Description:** a young and beautiful Latinx woman, and full of life.
- **Traits:** strong, gracious, intelligent, and kind.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** welcomes the investigators into her home. Her family is the center of her world and she will protect it.

ADVERSARIES

Nahum Eliot, *age 34, morose and silent menace*

- **Link:** encountered during **Getting into the Ring** (page 159).
- **Link:** attempts to kill Rossi and the investigators (**A Volatile Reunion**, page 175).

Nahum is the elder of the Eliot brothers. He is surly and quiet, which often leads people to think of him as less intelligent than his more garrulous brother. The truth is that he is quite intelligent, an amateur scholar, and a capable sorcerer.

- **Description:** white male, thin and balding; he dresses in cheap, plain suits.
- **Trait:** stares with dead-eyed indifference.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** seldom speaks; he stares and gestures, sometimes punctuating this with a grunt or harrumph.

Joab Eliot, *age 31, slimy and smarmy*

- **Link:** encountered during **Getting into the Ring** (page 159).
- **Link:** attempts to kill Rossi and the investigators (**A Volatile Reunion**, page 175).

Joab is the younger of the Eliot brothers. He is chatty and considers himself quite the charmer, though most people find him disingenuous at best, and unctuous at worst.

- **Description:** a short, white male, who dresses in expensive clothes (which he cannot afford). He wears copious amounts of aftershave, which does not quite hide his unpleasant body odor.
- **Traits:** creepy and unpleasant.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** an odious individual; a true coward and a cad, Joab defers to strong men and is utterly insufferable towards women.

Rhoda (née Eliot) Rossi, *age 56, lost soul*

- **Link:** trails the investigators (**The Widow**, page 165).

Rhoda Rossi is the long-vanished and thought-dead mother of Stefano Rossi. Plagued by alien nightmares and wracked by a mysterious ailment, nothing remains of the innocent girl who fled Innsmouth. Rhoda is a lurking figure in Harlem, shadowing her family from afar, barely glimpsed from debris-cluttered alleys, and from behind boarded windows. Rhoda eventually seeks out the investigators, enlisting their aid and, in so doing, reveals the true horror of the situation.

Rhoda appears as a large, bulky, vaguely feminine figure. She is swathed in black clothes from head to toe. She wears a large, decrepit Easter bonnet, fitted with a filthy opaque veil, atop her misshapen head. Her gait is an unsteady, shuffling limp. Only rarely does she speak, and then only in a low, croaking whisper; the tone is so unpleasant and alien that listeners seldom recall her words.

- **Description:** a hulking figure draped in dark clothes. From a distance, she is a pitiful wretch; while in close proximity; she reeks of fish.
- **Traits:** mad and guilty of terrible crimes; a pitiable menace.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** a monster who does not pose an immediate threat to the investigators. Rhoda tries, in her garbled and liquid voice, to entreat the investigators to help her son.

INDEPENDENTS

Atticus "The Abacus" Lewis, *age 53, genius bookmaker*

- **Links:** warns the investigators about the Haragan gang (**Tea with Atticus**, page 172).

Atticus "The Abacus" Lewis is a bookmaker operating out of the Morningside Teahouse. He has a very prescribed method for arranging bets and becomes peevish is this is not followed. Lewis possesses a wealth of knowledge about Harlem, though he shares this only begrudgingly.

- **Description:** wears his age lightly and is always impeccably dressed.
- **Traits:** observant and guarded.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** investigators find him curious about their bets; he's more interested in learning from them rather than answering their questions. A reasonable man, he's not opposed to a quid-pro-quo arrangement.

James "Jimmy" Harris, *age 28, former and future opponent of Rossi*

- **Links:** encountered at the Cotton Club (**Dead Boxer Waiting**, page 170).

Harris works at the Cotton Club as a janitor, and is also a journeyman boxer and scheduled to be Stefano Rossi's next opponent. He's an experienced fighter who holds a previous victory over Rossi and is confident about his chances, despite his opponent's recent winning streak.

- **Description:** big and athletic. Not a wealthy man, his clothes are worn, but well maintained.
- **Traits:** a native of Mississippi, full of Southern charm.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** open and honest, he genuinely likes Rossi and has no fear of him

Valentino Cherisi, *age 48, Rossi's former manager*

- **Links:** interviewed by the investigators (**A Bum Rap**, page 170).

Cherisi managed Stefano Rossi until he was "persuaded" to release the fighter to the Eliots' control. Despite being unscrupulous and an expert swindler himself, Cherisi realizes he was swindled by the Eliots and is quite bitter about the whole situation.

- **Description:** white male; while a former boxer, his once-excellent physique is fading to middle-aged plumpness.
- **Traits:** gruff, greedy, and callous.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** Cherisi is angry and confused by the situation with Rossi and the Eliots.

Mack Morton, *age 51, grief-stricken trainer*

- **Links:** interviewed by the investigators (**Sorrow by Any Other Name**, page 170).

A longtime trainer affiliated with Butler Jones, Morton saw his most promising fighter, Lance Rawls, die in the ring. He's utterly devastated and is drowning his considerable sorrow with cheap liquor. His perpetual hangdog expression is even more marked as of late by his drinking and depression at the death of his charge.

- **Description:** a tall, wiry, and light-complexioned black man, capable of passing for white, with a perpetual hangdog expression, which is more pronounced of late by his drinking and depressive state.
- **Traits:** grieving and plagued by guilt.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** feels he should have thrown in the towel to stop the fight; however, he was confident Rawls was up on points and would have won if he had gone the distance. Such conflicting thoughts are causing him anguish.

Arnold "Tubby" Simmons, *age 56, Rossi's grizzled trainer*

- **Links:** interviewed by the investigators (**Getting into the Ring**, page 159).

Simmons has been with Stefano Rossi since the beginning and has seen him evolve, having trained the boxer for his entire career. He is extremely pleased to see *his* fighter coming into his own.

- **Description:** a small man, he's in excellent condition for his age.
- **Trait:** optimistic to a fault.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** can provide insight if pushed, but his natural tendency to only see the best in people can blind him to the truth.

Cary Tierney, *age 27, disgruntled waiter*

- **Links:** provides insight into the Eliots (**A Helpful Tip**, page 161).

Tierney is a waiter at the Lenox Avenue Athletic club. He's disgusted by the behavior of the Eliots (and their lousy tips). He knows the brothers' routines and is willing to share this information.

- **Description:** average-sized white male, with nondescript features, dressed in the uniform of the club's serving staff.
- **Trait:** annoyed, opportunistic.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** a pragmatic fellow, he looks to recoup his losses by working with investigators.

SCENES

START: SPARRING WITH THE CHAMP

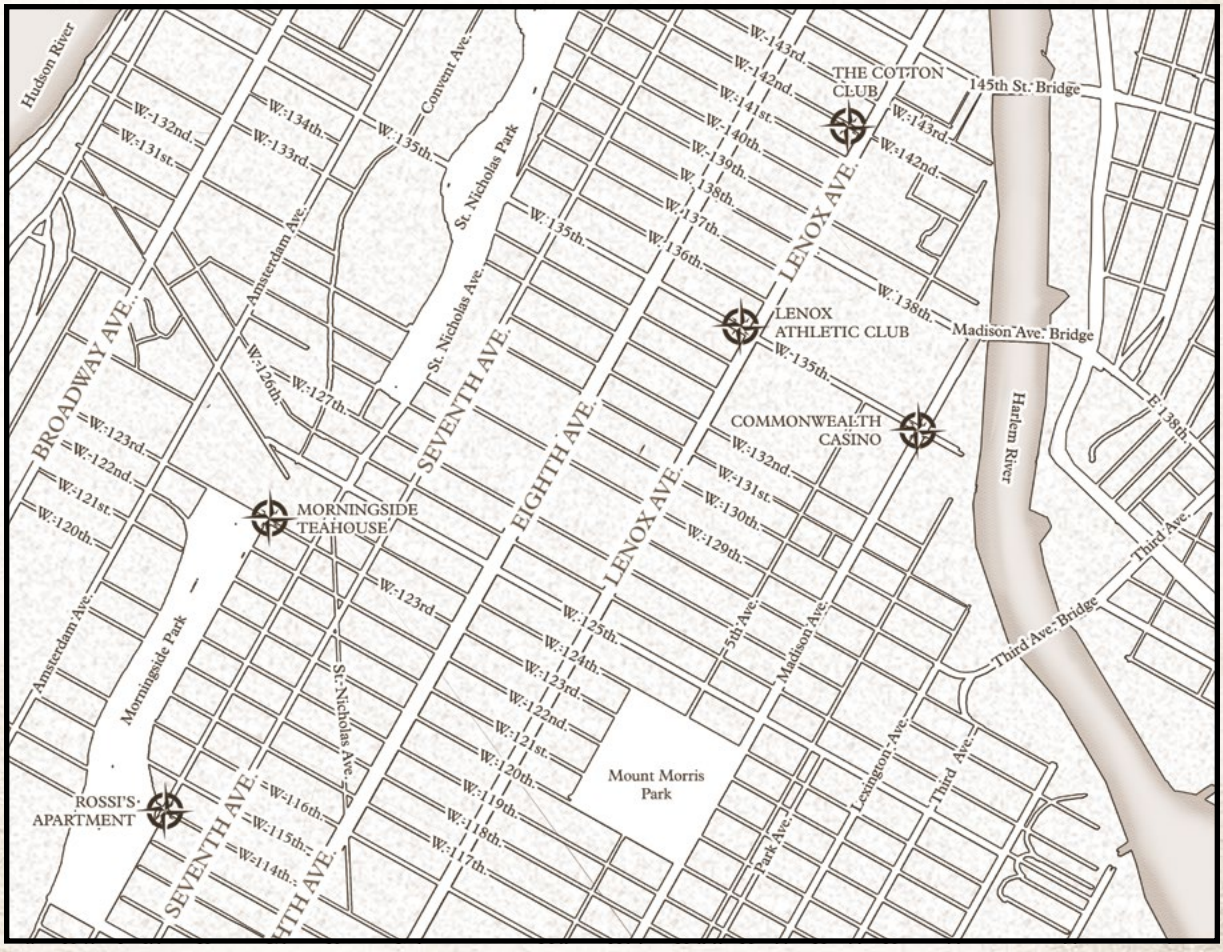
It's a busy Monday night at the Cotton Club (142nd Street and Lenox Avenue). The band is in full swing, and everyone is having a great time. Everyone that is, except for Jack Johnson. The former heavyweight champion is upset and has contacted the investigators for assistance.

On arrival, the doorman recognizes the investigators based on descriptions given by Johnson and waves them in, advising they go directly to the manager's office. He doesn't elaborate, telling them his boss is not happy and is waiting for his guests. If pressed, he says, "The boss ain't mad at you, yet. Keep him stewing though, and he will be."

Inside, white patrons are enjoying the dancing and the music. The place is busy, noisy, and the booze is flowing freely. Whether arriving singly or in a group, the maître d' smoothly ushers the investigators into Johnson's office.

KEY LOCATIONS

- **Cotton Club:** 142nd Street and Lenox Avenue.
- **Lenox Athletic Club:** 135th Street and Lenox Avenue.
- **Rossi apartment:** 114th and Lexington.
- **O'Brien's Gym**: 1523 Amsterdam Avenue.
- **The Widow's lair:** Harlem Sewers.
- **Commonwealth Casino:** East 135th Street.
- **Morningside Teahouse:** 123rd Street and Morningside



The Contender Keeper map

Curious glances from the patrician crowd follow their movement through the club.

Johnson's office barely accommodates all the investigators, let alone Johnson. It's crowded and hot. The former champion, a giant of a man, sits behind the desk. His broad shoulders are hunched with tension, and he continually clenches and unclenches his big hands (it's difficult to put the thought of the damage they could do out of one's mind). Seated across from Johnson is another man.

Keeper note: a successful **Lore (Harlem)** or Hard **Know** roll identifies the man as Butler Jones, a boxing manager. Harlem locals may recall that Jones has represented many fighters over the years, and is a passionate proponent of the sport. He is pretty much the boxing expert of Harlem. He's considered to be a good man who does his best for his fighters. While he has never boxed himself, he's adept at the business side of the fight game and respected for making good matches and delivering solid purses.

Johnson's anger is palpable—he is annoyed if anyone shows up late and considers the last investigator to *be* late. He berates this person mercilessly unless calmed with a Hard **Charm** or **Fast Talk** roll. Taking a pause, he then he gets down to business. If the investigators have met Johnson before, they know the normally jovial man is not usually angry.

"You ever heard of the boxer, Sir Lance Rawls? He was an up and comer, a boy with a real chance. He was fast and strong. Not as big as me, but quicker, I'll give him that. He was moving up the ranks. Then he got in the ring with Stefano Rossi, that no-good, cheating goon. That bum should have had no chance against Rawls. He was a washed-up loser, but somehow, he won. And he didn't just win, he murdered that boy! Rawls fell down in his dressing room, and he never got back up. Never woke up. Now, this dirty, cheating son of a bitch is going to be fighting that dumb ox, hayseed Jimmy Harris (see **Dead Boxer Waiting**, page 170). I can't have Rossi killing another fighter, especially since Jimmy works for me and is a damn fine man."

By the end of recounting his story, Johnson is seething with rage. Too frustrated to continue, he hurls a wad of papers at the investigators (**Contender Handout 1: Rawls Fight**). As they read the clippings, Butler Jones introduces himself. Jones, like Johnson, is incensed by Rawls' death; Rawls was one of the best fighters he had ever seen. As Johnson is unable to do anything more than seethe, Jones invites questions from the investigators. Use the following points to build this conversation.

RACIAL TENSION MODIFIER

When the investigator and their target are of different races or cultures, increase the difficulty of the roll (such as a social skill roll) by one level (Regular becomes Hard, Hard becomes Extreme). If necessary, at the Keeper's discretion, an additional penalty die may be applied, dependent on the circumstances. This modifier reflects the mistrust between different groups.

Contender Handout 1: Rawls Fight

FIGHT ENDS IN TRAGEDY

The fifteen-round fight started out well for Sir Lance Rawls, who was clearly much quicker than the older Stefano Rossi, and whose punches carried more snap. Rossi's punches were slower but he was bigger than Rawls, and he appeared stronger. Rossi "heavy hands" delivering noticeable results. As the fight wore on, Rossi's slow pace felt relaxed and calculated, keeping him fresh throughout the fight. Rawls, on the other hand, was taking hard damage, seemingly wearing him down as the bout wore on, and opening him up to a series of devastating punches from the plodding Rossi. At the end of the fourteenth round, Rossi looked unfazed, while Rawls was exhausted and scarcely able to stand. Despite the look of the fighters, Rawls was leading on point. All he had to do was finish on his feet and he'd win the match.

Rawls' corners were shouting for him to "Get on his bicycle" but despite his best efforts, the young fighter was too tired. Rossi continued to hound his opponent, forcing Rawls into a corner, allowing Rossi to unleash a ten-punch combination, each hit landing with a heavy thud. Rawls went down, and the fight was stopped, with Rossi the victor. In a tragic postscript to the bout, Rawls collapsed in his dressing room and later died of his injuries.

What Jones knows:

- He signed Rawls shortly after the young fighter won an amateur tournament.
- He was impressed by Rawls' natural ability and his work ethic. He immediately assigned his top trainer, Mack Morton, to train him (see **Sorrow by any Other Name**, page 170).
- Rawls was fast, strong, and tough. He could have been a top contender—and with training and dedication, possibly even the heavyweight champion of the world.
- Normally, he wouldn't have taken a fight with Rossi, since everyone knew that his old manager, Valentino Cherisi was crooked (see **A Bum Rap**, page 170); however, Rossi had been looking good lately, and not taking dives since the two New Englanders took over his management.
- It was a good fight for Rawls since Rossi was a known figure who had been recently winning, and a victory would be a great notch in Rawls' belt.
- Now, Jones can't believe that Rossi beat Rawls so badly, and thinks his new managers may be even worse than his old one.
- Jones did not see anything strange during the fight. He cannot point to anything specific as the cause of the loss.
- Rossi trains at the Lenox Athletic Club (**Getting into the Ring**, following).

A successful **Persuade**, **Charm**, or **Psychology** roll gets Johnson back into the conversation. In his boxing experience, he cannot fathom how an aging, slow, flabby-looking, and flat-footed shuffler like Rossi could ever beat Rawls. With a sight, he admits that he has never actually seen Rossi in the ring, but everything he's ever heard about Rossi points to the conclusion that Rawls should have won.

Johnson doesn't care where the investigators begin, but he wants answers and wants to know about Rossi and his new managers. If the investigators want to talk money, Johnson pulls out a roll of cash, disgustedly flinging three ten-dollar bills at them, while berating them for money-grubbing when they should want to do this for free. He says they will get more cash when they bring him results. He says they should regularly report into him, to make sure he's kept abreast of developments.

GETTING INTO THE RING

- **Link:** interview with Jack Johnson and Butler Jones (**Sparring with the Champ**, page 157).

When the investigators visit the Lenox Athletic Club, their reception depends on their occupation and/or the credibility of their cover story. Journalists are always welcome, but other professions (especially private investigators and police officers) are coolly received. A successful **Credit Rating** roll (apply a bonus die for advantageous occupations) or a successful **Charm** or **Fast Talk** roll opens the way for the investigators. The integrated club is largely operated by white managers with an all-black staff.

The club (at 135th Street and Lenox Avenue) is a small, members-only boxing gym catering to professionals and serious amateurs seeking a good environment for intense training and fight preparation. A small bar and restaurant (open only to members and special guests) is attached to the gym. The well-maintained and fashionable club features a reception, dining area, and bar with dark mahogany wood polished to a shine. Its gaslight fixtures are artfully modified to accommodate electric lighting. The building's lower level houses the boxing gym. The locker rooms are clean and staffed. Each club member has their own locker, with an assigned keyed lock; the attendant takes the key when the member leaves the locker room.

The gym lacks the aesthetics of the bar, as it is designed for functionality. Areas for shadow boxing, heavy bag work, and other aspects of the sport are situated around a 16 foot (4.8 m) sparring ring. In all, the space is small, but carefully arranged so as not to be overcrowded. It's noisy and busy, with a number of fighters working out at the various stations. Some have dedicated trainers working one-on-one with them (professional fighters preparing for upcoming fights), while others (amateurs) train in groups.

The gym's staff are protective of the fighters, especially the professionals, and do not readily permit them to be bothered. The amateurs are easier to access and can be a good source of knowledge about the fight game, but they have no insight into the business operations of the Eliots or the other relevant aspects of the investigation. If the investigators want to speak with Stefano Rossi himself, they find only roadblocks. No matter when or who they ask about Rossi, he is never "present," but his former trainer, Tubby Simmons, is pointed out to them (**Tubby's Statement**, following). Likewise, if asking about Rossi's new managers, the investigators are told to speak to the Eliot brothers (**Interviewing the Eliots**, below).

Keeper note: the investigators will not be able to speak with Stefano Rossi at the gym; if they attempt to approach him, they are barred by his trainers, or if causing a ruckus, have the Eliot brothers arrive, which gets them thrown out. To speak with Rossi, the investigators must catch him outside the gym (see **Going the Distance**, page 162).

Tubby's Statement

Rossi is trained by a former lightweight fighter, Arnold "Tubby" Simmons, called Tubby since he was overweight as a child. His skill has transcended race, a miraculous feat in this time, with black and white fighters both seeking him out for his expertise and experience. Even though he is in his early fifties, Simmons is in excellent physical condition and looks like he could easily go ten rounds.

Simmons is very proud of his fighter, Stefano Rossi, and considers him a marvel. He has worked with Rossi for years, but never really thought much of him until recently. A successful **Psychology** roll notes a wistful tone in his voice; if asked about it, he strongly suspected Rossi of taking dives on the instruction of his former manager Valentino Cherisi (see **A Bum Rap**, page 170). Now, after years of middling performances, Rossi is emerging and seems to have fully dedicated himself to his craft. He is winning fights now that he would have lost years ago. Relay the following points in the conversation.

What Simmons says about Rossi:

- Rossi's not graceful, but he can take a ton of punishment and never lets up.
- Rossi seems to be stronger than ever, and no one wants to spar with him more than once.
- Simmons sees nothing unnatural in Rossi's recent victories; it's just experience in his opinion, heavyweights mature later in life than the lighter classes do. Rossi is just a late bloomer.
- Rossi is training harder for fights than ever before, and he's trying harder in the ring. It's making him a better father; he wants some good paydays for his growing family. Simmons bets Rossi would do anything to keep those kids safe.
- Rossi's biggest change is that he's finally showing a killer instinct. When he was younger, Rossi would ease up on a guy when he had him in trouble, but not anymore.
- He can provide Rossi's address and general schedule (**Going the Distance**, page 162).

If asked about Rossi's new management, a successful **Psychology** roll notes a change in Simmon's demeanor. If pressed with a successful **Charm**, **Persuade**, or **Intimidate** roll, he grudgingly admits that he doesn't like Rossi's new managers, the Eliot boys, but they have turned Rossi's career around and, in consequence, he owes them.

Interviewing the Eliots

Keeper note: the Eliots have been working hard to get Rossi a world title shot. His recent string of victories, and the recent impressive win over Sir Lance Rawls have pushed him up in the rankings. Getting a title fight is a real possibility and one that would put the Eliots on "easy street." Thus, the brothers are keeping their fighter close to them. Unbeknown to all, Nahum Eliot has used sorcery to tip the scales toward a foregone conclusion.

The Eliots typically do business between late morning and mid-afternoon, out of the Lenox Athletic Club. The bulk of their work is related to setting up and promoting fights for Rossi. The brothers work well together, with the naturally outgoing Joab doing most of the talking, while the quieter Nahum handles the paperwork. They occupy a large rear table near the bar above the gym.

The brothers bear a familial resemblance: both are of middle height, a bit paunchy around the middle, with prematurely receding and thinning greasy-looking black hair. Their complexion is pale, though they do (in a certain light) appear to have a slightly olive or perhaps jaundiced tint to their skin—a successful **Medicine** roll suggests the brothers could be suffering from jaundice, although for them both to suffering from it is a little strange. They have weak chins, slightly protuberant eyes, and thin lips. Their teeth are small and narrow. The elder, Nahum, has a wispy, barely visible mustache, and dresses in a simple, though well-tailored, black-and-white suit. Joab is far more flamboyant; one of his front teeth is gold, and he dresses in loudly colored suits. Speaking with the Eliots is an unpleasant experience. Every word they utter seems to be laced with sarcasm, irony, or condescension.

Keeper note: the club's bouncers are mostly amateur or semi-pro boxers working for free access to the gym. These men are always nearby, and intervene quickly and violently

should an argument between the investigators and the Eliot brothers grow serious.

If the investigators ask for the Eliots in the bar, the brothers are curious about the visitors, but not curious enough to stop their conversation unless the investigators have a **Credit Rating** of 60 or higher—if so, the investigators gain a bonus die to a **Charm**, **Fast Talk**, or **Persuade** roll, which if successful, has the brothers gesture for the investigators to take a seat. As he hands the telephone off to Nahum, Joab asks the investigators if they are buying food or drinks for him and his brother? A successful **Psychology** roll suggests that Joab is gauging how serious the investigators are about the conversation. If the investigators refuse to buy lunch, the brothers look bored and say they don't have time for timewasters, then proceed to ignore the investigators by making new calls. The situation can be retrieved by calling over a waiter for a menu, and with a successful **Fast Talk** or **Persuade** roll at Hard difficulty to get the brothers to reconsider.

Assuming lunch is ordered and paid for, the brothers are happy to converse. While they assume the investigators want to arrange a fight or something along those lines, they entertain other topics. They will discuss Stefano Rossi and their relationship with him, mentioning how fate brought them to their long-lost cousin. Use the following points in the resulting conversation.

- They have always been big fight fans and turned their love of the sport into a family business.
- Harlem is a land of promise; Joab admits to having a couple of cops in their pockets, "That's why you're enjoying a Prohibition-free zone."
- If the investigators ask about joining the Lenox Athletic Club, Joab says they aren't "one of our people." Nahum jokingly adds, "You know, small-town folks."
- Rossi's going to be a real contender very soon. Under their guidance, he's giving every fight his all, and nobody can stand against him.
- They insist vehemently that Rossi's success couldn't have happened with his old manager. That "dirtbag" was holding him back, making him take dives against bums he could have destroyed.
- If asked about the Rawls fight, the brothers show no sympathy for the dead man. A successful **Psychology** roll detects their complete lack of concern over the loss of human life. Nahum especially seems unconcerned, saying it was not their fighter's fault, saying Rossi did what he needed to win, and that's that. In fact, both think the death was actually a good thing, as it has given Rossi's reputation the edge it lacked before.
- If asked about their past, the brothers are evasive. A successful **Charm** or Hard **Persuade** roll gets them to admit they're from New England, but they don't say where exactly. Instead, they talk about fishing and wanting to get to the big city. If this line of questioning continues too far, it annoys them and leads them to conclude the conversation. If the investigators persist, the brothers have them thrown out.
- Any mention of Jack Johnson or the Cotton Club catches Joab's interest. He says he's been meaning to visit the club and would love to meet Johnson, and asks if the investigators could introduce them—he requests this no matter how the conversation has gone.

As the investigators leave, a successful **Listen** roll catches Joab whisper to Nahum, asking if he is going to the Sugar Shack tonight. Nahum gives a steely glare and shakes his head no, saying it's back to the apartment for him.

A Helpful Tip

Once their business is concluded and they are leaving the club, the investigators are approached by a slim man whom they recognize as the waiter who served them during their conversation with the Eliots. Cary Tierney introduces himself and says he overheard their conversation. Tierney is disgusted by the brothers' boorish behavior, vile habits, and reluctance to tip adequately. He blatantly insinuates that if he is given some cash, he can share what he knows about them. Tierney wants $20 but will drop his demand to $10 with a successful **Fast Talk** or **Persuade** roll; alternatively, a successful **Intimidate** roll get him to share what he knows for free.

Tierney is eager to share what he's overheard and witnessed about the Eliots. He says they are small-time crooks who depend on every win their cousin makes to fund their operation. That's why they are desperate to book more fights, as they are making a bundle betting on their cousin. Nobody expected Rossi to win the Rawls fight, but the brothers were absolutely certain of it, and bet every cent they had on Rossi. Tierney is convinced the Eliots have insider knowledge or are somehow pulling the strings to ensure the outcomes of their fights.

Going further, Tierney says the Eliots have some strange habits. During the day, the brothers are always together, but at night they often split up. The older one, Nahum, seldom goes out; he's very much the homebody, staying in his apartment like a hermit. The younger one is just the opposite. Joab stays out all night, going all over Harlem, up and down, from the best places to the worst. There is a rumor around that he likes professional girls, and that he gets them from Bruno Greco, the notorious pimp and former member of the Giovanni gang (see **Breeding the Future**, page 168). If it seems like

INVESTIGATING THE ELIOTS

The investigators are likely to be frustrated after speaking with the slippery Eliots. While they are highly suspicious, there is little to incriminate the brothers. Additional information—some plainly incriminating, some damning, and some highly disturbing—can be discovered by observing their behavior, trailing them, and scouring their dwellings.

Once the business day is done, the brothers go their separate ways. Nahum retires to his apartment (**A Night In**, page 169), while Joab begins a night on the town (**A Night Out**, page 167). Neither brother drives, so they can be easily tailed. The address to Nahum's apartment can be learned from Cary Tierney (**A Helpful Tip**), but he doesn't know where Joab lives.

the investigators plan to talk to Greco, Tierney warns them that he is violent and unpredictable. Tierney promises to let the investigators know if anything else develops.

GOING THE DISTANCE

- **Link**: Jack Johnson (**Sparring with the Champ**, page 157).
- **Link**: Arnold "Tubby" Simmons provides Rossi schedule and home address (**Getting into the Ring**, page 159).

Though he is very friendly, Rossi can be tricky to interview. With his recent success as a boxer, he has quit his job as a stevedore and now splits his time between his home—a fourth-floor apartment (#403) at 114th and Lexington—and Lenox Athletic Club. He leaves his apartment before dawn and runs for an hour, ending up at the gym, where he eats breakfast and trains until 16:00 or 17:00, and then runs for another hour, ending up at his home. While at the gym, he is insulated by the staff and his trainers. Pesky investigators draw the ire of the staff and are shown the door.

Investigators can catch Rossi on his morning or afternoon run between his home and the club with a **Luck** roll, or with no roll if they have his schedule from Tubby Simmons. Doing so, they have to keep up, as Rossi doesn't slow his pace. With a successful **Charm**, **Fast Talk**, or **Persuade** roll, Rossi says he can't talk now but tells the investigators to come by his place one evening.

The Rossi Home

Stefano Rossi lives in a fourth-floor apartment with his wife Juanita and their three children. The apartment is small, clean, and comfortable. The parents share a small bedroom, while the children all pile onto a Murphy bed in the main living area at night. The kitchen is redolent of the Caribbean and Italian cuisine the happy couple prepares together; each mealtime, the family dines around a battered old table in the living room.

Juanita is a Dominican immigrant and speaks English with a charming, melodic accent. She is quite striking, and Rossi positively beams when speaking about her. He says they met when he was working on the docks, and that she was the only thing he ever stole from there. Juanita shushes him and explains that they did meet shortly after she arrived in this country. She felt bad for him and needed someone to open jars and get things off of high shelves, so she took him in. This sort of playful banter goes back and forth between the couple.

The children Alberto (seven), Anthony (five), and Ava (three) are well behaved and cherubic. Alberto is a serious young man and helps look after the younger children. Anthony is energetic and imitates his father, striking a boxer's stance and shuffling forward while swinging his skinny arms in a comical fashion. Little Ava is a beautiful child who is every bit the lady. She has her father wrapped around her little finger and is by his side nearly all of the time.

ROSSI'S METAMORPHOSIS

Though born appearing to all the world as normal humans, a deep one hybrid inevitably transform over time into an utterly inhuman creature. The end result may be the same, but the course each one travels is unique to the individual. In Rossi's case, he is transforming slowly, and his initial changes are largely internal. His bones are growing denser, while his muscle tissues have taken on alien properties, making him stronger and increasing his stamina. Currently, these are the only changes, but he is only a matter of weeks away from developing outward changes. He'll begin to lose his hair, and will develop patches of dry and scaly skin; however, his mind will alter even more rapidly than his body. Soon he will begin to hear the call of the sea, and his dreams will become haunted. Depending on the course of the scenario, the investigators may see Rossi's changing appearance.

Visitors are graciously welcomed into the home. It's a chaotic scene. The thrilled children entertain visitors and chatter away, climbing onto laps and asking endless questions. Juanita insists on feeding the investigators, no matter what time of day they drop in, while Rossi invites them to take seats around the dining table. The hospitality is a little overwhelming but utterly genuine.

Rossi's Backstory

Rossi happily tells the story of his parents' romance, although he does not know the specific details—he knows they met when his father was working in a New England coastal town. Of his mother, Rossi remembers little: she was kind and beautiful, as all mothers are to their children, but she grew sick and he and his father had to move away. At this point, the normally ebullient Rossi grows wistful, saying that he wished his father had stuck by his mother's side. A successful **Psychology** roll confirms that Rossi was not close to his father; indeed, if this is voiced, Rossi hints that his father did not approve of his marriage to Juanita.

Rossi's Boxing Career

Regarding his boxing career, Rossi says he began boxing in his teens; he was a fat kid and was being bullied, so boxing was a way to get into shape. He enjoyed some success as an amateur, and lacking any other real prospects, decided to start boxing professionally in 1912 when he was 22. He had attained 24 wins, 4 losses, and 13 knockouts by 1916, but with the advent of the Great War, he enlisted and served overseas in a non-combat role. He returned in 1919 and resumed his boxing career. Although he did not experience combat directly, Rossi witnessed much suffering during the war, which (he says) diminished his killer instinct, and his career suffered as a result. A successful **Charm**, **Fast Talk**, or **Persuade** roll gets him to confess (with some shame) that he began taking dives at the instruction of his then-manager, Valentino Cherisi (see **A Bum Rap**, page 170). It's clear that he doesn't like talking about this period in his career. His post-war record was a poor: 4 wins and 9 losses. With his boxing career going nowhere fast, Juanita wanted him to quit. He had just about made up his mind to take his wife's advice when two fellows happened to walk into O'Brien's Gym and struck up a conversation with him. Just like him, they were looking to change their situation, and what's more, they were related to him! In what Stefano sees as an amazing coincidence, the two men, who introduced themselves as Joab and Nahum Eliot, were his cousins on his mother's side. The Eliots explained that they had been cut loose by their father, and had been making their way the best they could. They were doing well but were hungry for more. His cousins were sympathetic when Rossi talked to them about his stagnating career. Joab and Nahum said they knew Rossi could do better, and that, just like them, he just needed a change. One thing led to another, and Rossi left his old manager in favor of having the Eliots manage his boxing career. This new arrangement has been in place months, and Rossi's career has turned around; he's won 6–0, with 6 knockouts since he's been with the brothers.

If asked what changed, Rossi replies that he's not sure. At his insistence, the brothers kept his old trainer (Arnold "Tubby" Simmons); Rossi regrets he had previously let Tubby down but is now making amends. He's fully committed and training hard, and doing everything Tubby asks. Essentially, the advice he's been given is to "fight his fight, keep constant pressure on his opponent, and wear them down." He shrugs and says that he's not a polished boxer, and more of a mauler, so this strategy plays to all of his strengths. So far, it's been working brilliantly. He goes on to say that he doesn't "let guys off the hook anymore." If his opponent is in trouble, Rossi doubles his attacks and goes for a knockout. A successful Hard **Psychology** roll detects a shadow passing over Rossi's face: on a subconscious level, he feels guilty, even though he is unaware of it.

The Rawls' Fight

Rossi doesn't want to talk about the Rawls fight, but will do so if pressed. His story of the fight concurs with the reports in the newspapers.

- Rossi speaks very highly of Rawls, saying he had incredible heart; the man was very fast and looked great.
- Rawls didn't hit very hard. (A successful **INT** or **Know** roll considers this statement unlikely, as Rawls had 20 knockouts in 22 fights.)

LATIN HARLEM

Locals of Harlem know that a large number of Puerto Rican and Latin Americans have been migrating to Harlem since the Great War. Taking up residence in the western areas of East Harlem (or Italian Harlem) around 110th and Lexington Avenue. In two to three decades, Italian Harlem becomes Spanish Harlem and slowly spreads out. The rent is cheap, people ask few questions, and it has the protection of the Italian gangs.

- Going into the 10th round, Rossi admits that he thought he'd lost the fight, although Rawls was starting to tire. And then, something changed.
- By the 15th round, Rossi knew he had won; Rawls had nothing left and was standing on will alone. "Once Rawls was backed into the corner, I unloaded on him. I tried to take it easy, but I had a job to do."

With this last statement, a successful **Psychology** roll notes Rossi is hiding something. A **Charm** or **Persuade** at Hard difficulty encourages him to admit, "in the last couple of fights, I have felt much stronger. Around the fifth round, I seem to get this burst of adrenaline, and it stays with me until the end of the fight. All I can see is a red haze." With this, Rossi is clearly emotional and upset. He deeply regrets what happened and didn't want to hurt Rawls. Rawls' corner should have stopped the fight. For a while, after Rawls' death, he thought about quitting, but he has a family to feed. Plus, he's a real contender now. Rossi and his family light candles for Rawls at the Church of St. Mark the Evangelist. If Rossi wins the title, he vows to dedicate the fight to Rawls and will ensure the dead man's family are taken care of.

Keeper note: a successful **Psychology** roll can confirm Rossi's sincerity; he is being completely honest. He regrets Rawls' death but does not feel particularly responsible, projecting the bulk of the blame on Rawls' handlers. If any insinuations are made about Rossi cheating, he attributes this to the investigators' ignorance of the fight game; however, if the investigators are rude or belligerent, he warns them to calm down. Should they continue in this fashion, he tosses them out of his home—and won't talk to them at the gym.

New Managers

Asked further about Joab and Nahum Eliot, Rossi speaks highly of them. They've turned his career around and seem to know what they're doing. They certainly treat Rossi better than Cherisi did as well, expecting him to win rather than lose fights, and not asking him to take dives. Rossi admits that his cousins are a bit wild, but that's his only criticism of the pair. If the investigators have yet to meet the Eliots, Rossi says they can find Joab Eliot at the Sugar Shack most evenings (see **A Night Out**, page 167).

Keeper note: a successful **Spot Hidden** or **Psychology** roll notes that Juanita seems to scowl disapprovingly while Rossi praises the Eliots. She won't say anything in front of her husband, but if an investigator goes into the kitchen with her, and makes a successful **Charm**, **Fast Talk**, or **Persuade** roll, she speaks freely.

Juanita's Opinion

Juanita does not like the Eliots. While she can't deny that they have been good to her husband and that he's now much happier fighting for them, she believes the Eliots are strange men, who don't seem anything at all like her husband—despite being cousins. Yes, the Eliots come from New England, like her husband, but there the similarity ends. All in all, Juanita finds Joab and Nahum Eliot extremely unpleasant; she prefers to keep her distance, as the younger one leers at her, while the older one, the "one with the dead eyes," has never said a word to her—Ava took one look at Nahum and started bawling.

Upcoming Fights

Rossi's next fight is a rematch with Jimmy Harris, who he lost to in 1920—this was Rossi's first loss after coming back from the war. He Remembers it was a tough fight, marking the start of his career's downturn. The rematch is important, for the first time in a long time, Rossi is heavily favored. He's very confident he'll win and avenge the former loss. If asked whether he plans on using different tactics to those of the Rawls fight, Rossi says no. While has no ill will against Harris, it's clear that he would enjoy settling the old score.

Before his late-career surge, the Rossi family lived a meager existence. Now, they seem to be close to having a more comfortable life. Rossi says that once he beats Harris, he could be a fight or two away from a world title shot—the wonder this instills in him and his family is plain to see. He goes on to say, with a dreamy look on his face, that he would love to buy a house: a real home for his family, with a yard and a fireplace, someplace by the sea. He pauses and remarks that he's been dreaming of the sea as of late, which he attributes it to his days working on the docks.

The Children

As the scene progresses, Rossi's children play around the adults. From time to time, Anthony and Ava clamor for the investigators' attention. One interaction involves Ava handing one of the investigators a drawing, which she explains is a picture of their family, so the investigators can remember them when they leave. All of the Rossi family is represented in Ava's drawing, but what's interesting is the shadowy figure in the background. If asked about the ghostly figure, Ava explains it is her "guardian angel," who she sees in church but who also follows her around sometimes. Juanita and Rossi are at a loss to explain Ava's words, dismissing it as an active imagination. If the investigators ask Anthony about the drawing, he calls Ava a "dumb-dumb head."

The Rossis are fine hosts, entertaining the investigators until it is time for the children to go to bed. Upon departing, unless the investigators were poorly behaved, Juanita invites them to stop by again, and Rossi promises to get them ringside seats for the Harris fight.

Keeper note: the investigator given Ava's drawing gains a bonus die to their Spot Hidden skill when attempting to notice the **Widow** (nearby).

CHASING DOWN A DREAM

- **Link:** scene is triggered when the investigators visit Rossi at home (**Going the Distance**, page 162).

Rain is falling hard when the investigators leave Stefano Rossi's home. Call for a **Spot Hidden** roll to notice a shadowy, veiled figure across the street, who seems to be watching the investigators. Upon seeing this figure, the investigators recall they have seen this figure before on Harlem's streets—in fact, the investigators now remember seeing it: in Ava's drawing. As this realization dawns, the individual shuffles back into an alley, squeezing in between the wall and a large delivery truck parked there. By the time the investigators cross the street, the figure has vanished. A successful **Track** or Hard **Spot Hidden** finds a slimy trail, smelling of fish, leading into an alley. In the alley, there are few places to hide: a truck parked in the alley, two doors in the adjoining buildings, and a manhole cover.

THE WIDOW

Rhoda (née Eliot) Rossi is still alive—and contrary to what her son thinks, has not abandoned him. When Stefano Rossi was a young boy, Rhoda began to undergo physiological changes, causing her great discomfort. Her doctors were unable to diagnose the situation; thus, Rhoda could find no help. With the departure of her husband and son, Rhoda turned to wandering the streets.

Rhoda knows there's something bad about Innsmouth, something terrible, evil, and horrifying. While her body changed, this wormy thought gnawed at her mind. Very little is left of the kind and happy girl who ran away from her family. As of late, she has been filled with a near-irresistible urge to return to Innsmouth. Such desires also come with a sense of frustration and violence, which sometimes force her to lash out. Now, Rhoda haunts the streets of Harlem, frequenting the places where her son and family live. She often follows the children to and from school, watching from afar; she does not interact with her family members, although she occasionally waves at Ava, the youngest of Rossi's children.

While the children are in school, Rhoda often visits the St. Mark the Evangelist Church. When she and Nunzio arrived in Harlem, she happily adopted his Roman Catholic faith. Despite Rhoda growing less human, she still attends Mass (a veil hides her physical transformation), and while considered somewhat odd, she is generally accepted by the multicultural parish community—even if she steadfastly maintains an understandably aloof presence.

Though Rhoda is routinely seen in Harlem: dressed in dark clothes and face hidden beneath a hat and veil, she is an anonymous derelict, quickly forgotten. Those who remember the strange woman call her "the Widow."

MEETING THE WIDOW

The two encounters with Rhoda Rossi are outlined. These scenes should escalate as the investigation progresses, serving to reveal the horrible fate that awaits Stefano Rossi.

- **Chasing Down a Dream**: the first encounter should take place after the investigators have met with Stefano Rossi and his family (**Going the Distance**, page 162). Here, the investigators notice Rhoda Rossi's dark form watching from the street.
- **A Guardian Angel's Plight:** ideally takes place on Thursday night, and serves to illustrate the doom posed by Rossi's heritage. Here, the investigators encounter Rhoda, getting the chance to hear her speak and glimpse her true form (bulging eyes, lip-less mouth, misshapen head, webbed fingers, and so on). In so doing, the investigators may deduce Stefan Rossi's ultimate fate.

- The Dodge delivery truck, parked at the alley's entrance and stacked high with boxes of produce, seems the most likely hiding place. Assuming the investigators searching the truck have made a successful **Stealth** roll, they determine no one is hiding in or on the vehicle. Noisy investigators may have to contend with Butch Giordano, the truck's white owner (currently resting inside the building next to the truck), who is none too happy about being woken up. He assumes the investigators are trying to steal some produce. A successful **Charm**, **Fast Talk**, or **Intimidate** roll gets Giordano to leave the investigators alone, as does a healthy "tip" of two dollars or more; otherwise, he shouts and rants until the police arrive, believing the investigators to be thieves.
- The doors to adjoining buildings are both locked, and a quick look at them reveals they have not been opened for some time, from the accumulation of dirt and debris around their frames.
- A successful **Spot Hidden** roll notices a small pool of slime and some claw marks on the edges of the manhole cover. Lifting the cover, the investigators stare into dark and swirling stormwater coursing through the large drain tunnel at some velocity. The foul-smelling water reeks of rotting sewage and is less than inviting.

Looking in the tunnel, a successful **Spot Hidden** detects a scrap of black cloth caught on a piece of wire grating. The cloth can easily be recovered with a successful **DEX** roll—if failed, see the following paragraph. The cloth is a simple, threadbare piece of black shawl, such as those worn by widows. If sufficient care was demonstrated in recovering the shawl, a large fish scale can be found tangled within it. Examining the scale with a **Science (Biology)** roll notes its flexibility and tactile strength, but its origin defies classification. The scale quickly deteriorates. The figure, who presumably disappeared into the drain, was wearing this shawl.

Should an investigator attempt to climb down into the nearly full sewer tunnel, ask for an **INT** or **CON** roll. A **CON** roll stops the investigator (from the stench), while an INT roll reminds them that this course of action is very unwise and dangerous. Should someone be foolish enough to try, a Hard **Swim** roll avoids being swept off the ladder. Otherwise, they are pulled in and swept along on a nightmare journey of the Harlem sewers, calling for a combined **CON** and **Luck** roll. If successful, the investigator suffers 1D4+1 damage but manages to grab a handle somewhere in the sewer system, allowing them to escape via another manhole cover somewhere in Harlem (of the Keeper's choosing). If failed, the investigator suffers 2D4+2 damage, catches a disease (determined by the Keeper), and washes up at the sewer's outlet into the Harlem River. Either way, the experience calls for a **Sanity** roll (1/1D4+1 loss).

A GUARDIAN ANGEL'S PLIGHT

- **Link:** scene takes place during the second half of the scenario, gearing up to the conclusion.

The timing of this night-time event is left to the Keeper's discretion. Rhoda Rossi has been watching the investigators look into her son's life. She senses they are trying to help him, and she knows that her time is running short. Out of desperation, she attempts to contact the investigators.

The investigators see the now-familiar black-clad, bulky form of Rhoda standing a short distance away, as they are transitioning from one location to another. This time, instead of fleeing, she beckons to them, moving her arm in an awkward motion. She then reaches down and, with one hand, picks up a manhole cover and proceeds to drop down into the hole. The ease with which the manhole cover is moved is startling.

Assuming the investigators are curious and follow after the strange figure, they find the sewer pipe is accessible (no water, just some pools on the bottoms that give off a terrible stench). A metal ladder provides access into the tunnel. Upon descending, the investigators see the figure standing 10 yards/meters away, beckoning them to follow. Should the investigators tarry and seem unwilling to enter the tunnel or climb down, the figure returns and beckons them once again.

The figure leads them a short distance, perhaps no more than a block or two, to a small chamber above the junction of four other tunnels. Here, it has set up its home. A filthy, partially broken rocking chair stands near one wall, while a heap of blankets lie atop a stinking and rotting, sewer-water-sodden mattress. Large piles of garbage litter the floor.

In a muffled, croaking, and inhuman voice, the figure says it is Rhoda Rossi, Stefano's mother. Continuing, Rhoda says she is sick and has been for a very long time; she lies down every night thinking she will die, but she wakes each morning. Her illness, she explains, is the result of a curse. Her father was a wicked man who sold his soul to the Devil, and she carries the taint of his wickedness within her. In turn, her own sin and wickedness passed the curse to Stefano, who has passed it along to his children.

Her words are vague, rambling, ill-defined, and addled. Any explanations are tinged with elements of her adopted Catholic faith, but illogical and theologically unsound. She becomes progressively agitated as she speaks, pacing restlessly about, glancing often at the pile of refuse, especially when she speaks of her own sin. While this is going, her garments become displaced and her veil slips aside revealing a horrible patch of mottled, grayish-green skin, provoking a **Sanity** roll (0/1). If the investigators do nothing to intervene, she eventually loses steam, her shoulders slump, and she flops down on the mattress and begins to weep.

During the course of Rhoda's confession or after it, the investigators can examine her dwelling. Besides the sad accouterments readily visible, the most notable things can be discovered if one chooses to dig through the refuse piles. These heaps of nauseating trash appear to be full of empty tin cans, broken bottles, bits of rags, and rotting matter; however, one of the heaps hides a worse horror. After a few moments of digging, the decaying corpse of a woman is revealed, whose face has been removed from the skull. Near the body is another corpse, that of a partially eaten infant—call for a **Sanity** roll (1D2/1D4+1).

Should the bodies be revealed, Rhoda howls, charges over, and shoves the investigator concerned aside, before beginning to pull the garbage back over the corpses. While doing this, her Easter bonnet falls off, revealing her awful visage. Almost entirely bald, except for a few patches of long, scraggly gray hair, her skin is the pale and mottled white of a frog's belly, while her face is covered with a rotting mask of human skin taken from the corpse of the woman in the garbage heap. The awful flesh mask is loosely strung around her head, sagging in places, and exposing a mouth far too wide, eyes too far separated, and teeth too numerous and sharp to belong to any human; call for a **Sanity** roll (1/1D6 loss).

The situation quickly escalates. Rhoda goes berserk, losing the last remnants of her sanity and humanity, as she lashes out violently at the investigators. While she initially attacks in a frothy rage, her anger quickly diminishes and demeanor changes to depression. Taunting the investigators to attack her, she does not defend herself, enticing them to end her tortured existence.

Rhoda Rossi

A NIGHT OUT

- **Link:** investigators learn of the Joab Eliot's habits (**A Helpful Tip**, page 161).
- **Link:** investigators trail Joab Eliot.

When the brothers' daily affairs have concluded, Joab changes into an even more garish outfit at the club and then retires to his new favorite speakeasy. Joab is a vexing guest and frequently wears out his welcome with his loud and obnoxious behavior, fondling of female guests, and indifferent attention to bar tabs. He has not yet ascended to the level of society at the more upscale establishments, like the Cotton Club, though he is eager to do so. He is persona non grata at many places, so he must now travel farther afield to get a drink and enjoy himself. His latest establishment is a middling Harlem location known as the Sugar Shack.

The Sugar Shack, a less than glamorous club, is a few blocks away from the Lenox Athletic Club. In a basement,

the club's handmade wooden door sign hangs from a chain on a hook in the brickwork outside; beneath the sign, scrawled on the bricks, is the legend "Members Only." Joab enters without difficulty, although the investigators are stopped by the doorman: a burly, bearded man named Omar. A successful **Fast Talk** or **Charm** roll gets them inside along with twenty-five cents; otherwise, a dollar bribe grants them temporary member status.

Compared to the excellent décor of the Cotton Club, the Sugar Shack is cheap and tawdry. Some effort has been made to elevate it above the status of a common neighborhood bar, such as the small area set aside for a band and the uneven dance floor. These additions have proven only moderately successful, the bar's patrons are a mix of hard drinkers (come for relief after another day of work) and ill-informed poseurs (trying to take in some of the good times they've heard so much about); Joab tends to gravitate towards the latter, avoiding the unwelcoming grunts and hard stares of the former.

If Joab sees the investigators and has already made their positive acquaintance, he calls out to them, greeting them as old friends. Joab refuses to talk of anything of substance unless the players succeed with a **Charm**, **Fast Talk**, or **Persuade** roll at Hard difficulty, preferring to get them to buy the drinks. He is a pest and leers over any female investigators in the group, with all the subtlety of a bull in a china shop. Should he be rebuffed, he quickly loses interest and begins to ogle other women in the bar. In short, he's a horrible, unctuous person and the worst company imaginable. Determined investigators, after much suffering, can only get him to repeat what they already heard from him—if this is their first meeting with Joab, he recounts the information given in **Interviewing the Eliots** (page 160).

After some time spent drinking and carousing, Joab makes a phone call and then leaves. If he's asked where he's going, he giddily says that he is going to see "a pimp about a whore." While he walks briskly away, the investigators can easily follow him.

Breeding the Future

Joab Eliot is happy for the investigators to tag along with him. He travels south, to an area referred to colloquially as "the Market." After looking around this seedy morass of human misery, he spies a tall, white Italian man—Bruno Greco—who stands next to a young Latinx woman dressed in a cheap, provocative style, who is clearly afraid, and who doesn't want to be here.

Greco is not a well-adjusted individual. If the investigators are accompanying Joab, he warns them that Greco is leery, and introduces them as "his friends." Greco glares at the investigators with suspicion. Any attempt to interfere with Greco and Joab's transaction elicits a stern reaction Greco, who tells the investigators to mind their own business. If the scene turns sour, Greco pulls out a .45 revolver, grabs the girl to use as a human shield (imposing a penalty die on attacks against him), and opens fire. It's swift, sudden, and apparently a practiced maneuver. Joab flees the instant that violence ensues.

If the scene proceeds peacefully, the pair get to business and exchange hushed words, which are difficult to overhear in the noisy street, although a successful Hard **Listen** roll catches the drift: Joab wishes to procure the services of the girl next to Greco (Alice), who is, in his words, is a "fresh young filly." Joab hands over a fistful of bills and Greco gestures with a flourish to the girl beside him. Joab takes Alice's hand and dashes away to rent a room in a seedy hotel that charges by the hour and which does not provide mints on pillows.

Once Alice and Joab have departed, Greco seems happier—a **Charm**, **Persuade** or **Intimidate** roll will get him to open up. The story Greco tells paints a somewhat criminal and damning portrait of Joab Eliot. The pair met a year ago, and Greco has been providing women to the insatiable Joab ever since. Greco offered to arrange some women for Nahum, but the older brother was not interested. Laughing, Greco says that Joab is a peculiar fellow with some peculiar tastes. Twenty dollars (less with a successful Hard social skill roll) gets him to spill the beans. Joab wants to be a father and paid Greco to allow him to impregnate some aging prostitutes. Joab is paying for these women's room and board, as well as a stipend to Greco. A few more dollars, a successful **Intimidate** roll, or a good punch on the nose gets Greco to part with the address where the women are staying—a tiny room in a tenement a few blocks from here (**Joab's Family**, following). At this point, Greco ends the conversation, stating that he has business to attend to.

Keeper note: if Greco is killed before talking, the investigators searching his clothes find his wallet and keys for his home, as well as another set of keys with an address to an apartment a few blocks away (see **Joab's Family**).

Joab's Family

Following Greco's directions (or the keys found on his body) leads the investigators to a sagging, decrepit tenement of the lowest order—it is as though all of the foul, rotting offal from the entire isle of Manhattan has drained into this very spot. Behind crumbling doors, wails and gurgles ring out, bespeaking terrible misery. The trip up the three flights of stairs feels more like a descent into primordial Tartarus. Arriving at the apartment, the investigators have the opportunity to meet Joab's lady friends.

Knocks are eventually answered by Hazel, a middle-aged black woman. Standing behind her is a middle-aged white woman named Lula. Both women are pregnant, shabbily dressed, smoking cigarettes, and seething with barely contained fury. When the door opens, a miasma of tobacco smoke wafts out into the hallway, the smell blends with others coming from the filthy apartment—greasy burnt food, human sweat, and raw sewage from a clogged and overflowing toilet. It is a staggering sensory assault. The investigators barely have time to catch their breath when the two women unleash a profane verbal barrage, demanding to know who the investigators are and what they want. Once they hear mention of Joab or Greco, they launch a fresh salvo of complaints, which range from demands for money for food, cigarettes, and booze to fixing the toilet and buying them new clothes. A **Charm**, **Fast Talk**, or **Persuade** roll eases the tension to garner a few snippets of information.

- Joab paid money to Greco to get the women pregnant.
- There are four pregnant women living in the tiny apartment.
- Joab pays for their expenses, visits them occasionally, and has promised to pay each of them $50 when they give birth—"*Nine months for 50 bucks... who wouldn't take that deal.*"

A successful **Psychology** roll notes their sincerity. It is obvious they do not have any prenatal care and don't seem to care what happens to the children pre and post birth. Advising the women to seek medical aid nets the investigator concerned +1 Sanity point.

Keeper note: Joab's deep one physiology is magnifying his own undeniable compulsion to procreate. His arrangement with Greco allows him to satisfy his paralyzing obsession.

A NIGHT IN

- **Link:** investigators learn of Nahun Eliot's routine by speaking with Cary Tierney (**A Helpful Tip**, page 161).

Compared to his brother, Nahum is monkish. He wakes mid-morning, takes his meals at the club, and then returns home. On occasion, he visits a library or bookseller, but currently, his time is occupied in a particular scholarly pursuit. During the scenario, if Nahum is not attending to business at the club, he can be found in his apartment (or on the way to or from there).

The apartment is located in what, in a few decades' time, will become Spanish Harlem. He lives on the third floor and does not answer the door if an unexpected visitor calls—a successful **Listen** roll detects him moving around inside. Those with **Language (Spanish)** may converse with one of Nahum's neighbors, who can confirm when he is home; a successful **Psychology** roll senses the neighbor's fear and concern about talking about Nahum. The apartment supervisor, a Puerto Rican man named Andres Otero, lives on the first floor; he has nothing bad to say about Nahum—who, he says, pays his rent on time and does not cause problems. Otero does not let the investigators into Nahum's apartment unless they have legitimate or convincing-looking warrants, although a Hard **Persuade** or **Intimidate** roll will also get him to comply. An honest man, Otero is offended if offered a bribe.

Should the investigators wish to break into the apartment, the best option would be during the day while Nahum is at the club. In addition, at that time, most of the residents of the building are either at work or sleeping after working a night shift. A **Stealth** roll gets the investigators up the stairs or fire escape unnoticed by Otero; if they are spotted, the apartment supervisor calls the police, who arrive in ten minutes. Unless he or his tenants are threatened, Otero lets the cops handle any issues. A successful **Locksmith** roll opens the apartment's door or one of the windows, although a noisier approach, with a **STR** roll, may also work. Fumbled or failed push rolls probably alert Otero.

Inside, the apartment is free of decoration. All of the furnishings are simple, functional, and ill-matched; it's the abode of an indifferent bachelor. A foul scent lingers in the air. In the main living area, a large dining table is littered with stacks of paper and several books. It's apparent that Nahum spends his free time here, engaged in some form of study.

Examining the papers and books, the investigators discover a yellowed and crumbling copy of the *Ponape Scripture* (**Contender Handout 2: Ponape Scripture**). Nahum appears to have been working through the tome, making various notes, most of which are illegible scrawls. From the notes that can be read, Nahum seems to be drawing comparisons between the islanders described in the book with his family and the people of Innsmouth.

Keeper note: Contender Handout 2: Ponape Scripture tells of the journey of Captain Abner Ezekiel Hoag to a South Pacific island wherein he encountered a group of people who worshipped a strange sea god. Captain Hoag stayed some time and recorded many of the islanders' bizarre and terrible rites. His account describes how the people interbred with the sea-dwelling denizens of this god. The offspring from these unholy couplings would be born appearing fully human but, over time, would grow more like their undersea brethren. Eventually, they would be wholly consumed by the inhuman compulsions of these beings and be drawn to the sea. For further details about the *Ponape Scripture*, see the *Call of Cthulhu Rulebook*, page 233.

DEAD BOXER WAITING

- **Link:** Jack Johnson mentions Jimmy Harris is scheduled to fight Stefano Rossi (**Sparring with the Champ**, page 157).

As James "Jimmy" Harris is due to fight Stefano Rossi, the investigators may want to seek him out. Harris is employed by Jack Johnson at the Cotton Club. He works during the day, cleaning up and performing other menial tasks. He trains, as much as he can, around his work schedule. In the morning, he runs for an hour before his shift begins; in the afternoon, he goes to O'Brien's Gym and trains for a couple of hours before heading home to his dismally small apartment. Harris is a bachelor.

The easygoing Harris, speaks with a pronounced Southern accent owing to having been raised in Mississippi. He is willing to speak with the investigators if they mention that Jack Johnson sent them. He is very respectful in his tone and manners and exudes a relaxed, good-natured Southern charm. Standing just over 6 feet (1.8 m) and weighing 210 pounds (95 kg), Harris is a good-sized heavyweight, and a journeyman fighter desperate for a payday. He is not afraid of Rossi nor is he concerned about the outcome of the Rawls fight being repeated; he understands the fight game is a dangerous business. He genuinely likes Rossi and insists he is a decent man.

Harris fought Rossi years ago and beat him, saying that Rossi is not a real hard puncher, although he is strong. Harris describes how he once boxed a bear at a carnival, and while the bear wasn't strong like a man, it had animal strength—just like Stefano Rossi. Harris plans on using the same strategy against Rossi that won him the first fight, although he admits that he hasn't been intensively training for this fight, just continuing his regular training regime. He's fit and says he's ready to go at short notice—anyone familiar with boxing will not find this unusual.

A BUM RAP

- **Link:** Valentino Cherisi is mentioned by Jack Johnson (**Sparring with the Champ**, page 157).
- **Link:** Arnold "Tubby" Simmons mentions Cherisi (**Tubby's Statement**, page 160).
- **Link:** Stefano Rossi mentions his former manager (**Rossi's Boxing Career**, page 163).

Valentino Cherisi, Stefano Rossi's former manager, is a second-generation Italian immigrant, who has an upstairs office in the same building as O'Brien's Gym. From here, he recruits naïve young fighters and cagily manages the careers of hopeless veteran boxers. A former middleweight boxer, the scrappy Cherisi is tough and unsympathetic. He feels superior to the fighters he manages since he was smart enough to leave the fight game; now, his charges take the beatings while he reaps the rewards.

Keeper note: investigators succeeding with a **Lore (Harlem)** roll have heard rumors about Cherisi being notorious fight fixer, with links to organized crime.

At first, suspicious of the investigators, Cherisi warms to them with a successful **Charm**, **Fast Talk**, or **Persuade** roll, although an **Intimidate** roll works just as well. Cherisi discovered Rossi and, noting his impressive size, encouraged him to take up boxing. He guided Rossi's early career but became disillusioned when Rossi began to lose fights. Seeing an opportunity, he coached Rossi to throw his matches, agreeing when the fighter would take a fall. With Rossi following his manager's orders, his fights proved very lucrative for Cherisi.

Cherisi was approached by the Eliot brothers, who inquired about buying Rossi's contract. Initially, Cherisi refused, as he didn't want to let a good thing go, unwilling to part with such a lucrative asset. Later, for reasons he can't really explain, he changed his mind and released Rossi from his contract. Cherisi (foggily) recalls talking at length with the younger Eliot brother, while the older one stared at him with his "dead eyes." Pausing for a moment, he says he is through with Rossi and doesn't care what he does now—this is an obvious lie. A successful Hard **Psychology** notes how Cherisi's eyes glaze over when describing his interaction with the Eliots, while a **Cthulhu Mythos** success detects some form of sorcery at work.

Keeper note: Cherisi has no way of knowing that Nahum Eliot cast the Dominate spell on him to coerce him into signing away Rossi.

SORROW BY ANY OTHER NAME

- **Link:** interview with Jack Johnson and Butler Jones (**Sparring with the Champ**, page 157).

Butler Jones provides the investigators with the address of Sir Lance Rawls' trainer Mack Morton. If asking around, the investigators hear that Morton has not been seen at any of his usual haunts, preferring to remain sequestered in his small apartment, and only emerging to buy booze from the corner store.

When the investigators get to his apartment, they find Morton in a drunken stupor. Some fresh coffee and a successful **Fast Talk** or **Persuade** roll gets Morton to talk

Contender Handout 2: Ponape Scripture

"COPIOUS PUS!" EXCLAIMED GILTAMAG. AFTER HAVING HEARD THEIR ENTREATIES AND PLAINTIVE CRIES I CAST THEM FORTH. THEY WERE USURPERS HERE, TRYING TO SPREAD THEIR CONTAGION AMONGST MY PEOPLE. TO THIS ZANTHU CONCURRED.

I SPAKE LOUDLY, "BEGONE MEWLERS FOR IN MU TERRIBLE GHATANOTHOA IS CHIEF GOD AND IS A JEALOUS AND VENGEFUL GOD. YOUR SOFT IMMORTALITY WILL SURELY ANGER HIM FOR HE OFFERS ONLY LINGERING UNDEATH AND SEDUCTIVE MADNESS. WE WILL NOT CONSORT WITH THE ONES FROM THE DEEP, NO MATTER WHAT OFFERINGS OF GOLD AND PROVENDER THEY PROPOSE."

ZANTHU INTERJECTED, "FI, HONORABLE IMASH-MO, THERE IS ROOM FOR DAGON IN MU, HE IS KIN TO YTHOGTHA AND THE BARGAIN THEY OFFER IS GENEROUS. A FEW OF OUR YOUNG MEN TAKE THE ONES FROM THE DEPTHS AS BRIDES. WE TEACH THEIR NEVER-DYING OFFSPRING THE WORSHIP OF MU'S GODS AND THEN WHEN THEY RETURN TO THE SEA THESE LESSONS WILL SPREAD. FOR AS GILTAMAG SAYS, THE SPAWN OF THOSE UNIONS WILL ALL BEAR THE MARK OF DAGON AND CHANGE OVER TIME, BECOMING STRONGER AND EVER-LIVING. AND THOUGH THEY WILL BECOME LIKE THOSE FROM THE SEA, THEY WILL RECALL OUR LESSONS."

TO THIS I REPLIED, "YOUR WORDS ARE SWEET ZANTHU, LIKE THE FLESH OF YOUR MOTHER STUCK IN MY TEETH." WHEREUPON HE DID SCREAM AND CAME AT ME.

COULD THIS GILTAMAG BE THE SAME AS THE FOLK OF THE OCEAN WHO SPOKE TO MARSH IN INNSMOUTH?

through his drunken haze. A longtime boxing trainer, Morton has helped dozens of fighters learn their trade. For the past ten years, he has worked with Jones' stable of fighters and was specifically assigned to Sir Lance Rawls. Morton considered Rawls among the most promising fighters he ever worked with and felt good about Rawls' chances as a professional. He was devastated by the tragic result of the Rossi fight. A successful **Psychology** roll confirms that Morton believes he is responsible for Rawls' death.

THE UPCOMING FIGHT

- **Link: Lore (Harlem)** roll—the Rossi-Harris fight is common knowledge around Harlem; tickets can easily be purchased.
- **Link:** Stefano Rossi provides tickets if the investigators have made a good impression (**Going the Distance**, page 162).

On Friday, the scheduled bout between Stefano Rossi and Jimmy Harris occurs at the Commonwealth Casino (East 135th Street). The Rossi-Harris match is the main event, and there is a packed house. Rossi's upset win over Rawls has earned him a considerable number of followers, and the tragic end of that fight has attracted morbid members of the press hoping to cover another brutal beating. Rossi's now a four-to-one favorite over the journeyman Harris.

Keeper note: it is assumed that the investigators have already met with Rossi. Furthermore, the investigators may have shared their findings (so far) with Rossi to some degree or another. The delivery and scope of information related could vary significantly. What is described in this section should be considered the result of full and complete disclosure of Rossi's condition. The Keeper should adapt the following as necessary.

Confronted by the investigators and told the truth of his hideous lineage, Rossi is reluctant to believe such talk, quickly slipping into a state of denial. A successful Hard **Persuade** or **Psychology** roll breaks down his wall of disbelief, or if presented with evidence—such as Nahum Eliot's notes and the *Ponape Scripture* (**A Night In**, page 169) or if brought to his mother (alive or dead, per **A Guardian Angel's Plight**, page 166)—Rossi instantly realizes the truth.

Rossi, with growing dread, asks if his children could also be infected. If this sad truth is confirmed, he is devastated to his core and utterly wracked with grief. A successful **Psychology** roll detects that the man is on the verge of a mental break from which he may never recover; he begins to weep loudly, crying out against his fate. Assuming the investigators show come compassion, Rossi composes himself and asks the investigators for their help, explaining that going into the fight, he's a four-to-one favorite. He walks over to a cabinet and pulls out a battered cigar box, and hands it to the investigators; the box is full of cash ($500). He asks them to place a bet for him, by putting all the money on Harris. *"I'm through fighting. I'm not going to hurt anybody else. Jimmy's going to win this fight. The least I can do is earn a real good payday for Juanita."*

He tells the investigators to go to a bookmaker he met when he was fighting for Valentino Cherisi, a man called Atticus "the Abacus" Lewis, who can be found at the Morningside Teahouse (**Tea with Atticus**, following). Lewis would never accept the bet directly from Rossi, plus he wants to ensure that the cagey bookie doesn't spread the word that the fight will be fixed. He asks the investigators to collect his winnings after the fight, and meet him at his apartment. If he has not done so already, Rossi provides them with good seats for the fight. He then departs, says it's up the investigators to make something good come out of the situation.

TEA WITH ATTICUS

- **Link:** Rossi asks investigators to place a bet for him (**The Upcoming Fight**, nearby).

Keeper note: with a successful **Lore (Harlem)** roll, the investigators know of the Morningside Teahouse and have

heard of Atticus "the Abacus" Lewis, a man who is intolerant of impatient people; such knowledge awards the investigators with a bonus die when speaking with Lewis.

The Morningside Teahouse (123rd Street and Morningside Avenue) is a small establishment run by a West-Indian man called Akash, who greets visitors warmly. Without the steady stream of customers coming in for a drink or to browse the extensive and aromatic selections of teas, this shop would have shut its doors years ago. Along the wall are shelves holding small barrels, all filled with loose-leaf tea, while near the entrance two large, plush chairs take up an advantageous position. Near to the comfy chairs is a line of wooden chairs. When the investigators arrive, the place is packed and all of the wooden chairs are occupied. Lewis is seated in one of the comfortable chairs and is enjoying a well-brewed cup of tea.

Lewis is in his forties and is dressed in a finely tailored suit. He is speaking quietly with another man, sitting in the opposite comfy chair, who appears to be making a bet. This exchange concludes moments after the investigators arrive, and the man in the closest wooden chair gets up and takes the now-vacated seat next to Lewis. If necessary, a successful **INT** roll notes the custom of queuing in the wooden chairs to speak with Lewis—this knowledge is known by those who already made a **Lore (Harlem)** roll. The investigators must get in line at the counter, purchase a cup of tea, and wait their turn. Should the investigators remain ignorant of how "things are done," and try to jump the queue, they are liable to be told in no uncertain terms to "cool it" and wait. Should they persist in their haste, they will be thrown out.

When the investigators' turn comes up, Lewis gestures to the chair opposite. He possesses a keen mathematical intellect and is a good judge of character. As the weekend looms, with its usual assortment of sporting events, Lewis is very busy. When the investigators place their hefty wager on Harris, Lewis asks, with suspicion, if they know something he does not. A successful **Accounting**, Hard **Fast Talk**, or Hard **Persuade** roll convinces him they are "on the square." An experienced bookmaker, Lewis is not overly concerned (this bet will not make any sizable impact on his operation), and explains that if they get lucky, they can come by the teahouse after the fight to collect their winnings.

THE MAIN EVENT

- **Link:** all lines of investigation lead to this event (**The Upcoming Fight**, page 172, **Tea with Atticus**, page 172).

The Commonwealth Casino's doors open for the event at 19:00, and at that time, the crowd is sparse. Provide the investigators with **Contender Handout 3: Fight Card.** The first two fights on the bill feature out-of-town fighters; they are competitive fights, with McGowan winning against Holmes in a fourth-round knockout, and Smith beating Hardy by a split decision. By the time these bouts conclude, the small casino is packed. The next fight on the card is a big local rivalry between Kane and Lybrook; supporters of both fighters clamor as the men walk to the ring. Drinks are served, and the cheers of the crowd almost drown out the sound of the boxers' thudding punches. The last stragglers take their seats just as Kane lands a lightning-bolt right cross, dropping Lybrook for the full count. The uproar is deafening, as the victor's supporters celebrate.

The exciting ending to the penultimate bout has left the throng eager for more excitement. The fighters of the night's final match make their way to the ring from their dressing rooms. The house lights go dim, leaving only the ring lit, as the announcer calls out the particulars of the bout.

"Ladies and Gentlemen, welcome to the Commonwealth Casino. Robert Winston Enterprises, in association with the Eliot Brothers, presents the featured bout of the evening with ten rounds in the heavyweight division. Fighting out of the red corner, weighing in at 204 pounds, hailing from Scooba, Mississippi, with a record of 24 wins against 6 losses, with 10 victories coming inside the distance, is Jimmy Harris! And his opponent, fighting out of the blue corner, weighing in at a ready 223 pounds, proud son of the Lenox Athletic Club, with 34 wins, 13 losses, and 19 wins by knockout, the fighting pride of Harlem, Stefano Rossi!"

Following the introductions, the referee gives his final instructions and the fighters walk back to their corners. Harris is focused and ready; he is in good shape and looks ready to fight. Rossi walks back to his corner woodenly; his eyes are red and vacant. When the bell rings, Harris steps out quickly, while Rossi trudges forward, his hands instinctively raising into a guard. The fight begins.

Harris starts fast and lands well. Rossi is doing little to fight back, other than to throw an occasional jab. He's a slow starter, so this not surprising; however, as the fight progresses, he fails to pick up the pace. In his corner, trainer Tubby Simmons begs Rossi to get going. The Eliots, visible at ringside, appear unconcerned, and exude an aura of supreme confidence; Nahum reads a magazine, while Joab is drinking heavily and talks loudly to no one in particular.

The rounds progress, with Harris building on his lead. He's landing punches at a prodigious rate, but they seem to have no effect. Rossi is barely throwing anything in return, but there's a "mouse"—a boxing term describing localized swelling—over Harris' right eye. It's clear that Rossi is much stronger than Harris as, during clinches, he moves around his opponent with ease. Between rounds, Simmons is apoplectic, screaming at Rossi to pick up the pace. Rossi stares ahead, eyes dead, indifferent to his trainer's cries.

A successful **Fighting (Brawl)** or Hard **Psychology** roll notes a change in Rossi's demeanor. He weakens his stance and, on the fifth round, despite his plodding brawler technique, he deftly sidesteps Harris, demonstrating surprisingly graceful footwork. In addition, he starts to displays a subtle defense, parrying blows or negating them before Harris has a chance to throw. The action moves to the center ring with Harris leading the way, his punches landing well, but with seemingly little effect. Rossi then throws a huge, heavy-handed uppercut with his left hand—it's is a rookie mistake—leaving his guard down and his chin exposed. Harris fires a straight right hand that lands solidly and Rossi goes down. The crowd erupts.

As the referee begins the count, the Eliots rise to their feet and begin screaming at their fighter to get up. Rossi lies on the mat, propped up on one elbow. A successful **First Aid** or **Medicine** roll notes that he is lucid, but despite this, he makes no effort to get up until the count reaches eight. At this point, the frothing Eliots have made it to the ring's apron and are hurling invectives at Rossi, who stares at them as the referee completes his count. A successful Hard **Listen** roll hears Nahum mumbling something while his brother shouts at Rossi; if the roll is successful, a **Cthulhu Mythos** or Hard **Occult** roll deduces that Nahum is casting some sort of spell on the downed fighter.

The fight is over, and Harris is declared the winner. The scene in the ring is bedlam. The Harris corner celebrates, with a jubilant Johnson rushing to the corner and raising his hand in victory. Simmons, clearly concerned, attends to Rossi, while the Eliots, stunned and enraged, continue to hurl abuse. As soon as Simmons has cut-off his gloves, Rossi shoves his way through the throng in the ring and makes contact with the investigators.

After his listless performance, Rossi appears suddenly full of energy, showing no signs of his supposed knockout. He tells the investigators to meet him back at the apartment and asks them if they can get him a cup of tea—implying they should visit the Morningside Teahouse for his winnings. He then turns away and wades out of the ring. Simmons and the Eliots follow behind. The crowd heads for the exit. The discussion on everyone's lips is about the shocking knockout; some claim that Harris just had Rossi's number, others say that Rossi never saw it coming, and some contend that old habits die hard and that Rossi took another dive.

If they wish to follow Rossi, a successful Hard **DEX** roll gets the investigators to Rossi's dressing room (they are mistakenly considered part of his entourage), although neither he nor the Eliots are amenable to discussion. Rossi again urges them through clenched teeth to go to the Morningside Teahouse, and then meet him at the apartment. He tries to be subtle but becomes increasingly blunt if the investigators fail to take the hint. The Eliots, by and large, ignore the investigators unless they interject themselves into their discussion. Joab harangues Rossi, demanding to know what happened. Simmons is completely bewildered by the events. The normally ebullient Rossi is surly and uncommunicative. He dresses quickly and leaves with both of the Eliots still screaming at him.

Keeper note: shortly after Rossi leaves, the true magnitude of the loss settles on the brothers. Having been convinced that, due to his singular physiology, Rossi could not lose, the brothers became bolder. They felt that betting on him was a sure thing, so they wagered everything they had on the fight. Now, they have lost everything. All of the considerable wealth they'd amassed by gambling on Rossi is gone, and they are now as poor as they were when they first arrived in Harlem. The brothers are now once again destitute and seething with rage... a deadly combination.

Contender Handout 3: Fight Card

TWICE FOR TEA

- **Link:** the investigators return to the Morningside Teahouse to collect their winnings (**The Main Event**, page 173).

The teahouse is open well after its posted closing time, with the scene much the same as before, as people queue to collect their winnings. This time Lewis recognizes the investigators and waves them over, allowing them to cut in front of the other waiting men, who look on with some degree of

amazement. Lewis congratulates the investigators on picking the winner and stares at them as if weighing their souls.

A successful Hard **Charm** or **Persuade** roll gets him to smile and say that not everyone was so lucky: the Eliots lost a considerable sum on the fight, or so he has heard. An amount so significant that it may very well have... ramifications. As Lewis hands over a satchel containing the winnings (around $2,500), he says he has some free advice for them: while the Eliot brothers may not have much in the way of hired muscle, they are friends with the Haragans, a bunch of bloodthirsty former military types—the investigators would be wise to watch their backs.

A VOLATILE REUNION

- **Link:** the investigators go to Rossi's apartment with the winnings (**Twice for Tea**, page 174).

Stefano Rossi has returned home, knowing the clock is ticking. It's only a matter of time before the Eliots learn of his wager and, more critically, his betrayal of them. The Eliots are out for Rossi's blood and want to take his winnings to recoup their own losses. At this point, Rossi is resigned to his fate; his fraying sanity has snapped, and he is careening toward the abyss.

When the investigators arrive, Rossi and Juanita are arguing: Juanita wants to know where the children are, and why she has to leave the apartment in the middle of the night. None of her questions or concerns are soothed when the investigators arrive and present Rossi with a satchel full of cash. Incapable of dealing with the situation, Rossi falls silent, while his distraught wife turns on the investigators for answers. While Juanita is an intelligent and rational woman, she's under a tremendous amount of stress. She is not apt to believe any supernatural explanation, but a successful **Charm**, Hard **Fast Talk**, or Hard **Persuade** roll convinces

EXTREME RESOLUTIONS (AUTHOR'S NOTE)

The following assumes the investigators have told Rossi about his tainted Innsmouth heritage. If this does not take place, see **Alternative Endings**, page 177.

Once he understands his fate, Rossi realizes that he doesn't want to turn into a monster, and he doesn't want his kids to either. He fears transforming into a deep one, be it next month or years from now, but what most terrifies him is the knowledge that his children will also change. Occupied with such thoughts and insane from the realization, Rossi decides to prevent the inevitable—well, there's no easy way to say this—by murdering his kids. It's extreme, but he feels trapped and can see no other way out. This author subscribes to Lovecraft's nihilism and encourages the Keeper to run the rest of the scenario with this in mind. This style may not suit everyone, so a few alternatives are provided below.

1. The investigators may notice Rossi's strange behavior after discovering the truth—the Keeper can stress Rossi's concern over his kids being infected by his bloodline. Thus, the investigators may take precautions by keeping an eye on Rossi and ensuring he is not left alone. Perhaps half of the investigators go to his home before or during the fight, or call Juanita and convince her of Rossi's precarious mental state.
2. Juanita is a smart and strong woman, so it is unlikely that she would let her distraught husband simply take their children. The investigators may arrive to find the couple arguing over the kids—up until the Eliots arrive (**A Volatile Reunion**, page 175), whereupon the investigators must contend with the added pressure of keeping the family safe. Alternatively, Juanita could take the children to a neighbor's apartment while she and Rossi argue.
3. Juanita wants to surprise her husband on his big night, so she brings the kids to the fight, leaving a note at home for Rossi in case they miss him. She is stunned at his loss and is late getting home, having struggled to get through the crowd. She and the children come home moments after the Eliots' arrive on the scene (**A Volatile Reunion**, page 175).

Played as written, a scene between Juanita and Rossi should be charged with emotion. The fighter is grief-stricken and plans to die very shortly at the hands of the Eliots; he just wants his wife to be safe (perhaps asking the investigators to take her away). He doesn't care about himself in the slightest.

her that the investigators have her and Rossi's interests at heart—good or bad supporting evidence may merit a bonus or penalty die to the roll.

Juanita is canny enough to know that by double-crossing the Eliots, her husband has brought trouble to their door. Flight seems an appropriate and prudent response; however, the matter of her missing children is of greater concern. Up to this point, the absence of the children may have gone unnoticed by the investigators—and they might very well share her concern (see **Extreme Resolutions** box, nearby). The question regarding the missing children align both the inquiries of the investigators and those of Juanita toward Rossi. Unwilling or unable to say what has happened to the children, Rossi obfuscates, saying, "they're safe now" or "nothing can hurt them now." If the investigators talked with Rhoda Rossi (**A Guardian Angel's Plight**, page 166) and subsequently connected Rossi to his mother, he says the children are with their grandmother.

At a suitable moment of tension, have the Eliot brothers arrive (accompanied by some of the Haragan gang). If the investigators thought to post a lookout, they see two 1922 Lincoln Sedans pull up to the curb, and four men (wearing stolen and battered Dayfield body shields) and the Eliot brothers get out—all appear to be armed with either handguns or shotguns. If not already aware, a successful **Listen** roll hears the gunmen's footsteps approaching up the stairs to the Rossi apartment. The time for discussion is over.

Rossi urges the investigators to take Juanita down the fire escape and get her to safety, while he holds off the Eliots. The choice to stay or go rests with the investigators—they have one minute to decide. Rossi gets into a boxer's fighting stance in front of the door and waits. When the door bursts open, Rossi leaps forward with wild abandon, unconcerned for his own safety. The doorway creates a choke point and, under ideal circumstances, would give the advantage to those defending from within the apartment; however, Rossi's mad charge robs any waiting investigators of such an advantage—with their **Firearms** rolls suffering a penalty die (assuming they are trying not to hit Rossi). For good or ill, this situation only lasts an instant, as Rossi's suicidal charge accomplishes its goal: after a crescendo of deafening gunfire, the boxer lies in a spreading pool of blood, just inside the door—investigators who didn't leave with Juanita and who remained inside the apartment should make a **Sanity** roll (1/1D4 loss). If Juanita is still here, she howls in anguish.

From the hallway, the unctuous voice of Joab Eliot calls out, "We got half of what we came here for—now give us the money, and nobody else has to get hurt." The choice to stay and fight or flee rests with the investigators. If they toss the satchel into the hallway, the gunmen collect it and leave. If the situation is not resolved, the Eliots enter the combat alongside the gunmen. Joab uses a sawed-off shotgun, while Nahum casts spells to attack the investigators.

Keeper note: if the children are alive and present, and if the investigators are trying to keep them safe, they are likely to complicate matters. Call for a **Luck** roll from investigators tasked with the children's safety; if failed, identify a risk that the investigator must overcome. If applicable, a failed Luck roll might also impose a penalty die when dealing with that risk.

Investigators who choose to retreat before the gunmen arrived can easily climb down the fire escape. As they reach the street below, they hear the sounds of the apartment door being breached, followed by the thundering sound of shotguns being fired. If the investigators decide to head back up to see what has happened, they come face to face with the oncoming Eliots and gunmen. Otherwise, fleeing investigators may be targeted, although only two shooters can fire (with a penalty die) from the apartment window above. If already at street level, the investigators can easily disappear into the alleys and streets, or into a car. Should they dally, the gunmen may follow, with the scene moving into a chase.

Requiem for a Heavyweight

Once the situation has been resolved, the investigators may revisit the apartment. As the smell of gunpowder fades, and terrified neighbors peek out through partially opened doors, the investigators can survey the tragic scene that has forever shattered the Rossi home. Stefano Rossi and possibly one or both of the Eliots, their hired gunmen, and one or more investigators' lie dead in the apartment. Juanita, if present and unharmed, rushes over, cradling her dead husband in her arms.

What of the Rossi children? Were they saved by the investigators? Where they turned over by Rossi into his mother's care? The investigators may feel compelled to follow up on Rhoda Rossi to check whether the children are actually safe. Returning to the site of the confrontation in

DAYFIELD BODY SHIELD

The body shield, providing 6-point armor, is composed of metal plates inserted between layers of fabric, and could be worn over or under a service jacket. Such armor works well against low-velocity missile weapons and provides a modicum of protection for high-speed weapons.

the sewers (**A Guardian Angel's Plight**, page 166). Almost immediately, the investigators notice the rotting mattress on which a blanket has been draped. The contour of the blanket is marked by three child-shaped lumps. Lifting the blanket reveals the peaceful but clearly dead faces of Alberto, Anthony, and Ava Rossi, provoking a **Sanity** roll (1D3+1/1D6+1 loss)—despite the possible realization that the children will now avoid the curse of their bloodline, their deaths are still shocking and liable to plague the dreams of the investigators in the days to come.

Keeper note: those who examine the bodies to determine the cause of death can do so with a successful **First Aid** or **Medicine** roll, indicating that they were smothered and died from asphyxiation.

ALTERNATE ENDINGS

The ending described assumes the investigators discover the awful truth of Stefano Rossi's deep one heritage, and thereby disclose it entirely to him. It is possible that this information never comes to light, with other options playing out instead.

Rossi Learns Nothing

If the investigators fail to learn the truth or withhold the secret from Rossi then the big fight (**The Main Event**, page 173) ends tragically. Harris puts up a valiant fight and leads over the first four rounds, but Rossi gains the upper hand during the fifth round—he relentlessly stalks the younger fighter, metering out devastating punches. Amazingly, Harris goes the distance, losing the fight by the judges' decision, but he's never the same; his speech slurred, evidence of a punch-drunk fighter. Jack Johnson is extremely unhappy about the outcome—this result was exactly what he wanted to avoid. Rossi never fights again, either. In the coming days, he grows increasingly violent, even when out of the ring. Within a few months, Juanita takes the children and departs, fearing for their safety. Deprived of their meal ticket, the Eliot brothers exit Harlem, there is the broken lives they leave behind. Deserted by everyone, Rossi withdraws and eventually vanishes altogether, finally answering the undeniable call of the sea and his blood.

Shoggoth at the Cotton Club

Rossi Partly Learns About the Mystery

The investigators may choose to withhold some of the truth from Rossi, especially the part about his blood taint carrying on to his children. If he's allowed to believe that his condition was not passed to his children, he clings to this myth like a drowning man to a life preserver. He proceeds with his bet and throws the fight. He ensures the safety of his family and dies confronting the Eliots.

Juanita and the Truth

The investigators may choose to tell Juanita the truth, especially as it involves her children, although she requires undeniable proof before believing it. She is heartbroken and blames Rossi for the briefest of moments before her love of the doomed fighter solidifies her choice. She can't save him but believes her children can be saved. She takes the children and leaves New York, asking the investigators to let Rossi know she loves him. She raises the children as best she can. In time, once the children (now young adults) begin to demonstrate signs of change, she poisons them rather than allow them to become monsters.

Keeper note: if Juanita is aware of the deep one taint by the time the Eliot brothers come to the Rossi home (**A Volatile Reunion**, page 175), and if she is in the apartment, she takes the first handgun she comes across and tries to kill the Eliots, blaming them for the whole situation.

CONCLUSION: WAITING FOR JACK

The scenario is likely to end where it began, at the Cotton Club. It's daytime and the club is quiet. Jimmy Harris has the day off, and a skeletally thin man is pushing a broom around in his stead. Jack Johnson sits at the bar, his bow tie undone. He is enjoying a 30-year-old bourbon and listening to the plaintive crooning of a bluesman auditioning to perform at the club.

Assuming the investigators intervened and prevented harm from befalling Jimmy Harris, Johnson greets them with a nod. He treats them to a drink on the house, and ask them to fill him in the details of their work. He accepts nearly any story—with any strange tales of the supernatural, he raises an eyebrow but does not comment. Told of the sad fate of the Rossi family, Johnson mournfully concludes the conversation by saying, "Not everybody gets a happy ending in Harlem."

Rossi's Apartment Map

REWARDS

- Saving Juanita and her children: +1D4+2 Sanity points.
- Defeated the Eliots: +1D6 Sanity points (halved if one brother escapes).
- Informing Stefano Rossi, about the truth of his ancestry: +1 Sanity point.
- Outwitting or defeating the Haragan gang (poss. delivering them to the police): +1D4 Sanity points.
- Harris is permanently injured: –1D2 Sanity points.
- Juanita is killed: –1D4 Sanity points.
- Rossi's children are killed: –1D6 Sanity points.
- The Eliot brothers escape: –1D4 Sanity points.

CHARACTERS AND MONSTERS

For ease of reference, the Keeper may wish to copy or print out these pages as a handy reference when running this chapter. NPCs, monsters, and others are gathered by type or distinct groupings.

Note: certain NPCs have Luck values, as well as talents for *Pulp Cthulhu* games; ignore these if playing regular *Call of Cthulhu*.

ALLIES OR INDEPENDENTS

Stefano Rossi, *age 33, contender and doomed man*

STR 90	**CON** 80	**SIZ** 90	**DEX** 45	**INT** 50
APP 55	**POW** 30	**EDU** 35	**SAN** 23	**HP:** 17
DB: +1D6	**Build:** 2	**Move:** 8	**MP:** 6	**Luck:** 30

Combat

Brawl	70% (35/14) damage: 1D3+1D6
Dodge	40% (20/8)

Skills

Charm 50%, Climb 40%, Firearms (Rifle/Shotgun) 40%, Intimidate 40%, Listen 55%, Psychology 40%, Stealth 45%, Swim 65%, Throw 50%.

Armor: 1-point hardening skin.

Pulp Talents

- **Tough Guy:** soaks up damage, may spend 10 Luck points to shrug off up to 5 hit points worth of damage taken in one combat round.
- **Heavy Hitter:** may spend 10 Luck points to add an additional damage die when dealing out melee combat (die type depends on the weapon being used, e.g. 1D3 for unarmed combat, 1D6 for a sword, etc.).

Juanita Rossi, *age 29, wife and mother*

STR 40	**CON** 70	**SIZ** 50	**DEX** 70	**INT** 70
APP 65	**POW** 60	**EDU** 40	**SAN** 60	**HP:** 12
DB: 0	**Build:** 0	**Move:** 8	**MP:** 12	**Luck:** 30

Combat

Brawl	40% (20/8) damage: 1D3
Dodge	35% (17/7)

Skills

Charm 60%, Fast Talk 40%, Persuade 50%, Psychology 65%, Spot Hidden55%, Stealth 60%, Throw 65%.

Pulp Talents

- **Nimble:** does not lose next action when "diving for cover" versus firearms.
- **Smooth Talker:** gains bonus die to Charm rolls.

ADVERSARIES AND MONSTERS

Nahum Eliot, *age 25, the quiet one*

STR 55	**CON** 65	**SIZ** 55	**DEX** 65	**INT** 65
APP 30	**POW** 85	**EDU** 60	**SAN** 00	**HP** 12
DB: 0	**Build:** 0	**Move:** 8/8*	**MP:** 17	**Luck:** 42

**Swimming.*

Combat

Attacks per round: 1

Brawl	35% (17/7), damage 1D3 or knife 1D4+1
.42 revolver	40% (20/8), damage 1D10
Dodge	35% (17/7)

Skills

Accounting 70%, Anthropology 30%, Cthulhu Mythos 33%, History 50%, Intimidate 40%, Language (R'lyehian) 40% (20/8), Library Use 50%, Occult 70%, Persuade 50%, Psychology 35%, Spot Hidden 40%, Stealth 30%, Swim 50%, Throw 40%.

Armor: none.
Spells: Breath of the Deep, Chant of Thoth, Cloud Memory, Clutch of Nyogtha, Deflect Harm, Dominate, Power Drain, Steal Life, Summon Nightgaunt.
Sanity loss: none.

Pulp Talents

- **Strong Willed:** gains a bonus die when making POW rolls.
- **Keen Vision:** gain a bonus die to Spot Hidden rolls.

Joab Eliot, *age 23, the rowdy one*

STR 70	**CON** 70	**SIZ** 80	**DEX** 45	**INT** 45
APP 40	**POW** 55	**EDU** 40	**SAN** 00	**HP** 15
DB: +1D4	**Build:** 1	**Move:** 7/8*	**MP:** 11	**Luck:** 27

**Swimming.*

Combat

Attacks per round: 1

Brawl	55% (27/11), damage 1D3+1D4 or knife 1D4+1+1D4
Sawed-off shotgun (2B)	50% (25/10), damage 4D6/1D6
Dodge	45% (22/9)

Skills

Accounting 40%, Art (Acting) 45%, Fast Talk 55%, Intimidate 70%, Listen 35%, Psychology 80%, Sleight of Hand 60%, Spot Hidden 60%, Stealth 70%. Swim 65%. Throw 45%.

Armor: 1-point fat skin.
Spells: none.
Sanity loss: none.

Pulp Talents

- **Iron Liver:** may spend 5 Luck to avoid the effects of drinking excessive amounts of alcohol (negating penalty applied to skill rolls).
- **Tough Guy:** soaks up damage, may spend 10 Luck points to shrug off up to 5 hit points worth of damage taken in one combat round.

Rhoda Rossi, *age 60, mysterious widow*

STR 80	**CON** 60	**SIZ** 100	**DEX** 65	**INT** 65
APP —	**POW** 70	**EDU** —	**SAN** 00	**HP** 16
DB: +1D6	**Build:** 2	**Move:** 8/10*	**MP:** 14	**Luck:** —

**Swimming.*

Powers

Breathe Underwater: requires no external help to breathe underwater.

Combat

Attacks per round: 2

Fighting	60% (30/12), damage claws 1D6+1D4
Dodge	35% (17/7)

Skills

Climb 55%, Jump 70%, Stealth 60%, Swim 90%, Track 65%, Throw 55%.

Armor: 2-point skin and scales.
Spells: none.
Sanity loss: 0/1d6 Sanity points to see Rhoda's full deep one appearance.

BOXERS AND HARAGAN GOONS*

Use these profiles for both gangster goons and various boxers.

	1	*2*	*3*	*4*
STR	65	70	80	70
CON	65	70	80	70
SIZ	75	70	70	65
DEX	60	65	75	60
INT	65	55	60	50
APP	55	40	50	45
POW	45	55	45	65
EDU	55	50	65	35
SAN	45	55	45	65
HP	14	14	15	13
DB	+1D4	+1D4	+1D4	+1D4
Build	1	1	1	1
Move	7	8	9	8
MP	9	11	9	13

Combat

Brawl	45% (22/9), damage 1D3+DB
Dodge	45% (22/9)
Thompson SMG*	45% (22/9), damage 1D10+2
.32 auto*	45% (22/9), damage 1D8*

**Goons only.*

Pulp note: increase Brawl and .32 auto skills both to 65% (32/13).

DREAMS AND BROKEN WINGS

Dreams and Broken Wings takes place in the fall of 1927, with the Harlem Renaissance in full swing, and is suitable for three to five investigators of any experience level. For the last year, Aaron Douglas and his wife Alta have gathered around them the group of artists and creators, who form the nucleus of a movement. *The Crisis* and *Opportunity Journal*, publications, which serve as the literary backbone of the Renaissance movement, are publishing creative works and writing by many who seek to change the narrative of the African-American in American culture.

BACKGROUND

Clayton Morris is dead.

You're probably wondering what happened to him, and how he ended up rotting at the bottom of the Hudson River with two .45-caliber bullets lodged in his brain. I could start way back... tell you all about his childhood. About the father who beat his wife and kept his children in a perpetual state of fear. About the mother's death—tuberculosis, in case you were curious. I could tell you about the years Clayton and his sister Pearl spent languishing in a Harlem orphanage. But honestly, the best place to start this story is... *the dreams*.

Dreams are funny things. Some people are inspired by their dreams, looking to them as a source of aspiration. Others are haunted by phantasmal reminders of bad decisions and regret. For Morris, dreams were something else entirely. For him, dreams were a realm to be explored. Perhaps it was Clayton's way of dealing with the harsh realities of his waking life. Who can say with any certainty why the Dreamlands opens its doors to any of the select few who cross over? But cross over he did.

The other thing I should probably tell you about Clayton Morris is that he possessed a prodigious artistic talent. Ultimately, it is the combination of these two things—his ability to enter the realm of dreams and his skill at capturing what he saw there on canvas—that led to his death.

Morris' artistic talents weren't merely focused on the wanderings of his subconscious mind. He also had an eye for the beauty of daily life. And, just as the former would eventually bring him darkness and ruin, the latter brought him happiness... and love. Lena Thoreau was a songbird whose voice was so pure, so golden, it could carry you to the gates of Heaven itself. Morris and Lena fell into each other's orbits in early 1924, and they each knew they had found their other half. Morris and Lena's creative spirits made for natural chemistry—in many ways, they became each other's muses, driving one another to creative heights neither could achieve alone. They were married less than a year later and moved into a modest apartment in Lower Harlem. Despite Morris' love for Lena, he never told her about his visits to the Dreamlands. In truth, as his love for Lena grew, he found his dreams becoming increasingly earthbound, tied to the beauty and warmth of her soul. She saw the paintings, of course—but she never suspected the true source of their inspiration.

1926 saw Morris gaining a foothold in the Harlem art scene, the movement which would later be called the Harlem Renaissance. In that year, he came to the attention of Aaron Douglas and a number of other artists who gathered at the Douglas household. As for Lena, her own talents began to pay dividends with regular gigs at the Cotton Club and other popular establishments. Their happiness wouldn't last.

In January 1927, almost three years to the day since they met, Lena Thoreau's life was cut short in the midst of a petty crime. The bullet that took Lena's life tore a gaping wound in Morris' soul. It was later that year that death came calling for Morris, too, in the form of Ronald Stewart. Stewart didn't look like much—a heavyset and balding man, whose bearing spoke of inherited wealth and a taste for spending it. Just another one of those rich uptown white men who came to Harlem seeking thrills, throwing their money around like it meant something. But Stewart knew a thing or two about art. He also knew a thing or two about the Dreamlands, which took Morris quite by surprise. Stewart was drawn to Morris' paintings—and not the ones Morris showed the usual crowd. Stewart liked the *other* work—the stranger stuff.

Morris thought Stewart was pulling his leg at first. Who would ever have suspected some fat cat could know? But he did. And he knew a few things Morris didn't. Not parlor tricks, mind you—but *real* magic. Stewart said he had been studying something called a dream battery, an artifact that could manifest your desires—your dreams—and bring them to life. Stewart's offer was pregnant with insinuation. "Why Clayton, don't you see? With a device such as this, you could do anything—even, say, bring a lost loved one back to life."

What was he supposed to do? You can hardly blame Morris for entering into that pact. All Stewart asked was for Morris to use his ability to walk in the Dreamlands to find the design, which had thus far eluded Stewart. Morris should have been more cautious—he should have realized what was in Stewart's heart—but he was blinded by grief, and by the hope that he could be reunited with his Lena, his songbird.

So, he did it.

Clayton ventured into the Dreamlands and found the design Stewart wanted. It was an arduous task, taking months of wandering the Dreamlands, carrying him across the Cerenerian Sea to the foothills of Ooth-Nargai, and into

pacts with ghouls and nightgaunts. Fortunately, the strange laws that govern the Dreamlands meant that mere days in the Waking World had passed during the time Morris had taken to locate the plans for the dream battery. Stewart took Morris' plans and commissioned a sculptor named Cecil Dreyfuss to bring them to life.

A week later, Morris was surprised when the pompous lump returned with a completed dream battery. Stewart instructed Morris in its use. The battery should be placed in his apartment, and be allowed to charge for several days. After reaching its full capacity, a ritual could be performed to create an area of "dreamspace" around the battery, which could then be shaped to the user's whim. A dreamer of Morris' capabilities should find it easy to do, Stewart reassured him. Meanwhile, Stewart would also attempt some dream manifestation with the second device Dreyfuss created. Morris was skeptical, but accepted the battery, and took the instructions on how to perform the ritual. He placed the battery in a niche under his bed and waited the allotted time. Two days later, Morris tapped into the reservoir of arcane energy now stored in the dream battery, spending two days bending reality to his will—from his desperation, from his love and loss, and from every memory still lingering in his mind and soul, he brought Lena Thoreau back into being. She would be with him forever.

At first, it was idyllic. Though a creation of pure dream energy, Morris' conjuration of his dead lover was an emotionally pure representation of everything he remembered about her. Once again, her gorgeous voice filled his apartment. It was so wonderful, so perfect, that he almost took no notice of the changes occurring in those around him. People were becoming sullen and depressed. Even the children who played outside in the summer months were listless and sapped of energy, their childlike glee snuffed out. Thus, Morris realized the price to save his grief: the battery consumed dreams, the very source of all hope and aspiration, and converted them into the energy that gave his Lena new life. And, there was another dream battery out there... somewhere. To what use and end did that pompous toad Stewart wish to put his own battery?

Morris tried to contact Stewart but to no avail. He tracked down Cecil Dreyfuss, the sculptor Stewart hired to produce the batteries, and discovered that Stewart had contacted Dreyfuss a week ago to commission three more sculptures. Morris pleaded with Dreyfuss to not complete the work, but it was too late—they were already finished and in Stewart's hands. Three more batteries—each with the power to drain an apartment building full of innocent people, to sap their hopes and dreams so they may be bent to another's whim. Morris, filled with rage, set out with a .38 revolver and a desire to put things right.

Through Dreyfuss, Morris managed to get a message to Stewart and they met at Morris' studio. An argument ensued. Stewart, who saw all of life as a series of transactions in which you either came out ahead or behind, asked Morris if he had not gotten what he wanted. Morris—enraged by Stewart's indifference to the harm he was causing—demanded to know what Stewart had planned. Stewart was more than happy to show him, getting his driver to ferry the pair to an abandoned theater in the heart of Harlem's artistic center. Morris' heart sank. All the dreams, all the beauty, and creativity would be ultimately crushed—what terrible scheme could Stewart have in mind that required the sacrifice of all these hopes and dreams?

It turns out Stewart's desire was simple: pleasure. Raw, uninhibited pleasure. Morris learned, to his horror, that Stewart wasn't alone and that he represented a cabal of rich hedonists, who called themselves the Temple of Leviathan. Their only desire was to fuel themselves by any means necessary for the sole purpose of feeding their insatiable hunger for power and physical pleasure. With four batteries feeding off the dreams of hundreds, the Temple could create and sustain an entire borough of New York devoted to satisfying their every carnal desire. Freed from the constraints of the Waking World, the only limit was the bounds of their perverse imaginations.

Morris, in his anger, took one wild shot at Stewart before being subdued by the other members of the Temple. In the end, Morris' efforts succeeded only in pushing Stewart and the Temple to commit murder. Wealth and corruption being natural bedfellows, one of the Temple members, a criminal attorney named Morgan Pierce, had connections with the local mob. To keep his own hands clean, Pierce hired some thugs working for a local Italian gangster named Theo Spinelli.

THE SPINELLI CONNECTION

Spinelli's operation centers on a numbers racket, run out of the back of a butcher shop in East Harlem, run for Giuseppe "The Clutch Hand" Morello and the Morello crime family. Plenty of money crosses Spinelli's palms every day, but very little of it falls into his own pocket. So, who's to care if ol' Theo makes a little on the side? Nobody is dumb enough to take a shot at one of Morello's operations, so Spinelli's boys just sit around twiddling their thumbs most of the time. Why not take on a little side work and split the profits 50/50? Thus, Spinelli took a call offering good money. Easy money. Just rub out some meddlesome bum. A garbage run.

So, Spinelli sends a few of his boys. It's a short night's work to drag Morris out to the waterfront, put a couple of

bullets in him, and throw his body in the Hudson River. Oh, and while you're at it, send someone over to the guy's apartment with an envelope... just slip it under the landlady's door. Pay Morris' rent for a few months, and make it look like he decided to take an unscheduled vacation.

That should have been the end of it. Stewart and the Temple activated the dream batteries, placed them in locations around the neighborhood, and waited for the batteries to accumulate enough energy to finalize their plans. But before he died, Morris had one last card up his sleeve. It wouldn't save him... but it might be enough to bring attention to the Temple and their plans. Summoning all his will, Morris projected himself into the one thing he had left in the world—his art. Each painting, every one, was a piece of his soul made manifest. His dreams made real. He may not be able to walk into the Dreamlands, but he might be able to imprint himself onto a canvas produced by his own hand. As he was dragged out of the trunk of the car and laid out on the riverbank, Morris' anguish and despair reached out across space—and for the briefest of moments, he felt his face bathed in the summer sunlight captured in a painting he gave his sister, years ago. It would be the last thing Clayton Morris ever felt.

THE TEMPLE OF LEVIATHAN

The Temple of Leviathan was, until five years ago, merely a weekly poker game attended by five of New York City's scions. It was Morgan Pierce, a prominent East Coast attorney, who first introduced the group to esoteric knowledge through some old tomes his grandfather left in his care. Pierce brought them to have a lark with the rest of the group, and thinking them to be silly fictions, gave them to Ronald Stewart. Most of the books were harmless ephemera, but hidden among the drivel was a modicum of useful occult lore. Stewart, whose wealth was only matched by his capacity for boredom, spent the next few weeks immersed in their study. When Stewart suggested the group engage in some blasphemous fun, none of them took him seriously, but they uniformly enjoyed the notion of indulging his maniacal suggestion.

They were somewhat startled when Stewart guided them to one of the city's numerous morgues. Where the group had expected a silly evening romp among the tombstones of a local graveyard, they were instead treated to the badly decomposed body of a suicide victim. The poor soul, Stewart explained, had been found in his apartment with wrists slashed, stewing in a cold broth of blood and bathwater. He reassured them that the policemen on duty had been duly compensated for their inattention, and would not interfere with their evening's festivities.

Giving them each a part to play, Stewart led the group through a ritual. After the necessary ministrations, they breathlessly awaited a response from the corpse—and when none was forthcoming, they left a very dejected Ronald Stewart fuming in the morgue. Two days later, Stewart attended the group's weekly card game with the deceased man as his invited guest. The group was aghast and accused him of base trickery. Before they could storm out, however, Stewart recited an incantation, reducing the corpse to a pile of dust—then, just as quickly, reversed the process.

After that astonishing display, the other members took Stewart's newfound obsession quite seriously. Over the next few years, the group slowly accumulated lore and increased their ability to wield their newfound talents. With their new interest came a new name for the group, the Temple of Leviathan. It is perhaps fortunate that the group was less power-hungry than hedonistic. To feed the group's need for knowledge-bearing artifacts and tomes, Stewart began using his resources to delve into the art trade, and it was here that he began to pull the threads that would eventually lead him to his obsession with the Dreamlands. As he accumulated example after example of surreal art, he pursued each new acquisition with an eye toward unlocking the mystery and power of dreams. It was inevitable that Stewart would stumble upon the work of Clayton Morris. Stewart realized that Morris was the dreamer who could bring Stewart's year-long plan to fruition.

INTRODUCING THE INVESTIGATORS

The easiest way to get the investigators involved is to ensure they know Pearl Wilkins; perhaps they are family members, close friends, or simply friends of a friend. They may have met Clayton Morris at one of Aaron Douglas' parties, and could, alternatively, be brought into the scenario by Douglas.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

ALLIES AND INDEPENDENTS

Pearl Wilkins, *age 29, nurse and grieving sister*

- **Link:** recruits the investigators (**Still Life**, page 188).

Wilkins is a tall, elegantly built woman, although many late shifts working at the hospital and grief over her brother's disappearance have begun to take a toll on her otherwise-youthful appearance. She is devoted to her job, but always took time to encourage her step-brother Clayton Morris in his artistic pursuits, attending his gallery shows whenever her schedule permitted. Thus, she is nearly as well known among the city's artistic community as Morris himself. Wilkins can introduce the investigators to people in the arts community—although such people will have no additional insights into Morris beyond what Wilkins can already supply.

- **Description:** tall and thinly-built, with distinctive hazel eyes; she is a model of quiet determination.
- **Traits:** altogether strong-willed but shaken by her brother's disappearance.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** desperate for any information about her brother's whereabouts. While unwilling to put herself in immediate danger, she is fiercely determined to find Morris. She can provide information about her brother's activities up to the date of his vanishing, as well as the addresses for Morris' apartment and his art studio.

Thaddeus Owen, *age 23, kind-hearted giant*

- **Link:** encountered outside Clayton Morris' studio (**Morris' Studio**, page 196).

Owen is imposingly large, yet has the mental capacity of a six-year-old. His father, Samuel Owen, owns the building where Morris maintained his studio. Owen spent many hours in Morris' studio, helping the artist with various physical tasks. Despite the fact that he can easily break someone in half, Owen is a kind and gentle soul, unlikely to turn to violence unless given a very good reason. Owen is distraught over Morris' disappearance and would probably be enraged if he discovered someone had harmed the artist.

- **Description:** just a hair under 7 feet (2 m) tall, this white man is nearly as wide as he is tall. His eyes betray a childlike mind.
- **Traits:** shy and unassuming, friendly to a fault.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** born with a disorder that prevents him from developing mentally past that of a six-year-old child, Owen is friendly and outgoing, and willing to help just about anyone who asks. He is a source of information about Morris and can shed some light on his disappearance. May provide some muscle if the investigators can convince him to tag along.

Madame Yonday, *age 34, fortune teller and psychic*

- **Link:** *Madame Yonday's Dream Journal* (**Dreyfuss' Workshop**, page 198).

Madame Yonday (real name Beatrice Hamilton) operates a fortune-telling and hoodoo parlor in Harlem. She is a colorful character, doling out folksy wisdom to the people in her neighborhood in the guise of magical prognostication. Like many in her profession, she produces an annual "dream book," which contains numerical correspondences for dream images, and which followers use to pick policy numbers. Few know that Yonday does in fact harbor some psychic ability, providing her with a modicum of actual insight. The dream batteries constructed by Ronald Stewart have lately begun to set off her psychic powers, causing her discomfort to no end.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

If Pearl and Clayton are sister and brother, why do they have different last names? A little history provides an explanation.

Pearl Wilkins and Clayton Morris were both orphaned at a young age. When later adopted by a kind family, the two children became step-brother and sister. The newfound family kept the children's original surnames so they would never forget where they came from.

- **Description:** a statuesque woman who favors colorful robes and hats.
- **Traits:** a talker who gladly expound on any subject—especially when she's being paid to do so.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** reticent to help the investigators, as she's already on edge due to recent visions (from the effects of the dream batteries), which have told her that something awful is happening around her. If convinced, she may provide the investigators with some assistance.

ADVERSARIES AND MONSTERS

Ronald Stewart, *age 43, gadabout and occultist*

- **Link:** may be encountered at the headquarters of the Temple of Leviathan (**Assault and Batteries**, page 203).

Ronald Stewart is the son of a wealthy real-estate mogul. The elder Stewart knows better than to put his son in charge of anything, which suits Ronald just fine, as he's perfectly happy spending his parents' wealth and living a lavish and carefree lifestyle without any demands. Despite his natural tendency toward sloth, Stewart has managed to acquire a dangerous amount of occult power. Clearly, the ability to feed his insatiable capacity for hedonism outweighs his laziness.

- **Description:** a white, portly, and balding man, who cares little concern in his physical health, although he does sport an ostentatiously expensive wardrobe.
- **Traits:** narcissistic and egomaniacal; treats those around him as tools or playthings.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** leader of the Temple of the Leviathan; orchestrated the series of events that lead to Clayton Morris' death.

Theo Spinelli, *age 37, flunky for Morello crime family*

- **Link:** encountered at the policy office in East Harlem (**A Matter of Policy**, page 200).

Spinelli is a low-level gangster in the employ of Giuseppe "The Clutch Hand" Morello; Spinelli runs Morello's numbers racket out of a deli in East Harlem. Despite being a lifelong criminal, Spinelli is a devoted husband and a loving father to his two young children. He answered his country's call during the Great War and distinguished himself in combat. It was during the war that Spinelli met the man who would one day be his loyal enforcer, Blake Kurzweil. Spinelli ran into a little gambling debt of his own recently and is working some side gigs to pay it off; he knows he's taking a risk using Morello's men to help out Ronald Stewart, but hopes he can make a quick buck and pay off his debt before Morello finds out.

- **Description:** a short white man, just over 5 feet (1.5 m) tall; going prematurely gray at the temples.
- **Traits:** abhors small talk; speaks with a slight stutter (and is defensive about it).
- **Roleplaying hooks:** willing to spill the beans on Ronald Stewart and the Temple of Leviathan, if Morello is used for leverage. Will not put himself in harm's way unless absolutely necessary.

Blake Kurzweil, *age 35, mob enforcer and sociopath*

- **Link:** observes the investigators and later tries to interrogate them (**Dreyfuss' Workshop**, page 198).

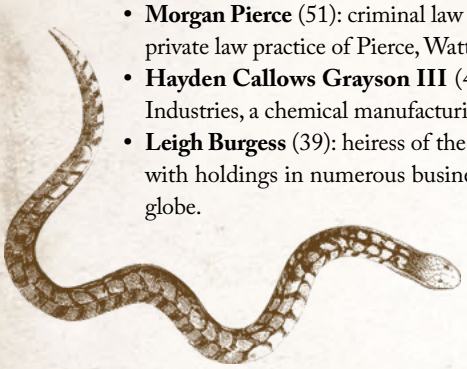
Kurzweil is a sadist; if his work didn't provide him with a release valve for his vile tendencies, he would probably be a serial killer. Some people are just bad eggs, and Kurzweil is one very bad egg indeed. While many who signed up to fight in the Great War could give patriotism or duty as reasons, Kurzweil did it so he could kill (and he was very good at killing). The only person Kurzweil has any loyalty to whatsoever is Theo Spinelli, with whom he served in the muddy fields of France. After their return to the U.S., Spinelli returned to a life of crime and enlisted Kurzweil as his chief enforcer. After Spinelli aligned with Ronald Stewart, the sorcerer gifted Kurzweil with a weird substance that he told him to consume as it would "protect him"—the substance was actually a specially prepared glob from a formless spawn, which has integrated into his body, and which allows Kurzweil to turn into a puddle of ooze at will.

- **Description:** pale-skinned and fair-haired white male, in contrast to the dark suits and fedora hats he favors. Kurzweil has a perpetual sheen of sweat, which he constantly mops from his brow and neck, no matter how cold it is (an outward manifestation of his body being conjoined with a formless spawn).
- **Traits:** a piece of Great War shrapnel in his throat has left his voice raspy and harsh; he doesn't speak much, but when he does it's pretty unpleasant.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** trails the investigators and later attempts to ambush them at Cecil Dreyfuss' workshop. He interrogates any captured investigators (to find out who put them on Stewart's trail) and then eliminates them—he may follow this up by attempting to silence the investigators' employers as well. Conversely, if the investigators somehow capture Kurzweil, they may be able to squeeze him for information about Spinelli.

Temple of Leviathan

The Temple is a small group of power-hungry and hedonistic individuals who have turned to the secrets of Cthulhu Mythos to enforce their will and hunger. The exact number of members is left to the Keeper's discretion, with the assumption of a minimum of four plus Ronald Stewart. Members include the following people:

- **Reginald Thurston** (25): youngest member of the group; serves as an executive with his father's shipping firm, Thurston Oceanic.
- **Morgan Pierce** (51): criminal law attorney working at the private law practice of Pierce, Watterson, and Lowe.
- **Hayden Callows Grayson III** (42): owner of Grayson Industries, a chemical manufacturing company.
- **Leigh Burgess** (39): heiress of the Burgess family fortune, with holdings in numerous business interests around the globe.



TIMELINE

January 8: Lena Thoreau killed.
October 1: Ronald Stewart approaches Clayton Morris.
October 4: Clayton Morris begins his Dreamlands journey to retrieve plans for the battery.
October 8: Clayton Morris delivers the battery design to Stewart.
October 14: Clayton Morris receives his battery and conducts the ritual.
October 25: Clayton Morris meets Stewart at his studio.
October 26: Clayton Morris killed.
October 27: Clayton Morris fails to show at the gathering at the household of Aaron and Alta Douglas.
October 29: Pearl Wilkins goes to Clayton Morris' apartment.
October 31: dream batteries placed by the Temple of Leviathan.
November 3: Pearl Wilkins is horrified after seeing Clayton Morris' face in a painting.
November 5: the investigation begins.

SCENES

START: STILL LIFE

The scenario begins on Friday, November 5, 1927, at Pearl Wilkins' residence (116th & Lenox). Wilkins is a vivacious and caring woman, who lives alone in a small and sparsely decorated one-bedroom apartment on the second floor. Many of the apartment's walls feature the work of various artists whose company Wilkins keeps. Wilkins is a nurse at Harlem Hospital, meaning she works irregular hours.

When the investigators arrive, it is clear that something is troubling Wilkins. While friendly in tone, she remains somewhat reserved, offering her visitors some sandwiches and coffee before explaining her reason for summoning the investigators. Wilkins is concerned for the safety of her brother, an artist named Clayton Morris, who has disappeared. In recent weeks, her brother's behavior has been uncharacteristically erratic. Wilkins explains that since the loss of his wife, Lena Thoreau, in January, Morris has been in a deep depression, although around mid-October his spirits seemed to suddenly lift; however, toward the end of that month, he became short-tempered and anguished. Wilkins has no explanation for such mood swings and hasn't been to his apartment in quite a while—the one time she offered to visit, he rebuffed her, explaining that he was doing well, but was too busy to see her.

A week ago, Morris was supposed to attend a gathering at the home of Aaron Douglas and his wife, Alta Sawyer. When he didn't arrive, it raised a few eyebrows; the meetings are informal, and people tend to come or not, as they please. At first, Wilkins chalked up Morris' failure to show as being due to his workload; however, her subsequent calls to him went unanswered, and she grew suspicious. Two days after the gathering, Wilkins dropped by Morris' apartment; he wasn't home, and the neighbors seemed quite unhelpful. Speaking with Morris' landlady, Lillian Baumann, Wilkins discovered that her brother's rent had been paid several months in advance and that he had told Baumann he would be away for a while as he had to leave town on sudden business. As neither she nor her brother has any extended family to speak of (all their social circles exist entirely within Harlem and parts of New York), Wilkins is at a loss to explain why Morris would be called away on business.

At this point in the conversation, Wilkins grows quiet, as if she is disturbed by a painful memory. She explains that she was cleaning her apartment a few days after visiting Morris' place when she saw something that frightened her. She begs a moment to collect herself and then—instead of explaining—she directs the investigators toward a painting

hanging beside the doorway to the front hall. At first glance, nothing about the painting seems unusual; it's an idyllic summer scene of a street corner, a familiar panorama to anyone who knows Harlem. The painting shows couples strolling the sidewalk hand in hand, while locals sit on a front stoop of an apartment building, exchanging gossip. On the street, a clutch of children are being chased by a dog. The scene is beautifully rendered in Impressionist brushstrokes: broad, bold dabs of paint bringing the canvas to life. An **Art/Craft (Art)** or Hard **Spot Hidden** roll notices something a little out of keeping with the rest of the painting: the face of a forlorn man staring out of a third-floor window overlooking the sidewalk. The man's eyes are drawn deep into their sockets, while his mouth is agape, as if screaming at the people below. The face is not immediately noticeable, but once seen, it's the only thing the eye is drawn to when viewing the painting. If the investigators don't notice this oddity, Wilkins points it out and exclaims—clearly knowing how insane it must sound—that the face in the window is that of her brother Clayton Morris, and that she is absolutely certain it was not there before his disappearance. Looking at the ghostly anguished face and hearing about its connection to Wilkins provokes a **Sanity** roll (0/1 loss).

Keeper note: examining the painting more carefully, the investigators note that it was painted by Clayton Morris and that the face in the window does seem consistent with the rest of the painting. The frame and canvas do not appear to have been moved in quite some time—a thin layer of dust covers its surface, and cobwebs lie between the painting and

KEY LOCATIONS

- **Wilkins' apartment**: 116th & Lenox.
- **Morris' apartment**: 273 West 122nd Street.
- **Morris' studio**: 216 Lenox Avenue.
- **Dreyfuss' workshop**: West 126th Street.
- **East Harlem "policy" office**: East 121st Street.
- **Madame Yonday's shop**: 314 West 117th Street.
- **Temple sanctuary**: 123rd Street.

Dreams and Broken Wings Keeper map

the wall. Whatever happened to the painting, it's obvious that it hasn't been removed from the wall, repainted, and then replaced.

Wilkins goes on to say that when Morris gave her the painting a year ago, it was exactly as the investigators see it, but minus the harrowing image of him screaming from the upper-story window. She feels the face at the window is an omen and that something terrible has happened to her brother. She appeals to the investigators for their help. Can they find her brother and uncover the trouble he is in? Presuming the investigators agree, Wilkins provides the following information.

- Clayton Morris' apartment is located on 122nd Street, a few blocks from the Alhambra Club.
- His rent was paid via a cash-filled envelope, slipped under Lillian Baumann's door the evening before his absence was noted at the gathering at the Douglas' home. Wilkins did not ask to see the actual envelope, nor is she aware whether this is how Morris normally paid his rent, as her time with Baumann was relatively short. Wilkins goes on to say that Ms. Baumann was quite surly and sickly looking.
- There was something odd about his apartment building, a disturbing atmosphere one might say (see **The Woman of His Dreams**, nearby).
- She has not been to Morris' studio yet; it's a couple of blocks from his apartment (**Morris' Studio**, page 196).
- Morris' wife Lena (née Thoreau) died in January; she was an innocent bystander, killed by a stray bullet fired during a mugging (see **The Shooter**, page 194).

If the investigators pick up on Wilkin's description of Lillian Baumann and ask her to elaborate, she pauses and then says that all the people she saw in the apartment building seemed tired, pale, and sickly in appearance—she didn't stick around to find out why. What she saw there disturbed her, and she implores the investigators to begin their inquiries at Morris' apartment building and to let her know what they find. She thinks Baumann might know more than she's letting on (**The Woman of His Dreams**, nearby).

Keeper note: should the investigators look into the death of Lena Morris via newspaper research or public records, a successful **Library Use** or **Law** roll uncovers a newspaper report (**Dreams Handout 1: Newspaper Article**) detailing the incident, as well as her obituary (**Dreams Handout 2: Obituary**).

AARON DOUGLAS AND THE HARLEM RENAISSANCE

Originally from Topeka, Kansas, Aaron Douglas would rise to prominence after the publication of Alain LeRoy Locke's *The New Negro*, Douglas' first major artistic commission. Often called the "father of African-American art," Douglas' graphic-design work featured prominently in publications such as *The Crisis* (published by the NAACP) and *Opportunity Journal* (published by the National Urban League), as well as *Harper's* and *Vanity Fair*. The Harlem household of Aaron and Alta Douglas was a gathering point for many of the Harlem Renaissance's most prominent contributors.

Like many artists who were part of the Renaissance, Douglas' work played a huge role in shifting perceptions of African-Americans away from caricature and stereotype. Taking cues from traditional African art and combining it with his own Modernist sensibilities, Douglas transformed the way the world saw black America. Douglas left Harlem in 1940 and settled in Nashville, Tennessee, where he taught art for nearly three decades. He died in 1979 at the age of 79.

THE WOMAN OF HIS DREAMS

- **Link:** Pearl Wilkins provides the address to Clayton Morris' apartment (**Still Life**, page 188).

Clayton Morris lives in a modest six-story apartment building (273 West 122nd Street). The building is home to twenty-four families and is owned by a young white woman named Lillian Baumann. At 24, Baumann is fairly young to own and maintain a property of this size, having been left the building's stewardship after her parents died in a boating accident two years earlier. Since then, she has run the property, with most residents agreeing that she's done a terrific job. Baumann is usually polite, if a little reserved—the dream battery's effect on the apartment building is taking its toll on her, as well as the rest of the residents.

Keeper note: as the investigators are approaching (or leaving) Morris' apartment for the first time, a successful **Spot Hidden** roll detects a shadowy figure watching them. The figure is Blake Kurzweil, a thug in the employ of

Theo Spinelli. If pursued, Kurzweil runs away and rapidly disappears (into the alley behind the apartment building)—the investigators have no chance to apprehend the man, although a successful **Spot Hidden** or **Track** roll finds a few droplets of a black mucus-like substance on the ground where the figure was spotted. If touched or examined, the mucus is acidic, causing 1D2 damage if touched by bare skin.

Paranoid that someone might follow up on Morris' disappearance, Spinelli has asked Kurzweil to keep an eye on the place for a couple of days. Kurzweil won't stick around long enough to get into a tussle with the investigators; he notes their interest in Morris' apartment, and then reports back to Spinelli. For now, Spinelli plays it cool, as roughing up the interlopers will only attract attention.

Dreaming While Awake

A sullen depression has settled on the families in the apartment building, causing them endless nights of restless sleep, and sapping them of energy during their waking hours. The resulting malaise has caused more than a little tension among the residents, and there has been a recent spike in calls to the police from incidents arising in and around the building—confirmed if an investigator succeeds with a **Lore (Harlem)** roll. The pall of despair that hangs over the building is noticeable to non-residents, even those unfamiliar with the area.

The depressive atmosphere grows more noticeable once the investigators enter the building, and then increases as they approach the fourth floor. Despite the building's heating being in good working order, an inescapable chill permeates the structure. Spending any time whatsoever on the fourth floor proves to be deeply unsettling, as an icy emptiness

Dreams Handout 1: Newspaper Article

ANOTHER HARLEM SHOOTING

A fatal shooting occurred last evening near the intersection of 127th and 7th streets, shortly after 11 p.m. The incident is being described as a mugging, although the shooting victim was an innocent bystander and not a party to the crime. The shooter, who has been identified as 32-year-old Maxwell Gaddis, has been taken into custody pending an investigation. Gaddis claims not to have the instigated the shooting, stating that 22-year-old Linden Brown threatened him with a knife and that the shooting was committed in self-defense. The victim was named as 26-year-old Lena Morris, resident of Harlem.

The Independent
January 9, 1927

Dreams Handout 2: Obituary

LENA DELACROIX MORRIS A fatal shooting occurred last evening near the intersection of 127th and 7th streets, shortly after 11 p.m. The incident is being described as a mugging, although the shooting victim was an innocent bystander and not a party to the crime. The shooter, who has been identified as 32-year-old Maxwell Gaddis, has been taken into custody pending an investigation. Gaddis claims not to have the instigated the shooting, stating that 22-year-old Linden Brown threatened him with a knife and that the shooting was committed in self-defense. The victim was named as 26-year-old Lena Morris, resident of Harlem.

begins to numb emotions and a deep despair begins to rise within the very core of the investigators—the effect provokes a **Sanity** roll (1/1D3 loss).

The residents don't comment on the atmosphere—they've been rendered numb and insensate to the extent that they are almost completely unaware of the effect—but questioning Morris' neighbors bears some fruit. Interviewing the residents with a successful **Charm, Fast Talk,** or **Persuade** roll gets someone to tell the investigators that they first noticed something strange three weeks ago; in fact, one of the children in the building became uncharacteristically hostile around that time, attacking one of their playmates. While police weren't involved, the incident stunned and frightened some of the neighbors, who have been reticent to let their children play in front of the property ever since. Another witness says that the last time they saw Morris, he was seen leaving the apartment in a huff, cursing to himself, and headed somewhere on foot in a very excitable state.

Conversation with Baumann

If the investigators wish to speak to Lillian Baumann, they find her in Unit 1A on the ground floor, as indicated on the mailboxes. Answering to a knock on her door, Baumann is quite a sight. Her naturally pale complexion is distinctly deathly white, and her eyes are ringed with red and couched in dark circles. A successful Hard **First Aid** or **Medicine** roll suggests she is clearly suffering, at the very least, from serious exhaustion or sleep deprivation; she can barely keep her thoughts together, and her speech is slurred. Without taking her in to see a specialist, all that can be ascertained is that she looks spectacularly unwell.

Gaining information from the landlady proves difficult. She's barely in her right mind and is highly irritable to boot. Unless brought to reason with a successful **Psychoanalysis**, **Charm**, or **Psychology** roll, she simply mutters incoherently about not wanting to be bothered and tries to retreat into her apartment. If calmed, she confirms that Morris did say he was going away on business, although she doesn't know the nature of the work. He paid several months' rent in advance before he left. At this point, Baumann complains loudly about having already answered these questions to the woman who showed up a few days ago, and that she's in no mood to be pestered again.

Getting anything more from Baumann requires a Hard **Charm**, **Fast Talk**, or **Persuade** roll (ignore this if a previous Psychoanalysis roll was successful), which gets her to give the investigators the envelope that contained Morris' rent money. The investigators comparing the envelope bearing Ms. Baumann's name and a date in blue ink to a sample of Morris' handwriting (from his apartment or via Pearl Wilkins) may attempt a **Language (English)** or **Spot Hidden** roll to note that the handwriting on the envelope does not match other samples of Morris' handwriting. Assuming the investigators were successful in getting Baumann to talk, she agrees to let them into Morris' apartment; otherwise, a successful social skill roll is required—or the "donation" of two dollars—gets Baumann to give them a key.

Getting into Morris' Apartment

Morris' unit is 4D, on the fourth floor, on the right at the far end of the hallway. If the investigators have a key to Morris' apartment, it's a simple matter of letting themselves in; otherwise, a successful **Locksmith** or **STR** roll opens the door—if STR, the noise draws attention from neighboring apartments. Alternatively, accessing the apartment via the fire escape (on front of the building) is relatively easy, although risks being noticed by the neighbors if all of the investigators enter in this manner (doing the smart thing and sending one person up to open the window with a **Locksmith** roll to let the others in from the inside is advisable). If they ascend as a group, a successful group **Luck** roll allows them to do so without drawing unwanted attention; if the roll is failed, the neighbors call the police, and a squad car arrives in about 15 minutes.

The Strange Girl

If the investigators approach the apartment from the hallway, a successful **Listen** roll alerts them to the presence of a faint but noticeable voice—a girl's voice—muttering in a strange manner. This is five-year-old Margaret Ashton, from unit 4B. She is sitting cross-legged in the left alcove, scribbling on the wall beside a window. Like all the residents of the building, Margaret is afflicted by the dream battery's vampiric nature. Her skin is ashen gray, her hair is a matted mess of knots, and her eyes are red-ringed orbs peering from within black pits. Her drawings are a mess of scribbles, all without any form or meaning—she is a child without dreams or imagination. A successful **Art/Craft (Any)** or **Psychology** roll notes that the girl's artistic efforts seem to have been reduced to mechanical nonsense, as if completely devoid of creative thought. If the investigators have already spoken to Baumann downstairs, it is clear that Margaret suffers from the same condition as the landlady. The girl barely registers the investigators, answering their questions with nothing more than grunts or sighs, without even bothering to turn around, while she is focusing on her scribbling. Margaret is blissfully unaware of what's been happening in the apartment building. A successful Hard **Charm** or **Psychology** roll gets the girl to respond, and if asked about Clayton Morris, she simply says, "Nice" and then goes on to say, "I like to hear the pretty lady in Mr. Morris' apartment sing at night." The encounter is unsettling and calls for a **Sanity** roll (0/1 loss).

After engaging with Margaret for a minute or two, her father Michael Ashton emerges from their apartment and rushes down the hall towards the investigators, demanding to

know what they want from his child. Ashton is clearly not well, displaying similar physical symptoms to everyone else they've seen in the building. Clutching Margaret and shuffling her into the apartment, Ashton then proceeds to confront the investigators; his exhaustion and weariness have brought him to the brink of rage. A successful **Charm**, **Fast Talk**, **Persuade**, or **Intimidate** roll peacefully ends the situation; otherwise, he takes out his frustrations on the investigators. Despite his bulk, the man is in no condition to fight, his attacks are slow and ineffectual—although his first punch may come as a surprise and connect, causing 1D3 damage. Hampered by weariness, after a few moments of shouting and bawling, Ashton retreats into his apartment, slamming the door behind him.

A Dreamer's Reprieve

Once inside Morris' apartment, the investigators are effectively inside his "dreamspace" and are subject to the strange laws therein (see **Dreamscape Effect**, nearby). The first thing the investigators notice is that the oppressive pall of despair, which has pulled at them from the moment they set foot inside the apartment building, abruptly ceases to exist. Crossing the threshold back into the hallway brings the cold emptiness back like a clinging shroud. The second thing is a beautiful voice echoing from the bedroom, singing Bessie Smith's "I Ain't Got Nobody." Not just any woman's voice, but someone who appears to be Morris' deceased wife, Lena. While the investigators may not know her by appearance, a cursory examination of some of the apartment's effects confirm that this is, in fact, her—or someone who looks very much like her. It's possible that one or more of the investigators making a successful **Lore (Harlem)** roll knows, has heard of, or has seen Lena perform in one of the neighborhood's many clubs, in which case the voice and face are recognized as unmistakably hers.

Lena is, of course, a figment of the dreamspace—a shade created from Morris' memories and affection for his dead wife. Speaking to her, knowing she's been murdered, is disturbing and provokes a **Sanity** roll (0/1D3 loss). Lena can converse with the investigators, but is unaware that she is a walking "fiction." Likewise, she knows nothing of the dream battery, nor of Morris' activities related to its creation. She speaks of her husband with radiant affection and expresses how much she misses him. If asked about Morris' whereabouts, she says he's been gone for several months (in Dreamlands time, that is), and she wants nothing more than to feel his arms around her again. Lena won't stop the investigators from searching the apartment, and if they hint that something untoward might have befallen Morris, she becomes deeply concerned for his safety.

Naturally, Thoreau cannot leave the apartment. Should the investigators ask her to do so, she'll tell them she can't, with no explanation as to why. If they force her out in some manner, she'll immediately cease to exist, vanishing in an instant as if she'd never been (**Sanity loss** 1/1D4). Likewise, Thoreau is dispelled in an instant if the battery is destroyed or is moved more than a city block away.

DREAMSCAPE EFFECT

Morris' dreamspace within his apartment affects the investigators' perception of time. Any period spent in the apartment is subject to Dreamlands' time; namely, time in the apartment moves more quickly than time in the Waking World. Thus, having spent an hour spent inside the apartment, the investigators find only a minute has passed when they depart. The relation between Waking World and Dreamlands time is flexible, so the Keeper is free to adjust this example as they see fit, converting an hour in the dreamspace to a minute or a second as necessary. The time difference is apparent to those checking their watches or if making a successful **INT** roll.

In addition, many of the items in Morris' apartment are figments of the dreamspace and cannot exist in the Waking World. Taking an item (such as a curious-looking book or an ornate and old-fashioned candelabra) from the apartment, the investigators find that it simply disappears, with a **Sanity** loss of 0/1. Note that this consequence is the same should the investigators try to remove Lena from the apartment, although the **Sanity** loss is increased to 1D3/1D6. Should the dream battery be removed or destroyed, the apartment reverts to its actual Waking World state, revealing a space that bears much the same physical layout but with few furnishings. Items that actually exist in Waking World and which can be removed are described in *italics* in the **Inside the Apartment** section and listed below for quick reference.

Waking World (real) items in Morris' apartment:

- Armchairs
- Newspapers
- Two books
- Various photographs
- Bed and nightstand
- Lamp
- Men's clothes
- Spectacles
- Loose change
- A notebook
- Strange cylinder

Inside the Apartment

The apartment is sparsely furnished. Just inside the doorway is a nail in the wall; a handwritten note beneath the nail reads "studio," although the key is missing (Morris took the key with him to meet Arnold Stewart, but never returned to replace it, see **Morris' Studio**, page 196). A pair of worn *armchairs*, one light brown and the other a faded lime green, flank a modest coffee table, on which lies some half-read *newspapers* and a couple of *books*: T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* and W. Somerset Maugham's *The Painted Veil*.

A long table positioned next to the right-side wall hosts a radio, a small planter containing an assortment of flowers, and several picture frames containing *photographs*: one of Morris at work in his studio (standing before a large canvas,) another of Morris and his sister Pearl (attending a birthday party), and two photographs depicting Morris' wife Lena. In the first of these, Lena is standing with her back to the camera overlooking a body of water, her head turned back toward the photographer. In the other, Lena and Morris are seated on the stoop of an apartment building sharing a private moment; Morris' arm is draped over his wife's shoulder.

Directly across from the door is a small dining and kitchen area with a small refrigerator—this item (above all others) may provide a clue to the dream quality of some of the fixtures and furnishings (see **Dreamscape Effect** box, nearby), as a successful **INT** roll notes it would be very unlikely for Morris to afford a refrigerator in the 1920s. Should the investigators open the refrigerator, they find it well-stocked, but all the items inside are made of dream material; they taste fine and are just as filling as the real thing, but once the investigator leaves the apartment, they feel hungry again, as if they have not eaten anything for a while. On the other hand, all water fixtures in the apartment are still tied to the city lines and produces actual water. An opened and half-consumed bottle of beer is on the table.

A door leads into Morris' bedroom and the small bathroom. The bedroom contains a *queen-size bed* and a *nightstand* that bears a single *lamp*. A small closet contains a modest selection of *men's clothes*. On the *nightstand* is a pair of *spectacles*, some *loose change*, and a *notebook*—looking inside, there are a handful of sketches, mostly depicting daily life in the neighborhood, still-life sketches of small objects, and some rough portraits of Lena, which describe her beauty particularly well, although which also provoke a distinct melancholy. Some of the sketches are quite odd and somewhat Surrealist in nature, while others are downright disturbing, depicting images of ghoulish men scuttling about dark caves, bat-winged monstrosities, and dark oceans teeming with bizarre life. Viewing the images in the *notebook* calls for a **Sanity** roll (0/1), while a successful **Cthulhu Mythos** roll suggests these strange images are consistent with places and beings one might encounter in the Dreamlands. In addition to the images, the *notebook* contains a few handwritten notes, mostly reminders of mundane tasks, some crossed out, some not. There seems to be no rhyme nor reason to the contents, as if Morris simply pulled the book out of his pocket on a whim and scribbled on whatever page was convenient. Likewise, there are no dates; however, there is one useful inscription, which accompanies a small, hastly drawn pencil sketch of an unusual cylinder. The sketch is indistinct but stands out as being quite different from the other drawings in the *notebook*.

A successful **Spot Hidden** roll detects marks on the floor, partially hidden beneath a rug, near the *bed*. Lifting the rug finds a small niche cut into the floorboards containing a strange-looking *cylinder* (Morris' dream battery). Some 12 inches (30 cm) in length and 6 inches (15 cm) in diameter, the object is comprised of hardened red clay. Inscribed around the perimeter are strange markings, which a successful **Anthropology**, **Archaeology**, or Hard **History** roll reveals they do not resemble any known language. The *cylinder* radiates a strange aura that makes one feel disconnected from the world around—holding it in one's hands is deeply unsettling, causing a **Sanity** roll (1/1D6 loss).

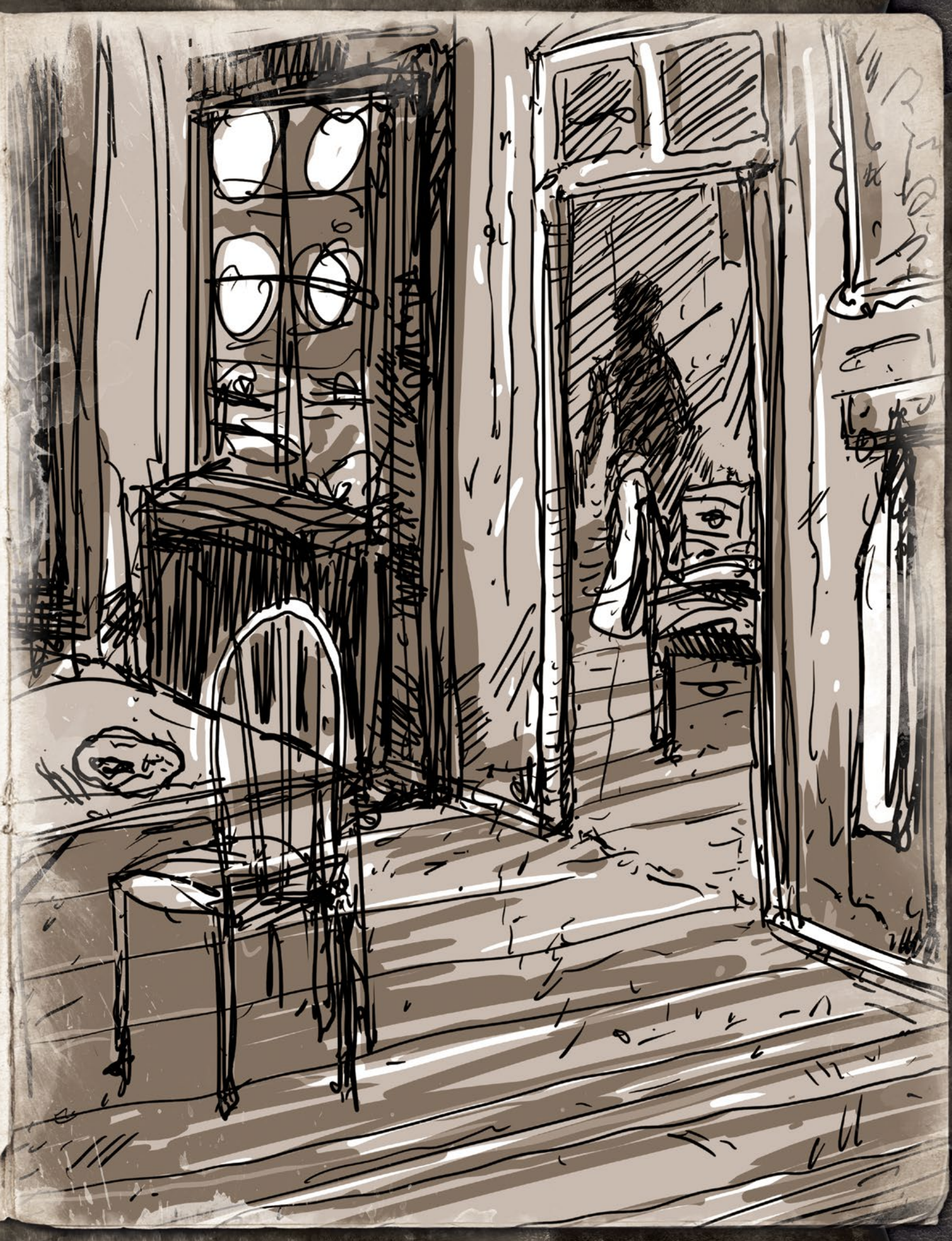
THE SHOOTER

- **Link:** researching Lena Morris' death (**Still Life**, page 188).

Following up on Lena Morris' murder confirms that Maxwell Gaddis was the shooter. After a short trial, Gaddis was acquitted of the murder charge. The quiet and reversed white man was a veteran of the Great War, who now makes a living as a factory worker—and also works a sideline running numbers for one of Theo Spinelli's "policy offices" in Lower Harlem. Finding Gaddis requires a successful **Law** roll or ten dollars to hire a lawyer to locate the court and city hall records, a **Fast Talk** or **Persuade** roll at Hard difficulty, or a **Lore (Harlem)** roll to find him via word of mouth.

Gaddis is not particularly keen to speak about the shooting; the whole thing has been a traumatic experience for him, and he does not relish it being brought up again. He said all he needed to when he was arrested. Convincing him to open up requires a Hard social skill roll. The shooting, he says through teary eyes, was a terrible misfortune. A man (Linden Brown) stumbled out of an alley towards him, brandishing a knife. Gaddis did what he felt was necessary to protect his life and fired his handgun. There are days, he says, when he wishes the Lord had taken his life instead of that young girl's. Continuing, Gaddis says that he met the woman's husband once. Morris showed up on his doorstep

Opposite: Morris' Apartment



out of the blue several weeks ago, drunk out his mind. Morris said he forgave Gaddis, and that everything was going to be okay because "He knew how to bring her back." Gaddis thought Morris was just plain losing it. He invited Morris into his home, but Morris refused and disappeared into the night. That was the first and last time Gaddis saw him.

MORRIS' STUDIO

- **Link:** Pearl Wilkins provides the address to the art studio (**Still Life**, pages 188).

Morris' studio is a simple, below-ground, two-room rented space (216 Lenox Avenue). The building above is occupied by the Spallino Funeral Home; a little unsettling, but it stays quiet most of the time. When the investigators arrive, they find the studio's door locked—Morris took the only key with him when he met Ronald Stewart (just before being taken back to the Temple's sanctuary in Harlem), and it now lies at the bottom of the Hudson River, along with Morris. The door can be opened with a successful **Locksmith** roll or forced with a Hard **STR** roll.

The Father

The owner of the property is an amiable older white gentleman named Samuel Owen. Owen's son, Thaddeus, was fond of Morris and spent a good amount of time in the studio helping Morris with various tasks. A successful **Lore (Harlem)**, **Charm,** or **Fast Talk** roll has a local resident inform the investigators that Owen lives in apartment 206 in the building above, upstairs from the funeral home. Owen is happy to tell the investigators what he knows if informed of Morris' disappearance. His story is more or less the same as Lillian Baumann's (**Dreaming While Awake**, page 191): he received a note indicating that Morris was going out of town and a small envelope of cash to cover several months' rent. In questioning Owen, use the following points to develop his answers.

- Owen didn't know Morris well but found him a pleasant enough fellow. Morris kept to himself and chose to work late evenings while his wife was performing at various venues in town.
- Morris grew sullen and depressed after his wife's death and his visits to the studio became less frequent—from the time of her passing until sometime in early October, when he seemed to take a renewed interest in his work.
- Owen's son Thaddeus was very fond of Morris and was eager to help around the studio; he didn't mind that Morris' late hours kept Thaddeus up at night as helping the artist gave his son a sense of purpose and something to keep his idle hands busy.
- Thaddeus told his father that Morris and some fancy-dressed white fellow got into a shouting match. Owen told Thaddeus to mind to his own business and not spread dark rumors about folk.

If the investigators ask to speak with Thaddeus, Owen gets his son; otherwise, Thaddeus can be found outside the building—the investigators probably notice him—a forlorn-looking man observing Morris' studio from across the street.

Keeper note: if the investigators have already visited Morris' apartment and obtained the envelope from Baumann, they easily determine that the handwriting on both envelopes matches

The Son

Thaddeus Owen is developmentally disabled, bearing the mental faculties of a six-year-old. He's a hulking figure of a man, who could probably tear someone's head clean from their torso (if such a thought occurred to him). Despite his intimidating size, Thaddeus is a peaceful and sweet-natured fellow. Thaddeus was always welcome in Morris' studio and helped move canvases and equipment when needed. Importantly, he was the last person to see Morris before he was taken by Ronald Stewart. Thaddeus has been frightened ever since Morris left with Stewart. The last time he saw Morris, the painter was engaged in a heated argument with Stewart. Thaddeus overheard the whole thing, but his impaired cognition makes it difficult for him to understand most of what transpired.

Should the investigators try to threaten or harm Thaddeus, he backs away and tries to escape—figuring they are like the people who took Morris. If a chase ensues, the investigators catch Thaddeus easily enough; he doesn't run, but rather lumbers, clumsily flailing his arms while screaming at the top of his lungs in a very childlike fashion. Pursing investigators should feel bad about causing him distress (at their discretion, the Keeper may impose a 1 Sanity point penalty).

When the investigators speak with Thaddeus, it is a matter of convincing him they're not "bad guys." In Thaddeus' mind, everyone is either a "good guy" or a "bad guy." The people who took Morris are "bad guys." A successful **Psychology** roll enables the investigators to deduce Thaddeus' condition, and grants a bonus die to a **Charm** or **Persuade** roll to encourage him to speak. Use the following points as a guide for what Thaddeus can tell the investigators.

- Morris was very nice to him, brought him food, and let him carry things around the studio.
- Morris told Thaddeus about a "magic lady" he liked to visit, called Madame Yonday (**Miss Fortune Teller**, page 200).

- Morris always told great stories of magical places and wrote them down in books he kept hidden in his studio.
- The last time he saw Morris was about two weeks ago (he can't be more specific; the actual date was October 25, the day Stewart came to the studio). Morris was arguing with someone in the studio, a "bad guy." The bad guy was white and drove a "real nice car."
- Morris and the "bad guy" were shouting and kept talking about "batteries" or something (the plural is important there—it tells the investigators there are more of these items). Morris seemed angry that the "bad guy" was going to hurt a lot of people.
- After shouting at one another, Morris and the "bad guy" got in the nice car—if asked where they went, Thaddeus just points in the general direction of Upper Harlem.

Polling the neighborhood corroborates Thaddeus' version of events—a couple of the other residents saw the altercation, although nobody paid any attention to what was being argued about. A successful social skill roll turns up one witness who claims to have seen Morris pull a gun out of his pocket and check the cylinder before entering his studio.

BACKUP?

It's possible that the investigators may want to bring Thaddeus Owen along with them, for his muscle. He's sufficiently good-natured (and morally polarized) to accompany them if he believes saving Morris is part of the plan. His profile is provided in the **Characters and Monsters** section (page 205), just in case—but man... that's kind of a cruel thing to do. I mean, Thaddeus has been through enough, don't you think?

The Studio

Morris' studio space is sparse, featuring little in the way of furnishings beyond a simple roll-top desk and several easels. Various art supplies (tubes of paint) and canvases (some stretched and prepped for painting, others awaiting preparation), and other artists' ephemera lie scattered about. The front room is clearly where Morris did most of his actual painting, and an unfinished piece (featuring, with sad irony, the Hudson River waterfront) stands on an easel. Other work in various stages of completion lies around the room. One upper window provides natural light, while another has been boarded up.

A single door leads to a storage area full of samples of Morris' work. Despite the general clutter on display in the studio, it is obvious that someone has spent quite a bit of time going through Morris' work as if searching for something. The place hasn't been messily turned over; the front office simply displays a lack of care, while the storeroom is in complete disarray. Dozens of paintings and preliminary sketches have been carelessly stacked on top of each other in one corner of the room. The paintings are beautiful. If the investigators take time to pore over the stacks, a successful **Art/Craft (Art)** roll reveals Morris' talent and development; one can see Morris slowly finding a way to combine realism with his natural abstract style, perhaps influenced by other members of Harlem's art clique. All in all, the body of work represents a gorgeous slice of Harlem life; however, lying among the paintings of urban life lurk a darker and stranger subject matter. Some of the paintings depict strange and alien worlds and vistas—these are Morris' paintings of the Dreamlands. Despite their subject matter, it is as though one could step into the paintings and into another world. A successful **Cthulhu Mythos** or **Lore (Dreamlands)** roll recognizes some specific landmarks (such as the Dylath-Leen, Ulthar, and the Enchanted Wood) or creatures (such as zoogs, ghouls, and gugs).

Several shelves in the studio sag under the weight of numerous sketchbooks. Morris was prolific and produced a sketchbook every week for the last five years. Unlike the rest of the studio, when it came to his sketchbooks Morris was methodical: each tome is dated and labeled. Not merely a collection of drawings, it is possible, should one care to spend time with them, to draw a fairly complete picture of Morris' life. These sketchbooks are a window into Morris' inner life and, if taken together, form a Mythos tome of sorts (see **The Morris Collection** box, nearby).

Hidden behind the boards covering up a window are a set of journals, which may be found with a Hard **Spot Hidden** roll (alternatively, Thaddeus Owen may hint at their location, if questioned by the investigators). The boards are easily removed, giving access to four books that document Morris journey in the Dreamlands to acquire the plans for the dream battery. While the journals describe Morris' quest to find the battery, they do not describe the battery's purpose or function. Morris mentions his "benefactor" (meaning Ronald Stewart) several times but declines to mention him by name. Morris also describes (with great enthusiasm) his desire to receive the completed and functioning "battery," but complains that he does not know where he will hide it in his apartment. Folded in the back of the last journal is a handful of sketches depicting the dream battery. If the investigators have already seen or retrieved the dream battery, they recognize it from the sketches, although an **Art/Craft (Sculpture)** or **INT** roll deduces these are just preliminary sketches, as the finished battery differs in a few

THE MORRIS COLLECTION

There is a total of 242 sketchbooks of various sizes and four journals that comprise the "Morris Collection." Together, they form a Mythos tome, which particularly concerns the Dreamlands. While many of the sketches are mundane, most of the books include at least one to two directly relevant Mythos compositions, with many being drawn "from life" while Morris journeyed through the realm of dream. The journals contain the insights, descriptions, and encounters recorded by Morris while venturing through the Dreamlands.

The Morris Collection
Notes and illustrations by Clayton Morris, circa 1922–1927

- **Sanity loss:** 1D6
- **Cthulhu Mythos:** +2/+4 percentiles
- **Mythos Rating:** 18
- **Other:** +3 percentiles to Art/Craft (Art), + 10 percentiles to Lore (Dreamlands)
- **Study:** 6 weeks
- **Suggested spells:** none.

small respects. In the corner of one of the sketches is a hastily penciled and mostly erased (but still readable) address: West 126th Street. This is the address of Cecil Dreyfuss' workshop (**Dreyfuss' Workshop**, nearby); a successful **Lore (Harlem)** or **Art/Craft (Any)** roll recalls the name, recalling Dreyfuss as a talented, though relatively unrecognized, sculptor.

DREYFUSS' WORKSHOP

- **Link:** address found in Morris' art studio (**Morris' Studio**, page 196).

Keeper note: when the investigators arrive, Blake Kurzweil and two of Theo Spinelli's gunmen are in the process of tearing apart Dreyfuss' workshop to remove any evidence of his dealings with the Temple of Leviathan. One of the men keeps a watch in the hallway. Unless they have stated that they are attempting to use **Stealth**, the investigators' entrance may be detected, causing Kurzweil and the men to lie in ambush in the rear of the workshop.

After Kurzweil sees the investigators poking around Morris' apartment, Ronald Stewart figures it would be wise to sever any remaining loose ends by disposing of Cecil Dreyfuss, the only other person outside of the Temple of Leviathan who knows about the dream batteries, and ensuring any notes or information held by the sculptor that could draw attention to the Temple are destroyed.

When the investigators arrive at the workshop (West 126th Street), the sculptor is already dead, and Spinelli's men are lying in wait. The workshop is a modest space; Dreyfuss chose it for its isolation from street noise, the only access is through an alley between two apartments that opens up into a courtyard. Most of the courtyard is walled in by the surrounding apartment buildings, while a single door allows access to the workshop area— a three-room structure.

The entrance lobby contains a few office items (a desk, chair, and filing cabinet). A wooden door leads from the lobby into a short hallway that adjoins a stockroom (to the left) containing clay, tools, and other supplies, and a small workspace (to the right) where wooden shelves present Dreyfuss' work. As anyone can tell from seeing the work on display, Dreyfuss is a talented artist with a delicate hand, skilled at capturing the tiniest details. Much of his body of work is devoted to abstract pieces resembling sea life, although there are some pieces concerning human form (busts of models, anatomical pieces, and so on).

Alas, Dreyfuss will never again produce another piece of work, as he now lies dead on the floor of the workshop, his skin puckered and burned after having been subjected to a deadly acid attack from Kurzweil.

Stopping Kurzweil

Kurzweil is interested in finding out who the investigators work for, and so would rather capture than kill them. If things don't go his way and the investigators prefer to fight rather than surrender, Kurzweil disengages from the combat and attempts to burn any evidence of Dreyfuss' dealings with Ronald Stewart and the Temple of Leviathan. Stopping Kurzweil requires either a suitable combat action/maneuver or an opposed **DEX** roll to reach him; otherwise, he set light to the paperwork and then uses his Mucus Form ability (see Kurzweil's profile, page 205) to escape through a water pipe in the wall—this means of escape provokes a **Sanity** roll (1D3/1D6+1 loss).

Should the investigators manage to overcome and capture the gunmen (Kurzweil is assumed to escape even if momentarily captured), they break under interrogation with an **Intimidate** or Hard **Persuade** roll. Use the following points for what the gunmen have to say.

- They work for Theo Spinelli, a white mobster who runs a numbers racket office in East Harlem, who is trying to muscle in on Queenie St. Clair (**Historical Folk: Stephanie St. Clair**, page 65) and Casper Holstein (**Historical Folk: Casper Holstein** page 64).
- They know Clayton Morris is dead. One (or both) of them was there when Morris was taken to the Hudson River and executed.
- They don't know why Spinelli—or his client—wanted Morris dead. They just got paid to make him dead. End of story.
- They don't know who Spinelli's client is.
- Spinelli was keeping tabs on Morris' apartment in case anyone came poking their nose in.
- Kurzweil was always a cruel bastard, but he's far worse nowadays—they are clearly terrified of Kurzweil, and doubly so if he used Mucus Form to escape.
- Spinelli isn't acting on orders from his boss, Giuseppe "The Clutch Hand" Morello; he's working side jobs for someone else. Morello wouldn't be happy if he found out (**A Matter of Policy**, page 200).

Additionally, one of the men's pockets contains keys for the car they left parked on the street outside the alley, a black 1923 Earl Sedan. Searching the car, a successful **Spot Hidden** roll uncovers a torn receipt from Ricci's Meats, bearing what appears to be a handful of policy bets (**A Matter of Policy**, page 200). The glove box contains a "dream book" titled *Madame Yonday's Dream Journal*, which promises "Success in Money, Love, and Happiness." Inside the book is a handwritten note from Madame Yonday herself saying, "To Clayton, my Beautiful Dreamer" (**Miss Fortune Teller**, page 200). Morris had the book on his person when he was taken captive, and one of Spinelli's goons threw it in the glove compartment on a whim.

HOODOO

Madame Yonday is part of a rich culture of African-American spiritualism called hoodoo. Also known as "root doctoring," hoodoo came to the U.S. by way of West Africans arrived in the country via the slave trade. During the 1920s, such practitioners often operated independent businesses offering fortune-telling services, as well as publishing so-called "dream books" to give readers an edge in the many policy games in operation at the time. Such books usually contained lists of images found in one's dreams, along with a corresponding number. So, if you had a dream about an elephant, and the book lists "Elephant 25," you might want to include the number 25 in your policy bet the following day.

MISSED CLUES

The scenario requires the investigators to visit **Dreyfuss' Workshop** (page 198) from information found in Clayton **Morris' Studio** (page 196), which in turn leads them to **A Matter of Policy** (page 200) and **Miss Fortune Teller** (page 200). Most groups will figure things out and work their way to these encounters naturally, but the investigators may miss the clues to these two scenes. In such an event, the Keeper should look to provide the clues elsewhere in the story. Possible alternatives include the following:

- Asking around about the man seen watching the investigators (**The Woman of his Dreams**, page 190), Harlemites recognize the man as Blake Kurzweil, who works for Theo Spinelli, who has a policy office on East 121st Street—pointing to **A Matter of Policy**.
- Perhaps while puzzling out the situation in a café or speakeasy, the despondent investigators are encouraged to speak to Madame Yonday, "who knows pretty much everything" and who can "speak to spirits." With nowhere left to turn, perhaps supernatural assistance can light a way in the darkness—leading to **Miss Fortune Teller**.

A MATTER OF POLICY

- **Link:** receipt found in the car outside Dreyfuss' workshop (**Dreyfuss' Workshop**, page 198).
- **Link:** Spinelli's gunmen are interrogated (**Dreyfuss' Workshop**, page 198).

Theo Spinelli can be found at the policy office (East 121st Street) in East Harlem. Spinelli is employed of Giuseppe "The Clutch Hand" Morello, with all proceeds from the office going directly into Morello's coffers. For a mob operation, it's pretty low-key: located in the back of a deli and meat shop named Ricci's Meats, which is owned by a delightful Italian couple named Bruno and Rafaella Ricci—the investigators would do well to try the prosciutto, it's some of the best in the city. The Riccis make the space available to Spinelli and his runners, for a small cut of the daily take.

Despite the cozy sounding framework, make no mistake, this is a mob operation, and pushing Spinelli around brings some serious heat. If the investigators go in with guns blazing, they are liable to die. Not because the policy office is crammed to the walls with gun-toting gangsters—on the contrary, it's pretty lightly staffed (at any given moment, the office contains Spinelli and three gunmen, plus Kurzweil when he's not off taking care of some other business for Spinelli). But Morello doesn't like anyone interfering in his business; when he finds out who kicked up a stink or rubbed out some of his people, he sends his men to pay the troublemakers a visit, if you catch my drift. It might not be today, or tomorrow, or next week. But rest assured, there will be consequences.

Spinelli's Sideline

Spinelli is hiring out his goons for off-the-books jobs without Morello's knowledge. If the investigators interrogated the gunmen encountered at **Dreyfuss' Workshop** (page 198), then they should know roughly about Spinelli taking on "private work." From there, it's easy to deduce that Morello isn't likely to take this news well—a **Lore (Harlem)** or plain old **Know** roll deduces this outcome if necessary. Armed with this knowledge, dealing with Spinelli grants the investigators a bonus die in any attempt to convince him to give them the information they need. The investigators may have already killed or subdued several of Spinelli's guys, and that's something he's going to have to explain to Morello. Unless Spinelli plays it cool, he could wind up at the bottom of the Hudson River. Where he was expecting easy money, now he's attracting attention—and that doesn't bode well. The investigators, if they play their cards right, might be able to induce Spinelli to tell them about Ronald Stewart while also persuading him to cut ties with the Temple of Leviathan. Such a conversation with Spinelli requires a successful **Persuade** or **Intimidate** roll at Hard difficulty, though as noted above, a bonus die may be offered if the investigators are shrewd. If the investigators have killed Kurzweil, Spinelli is in no mood to negotiate, any attempts to bargain with him incur a penalty die. If the conversation results in failure, Spinelli tells the investigators to buzz off and puts four gunmen on their tail (plus Kurzweil if he's alive) with orders to silence the troublemakers for good—the Keeper should present an ambush at a suitable time thereafter.

Arriving at the Deli

If the investigators arrive at Ricci's Meats during the day, business is brisk. Bruno Ricci, a heavyset man in his early 50s, is boisterously helping customers out front while his wife Rafaella does her best to fulfill orders in the back. A steady stream of runners come and go between the back door and Spinelli's cramped office. If arriving after business hours, the shop is obviously closed, although the door's lock is easily bypassed. The back room is empty, save for the policy wheel (still filled with numbered balls) and stacks of empty betting slips. The daily take, normally kept in the office safe (Hard **Locksmith** to open) is now gone. A wrapped gift (a box containing two rather expensive diamond earrings) sits on the desk, atop a pile of receipts from the deli counter.

Keeper note: while the investigators are rifling through the office, Spinelli returns with Kurzweil (if alive)—Spinelli forgot his wife's birthday present (the diamond earrings). Any negotiations with Spinelli are conducted as described above, albeit all skill rolls should have their difficulties increased.

If the investigators get Spinelli to talk, he confirms that he has been undertaking work for an "uptown flake," a man named Ronald Stewart, who he claims is someone to be reckoned with. With a successful **Lore (Harlem)** or Hard **Know** roll, the investigators recall Stewart as a rich playboy type. Spinelli can also confirm that Stewart and his cronies operate out of a disused theater on 123rd Street (**Assault and Batteries**, page 203).

MISS FORTUNE TELLER

- **Link:** mentioned by Thaddeus Owen (**Morris' Studio**, page 196).
- **Link:** *Madame Yonday's Dream Journal* found in car (**Dreyfuss' Workshop**, page 198).

The investigator can easily find Madame Yonday by asking around or with a successful **Lore (Harlem)** roll. In addition to publishing *Madame Yonday's Dream Journal*, she operates

a fortune-telling business (314 West 117th Street)—the business is listed in the telephone directory. Open from 12:00 noon until 8:00 p.m., six days a week, Yonday offers services ranging from crystal-ball scrying and palmistry to tarot readings and dream interpretation. It's this last service that drew Clayton Morris to her several years ago, as he felt he needed someone in whom to confide his secret. Yonday accepted his strange tales as fact and offered him spiritual guidance from time to time.

Yonday claims to be a psychic, although most of what she says to her clients as prognostication is total hogwash, and she knows it—but it pays her rent, and her customers depart in good spirits armed with some good sense practical advice for navigating the intricacies of their lives. That said, Yonday occasionally does receive psychic visions, which suddenly arrive as vivid hallucinations. Often, she has no understanding what these visions portend (they are usually benign or inconsequential), but on rare occasions, Yonday has received potent images that were later borne out in frightening detail. Notably, Yonday's visions have predicted the stroke suffered by President Woodrow Wilson in 1919, the 1920 bombing of Wall Street by Italian anarchists, and the death of Harry Houdini. Of course, the visions aren't constrained just to the awful and calamitous, but it is those that cause her the most consternation. On the rare occasions, she's thought to bring her second sight to someone's attention by way of preventing a tragedy, she's been dismissed as a crackpot and disbelieved; thus, Yonday learned to keep such visions to herself, and to let fate unfold as it will.

Lately, Yonday has experienced a series of harrowing impressions that she finds deeply troubling. For the past week, her nights have been haunted by images of hundreds of people suffering, wracked in torment by an unseen force that feeds on their very souls. Unlike the majority of her visions, these recent ones have been indistinct and somewhat veiled, and have left her with the impression that something is disturbing the very fabric of reality. She is, of course, being affected by the power of the dream batteries planted by the Temple of Leviathan, which are drawing energy from the populace of Harlem.

Psychic Consultation

Assuming the investigators arrive during business hours, there is a 70 percent chance Madam Yonday is with a client; the investigators are asked to sit in her waiting room until she becomes free. The waiting room is draped in dark maroon velvet curtains and smells of exotic incense. Various mystical implements are displayed on the room's shelves, although these are mostly cheap trash placed to enhance the mood. A row of four rickety, wooden chairs sits just inside the front door, while a doorway (sectioned off with a beaded curtain) leads to the reading room beyond. Next to the beaded entrance is a locked wooden door that provides access to a staircase leading up to Yonday's apartment above the shop.

While Yonday reads for her client, a successful **Listen** roll overhears her advice to a young woman about a relationship of which she's unsure. A series of questions back and forth results in Yonday advising her client to be patient with her young lover, and that she can see into the man's heart, which is kind and true but scared to open up. A few moments later, the young woman emerges from the back room, a nervous smile on her face. After a few moments, Madame Yonday steps into the waiting room and receives her visitors.

Keeper note: should the investigators arrive after business hours, Yonday is in her apartment on the upper floor. The door to the shop is locked, but she answers any knock or summons, albeit a little irritated at being bothered at such an hour.

Psychic Assistance

If the investigators explain the reason for their visit, Yonday seems deeply disturbed. Her first instinct is to usher them out of her shop as quickly as possible, as she senses something "dark" about her visitors. If the investigators can convince her with a successful social skill roll or an **Occult** roll, she sighs with resignation and agrees to hear them out.

Yonday confirms that she knows Clayton Morris, describing in vague terms the reason for his visits, saying he was experiencing some "interesting" images on which he wanted some clarification. If pressed, she gives details, mentioning some locations from the Dreamlands (the Enchanted Wood, Celephäis, and Ulthar)—those possessing a modicum of skill in **Lore (Dreamlands)** or with a successful **Cthulhu Mythos** roll, recognize some of what she describes as imagery of the "Dreamlands." Use the following points to develop the conversation.

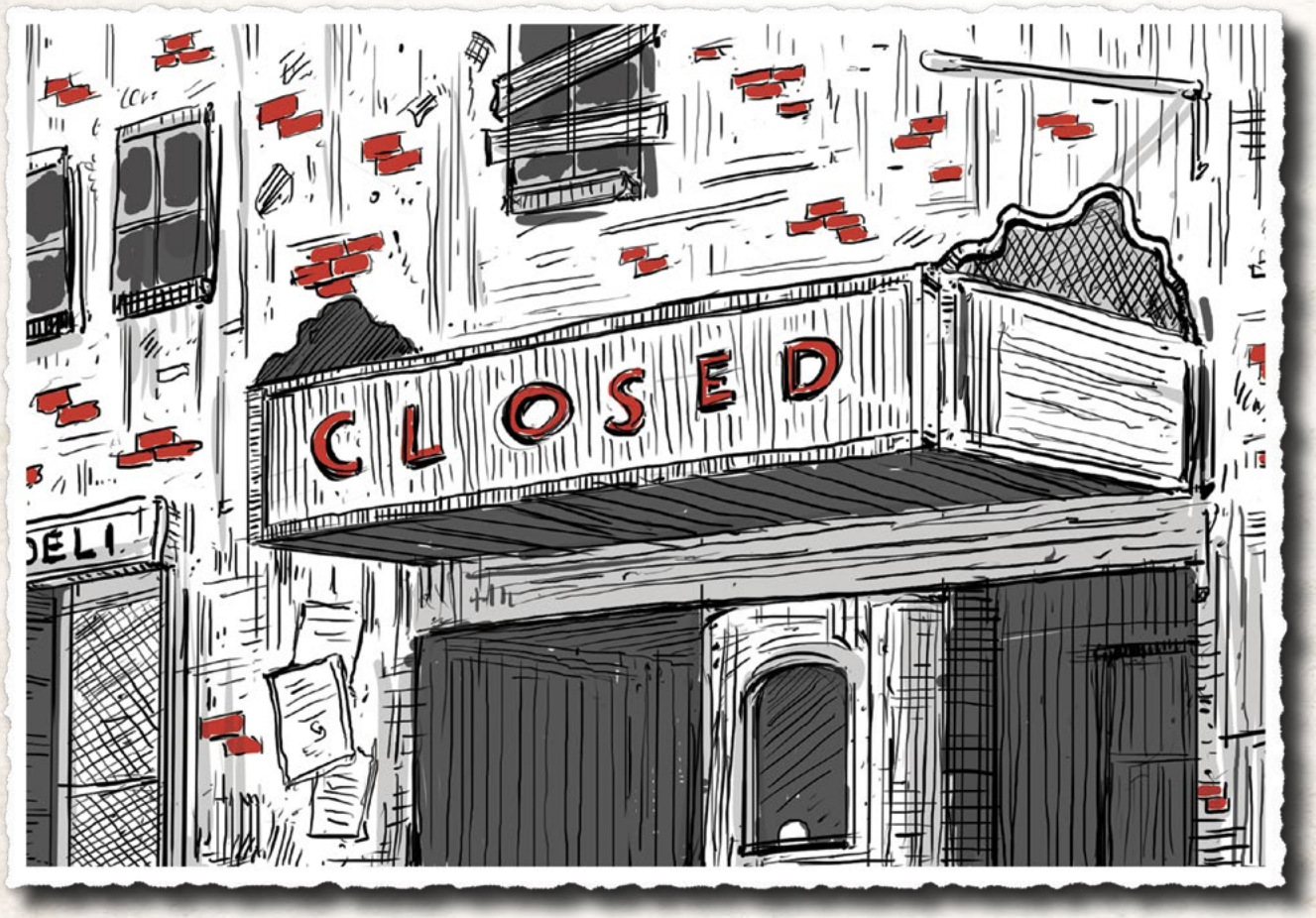
- She hasn't seen Morris in a while and is unaware of his disappearance.
- She gave Morris a copy of her dream book but, as far as she knows, Morris wasn't a policy player.
- Morris enjoyed very vivid dreams and spoke of great adventures in a strange land.
- Morris was deeply saddened by the death of his wife Lena but was reluctant to speak of her. His mood seemed brighter the last time Yonday saw him, though. She doesn't know what brought him out of his depression, but thinks it has something to do with his deceased wife.

If the investigators show Yonday a dream battery or the sketches of the battery from Morris' notes (**Morris' Studio**, page 196), her demeanor darkness and she says that something apocalyptic is underway, somehow connected to Morris and the strange red-clay device. She has no way of explaining it to the investigators other than to describe her visions, which are indistinct but terrifying. In an animated fashion, she says, *"There are hundreds of souls, enslaved forever, crying out for help. Entire neighborhoods sapped of their humanity and reduced to husks to feed the greed of a great evil... a never-ending torment that deprives all of hope and happiness. Something or someone is stealing their dreams!"*

If asked whether destroying the clay object (the battery) will help, Yonday says there are more out there. If the spell is to be broken and the people saved, they must all be found. Unfortunately, she hasn't the means to direct the investigators to the location of the other batteries, but she might be able to sense the spell they fuel. With this, Yonday brings the group into her back room, a small chamber dominated by a single round table. Black velvet curtains ring the room, creating a dark but warmly comforting space. The table is bare save for a crystal ball, a small notepad, several pencils, and a strongly smelling incense burner.

Yonday requests the investigators to be seated and remain silent while she lays her hands on the red-clay cylinder-like object (or one of Morris' sketches). After a minute of silence, the air in the room grows noticeably cold, and Yonday begins to utter strange, guttural sounds while swaying back and forth. Suddenly, Yonday's voice rises to a shrill cry and she falls backward, violently convulsing. In desperation, she reaches for the notepad and pencils on the table—hopefully, the investigators hand these to her. Yonday begins scribbling notes, dumping the contents of her mind onto paper as quickly as possible. With this done, she collapses to the floor, coming to her senses a few minutes later.

Yonday's scribblings seem incomprehensible at first, but a successful combined Hard **Language (English)** and **Occult** roll (or a **Cthulhu Mythos** roll) enable the investigators to piece together an image out of the fragments—by arranging the notes in a mosaic pattern. What emerges is an image of an old, dilapidated building. If the investigators fail a **Lore (Harlem)** or Hard **Know** roll, Yonday smiles and says it's the old theater building on 123rd street. A place that has been condemned for several years (**Assault and Batteries**, following).



The dilapidated theater

ASSAULT AND BATTERIES

- **Link:** Theo Spinelli says Ronald Stewart can be found at the disused theater (**A Matter of Policy**, page 200).
- **Link:** Madam Yonday directs the investigators to the old theater (**Miss Fortune Teller**, page 200).

Following directions provided by Madame Yonday or Theo Spinelli, the investigators proceed to the Temple of Leviathan's sanctuary. Ronald Stewart and his fellow occultists operate out of the old theater, which closed after an electrical fire and was subsequently condemned. Stewart purchased the property to provide a staging ground for his ritual, placing each of the four dream batteries in apartment buildings equidistant to the theater. While the investigators may attempt to find the dream batteries to interrupt the ritual without approaching the theater, doing so requires many hours of legwork, allowing the ritual to reach completion—the resulting dreamspace would be active.

Keeper note: most Harlemites quickly notice they are allowed to walk around the area around the old theater unmolested; this is a strange feeling for them, and something they may wish to point out to their white counterparts. This odd behavior of the local residents identifies those affected by the dream battery.

When the investigators arrive at the old theater, Stewart's ritual is within one hour of completion. The theater is boarded up at the front, sides, and rear, as well as the upper stories. The ritual is being conducted on the theater's disused stage. The easiest way into the theater is via a sunken cement stairwell leading to a locked metal door (Hard **Locksmith** or **STR** roll) that opens into a basement filled with shelves full of dust-covered theater memorabilia and crates. Most of the crates are empty, although some contain decaying straw that gives the room a distinctly unpleasant mildew smell. Navigating the basement is a bit of a trick owing to the shelves and clutter, creating a labyrinth of sorts, and requiring a successful **Navigate** roll to quickly find a way through. Making things even more difficult is the fact that the basement has no working light source—unless the investigators have one in hand, traversing the room to the staircase at the far end without making much noise (alerting those upstairs) requires a Hard **Stealth** roll.

While the Temple of Leviathan members complete the ritual, Blake Kurzweil and a handful of Spinelli's men (one for each investigator) guard the perimeter. Kurzweil stands on the stage with one gunman, while another stands guard by the door leading to the basement. The other guards watch the ritual unfold from the theater's seating area. On stage, Stewart and the Temple members are arranged in a circle, dressed in crimson robes and chanting in an unearthly tongue. In the middle of the group is a coruscating globular mass that emits a strange, oscillating light. Within this mass, many strange visions may be perceived—horrific and otherworldly images of beings and places that exist nowhere on Earth. A howling cacophony fills the theater, instilling a sense of dread in all those present—call for a **Sanity** roll (1D4/1D10 loss).

A Less Than Cautious Approach

Aggressively assaulting the stage sees Kurzweil and his men protecting Stewart and the Temple members. Anyone positioned in the theater seats enjoys cover from the goons (apply a penalty die to the bad guys' firearms rolls). The Temple members do not engage in the confrontation unless Kurzweil and his goons are all taken out of action. Even then, they do so defensively, aiming to escape and to recover the dream batteries—allowing them to try again at a later date.

A Stealthy Approach

Devious and stealthy investigators may notice—with an **Art/Craft (Theater/Acting)** or **Spot Hidden** roll—that the theater's rigging and scaffolding above the stage look very old and, consequently, is probably not particularly secure. A successful **Stealth** roll allows an investigator access to the rigging above, allowing them to knock out the supports and send the rigging tumbling onto the heads of Stewart and his colleagues—the ritual ends accordingly, with magical energy going haywire as dream substance suddenly manifests inside the theater. Strange forms twist and bend chaotically, sounds are muffled or rendered indistinct, and reality warps. The chaotic effect begins to spread, encompassing two of Stewart's colleagues and the physical world of the theater at a rate of 1 foot (30 cm) per hour in every direction. Realizing the danger now posed by their actions, provokes a **Sanity** roll (1D3/1D6 loss)—those falling temporarily or indefinitely insane may, at the Keeper's discretion, gain an insane insight informing them that the only way to stop the spread of the dream matter is to find all of the dream batteries and destroy them.

The Dream Matter

If consumed by the dream matter, a person disappears and no trace of them can be found. Whether such unfortunates simply cease to be or are carried off to someplace in the Dreamlands is left to the discretion of the Keeper. Certainly, if any investigators are caught in this manner, the Keeper should consider the possibility of running a Dreamlands adventure wherein the investigators must find a way home. Alternatively, exposure to the dream matter inflicts 1D6 damage per round, with it effectively eating away body parts until the person is completely consumed.

Finding the Dream Batteries

Quick-thinking investigators may be able to drag Stewart or another Temple member out of harm's way and force them to tell where the dream batteries are located. This is certainly the quickest and easiest solution to averting the threat of the dream matter and restoring the joy and dreams of the local residents. Otherwise, the investigators must race around the neighborhood seeking out the dream batteries. Accomplishing this task might be conducted with a series of skill rolls (such as social skills in talking with local residents to identify where the four hot spots of depression lie, or a **Psychology** roll to try to gauge the same information from observing people). Alternatively, a **Luck** roll could be attempted by those investigators desperately searching around the nearby buildings.

CONCLUSION

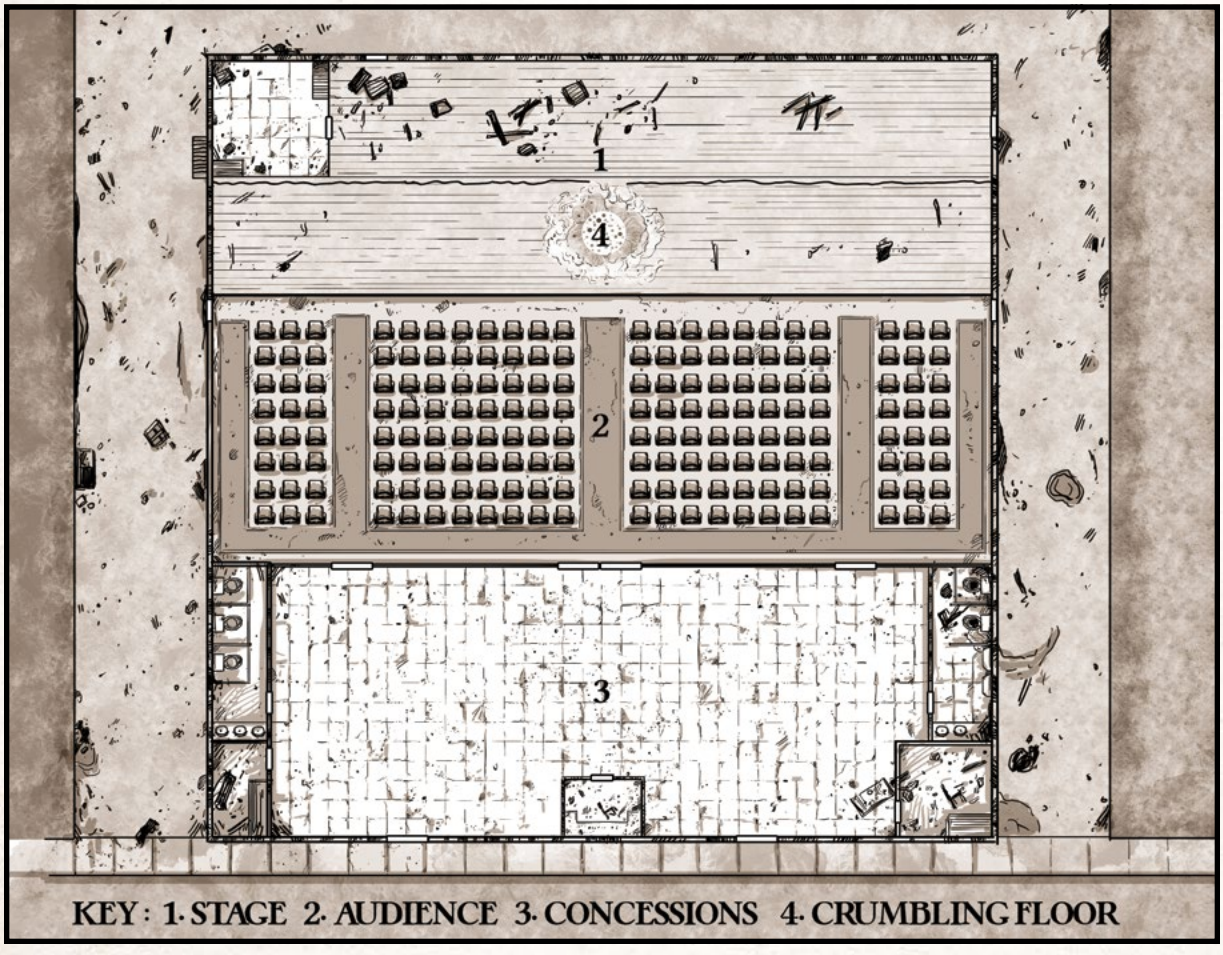
With the Temple of Leviathan defeated, the remaining dream batteries found and destroyed, the investigators have won the day. Eventually, all of the victims' health returns. The disappearance of several of New York's wealthy elite causes some consternation, as the story makes headlines for several weeks. Should their bodies be found decomposing in an abandoned building (which, it turns out, was owned by Ronald Stewart), the mystery passes into urban legend.

There remains the unfortunate business of informing Pearl Wilkins about her brothers' fate. Informing the police results in a search effort, which recovers Morris' body from the river in one week's time; otherwise, his badly decayed and bloated remains wash to shore a month later.

Lastly, should the Temple members have escaped with the dream batteries, then they will try again—the investigators should be on the lookout for the tell-tale signs.

REWARDS

- Defeating the Temple of Leviathan: + 1D6 Sanity points.
- For each dream battery destroyed: + 1 Sanity point.
- Defeating Kurzweil: + 1D4 Sanity points.
- Hurting or otherwise abusing Thaddeus Owen's good will: –1D4 Sanity points.
- Using a dream battery: –1D6 Sanity points per night.



The Theater map

CHARACTERS AND MONSTERS

For ease of reference, the Keeper may wish to copy or print out these pages as a handy reference when running this chapter. NPCs, monsters, and others are gathered by type or distinct groupings.

Note: certain NPCs have Luck values, as well as talents for *Pulp Cthulhu* games; ignore these if playing regular *Call of Cthulhu*.

Spells: spells are taken from the *Call of Cthulhu Rulebook* and the *Grand Grimoire of Cthulhu Mythos Magic*; if necessary, the Keeper may replace *Grimoire* spells with others from the *Rulebook*.

ALLIES OR INDEPENDENTS

Thaddeus Owens, *age 52, friendly neighbor*

STR 85	**CON** 75	**SIZ** 90	**DEX** 40	**INT** 25
APP 45	**POW** 40	**EDU** 20	**SAN** 40	**HP:** 16
DB: +1D6	**Build:** 2	**Move:** 5	**MP:** 8	**Luck:** 20

Combat

Brawl	40% (37/12) damage: 1D3+1D6 or club 1D8+1D6
Dodge	20% (10/4)

Skills:
Charm 50%, Climb 60%, Listen 60%, Spot Hidden 40%, Stealth 35%, Throw 55%.

Pulp Talents

- **Quick Healer:** natural healing is increased to +3 hit points per day
- **Heavy Hitter:** may spend 10 Luck points to add an additional damage die when dealing out melee combat

Madame Yonday, *age 34, psychic*

STR 50	**CON** 55	**SIZ** 75	**DEX** 45	**INT** 55
APP 70	**POW** 85	**EDU** 55	**SAN** 80	**HP:** 13
DB: +1D4	**Build:** 1	**Move:** 7	**MP:** 17	**Luck:** —

Combat

Brawl	50% (25/10) damage: 1D3+1D4
Dodge	30% (15/6)

Skills
Charm 70%, Fast Talk 60%, First Aid 45%, Listen 60%, Psychic Power (Divination) 65%, Psychic Power (Medium) 55%, Psychology 75%, Stealth 55%.

Pulp Talents

- **Psychic Power:** Divination
- **Psychic Power:** Medium

Blake Kurzweil, *age 29, monster in human guise*

STR 65	**CON** 70	**SIZ** 60	**DEX** 70	**INT** 55
APP 40	**POW** 40	**EDU** 55	**SAN** —	**HP** 13 (18*)
DB: +1D4	**Build:** 1	**Move:** 10	**MP:** 8	**Luck:** 40

**Increased when in mucus form.*

Powers

Mucus Form: may transform into a proto-formless spawn blob, allowing him to squeeze into small spaces; provides 6-point armor, and increases hit points to 18. The transformation into mucus form costs 1 magic point; no cost to revert back to humanoid form.

Acid Attack: projects acidic mucus from skin pores inflicting 1D6+2 damage, and 1D4 damage per round thereafter until scrubbed or washed off. The acid burns through clothing but not metal.

Combat

Attacks per round: 2

Fighting	50% (25/10), damage 1D3+1D4 or melee weapon
.45 auto	70% (35/14), damage 1D10+2
Acid attack	45% (22/9), damage 1D6+2, then 1D4 thereafter
Grenade	40% (20/8), damage 4D10/2D10/1D10
Dodge	60% (30/12)

Skills: Demolitions 45%, Drive Auto 60%, Fast Talk 40%, Intimidate 75%, Locksmith 35%, Psychology 40%, Stealth 80%. Throw 50%.
Armor: none; in mucus form, his gelatinous mass affords a 6-point armor (increased to 9-point in *Pulp Cthulhu*).
Spells: none.
Sanity loss: 1D3/1D6 Sanity points to see Kurzweil transform.

Ronald Stewart, *age 39, corrupt mastermind*

STR 45 **CON** 60 **SIZ** 80 **DEX** 25 **INT** 85
APP 45 **POW** 85 **EDU** 70 **SAN** 00 **HP** 14
DB: +1D4 **Build:** 1 **Move:** 7 **MP:** 22* **Luck:** 45

Combat

Brawl	30% (15/6), damage 1D3+1D4
.38 auto	55% (27/11), damage 1D10
Dodge	12% (6/2)

***Special:** amulet provides 5 extra magic points.*

Skills

Anthropology 30%, Art/Craft (Painting) 60%, Charm 75%, Cthulhu Mythos 26%, History 50%, Library Use 50%, Lore (Dreamlands) 22%, Occult 64%, Persuade 80%, Psychology 60%, Stealth 35%, Throw 40%.

Armor: none.
Spells: Contact Deity (Tsathoggua), Deflect Harm, Instant Enlightenment, Mental Suggestion, Mindblast, Send Dreams, Wrack.

GOONS, GANGSTERS, AND GUARDS

	1	*2*	*3*	*4*
STR	65	45	50	55
CON	70	85	50	55
SIZ	60	55	70	80
DEX	45	65	30	75
INT	40	45	50	50
APP	70	55	50	45
POW	40	55	60	35
EDU	35	55	45	40
SAN	40	11	12	9
HP	13	14	12	13
DB	+1D4	0	0	+1D4
Build	1	0	0	1
Move	8	8	7	7

Combat

Attacks per round: 1

Brawl	45% (22/9), damage 1D3+DB
(#1, 3, 4) .38 auto	45% (22/9), damage 1D10
(#2) Thompson SMG	40% (20/8), damage 1D10+2
Dodge	30% (15/6)

Pulp Combat

Brawl	65% (32/13), damage 1D3+DB
(#1, 3, 4) .38 auto	55% (27/11), damage 1D10
(#2) Thompson SMG	50% (25/9), damage 1D10+2
Dodge	45% (22/9)

MEMBERS OF THE TEMPLE OF THE LEVIATHAN, OCCULT CULTISTS

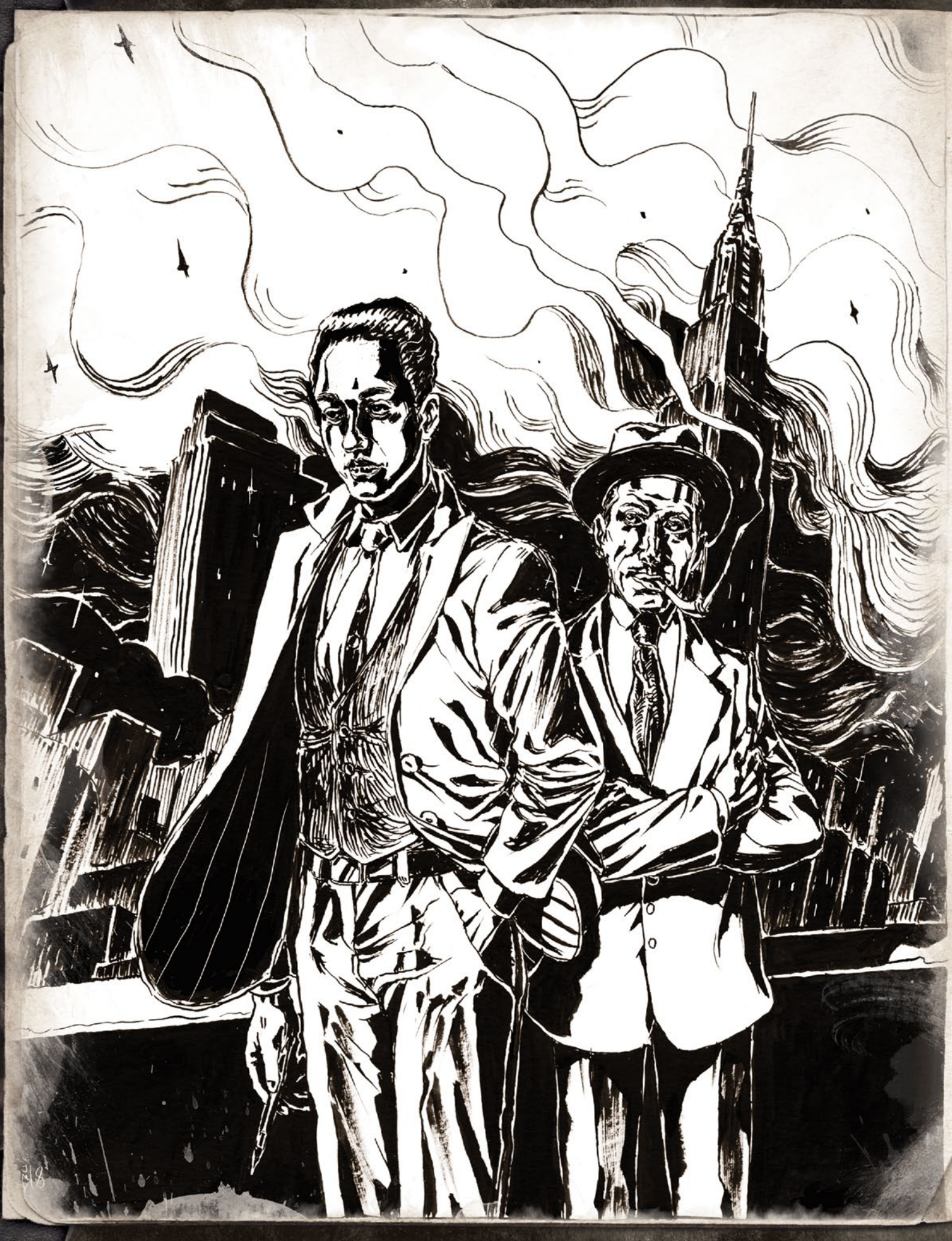
	1	*2*	*3*	*4*
STR	65	45	50	55
CON	70	85	50	55
SIZ	60	55	70	80
DEX	45	65	30	75
INT	40	45	50	50
APP	70	55	50	45
POW	40	55	60	35
EDU	35	55	45	40
SAN	40	11	12	9
HP	13	14	12	13
DB	+1D4	0	0	+1D4
Build	1	0	0	1
Move	8	8	7	7

Combat

Attacks per round: 1

Brawl	35% (17/7), damage 1D3 or knife 1D4+1
.32 auto	33% (16/6), damage 1D8
Dodge	30% (15/6)

Reginald Thurston spells: Fist of Yog-Sothoth.
Morgan Pierce spells: Shrivelling.
Hayden Callows Grayson III spells: Swelling Torment.
Leigh Burgess spells: Spectral Razor.



AN ODE FOR THE LOST

An Ode for the Lost takes place in December 1927 and involves the investigators coming face to face with notable figures of the Harlem Renaissance, primarily Alain Locke and Langston Hughes. Locke, having received a lost box of notes from noted explorer and chronicler of the occult Jackson Elias, finds himself overwhelmed by an artifact of ancient dreaming. After attending a private lecture in Harlem, the investigators become trapped inside the Dreamlands. The scenario is suitable for three to six investigators of any experience level. For context about the Dreamlands, see Lovecraft's *The Dream-Quest of Unknown Kadath* and "The Cats of Ulthar." The Keeper is encouraged to also seek out Hughes' first book of poetry, *The Weary Blues*.

BACKGROUND

Eons ago, on ground that would become southern Nigeria, antecedents of the Yorùbá people split the Dreamlands and Waking World into two halves that intersect at a single point—the experience of sleep. Meant to delay the Ancient Spinner's completion of its world-ending web, this action split the Great Old One's power between the two worlds, and those who would become the Yorùbá —the Orisha— constructed a Mask of Dreaming to hold the worlds in balance.

In 1924, a few months before his death, Jackson Elias discovered the Yorùbá's Mask of Dreaming and mailed it to the U.S. for safekeeping, but unfortunately, the mailed box was lost in the post. Recently, it was rediscovered and sent on to Elias' old friend, Alain Locke. Since then, Locke has dreamed about horrific creatures speaking in whistling, flute-like tones, who lumbered across the face of a sunless world. In the Dreamlands, the Elder Hierophant, alleged by some to be a leader among the foul moon-beasts, exerts its will to draw the mask—and consequently, those around it—into the Dreamlands, to destroy the artifact and restore the Spider God to full strength.

ELIAS, HUGHES, AND LOCKE

In 1920, as part of an initiative by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), Jackson Elias wrote Langston Hughes a letter of recommendation for Columbia University, before leaving on an expedition to Peru. When Elias returned, he took it upon himself to meet the young man with whom he was paired, and in late 1921 they met on a bench in a snowy St. Nicholas Park. The two men went for coffee and wound up spending the day together. Within a few weeks, they had struck up a secretive romance. Hughes was 19 at the time, Elias 42. They enjoyed an on-and-off-again, tumultuous relationship for the next few years whenever they were in the same city.

Alain Locke and Elias frequented the same Washington, D.C. circles (where Locke resides) and knew many of the same people in publishing. Elias trusted Locke and considered confiding in him certain truths about the Mythos, although Elias never got the chance as his unforeseen death occurred before such wisdom could be passed on. The box containing the Mask of Dreaming was mailed care of Locke and was the closest Elias ever came to sharing what he knew of the Mythos with Locke.

INTRODUCING THE INVESTIGATORS

The investigators receive invitations from June Hampton to attend an informal lecture, given by Alain Locke, at her home (see **Ode Handout 1: An Invitation**). Investigators might receive these invitations through a mutual acquaintance with Hampton, who is well-connected with New York society. If the investigators are from out of town, Bob and Catherine Thwaite travel frequently and may previously have met the investigators, providing their names to Hampton. The salon at Hampton's apartment (**Dinner and a Lecture**, page 214) makes an ideal location for a group of new investigators to form, socialize, and find themselves drawn into a mystery.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

ALLIES AND INDEPENDENTS: HARLEM

Alain Locke, *age 42, philosopher and civil rights leader*

- **Link:** receives the box from Jackson Elias containing the Mask of Dreaming.
- **Link:** encountered at the lecture (**A Dinner and a Lecture**, page 214).

A major figure of the Harlem Renaissance, Locke mentored and encouraged figures like Zora Neale Hurston and Langston Hughes. Locke authored *The New Negro*, an influential work advocating African-American dignity and resistance against racist laws and practices. He now espouses

an artistic return to African roots. See Chapter 4, **Alain Leroy Locke**, page 42.

- **Description:** well-dressed, though not ostentatiously so.
- **Traits:** professorial and candid; an advocate for equality and equity.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** when the investigators meet Locke he is under the Mask of Dreaming's influence and acts withdrawn. After his rescue, Locke becomes more affable and talkative.

Langston Hughes, *age 25, poet*

- **Link:** encountered at the lecture (**A Dinner and a Lecture**, page 214).

Hughes' first book of poetry, *The Weary Blues*, came out in 1926 to rave reviews. His most recent title, *Fine Clothes to the Jew*, recently came out (mid-1927) with less fanfare. Hughes counts Locke, and many other Harlem Renaissance figures, as friends. Hughes' sexuality was a private matter, only known to his closest friends. Hughes regularly attends June Hampton's salons, occasionally reading fledgling poems to her audiences. A student at Lincoln University in Pennsylvania, when the scenario begins, he is visiting his mother in New York during the holiday season. See Chapter 4, **Langston Hughes**, page 50.

- **Description:** handsome and clean-shaven; dresses in modest clothing.
- **Traits:** softly spoken but worldly; unafraid of life but aware of its failings.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** thoughtful but not outwardly poetic, Hughes laughs often and has smiling eyes. When uncomfortable, he fidgets with buttons on his clothing or nearby items.

"Aunt" June Hampton, *age 67, philanthropist and property owner*

- **Link:** encountered at the lecture (**A Dinner and a Lecture**, page 214).

Born in Pensacola, Florida, Hampton escaped north to Harlem in 1874, 14-years-old and alone. She worked diligently to establish herself, working demeaning jobs, saving money, and outmaneuvering white landlords in business deals. Her efforts awarded her with several apartment buildings between 135th and 151st streets. Now Hampton ("Aunt" to those who know her) is a notable socialite in Harlem, who holds regular salons at an apartment building she owns.

- **Description:** a slight frame, shorter than most, with graying hair in a loose perm.
- **Traits:** motherly, sometimes didactic; loves bringing people together and promoting new ideas.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** often carries her cat lifted to her shoulder; stands with an erect bearing and meets the gaze of everyone.

Tilby, *age 15, housecat and general in Ulthar's army*

- **Link:** encountered at the lecture (**A Dinner and a Lecture**, page 214).
- **Link:** encountered again with June Hampton (**Lunch with the Doctor**, page 216).
- **Link:** may be convinced to aid the investigators (**Finding the Cats**, page 229).

In 1912 June Hampton rescued Tilby as a kitten from a sewer drain. The cat soon learned how to cross into the Dreamlands, and in the past 15 years, she has risen to be an honored general among the cats of Ulthar.

- **Description:** a big-boned, gray domestic cat, with wide and luminous eyes.
- **Traits:** purrs noisily, commands fearlessly, and enjoys hunting spiders.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** she uses small motions of her head to communicate in the Waking World.

Bob and Catherine Thwaite, *ages 29 and 32, journalists*

- **Link:** encountered at the lecture (**A Dinner and a Lecture**, page 214).

A husband-and-wife journalist duo, the Thwaites ardently support equality and civil rights. Bob is a large and stern but friendly man, while Catherine is a tall woman, known for her op-eds written under the male pseudonym of "Bobby Greer."

- **Description:** a fashionable white couple who don't like to be "seen," preferring to stay out the spotlight.
- **Traits:** they have a competitive marriage and leverage their social networks for stories.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** they want to be helpful but are more focused on recording the events around them.

Tilby

ALLIES AND INDEPENDENTS: THE DREAMLANDS

Jackson Elias, *appears age 40, explorer*

- **Link:** a helpful guide in the Dreamlands (**Into the Woods,** page 220)

In 1924, while in Nigeria, Elias (on the same excursion spent investigating the Carlyle Expedition; see Chaosium's *Masks of Nyarlathotep*) acquired the Mask of Dreaming from a small mountain compound. Elias never discovered the mask's true purpose, as later (in 1925), he was murdered in his room at the Chelsea Hotel, New York. The night before his death, Elias had a final date with his on-and-off-again lover, Langston Hughes.

When murdered, Elias' consciousness was projected into the Dreamlands—perhaps from an effect of the Mask of Dreaming—where his mind has survived, allowing him to explore the Dreamlands. How long he has been in the world of dream is uncertain; he can't quite recall, as time passes differently here. His dream persona knows everything the Waking World Elias knew—up until a few hours before his murder; he knows nothing about his own death.

- **Description:** known for his tweed suits, fedora, and an ever-present pipe (used more for gesturing with than for smoking).
- **Traits:** warm and caring, with a sometimes-morbid sense of humor; known for taking risks.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** Elias may ask the investigators for news, especially if they have heard of the Carlyle Expedition.

Tumult, *appears age 65, Tavernkeeper*

- **Link:** encountered in Ulthar (**The Tavern**, page 224).

An ancient resident of Ulthar, Tumult has kept the tavern running since anyone can remember. Like any good barkeep, Tumult keeps his ear to the ground and knows more about Ulthar's people than he should. Tumult can make important introductions for the investigators—particularly with Captain Dallfane—and provides information that can help against the moon-beasts.

- **Description:** a head of long gray hair that reaches past his pale white shoulders, and two glass eyes, although he apparently sees just fine.
- **Traits:** gruff speech, cautious in his praise, and always ready with the next drink.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** helpful but wary of drawing too much attention in these troubled times.

Kranon, *appears age 78, Ulthar's burgomaster*

- **Link:** encountered in Ulthar (**The Burgomaster's Home**, page 225).

How Kranon rose to become burgomaster of Ulthar, none now remembers; he may have held the post since Ulthar's founding. Once pompous if erudite, Kranon is a shell of his former self, having seen his home town come to ruin. Centuries, ago, Kranon enacted a law that protects all cats from harm in Ulthar, and he remembers those as his best days.

- **Description:** an old white man, with greasy hair and a puckered mouth, and a rotundity that shows a former zest for life.
- **Traits:** often sits with a distant look on his face, evidence of a general mental haze he struggles with.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** broken by the Elder Hierophant, he is now shattered and hopeless, and in mourning for the Ulthar he once knew.

Captain Dallfane, *appears age 37, captain of the black galley*

- **Link:** encountered in Ulthar (**The Tavern**, page 224).

Dallfane hails from Leng, and is one of the few female captains of the black galleys. Her people are not the evil horrors Randolph Carter describes in Lovecraft's *The Dream-Quest of Unknown Kadath*, but rather were oppressed by the moon-beasts for millennia. Something of a taskmaster on her ship, her crew (all but the moon-beast rowers) fear her for her quick to anger temper but love her for her fairness. In Ulthar, her black galley is the last remaining, and while she and her crew have been charged with supplementing the moon-beasts' command over the city, the work turns her stomach.

- **Description:** dark olive skin, her body (except for her face) is heavily furred, and she has unguligrade legs (the legs and cloven feet of a goat) beneath loose pantaloons; horns rise from her head, although these are covered beneath a turban to hide them from those who would judge her.
- **Traits:** loyal to her people to a fault, but hates their moon-beast tormentors; she recognizes the evils she and her people have committed while the moon-beasts' knife was at their back.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** has been waiting for an opportunity to betray the moon-beasts.

The Orisha, *Dreamlands deities*

- **Link:** potentially safeguards the mask (**Beyond the Wall of Dream**, page 231).

The Great Ones (or Elder Ones) are the Orisha, a mysterious group that lives in a pre-African world, trapped in the Temple of the Elder Ones by the Spider God (Atlach-Nacha). In Yorùbá mythology, the Orisha created the world, Obatala created humans, and Oduduwa created the Earth from the ocean, with many other gods adding to the creation. The Orisha are a diverse group of creators, soldiers, craftspeople, and tricksters. In this scenario, the Orisha created the Mask of Dreaming to weaken the Spider God, splitting the Dreamlands from the Waking World.

- **Description:** the Orisha are a mixed gender group, who speak no earthly language, though some of their words recall the Yorùbá language. They dress in the Aso-oke (homespun) cloth traditional to southwestern Nigeria; the men wear tunics and caps, the women wear blouses, skirts, and head-ties.
- **Traits:** quick to laugh but deadly serious; hospitable and patient, they do not suffer fools.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** otherworldly and peaceful; unknowable yet with a sense of familiarity about them.

ADVERSARIES: THE DREAMLANDS

Elder Hierophant, *strange and mysterious entity*

- **Link:** has captured Alain Locke and wants the Mask of Dreaming (**The Ritual Chamber**, page 231).

The Elder Hierophant is an unknown thing, possibly an ancient and powerful moon-beast or, possibly, a mask of the Outer God Nyarlathotep. The Elder Hierophant's hatred of the Waking World is undeniable. It speaks by playing horrible tunes on a set of pipes, the instructions understood by its devoted moon-beast servants, while others who hear the pipe's music, find it discordant tones painful and sanity-blasting.

- **Description:** some 7 feet (2 m) tall, it dresses in thin green robes that belie a skeletal frame, its purplish hands end in blackened fingernails, and its face is hidden behind a silken veil.
- **Traits**: its malice is matched by its cunning.
- **Roleplaying hooks**: wishes to recover the Mask of Dreaming at all cost and thereby break the barrier between worlds.

TIMELINE

June 1924: Jackson Elias, while on an expedition in Africa, discovers the Mask of Dreaming in southern Nigeria before making his way to Kenya.

June 1924: acting on instinct, Elias mails a file box containing the Mask of Dreaming to his friend Alain Locke for safekeeping, but the post service misplaces the package.

January 14, 1925: Langston Hughes and Elias spend a final night together in New York City; Elias is murdered in the Chelsea Hotel the next day.

December 3, 1927: Locke receives the box sent by Elias containing some notes and the Mask of Dreaming.

December 17, 1927: Locke begins dreaming about monsters communicating via whistling pipes, and a medieval town surrounding a repugnant mound of onyx stone.

December 20, 1927: Locke begins to hide the Mask of Dreaming whenever he leaves home and eventually carries it with him wherever he goes.

December 29, 1927: the investigators attend June Hampton's home for a lecture from Locke.

KEY LOCATIONS

In the Waking World

Hampton's apartment (135th and Amsterdam): a six-story apartment building owned by June Hampton; the upper two floors comprise Hampton's personal rooms, used to entertain guests, hold private salons, and in which she lives. Hampton lets out the bottom four floors for reasonable rates.

West 135th Street Branch of the YMCA
Located at number 181, the "135th Street Branch" is four blocks east of June Hampton's apartment, on the other side of St. Nicholas Park. While in town, Alain Locke has decided to stay here.

In the Dreamlands

A domain existing parallel to our own and accessed through slumber. The Dreamlands is a medieval-like world where aspects of the Cthulhu Mythos lurk. Entering through a dream, the investigators arrive in the Enchanted Wood, where they discover Jackson Elias. From there, they come to the town of Ulthar, whose locations and characters present the investigators with a "sandbox" environment to explore.

Ulthar: a town with gabled roofs, built in Tudor style, it has a large stone tower (the Temple of the Elder Ones) on a hill at its center. The surrounding farmlands are mostly abandoned. The streets are paved with cobblestones, and its remaining citizens largely remain in hiding.

Tavern: owned by a blind man named Tumult, the nameless tavern serves as a refuge for the investigators and a source of important information. Near the town's center, at the base of the large hill, the tavern signals its patrons by a flat block of basalt hung over the door, bearing the outline of a beer goblet drawn in chalk.

Burgomaster's home: the burgomaster (mayor) of Ulthar, Kranon lives in a decaying mansion. Kranon's home is a major feature of Ulthar, built of closely fitted stone blocks and wooden beams. His servants, who once waited on his guests, have gone missing.

The Black Galley: a single black galley remains at anchor on the River Skai, not far from the Burgomaster's home. Captain Dallfane's vessel, it has no name other than "the Black Galley," and sits in port at Ulthar. Alain Locke is imprisoned onboard when the investigators arrive.

Pautrin's Mask Shop: Emilius Pautrin sold masks on the main thoroughfare through Ulthar before the moon-beasts' arrival and his subsequent death. The building is two stories high and marked by a wooden sign painted with a carnival mask. The site of Alain Locke's hideout, moon-beast soldiers smashed up the shop when they captured Locke and killed Pautrin. Within the shop, Locke hid the Mask of Dreaming and created a miniature of the Temple of the Elder Gods, which allows travel to any location inside the temple.

Temple of the Elder Ones: set at the top of a great hill, whose switchbacks and stairs must be climbed to reach the entrance. The temple was once where Ulthar's citizens worshipped the old gods but, in recent times, the Elder Hierophant has had it his home. The tower's first level is a grand columnar hall with a megalithic stone throne at one end; spiral stairs lead up to rooms the Hierophant has converted into torture chambers. The top level holds a ritual chamber where the Hierophant makes its attempts to destroy the Mask of Dreaming. The ritual chamber also holds the secret prison of the Orisha, the Great Ones.

SCENES

START: A DINNER AND A LECTURE

- **Link:** the investigators are invited to June Hampton's salon (**Ode Handout 1: An Invitation**).

It is bitingly cold in New York City. The temperature hovers in the single digits, but the wind chill makes it feel much colder. Some snow remains on the ground, and people on the street move quickly, wrapping their coats around themselves. The investigators have been invited to attend an informal lecture on December 29 at 7:00 p.m. (**Ode Handout 1: An Invitation**).

The investigators make their way up the four floors of the apartment block, encountering the families that live within, to the fifth floor—what June Hampton calls her "salon"—an open space with most of the walls removed, exposing structural supports now wrapped in pine garland and hung with glass Christmas decorations. Within, several couches and numerous stackable metal chairs have been set out before a small lectern.

The room is busy with activity as people mill and chat, while others browse a table bearing a spread of food. Investigators who have attended Hampton's salons before may already know the journalist husband-and-wife team of Bob and Catherine Thwaite, a white couple that lives in midtown and who make the trek northward a few times a month. The Thwaites hover in the back of the room, conversing with those familiar and new to them.

A successful **Spot Hidden** roll notices June Hampton speaking with a young man—a successful **Lore (Harlem)** roll recognizes the man as Langston Hughes and recalls his work. While speaking, Hampton cradles a large gray cat (Tilby) in her arms, who purrs noisily. Alain Locke hovers just beyond Hughes and Hampton's conversation, and seems nervous, a successful **Psychology** roll attributes this to mild stage fright. Their conversation finished, Hampton, flanked by Locke, approaches the gathered invitees and thanks them all for coming and asks everyone to take their seats. Those near the podium have a chance to notice Locke's bag, an expensive leather briefcase—a successful **Spot Hidden** roll notes the obtrusive corner of some curved wooden object inside. If approached, Locke may be convinced to show the object (the Mask of Dreaming) to the investigators with a Hard **Charm** or **Persuade** roll (see **Ode Handout 2: The Mask of Dreaming**); otherwise, he says that there may be time after the lecture to talk further.

As everyone takes their seats, Hampton stands at the lectern and again thanks everyone for coming. While she speaks, her cat, Tilby, leaps into one of the investigator's laps; the cat giving an uncanny "knowing" gaze at the investigator as she settles. Hampton introduces Locke as a major voice in the cause of African-American independence, mentioning his accomplishments and his powerful book *The New Negro.* She continues, saying that Locke is foremost in advocating for artists to return to their African roots, and advancing African-American culture. The issues her guest will speak on tonight, she hopes, will be of interest to everyone present. "*Dr. Locke was lately of Howard University, which, we're sad to say, released him from his position for teaching the radical subject of race relations,*" Hampton says wryly. With this, Locke takes the stand to a round of applause from the packed room.

"*Thank you,*" Locke begins, "*and thank you, Ms. Hampton, for inviting me to speak tonight. It is always a pleasure to be in such fine company. I trust the audience will be a… receptive one.*" Locke's talk, scheduled to last 45 minutes, begins on familiar topics pulled from *The New Negro*; however, near the 45-minute mark, he shows no signs of slowing down. Locke drifts into more extreme subjects, mentioning the recent news of a mob attacking and mutilating two young bellmen, "*I need not tell you the color of these young men's skin. They were bellmen working in Mississippi, enticed into the room of two white women. And, when discovered… well.*" Locke advocates active action, calling for a march from Harlem all the way to midtown to coincide with the New Year's Day Parade. A successful **Psychology** confirms this demand is out of character for Locke—he seems under duress and sweats profusely. The audience's excitement builds, its younger members nodding in agreement. If seated near to the Thwaites (or a **Spot Hidden** roll), an investigator sees them making notes in their journals, while also nodding.

As Locke's talk concludes, he appears drained and weary and steps down from the podium. Excitable members of

RACIAL TENSION MODIFIER

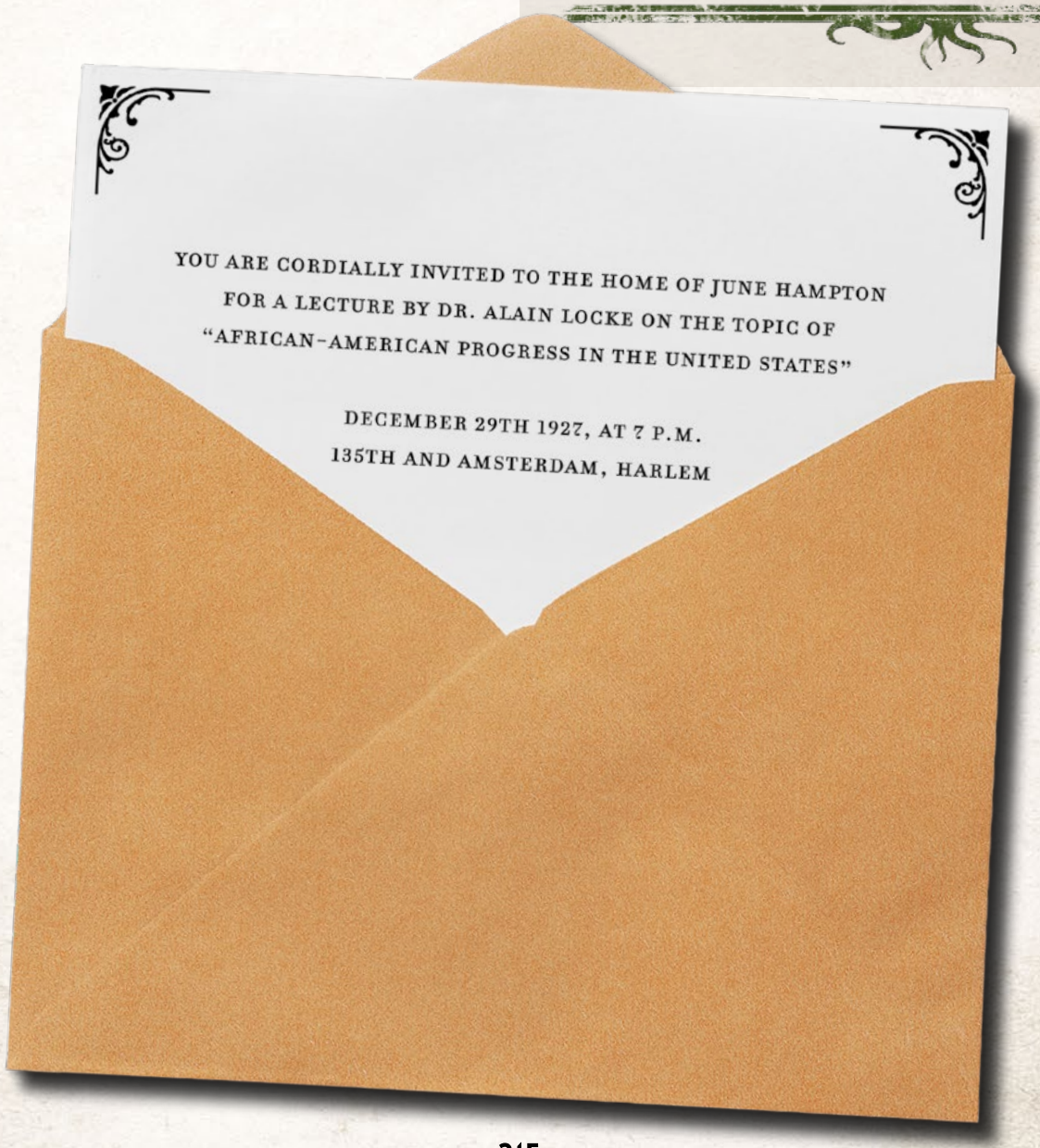
When the investigator and their target are of different races or cultures, increase the difficulty of the roll (such as a social skill roll) by one level (Regular becomes Hard, Hard becomes Extreme). If necessary, at the Keeper's discretion, an additional penalty die may be applied, dependent on the circumstances. This modifier reflects the mistrust between different groups.

the crowd quickly surround him, clapping him on the back and offering their congratulations. Others remain reserved, talking among themselves. The Thwaites walk up to the front of the crowd and give their goodbyes to Hampton before making their exit. Before the salon concludes, Hughes approaches the investigators and engages them in conversation, asking for their opinions on tonight's talk. During the conversation, Hughes invites the investigators to join him and Locke for lunch the next day, back here at Hampton's apartment (**Lunch with the Doctor**, page 216).

I READ THE NEWS TODAY

The tragic news mentioned by Locke comes from an actual headline in the December 31, 1927, issue of *The Afro American*: "MOB CASTRATES TWO MEN, CUTS OFF THEIR EARS." The deed, committed by 12 masked men in Jackson, Mississippi, left the mutilated bellmen outside to die. Another in a series of such events that appear to be happening on a regular basis. This atrocity is not raised to make light of the historical event in a game setting, but to highlight a true historical occurrence.

Ode Handout 1: An Invitation



PUBLIC DREAMS

- **Link:** all who attended the talk (**Dinner and a Lecture**).

The night of the talk, everyone who attended dreams of standing within an impenetrable forest. A ghostly moon hangs beyond the canopy, and the night presses thick from all directions. The naked dreamer feels fixed in place, while the world around them and the moonlight seem timeless. Most remember nothing more.

Ask the investigators to attempt a Hard **POW** roll: if successful, they feel as if they are lucid dreaming within the forested space, able to move around and note various human shapes among the trees, just out of sight. As they look around, it becomes clear that the people around them were all in the audience for Locke's talk.

LUNCH WITH THE DOCTOR

- **Link:** Hughes' invites the investigators to lunch (**Dinner and a Lecture**, page 214).

The next day, the investigators gather at June Hampton's place once again, this time on the sixth floor, in her personal dining room. They find Langston Hughes and Alain Locke already in attendance, while Tilby toys with a spider under the table. During the ensuing discussion, it becomes apparent that everyone shared the same dream, provoking a **Sanity** roll (0/1 loss). The conversation moves on when a trio of unexpected guests arrive: Zora Neale Hurston, Wallace Thurman, and Aaron Douglas. Their noisy entrance scares Tilby, who runs for Hampton's bedroom—should an investigator follow and go to look for the cat, they are unable to find her.

Hughes and Hampton move to greet and introduce the new arrivals to the investigators. The trio announces they are driving to Atlantic City for the New Year, and they've come to collect Hughes. Hughes smiles but politely refuses, stating that he has plans to spend the celebrations with his mother (she would be heartbroken if he reneged). Quickly enough, the three depart for their automobile waiting outside, with Hampton seeing them on their way.

During the meal, after Hampton returns, Hughes raises the reason he invited everyone: attendees of Locke's talk, inspired by his call to action, are now organizing a march, and Hughes hopes the investigators will consider joining him on the streets on New Year's Day. While this occurs, ask for a **POW** roll to note the scent of oak and pine that suddenly pervades through the room. The scent seems to disperse when Locke excuses himself, saying he didn't sleep well, and asks for their forgiveness as he departs. That evening, alone in his room, Locke falls into a pseudo-coma and begins a journey through the Dreamlands—the investigators will soon follow.

Ode Handout 2: The Mask of Dreaming

DREAMING IN THE DARK

- **Link:** follows lunch with Langston Hughes (**Lunch with the Doctor**, page 216).

The investigators dream, finding themselves in the same forest as on the previous night. The dreamers feel fixed in place, unable to move while stomping toward them from out of the woods comes a hulking creature, provoking a **Sanity** roll (1/1D8 loss). A successful **Cthulhu Mythos** or **Lore (Dreaming)** roll recognizes the creature as a moon-beast. Around the woods, once again, are the attendees of Hampton's salon, including Alain Locke and the Thwaites who stand nearby and who scream at the sight of the lumbering moon-beast. Bob Thwaite shakes with fear but is unable to escape as one of the moon-beasts slippery nose-tentacles reaches out and, without warning, twists Bob's head violently, breaking his neck and killing him. The act seems to release the hold over Bob's wife Catherine, who then runs screaming into the night. The moon-beast then turns to Locke, placing one of its heavy paws on his shoulder. In the next moment, the creature plunges one of its tentacles down his throat, impossibly far. Its tentacle withdraws with nothing, and it unleashes a roar into the night followed by a few short, flute-like squawks.

Keeper note: a successful Hard **Psychology** roll discerns the moon-beast is searching for something. The investigators may later learn that the cats of Ulthar kill this moon-beast, if they encounter the zoogs (**Into the Woods**, page 220), or when they rescue Locke (**The Black Galley**, page 226).

The investigators awaken from the dream's horrible realism, which provokes a **Sanity** roll (0/1D3 loss). A **Natural World** or Hard **Know** roll recalls that the forest scent seemed reminiscent of the oak-and-pine smell encountered at yesterday's lunch. Should the investigators realize they've dreamt the same dream, call for a **Sanity** roll (0/1 loss).

When the investigators travel into the city, a successful **Spot Hidden** rolls notes the early edition headline, "Hysteria in Harlem!" The story recounts how, early that morning, nearly a dozen individuals ran screaming from their homes into the streets. All of those affected eventually came to their senses, but the police had to round up several people. A successful **INT** roll recognizes that the names in the paper were attendees at Hampton's salon, provoking a **Sanity** roll (0/1 loss).

The police presence in Harlem is increased for the rest of the day. Investigators venturing onto the streets may draw a policeman's ire with a failed **Luck** or **Navigate** roll—the investigators are stopped for questioning. The interrogation lasts for an hour, with those failing a **Fast Talk** or **Persuade** roll being harshly handled (resulting in 1D2 damage); those who don't cooperate are dragged downtown for the night (and another 1D3 damage) before being released the following morning. A successful **Law** roll confirms the police tactics are illegal, yet remain a common practice.

If the investigators return to June Hampton's residence they will encounter Langston Hughes (**Jackson Elias' Good Friend**, page 219), alternatively they may seek out Alain Locke at the YMCA (**The Fantastic Dr. Locke**, nearby), or they might sojourn into midtown to ascertain the health of Bob and Catherine Thwaite (**Bedridden**, page 219).

THE FANTASTIC DR. LOCKE

- **Link:** dream encounter with the moon-beast (**Dreaming in the Dark,** page 217).
- **Link:** spotting the Mask of Dreaming in Locke's possession (**Dinner and a Lecture**, page 214).

Alain Locke rooms at the YMCA, a 15-minute walk from June Hampton's apartment building. Locke hasn't shared his room number with anyone, although the investigators can obtain it from the front desk clerk, Reginald Clarke, with a successful **Charm**, **Fast Talk**, or **Persuade** roll, or by bribing another resident with a quarter, revealing Locke's room as number 525. With a Hard success, Clarke reveals that Locke tends to depart his room around 11:30 am each morning, although he has not seen Locke leave yet today.

Knocking at Locke's door doesn't receive an answer, while a **Listen** roll discerns no movement inside. Only the building's street-facing side has a fire escape, requiring a successful Hard **Stealth** roll to climb it unseen during the day. A successful **Locksmith** or Hard **STR** roll forces the apartment's door. Inside the narrow room, Locke can be found asleep on a small bed. Nothing the investigators do, however, can wake him. A **First Aid** or **Medicine roll** diagnoses that whatever afflicts Locke is not *quite* a coma (his pupils respond to light; his breathing is regular). For all intents and purposes, he simply seems asleep, his eyes darting back and forth as though dreaming, even when investigators lift the eyelids.

Locke's briefcase sits on a metal chair by the window; other than a few notes for the lecture, there nothing of interest is inside. Under the bed frame, the investigators can find an old file box with ratty postage labeled, "June 1924–Elias, c/o Alain Locke" in big block letters. A **Spot Hidden** success notices that the label is marked as coming from the Colony and Protectorate of Kenya. Inside, Locke has written out a manifest of the box's contents. The majority are notes written by one Jackson Elias, whose name, with a successful **History**, **Occult**, or Hard **Lore (Harlem)** roll, the investigators recognize as the author of several books on religious cults

Ode Handout 3: Letter to Hughes

My dear Langston,

I received your recent poems with pleasure. I hope it is not strange for me to say I feel proud to see you becoming such a fine writer. I encourage you to continue submitting to publishers! It can only be a matter of time.

I am currently bound for Nairobi from Lagos. I tell you, being here feels... sound. Like coming to rest after a long day's work. Being on the continent, that is. The work itself, my notes for the next book, I'm afraid I have been plagued by—well, never mind. I wouldn't want to worry you with all that.

I anticipate being in New York again in January. Will you see me?

Ever yours,
J. E.
17 June 1924

around the world—*Sons of Death*, *The Hungry Dead*, et al. The notes date from 1923 to 1924 and consist mostly of chapter summaries. The manifest holds two noteworthy items: the first, labeled as "Mask–Nigeria? Kenya? Relation to Orisha worship?" and the second as, "Letter to L. H." Digging through the papers finds nothing like a mask (it is now in the Dreamlands). Lastly, investigators searching through the box's contents uncover a piece of legal paper covered in Elias' scrawl—a letter written to none other than Langston Hughes (**Ode Handout 3: Letter to Hughes**).

RESEARCHING THE ORISHA

Investigating "Orisha worship" with a **Library Use** roll discovers that the "Orisha" are Yorùbá gods from southern Nigeria, found in innumerable oral traditions and myths. Originally, different Orisha were worshipped at different Yorùbá cultural centers. When the Orisha came westward with the Atlantic slave trade, worship shifted from individual Orisha worship to a plurality, and they remain strong in several Caribbean religions, including Vodou (Voodoo) and Santería. In Vodou, intricate cornmeal drawings are used to call on the Orisha (and other spirits called "lwa"), while in Santería their worship is more akin to prayer than direct invocation.

JACKSON ELIAS' GOOD FRIEND

- **Link:** Ode Handout 3: Letter to Hughes (**The Fantastic Dr. Locke**, page 217).
- **Link:** the communal dream (**Dreaming in the Dark**, page 217).

The investigators can find Langston Hughes, once again, at June Hampton's apartment; if necessary, if they don't think to look for him there, an **INT** or **Idea** roll suggests this course of action. Arriving, the investigators easily overhear the last few words of Hughes and Hampton's discussion concerning their shared dream from the night before. Both appear visibly shaken by the dream.

- Hughes provides the Thwaites' address, should the investigators broach the topic (**Bedridden**, page 219).
- If he's informed about Locke's condition (**The Fantastic Dr. Locke**, page 217), Hughes shows concern and offers to get medical help if the investigators haven't already called for assistance.
- Shown the letter from Jackson Elias, Hughes has to find a place to sit down. When suitably calmed (perhaps with a **Charm** or **Persuade** roll), Hughes relates his history with Elias: he was invited through an NAACP program to write Hughes a letter of recommendation for Columbia University; Elias later visited Hughes there, and they fell into a passionate, though rocky, relationship.
- Hughes was with Elias the night before the latter's murder in January 1925.

BEDRIDDEN

- **Link:** Bob Thwaite's death (**Dreaming in the Dark**, page 217).
- **Link:** Hughes supplies the Thwaites' address (**Jackson Elias' Good Friend**, page 219).

The Thwaites live in a nicely attended apartment in midtown Manhattan, near Columbus Circle. The building is segregated—enforced by a white, apathetic doorman, who can be circumvented with a bribe or a Hard **Fast Talk** roll. Note that **Intimidate**, even if successful, has the doorman calling the police shortly after the investigators go upstairs.

A mailbox near the front door lists "B & C Thwaite" at number 401. The all-white residents stare at any non-white (and obviously non-Christian) investigators as they climb the stairs or take the elevator to the fourth floor. With a **Credit Rating** of 60 or higher, or with a successful **Luck** roll, the residents ignore the investigators; otherwise, they remember them well when the police arrive later about the body.

Room 401 is locked, but the investigators easily force it with a successful **STR** or **Locksmith** roll. Inside, the three-room apartment is all white surfaces and immaculately clean. A bookshelf holds the Thwaites' notebooks and a few interesting titles, including *The New Negro* (by Alain Locke), *The Communist Manifesto* (by Marx and Engels), *The Jungle*, and *King Coal* (both by Upton Sinclair). Moving into the bedroom, the investigators find that Bob Thwaite's body, his head horrifically contorted on a twisted neck. He wears a set of soiled white silk pajamas, with a monogram on the breast reading "R. T." The unpleasant scene provokes a **Sanity** roll (0/1D4 loss).

Catherine is nowhere to be found. Checking the windows finds them locked from the inside and, if questioned, the doorman never saw her leave after the couple arrived home yesterday. Investigating the bed notices a nightgown, just under the covers (**Spot Hidden** roll if the investigators aren't specific), of the same material as Bob's pajamas. On the nightgown, is a matching monogram "C. T."

DREAMING CONQUERS ALL

- **Link:** Locke's pseudo-coma (**The Fantastic Dr. Locke**, page 217).

By the time they discover Locke, meet with Hughes, and possibly discover Bob Thwaite's body, the day is descending into darkness. Should the investigators wish to stay awake through the night and avoid further dreams, ask for a combined **POW** and **CON** roll for the first five hours; thereafter, a successful combined roll at Hard difficulty is required each hour to stay awake. In a New York December, the sun sets just before 5:00 p.m. and rises just after 7:00 am; assuming a normal bedtime of around 11:00 p.m., the investigators must remain awake for eight hours. Of course, by daylight, they may believe that they have avoided any further nightmares and so fall quickly to sleep.

If a single investigator manages to remain awake, none of the investigators enter the Dreamlands. Rather, those sleeping dream of a painful and fitful blankness and awaken unrested (skill rolls are at an increased difficulty or a penalty die is applied). Whenever all of the investigators eventually drift off to sleep (be it during the next day or the next night), they find themselves heading **Into the Woods** of the Dreamlands (following).

INTO THE WOODS

- **Link:** the investigators all fall asleep (**Dreaming Conquers All,** page 220)

The investigators wake from their sleep, with Hughes nearby, in the same wood as before. The investigators' recent proximity to Locke (**The Fantastic Dr. Locke**, page 217), and Hughes' closeness to Jackson Elias, has drawn them into the Dreamlands. They are, once again, naked and without equipment. They feel the same sense of entrapment and an inability to move when shifting from the waking to sleeping worlds. After a few wheezing moments they find their breath, coming into their bodies like swimmers coming up for air, and find they can move about. Hughes is just as disoriented and confused as the rest. It is nighttime, but a strong moon glares through the treetops, providing low illumination.

Keeper note: while in the Dreamlands, the **Racial Tension Modifier** does not apply.

A small campfire can be seen through the trees some 50 feet (15 m) away, while a successful **Spot Hidden** roll detects small shapes clambering among the branches of the surrounding trees. A **Dream Lore** or **Cthulhu Mythos** roll may deduce that the shapes are zoogs—sentient rat-like creatures with tentacled snouts, who are the sworn enemies of the cats of Ulthar. The zoogs are curious about these newcomers who have circumvented the Gate of Deeper Slumber, the primary entrance to the Dreamlands. The zoogs watch but do not disturb the investigators unless they are called out to, in which case one descends and steps into view, calling for a **Sanity** roll (0/1D3 loss). The zoog converses with the investigators, although appears somewhat confused about them. Use the following points to guide the conversation.

- If asked about their location: "the forest," is the best answer the zoog can give.
- The zoog asks seemingly random questions, such as, "did you pass through the gate?" and, "did you descend the 700 steps?"
- If the investigators mention the moon-beast of their previous dream, the zoog snorts and describes how "those tasty furry things of Ulthar" ripped it apart.

After satisfying its curiosity, the zoog races away into the trees followed closely by its mates. Should the investigators foolishly attempt to harm the zoog, those in the trees quickly jump down to defend their companion (see **The Zoogs**, page 234, for their profile).

Approaching the campfire, the investigators come across Jackson Elias, dressed as he was the day he died—in a tweed suit and fedora—and holding a cutlass. Elias stands up to greet the investigators, surprised to find a group of nude humans in the forest, and especially surprised to see Hughes among them. Elias and Hughes' reunion is strained, as they encounter someone they never expected to see again. Once introductions have been made, Elias invites everyone to sit around the fire and passes a few blankets among the group. After answering a few questions (see **What Elias Knows**, following), Elias and Hughes have a quiet conversation—a

TIME AND THE DREAMLANDS

Time passes strangely here. Some dreamers go on adventures that seem to last for years but, upon returning to the Waking World, discover that a but single night has passed. Others might spend only a day in the Dreamlands, while the span of a week passes in the Waking World. For the purposes of this scenario, Elias has been in the Dreamlands long enough to have a good sense of Ulthar's inhabitants and its layout but has yet to explore very far beyond the town, while Locke arrived here just two weeks ago.

successful **Listen** roll gathers that the two are catching each other up on the past few years.

What Elias Knows

Jackson Elias can bring the investigators up to speed about the Dreamlands and, once Hughes has vouched for the group, is happy to share information. Elias can recount some of the details of the situation in Ulthar, but does not know what's become of Locke, and is surprised to find another old friend (Hughes) has arrived in the Dreamlands. Elias begins, "What do you want to know?" Use the following points to guide the conversation.

- Elias isn't sure how long he's been in the Dreamlands, but it seems like years. Days, seasons, even celestial bodies seem to pass irregularly here.
- The connection between the Dreamlands and the Waking World seems to be changing. He knows that many dreamers arrive in the Dreamlands via the Cavern of Flame, descending down the "700 steps;" however, this portal or entrance apparently vanished about two weeks ago.
- Someone calling themselves the Elder Hierophant, accompanied by a cadre of loathsome moon-beasts, arrived in Ulthar and quickly took over the town, with many residents fleeing safer pastures elsewhere—Elias only barely managed to escape. Rumor has it that the Elder Hierophant seeks an item of great power in Ulthar. Elias believes these events have affected the connection between the worlds and suspects that the Elder Hierophant's actions are somehow drawing the Waking World and Dreamlands closer together.
- If asked about the Mask of Dreaming, Elias remembers it well, having originally found it in a mountainous region of Nigeria in a Yorba village. After acquiring it, he had the most intense dreams of his life; it was as if his mind was being pulled into another land.
- If asked about where they can find clothing, Elias suggests looking in the recently abandoned farms and houses on the outskirts of Ulthar. He is happy to act as a guide.

Keeper note: Hughes won't bring up Elias' death unless the investigators do and, until informed of it, Elias expects that if the investigators find a way to escape, he'll be able to escape with them, as he does not realize he died in the Waking World in 1925. A successful **Dream Lore** or **Cthulhu Mythos** roll suspects the truth that, tied as Elias was to the Mask of Dreaming, in death his consciousness was transported to the Dreamlands. A kind Keeper may allow Elias to return to the Waking World with investigators as an ageless Dreamland version of himself made flesh. If not, Elias dies again in a horrific and antagonizing death as he fades from existence, call for a Sanity roll (1D3/1D6 loss).

AT HOME IN ULTHAR

- **Link:** Elias leads the investigators toward Ulthar (**Into the Woods**, previous).

Following Elias, the investigators enter Ulthar's outskirts, encountering farmland and various small homes that dot the countryside. The investigators can easily find clothing as they approach the city from any of these dwellings. The investigators pass vacant farmhouses, which on closer inspection seem to have been abandoned in the middle of meals or daily chores—any of these might provide the investigators with a quiet base of operations as they explore Ulthar.

Entering Ulthar, its cobblestone-paved streets and sharp bends around corners make surprise encounters frequent. While not completely abandoned like the outskirts, the town is clearly emptier than normal, with boarded-up shop fronts and few candles in the windows at night. Previous visitors to Ulthar or those with a modicum of **Dream Lore** skill may expect to see cats flaunting themselves on doorsteps and windowsills, but none appear—if necessary, Elias could remark on the absence of the cats. At odd intervals, echoing over the town, agonized screams ring out. If gaining a little height (perhaps climbing up the side of

RUNNING HUGHES AND ELIAS

Hughes and Elias can aid the investigators in several ways in the Dreamlands. While the two remain affectionate toward one another, they are not joined at the hip and split up to investigate different avenues if the investigators ask them to. If present during an encounter, use the following guide to determine their "help" to the investigators.

- Elias provides a bonus die to **Dream Lore**, **Occult**, and **Navigate** rolls.
- Hughes provides a bonus die to **History, Religion**, and **Lore (Harlem)** rolls.
- In combat, Elias and Hughes fight alongside the investigators, and together can "narratively" take on three human-sized individuals, or one moon-beast, while the investigators either fight others, flee, or pursue another goal. There's no real need to roll dice for these NPCs, just narrate their involvement and focus on the situation and rolls of the investigators.
- If Hughes or Elias become separated from the investigators, they eventually make their way back to the group when determined by the Keeper.

PULP ENCOUNTER: MOON-BEAST RAID

While the investigators spend time exploring Ulthar, the Keeper may use this optional pulp encounter. The scene portrays a moon-beast attack on Shama and Gedney, a pair of middle-aged farmers, who are selling vegetables from a cart on the street. As the investigators interact with them (or simply pass by), a lumbering moon-beast charges from around a corner at immense speed and loops Gedney up in its arm and continues down the street. As it begins to leave, Shama launches himself at the monster and struggles to free his friend. With a mighty sweep of its paw, the moon-beast crushes Shama's head, leaving his still twitching body sprawled on the cobblestones. In the blink of an eye, the moon-beast is off careering down the street, Gedney still clutched tightly to its side. The event and sight of the monster provokes a **Sanity** roll (1D4/1D8+1 combined loss). While this event should reiterate the moon-beasts' cruelty, it also demonstrates to the investigators the tactics of the moon-beasts.

a building), an investigator can ascertain that the sounds emanate from a tall tower crowning a hill in the center of Ulthar.

Shortly after entering the town, walking around the streets, the investigators hear a loud thumping noise coming from around a corner ahead. They have a few moments to decide whether to face the noise maker or hide. There are plenty of alleys or empty houses nearby, which grant a bonus die to a **Stealth** roll. Within moments, a gigantic moon-beast appears around the corner, its hideous snout-tentacles snapping through the air like whips. The sight calls for a **Sanity** roll (0/1D8 loss). Even if the investigators remain exposed, the moon-beast doesn't harm the investigators unless attacked—it is merely a wandering sentinel, "keeping the peace" of the Elder Hierophant and soon marches past.

Once the investigators reach Ulthar, there are several encounters that help to inform them about Ulthar's sorry state. Each is described in the following sections; note that **The Temple** details the probable conclusion to the scenario, with the Keeper advised to ensure the investigators encounter all or most of the other sections first.

- **The Tavern**, page 224.
- **The Burgomaster's Home**, page 225.
- **The Saint of Eyes**, page 225.
- **The Black Galley**, page 226.
- **Pautrin's Mask Shop**, page 226.
- **The Temple**, page 230 and **Ritual Chamber**, page 231.

Moon-Beast pursuers

WHAT'S HAPPENED IN ULTHAR?

The Elder Hierophant has staked a claim to Ulthar, using the moon-beasts to control the town. Ulthar's proximity to the Enchanted Wood, through which many dreamers enter the Dreamlands, makes it tactically advantageous in the hunt for the Mask of Dreaming. On arrival, the Elder Hierophant displaced the wizened Atal as high priest in Ulthar's tower, the Temple of the Elder Ones (**The Temple**, page 230).

The moon-beasts arrived on black galleys—seemingly crewed by the enslaved people of Leng, the oars actually operated by the moon-beasts—and overran what little defenses Ulthar had, and occupied the town. Most of Ulthar's citizens fled at the arrival of the black ships, with the few remaining now living under the Elder Hierophant's oppression—many have been carted off to the Temple of the Elder Ones, forced to be sacrificed in the Elder Hierophant's rituals. And the cats, faced with such a great number of their moon-beast mortal enemies, simply vanished.

When Locke arrived two weeks ago (in Dreamlands time) he managed to hide from the moon-beasts for several days in **Pautrin's Mask Shop** (page 226). There, he persuaded Pautrin to carve a replica of the Mask of Dreaming, a forgery Locke could use to confuse the Elder Hierophant and perhaps buy some time. While hiding out in the shop, Locke developed an ability for dream-shaping, and, while hidden for hours at a time in the shop's cramped crawlspace, fashioned a scale model of the Temple of the Elder Ones, and in so doing, created a portal through which someone can travel directly into any point in the Temple. This dream-magic working, unfortunately, drew the Elder Hierophant's attention and moon-beasts were sent to investigate. Ransacking the mask shop, the moon-beasts found and captured Locke, along with the replica mask, and killed Pautrin. The real Mask of Dreaming, along with the temple miniature, remains safely hidden in the shop's crawlspace… for now.

Now, Ulthar's streets are eerily quiet. Most of the fleet of black galleys have since departed, but 18 moon-beasts remain in Ulthar, half in the Temple of the Elder Ones and half patrolling the streets.

Locke's Location

The order in which the investigators act is important as Locke's situation becomes increasingly dangerous. On hearing about Locke's imprisonment in **The Black Galley** (page 226), possibly from Tumult or Dallfane (**The Tavern**, page 224), the investigators could immediately move to rescue him, which is more easily done at this point. Locke can then lead them to the real Mask of Dreaming. If, however, the investigators discover the Mask of Dreaming and the scale model of the Temple first (or, at Keeper's discretion, if they tarry too long), the Elder Hierophant's guards remove Locke from the Black Galley and bring him to **The Ritual Chamber** (page 231), where the Elder Hierophant questions him. Note that returning the Mask of Dreaming to the Orisha before rescuing Locke dooms him—the Elder Hierophant drives him insane before fleeing the Temple.

Citizens of Ulthar

While there are a few helpful citizens of Ulthar (Tumult and Dallfane in **The Black Galley**, page 226, Kranon in **The Burgomaster's Home**, page 225), most of the populace has either run off or been corralled by the moon-beasts. The few who still brave Ulthar's streets hurry past strangers. A Hard **Persuade** or **Charm** may convince such street goers (or patrons of **The Tavern**, page 224) to talk. Prodded, they may reveal information—use the following as a guide for conversations with the folk of Ulthar.

- "*You want to know what's going on? Best not to talk on the street. Go to the tavern, safer t*here." (**The Tavern**, page 224).
- "*I saw a woman carried into the Temple of the Elder Ones, but I swear I saw her later wandering along the riverside.*" (**The Saint of Eyes**, page 225).
- "*Them moon-beasts don't seem to care if people come and go, but if you're caught out on the street, you might be grabbed and taken to the tower.*"
- "*Those taken to the tower don't come back. You can hear their screams! Tortured they are. Who knows what evil is happening in there.*"
- "*That Pautrin, who crafted all manner of masks, had his shop destroyed by the moon-beasts.*" (**Pautrin's Mask Shop** (page 226).

Keeper note: investigators who attack or aggressively confront the citizenry, find most attempt to flee rather than fight back. Of course, loud antics on Ulthar's streets should call for a **Luck** roll; if failed, a moon-beast patrol comes to investigate the noise.

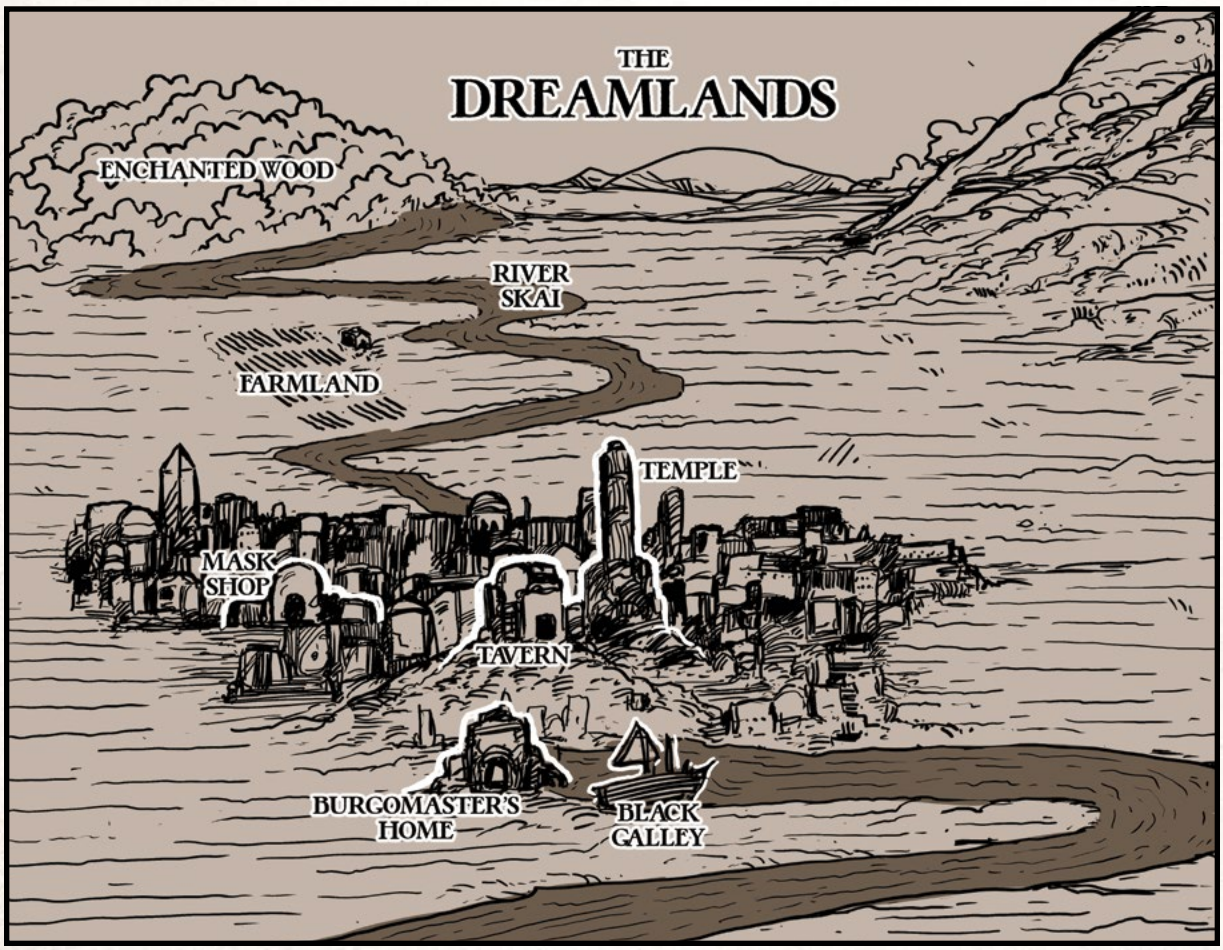
THE TAVERN

- **Link:** exploring Ulthar, the tavern is hard to miss.
- **Link:** Elias leads the group here (**At Home in Ulthar**, page 221).

The barkeep, Tumult, is surprised to see new visitors in Ulthar, especially those that don't look like moon-beasts. Over a drink and food, he can describe the arrival of the black galleys, moon-beasts' occupation, and his sadness at the cats' disappearance. Use the following to guide the conversation, referring to **What's Happened in Ulthar?** (page 223) as necessary—although he knows little regarding the Elder Hierophant's quest for the Mask of Dreaming.

- The moon-beasts patrol the streets but, in so doing, it seems they search something.
- If asked about a mask, Tumult suggests looking in **Pautrin's Mask Shop** (page 226), though word has it the moon-beasts killed the owner.
- Tumult believes the missing cats are Ulthar's only hope, especially if the rumors of the black galley fleet soon returning are to be believed—some say they are bringing the horrid spiders of Leng.
- If the investigators want to know more about the cats of Ulthar, they are directed to speak with Kranon, who hides in **The Burgomaster's Home** (page 225).
- Tumult has heard the rumor that a "Saint of Eyes" has been seen near the docks (**The Saint of Eyes**, page 225).
- Tumult does not know why others stay in Ulthar but he will not leave his tavern to be ruined.

There are few patrons in the tavern and, while speaking to Tumult, the investigators may notice Captain Dallfane, sitting alone, drinking away her cares. A successful Hard **Spot Hidden** roll detects how her legs fit oddly in the booth and the strange "lumps" in her turban. If approached, successful a **Charm** or **Persuade** roll entices the quite drunk Dallfane to reveal she is a captain in name only. Her caution evaporated by Ultharian wine, she explains that millennia ago the moon-beasts enslaved her once-proud people from the Plateau of Leng and forced them into near slavery. While some of her people enjoyed the benefits brought by the moon-beasts,



Dreamlands Keeper map

most despise the toad-like horrors. In times past, the moon-beasts used the Lengite crews of the black galleys to entice the unwitting onboard, carrying them away for the moon-beasts' foul rites; however, they have never previously occupied a port of call like they have done in Ulthar.

Dallfane bears no ill will toward any in Ulthar, wishing she could break free and strike against her overlords. A successful **Psychology** roll confirms that she speaks the truth. Given suitable motivation by the investigators, the black galley's captain could be a very useful alley. Refer to the following in developing the conversation with the investigators.

- Dallfane knows that Locke was found and captured in **Pautrin's Mask Shop** (page 226). Her own Lengite crew currently guard him on **The Black Galley** (page 226).
- If Catherine Thwaite's name is mentioned, Dallfane recalls that two weeks ago, she saw the moon-beasts carrying a woman named Catherine into the Temple of the Elder Ones, but hasn't seen her since.
- If asked about the cats, Dallfane is unsure but has heard that Kranon is very wise. He is said to be in **The Burgomaster's Home** (page 225).

Keeper note: if desired, encountering Captain Dallfane can be moved to **The Black Galley** (page 226).

THE BURGOMASTER'S HOME

- **Link:** Tumult or Dallfane direct the investigators to Kranon (**The Tavern**, page 224).

Knocking on the mansion's large doors receives no answer; however, the doors are unlocked and may be easily opened. The investigators find Kranon, glassy-eyed, in a large dining room, where the smell of rotting food on a long wooden table accosts them. Kranon is unresponsive at first, although a successful **Persuade** roll or mention about "the cats," rouses him from his thousand-yard stare.

Kranon is suffering from a close encounter with the Elder Hierophant, who spoke to him with its madness-inducing pipes. The bizarre music wrenched holes through Kranon's psyche, and he now has trouble focusing, his attention wavering as he becomes lost in the unearthly music that plays through his mind. Occasionally, he hums partial phrases of the maddening tune—a **Sanity** roll to hear this (0/1 loss). If the investigators can keep him focused long enough (a successful **Charm**, **Fast Talk**, or **Persuade** roll), he can recount the following vital information.

- Ulthar's streets once were home to many cats, who would sun themselves on any available surface while keeping the town free of rats. The cats would exact terrible revenge on any who would harm their kind; indeed, many moons ago, the law stating that "no man may kill a cat" was adopted, and since that time the cats have defended Ulthar.
- The cats can walk between the Dreaming and Waking Worlds. When the hated moon-beasts arrived in great numbers, the cats must have realized they could do little to stop the occupation and so jumped from this world to the other. Perhaps, if told of Ulthar's dire need, the cats might return to settle the score with their moon-beast enemies (see **Finding the Cats**, page 229).
- Kranon knows Alain Locke was hiding in **Pautrin's Mask Shop** (page 226) before the moon-beasts captured and removed him to **The Black Galley** (page 226).
- If the Mask of Dreaming is mentioned, Kranon recalls that it is said the masks allows one to walk between the Dreaming and Waking Worlds. Having understood some of the Elder Hierophant's plan, Kranon knows the Hierophant intends to destroy the mask but doesn't know why.
- The Elder Hierophant spends its time working a great ritual. Kranon believes the Mask of Dreaming is somehow connected to the ritual or, at least, its destruction is somehow part of the ceremony.

THE SAINT OF EYES

- **Link:** mentioned by Tumult (**The Tavern**, page 224).
- **Link:** mentioned in passing (**Citizens of Ulthar**, page 223).
- **Link:** the strange figure seen in the temple miniature in the mask shop (**Pautrin's Mask Shop**, page 226)

When investigators are near the River Skai—**The Black Galley** (page 226) or **The Burgomaster's Home** (page 225)—they may encounter the Saint of Eyes, better known to the investigators as Catherine Thwaite. Captured by the moon-beasts, Catherine was taken to the Temple of the Elder Ones where the Elder Hierophant removed her eyes. Now, she walks the riverbanks like a ghost.

When first encountered, the Saint of Eyes does not react to the investigators, as though she is not aware of their presence. Seeing her eyeless face and harrowed demeanor provokes a **Sanity** roll (1/2 loss). It's clear that Catherine has suffered a terrible encounter with something awful (the Elder Hierophant), although a successful **Psychoanalysis** or Hard **Psychology** roll rouses her to consciousness for a while, allowing her to respond to the investigators. Telling her story, Catherine recalls strange pipe music and bursts of unsavory conversation, and remembers a "horrible thing" that laughed while it plucked out her eyes. The thing sat upon a stone throne in a tower, guarding the entrance to the prison of the Great Ones (see **The Ritual Chamber**, page

231). She heard the thing cackling, saying something about the Old Ones being entombed in the throne, and how it will soon "walk the streets of her homeland."

If the investigators manage to convince Catherine to join them, she vanishes at an inopportune moment, as the group rounds a corner or enters a building, only to reappear near to the river. Catherine, unfortunately, cannot return to the Waking World and is doomed to be the Saint of Eyes for all time.

THE BLACK GALLEY

- **Link:** meeting Captain Dallfane (**The Tavern**, page 224).
- **Link:** Locke's last known location (**The Burgomaster's Home**, page 225).

Keeper note: refer to **Locke's Location** (page 223) to determine if Locke is still aboard the ship.

Most of Captain Dallfane's Lengite crew (10 individuals) are currently ashore, but three remain aboard ship: two guarding the brig and one high in the crow's nest. A Hard **Stealth** roll or, alternatively, a suitable distraction allows the investigators to slip aboard. If discovered, the crewmember concerned raises an alarm, which brings the other two in a few moments. If one guard falls in combat, another will attempt to flee to summon a moon-beast patrol. If the investigators are able to rescue Locke unseen, the guards discover the escape and report it the moon-beasts soon after. If accompanied by Captain Dallfane, the guards do not question her authority and allow the investigators to pass.

Locke's cell, below decks in the hold, comprises three walls of iron bars and the hull's dank, moldy fourth wall. Down from the cell, the investigators notice that the ship's oars are strangely crafted for inhuman hands—assuming the investigators have already encountered a moon-beast, it's clear that the oars are fashioned for use by the toad-like monsters. Investigators may attempt to pick the padlock on Locke's cell with a **Locksmith** roll or bend the bars away from the hull with Hard **STR** (Regular if using tools).

While pleased to see the investigators, two weeks have passed for Locke, and he needs **First Aid** before he is steady on his feet. He has grown a beard and appears malnourished. Depending on the circumstances, the investigators may have to carry him off the ship.

Speaking to Locke

Once on safer ground and tended to, Locke is able to convey what he knows. He remembers that he appeared in a forest, where a moon-beast attacked him, and that a horde of cats came to his rescue and killed the monster. The cats bid him a good day and told him that they were departing the dreams of humans.

From his time spent with Pautrin the mask maker, Locke learned something about the nature of the Mask of Dreaming, which he describes as an object meant to ensure that the dreams of men are kept separate from the reality of the Waking World. Pautrin told him the mask was created by the Great Ones, the old gods of the Dreamlands (he does not know of the Orisha connection). Locke hid the Mask of Dreaming in a crawlspace in the mask shop (**Pautrin's Mask Shop**, page 226)—the moon-beasts think they found the Mask, but this was a replica Locke asked Pautrin to make. He suspects that the Elder Hierophant intends to destroy the Mask of Dreaming and somehow cause the world of dream to come crashing into the "real" world. From his brief time in the Temple of the Elder Ones, Locke knows that the Elder Hierophant's ritual requires a sacrifice. Thus far, Ulthar's citizens have been the sacrifice, but from what Locke could tell, they were unsuitable.

Locke suspects that the only way to stop the Elder Hierophant is to prevent the Mask of Dreaming from getting into its hands. He pleads with the investigators to go to Pautrin's shop and find the Mask of Dreaming, and then give the Mask to the Elder Ones for safekeeping. Unfortunately, he doesn't know where the Elder Ones are.

Keeper note: the clue to the Great Ones whereabouts is held by **The Saint of Eyes** (page 225)—they are imprisoned, accessible only via the trapdoor hidden beneath the stone throne in the **Ritual Chamber** (page 231) of the Temple of the Elder Ones (**The Temple**, page 230). If necessary, the Saint of Eyes could be spied or encountered while the investigators rescue Locke. If the investigators need guidance and have yet to discover the temple miniature in **Pautrin's Mask Shop** (page 226), Locke suggests using the miniature's portal to infiltrate the Temple by disguising themselves as sacrificial pledges.

PAUTRIN'S MASK SHOP

- **Link:** Tumult directs the investigators to the shop (**The Tavern**, page 224).
- **Link:** mentioned in passing (**Citizens of Ulthar**, page 223).
- **Link:** Locke asks the investigators to retrieve the Mask of Dreaming (**Speaking to Locke**, previous).

Keeper note: see the nearby box, **Pulp Encounter: Moon-Beast Raid!** for an optional obstacle.

The storefront has been boarded over; a combined **STR** and **Stealth** roll may silently break off the boards (gain a

bonus die if done at night), allowing investigators to get in unseen. If the roll is failed, a moon-beast patrol comes to investigate the noise, requiring a further **Stealth** roll if the investigators wish to avoid a confrontation. Alternatively, clever investigators may watch the shop to ascertain that the moon-beasts patrol the street once every hour, allowing them to plan a suitable distraction to ensure the moon-beasts cannot hear the investigators breaking in.

Inside the shop, it's clear the moon-beasts have been here. The wooden walls and ceiling bow outwards, as though through some great strain, and tables, masks, ribbons, wood shavings, and carving tools litter the floor. A cursory examination of the broken masks and rubble tells that these masks are dissimilar to the Mask of Dreaming—where it is of African origin, these fit a decidedly European style.

The human-sized stairs to the upper floor are warped and the walls are bowed and broken, evidence of the passing of the moon-beasts. Upstairs is a single room with a bed and bureau, along with a white male's body (Pautrin) on the floor. The floor bows downward, as though bent by a heavy load. The body, presumably Pautrin, has had its skull crushed, along with its extremities. The sight is ghastly and provokes a **Sanity** roll (0/1D3 loss). Examining the body with a **Biology**, Hard **First Aid,** or **Medicine** roll discerns that Pautrin's expiration was long and slow: his finger bones were crushed into powder, then his hands, his toes, and feet. It appears that his face was saved for last: pushed inward, then the sides of his skull compressed at right angles to the face.

Observations about the ground-floor ceiling's upward bow and the upper floor's downward bow seem to conflict. A successful **Spot Hidden** roll notices, as investigators descend the staircase, that the upper-story floor is unusually thick. Closer examination or a successful **Spot Hidden** roll finds an upper-floor floorboard with a finger-width hole that, if pulled at the correct angle, slides from a carved channel. A small crawl space presents itself. A **SIZ** 60 investigator can slip into the crawlspace (larger builds will have to pry up the floorboards), allowing them to crawl toward the rear of the property where sits a large upturned wooden bowl-like object.

Lifting the bowl reveals a scale model of the Temple of the Elder Ones beneath, complete with levels that lift away to diagram each floor's layout. The miniature's substance shimmers, seemingly immaterial while feeling solid. Separating levels and peering inside, notes tiny, animated figures of humans and moon-beasts, which provokes a **Sanity** roll (0/1 loss). Further searching of the crawlspace finds no sign of the Mask of Dreaming.

Keeper note: if the investigators did not rescue Alain Locke from **The Black Galley** (page 226), he has now been moved to the Temple, and the investigators can become aware of this fact by spotting his miniature figure in the scale model—his location is in **The Ritual Chamber** (page 231). A successful **Spot Hidden** roll also notes a lone figure moving near the river where it bends toward the miniature temple—this is Catherine Thwaite, **The Saint of Eyes** (page 225).

Physical manipulation of the figures in the scale model is impossible, the figures merely reflect what's occurring in the temple. If an investigator gazes on the scale model for more than a few moments, ask for a **POW** roll; if failed, the investigator begins to be pulled into the Temple of the Elder Ones, to the level currently exposed—a successful second **POW** roll resists the pull. If the second POW roll is failed or the investigator allows themselves to be transported, the process costs 2 magic points. Those witnessing (or the investigator concerned) may attempt a **Cthulhu Mythos**, **Dream Lore**, **Occult** or Hard **INT** roll to realize that they can direct this effect, entering any location in the temple by focusing and concentrating on a particular section (costing 2 magic points and a successful **POW** roll). Traveling via the miniature's magical portal, the investigators feel like

PULP ENCOUNTER: MOON-BEAST RAID

While the heroes are in Pautrin's mask shop, the Keeper may wish to present some action by having a patrol of moon-beasts pass by and notice movement or sounds coming from within, or perhaps they notice the door or shutters have been tampered with. The moon-beasts can be heard entering by the heroes, providing just enough time to decide how to tackle the situation. Do the heroes try to hide in the crawlspace or around the building, presenting a tense moment of hide and seek? Or, do they stand firm and try to fend off the attack? Determine the capabilities of the heroes and the number of moon-beasts from one to three accordingly. The monsters' standing order is to capture rather than kill, so incapacitated, unconscious, or surrendering heroes are taken either to **The Black Galley** (page 226) or **The Temple** (page 230) at the Keeper's discretion—if later in the scenario, the Temple of the Elder Ones is advised, as this provides an alternative way to get the heroes into the endgame of the scenario (assuming they possess the Mask of Dreaming). Perhaps one hero avoids capture and must now use the scale model's portal to mount a rescue (bring the Mask with them).

something is dragging them through water at high speed before arriving in the temple. Investigators who observe their colleagues "entering" the miniatures can see their miniature figurines now walking about in the model.

Keeper note: the scale model is an exacting replica, but only of the main building. While **The Ritual Chamber** (page 231) is included in the model, the investigators cannot access the Great Ones' prison—they must travel into the Temple first. Despite creating it, Locke is unaware of the model's portal ability and is shocked when it comes to his attention.

The absence of the Mask of Dreaming in the crawlspace concerns Locke; however, a Hard **Spot Hidden** or if an investigator removes the tower's top level (the Ritual Chamber) from the scale model, a tiny model of the Mask of Dreaming can be seen. Reaching for it, an investigator can withdraw the model mask, which immediately grows full sized in a matter of seconds. The apparent impossibility calls for a **Sanity** roll (0/1 loss).

The Mask of Dreaming

Wearing the Mask of Dreaming enables the wearer to enjoy certain effects. Firstly, once an investigator wears the Mask, they and anyone touching them, gain the ability to wake up from their current dream with a **POW** roll. Likewise, the wearer and those touching them may travel to the Dreamlands from the Waking World with a **POW** roll. If traveling from the Waking World, the users' bodies fall to the ground, asleep, their consciousnesses transported. Secondly, the Mask allows the wearer to walk in two worlds simultaneously—with a Hard **POW** roll, their consciousness splits, one-half venturing into the alternate world (the Dreamlands or the Waking World, depending on the wearer's current location). This ability allows the wearer to view a current scene in the other realm, although they cannot interact with the world there. For example, if in the Waking World, the Mask might show the wearer what is happening in Ulthar, or perhaps the scene currently playing out in the Temple of the Elder Ones. The Keeper determines the scene viewed and the length of time it takes. The wearer has an intangible physical presence in the other world; for example, if traveling to the Waking World, only certain people (like psychics, or creatures like cats) can see the user.

The first time the Mask is worn, the user feels as though their mind is being torn in half, causing an automatic 1D6 Sanity loss, with additional uses then costing 1D2 Sanity points thereafter. When a mortal first removes the Mask, a vision appears in their mind of something huge scuttling toward them while a lithe voice calls to them. This is a psychic communication from the Spider God, Atlach-Nacha, a gigantic spider-like entity with a human-skull-like face molded into its sticky flesh on its thorax. The voice asks the wearer to pledge obedience in return for a question answered—the Spider God offering to "pluck a thread of existence, to answer one question." The experience is unnerving and provokes a **Sanity** roll (1/1D10 loss).

If the wearer of the Mask agrees to the offer, the Keeper should note that the investigator concerned suffers a penalty die on **Sanity** rolls made when encountering the Elder Hierophant in **The Ritual Chamber** (page 231) and, if they go insane as a result, they will turn on their compatriots. In terms of the 'question answered," Atlach-Nacha answers the investigator's question using riddles and/or cryptic images. Use the following as a guide for possible answers:

- **Questions about the Elder Hierophant's plans:** a vision of the pool of blood in **The Ritual Chamber** (page 231), followed by visions of New York City skyscrapers collapsing into the Hudson River while a fleet of black galleys sail into port.
- **Personal questions, like "When will I die?":** are answered with an enigmatic "midnight," followed by a vision of a pocket watch in the investigator's periphery that irregularly ticks toward 12 o'clock.
- **Very specific questions, like "How do we defeat the Hierophant?":** are answered with an overwhelming flood of images that sends the investigator into a seizure on the ground and the loss of 1 Sanity point. Afterward, the investigator has trouble recalling any specific details, but gains a bonus die on rolls taken when acting against the Elder Hierophant during the final scene of the scenario.

WE HAVE THE MASK—WHAT NOW?

Once the investigators have the Mask of Dreaming, they have a method of **Finding the Cats** (page 229), a method of getting home (**The Mask of Dreaming**, nearby), and face a series of choices: if they have not yet saved Locke, or, realizing the necessity of returning the Mask to the Great Ones, do they risk entering the Temple of the Elder Ones to do so? Do they choose to flee? Do they remain and explore the Dreamlands? Or, do they decide the Waking World doesn't deserve to be saved and let the Elder Hierophant have the Mask?

FLEEING THE DREAMLANDS

Investigators choosing to flee the Dreamlands without restoring order by returning the Mask of Dreaming to the Great Ones or defeating the Elder Hierophant only postpone the inevitable. The boundary between the worlds has been weakened by the Elder Hierophant, whose continued efforts eventually bear fruit, allowing the transportation of three moon-beasts to the Waking World, tasked with retrieving the Mask. Assuming the investigators still have or were the last people to possess the Mask, the moon-beasts come for them. More follow if the first sortie fails. Once the Mask is gained, the Elder Hierophant begins its assault on the Waking World in earnest.

Because of the Dreamland's strange effects upon time, and because the Mask returns to the Waking World with the user, an investigator, should they fail their POW roll to travel with the Mask's wearer, could find themselves left in the Dreamlands for an extended period. When their companions return, the Keeper should decide how much time has passed in the Dreamlands—a second, a few minutes, hours, days, or even years. Roll POW for Hughes and Locke as well—they may be stranded just as easily.

FINDING THE CATS

- **Link:** discovering the Mask of Dreaming (**Pautrin's Mask Shop**, page 226).
- **Link:** Kranon asks the investigators to bring the cats back (**The Burgomaster's Home**, page 225).

To bring the cats back to the Dreamlands, the investigators need to return to the Waking World using the Mask of Dreaming, find a cat, and convince it to return with its compatriots to Ulthar. Investigators hold a quite one-sided conversation with cats in the Waking World, as cats can only speak to humans in the Dreamlands. Recalling Tilby, investigators who previously treated the cat well and who now approach June Hampton's cat receive a bonus die to a **Charm** or **Persuade** roll to convince Tilby to help them. Unfortunately, the cats need motivation beyond protecting Ulthar to return. News of the Elder Hierophant's plans to collapse the boundary with the Waking World convinces Tilby, as does a sound tactical strategy, for instance, using the scale model of the Temple in **Pautrin's Mask Shop**, page 226, to assault the Elder Hierophant. Convinced of the investigators' credentials and the need for action, Tilby conveys the request for help to the other cats. Soon, the investigators are surrounded by all manner of felines, who unnervingly sit stock still and intently watch the investigators. This is the cue to explain their plan to the cats. Once done, the cats all depart as one, traveling to the Dreamlands through secret cat ways. When the investigators use the Mask of Dreaming to return to the Dreamlands, the cats are waiting for them.

Once in the Dreamlands, communication with the cats is a lot easier, as the cats can speak. One possible strategy is to get the cats to provide a distraction by attacking the Temple's lower level while the investigators enter **The Temple** (page 230) or **The Ritual Chamber** (page 231) using the scale model's portal—acting as a unit, a group of 15 cats can take down a moon-beast with five losses. The cats agree to the investigators' suggestions about their deployment with a successful combined **Persuade** and **INT** roll; otherwise, if the roll is failed, the cats use their own tactics and start a guerrilla operation against the moon-beasts, attacking patrols who stray from Ulthar's center—if the investigators delay in striking at the Temple, hesitating after the cats' actions, the moon-beast reprisals are vicious, and Tumult's tavern burns.

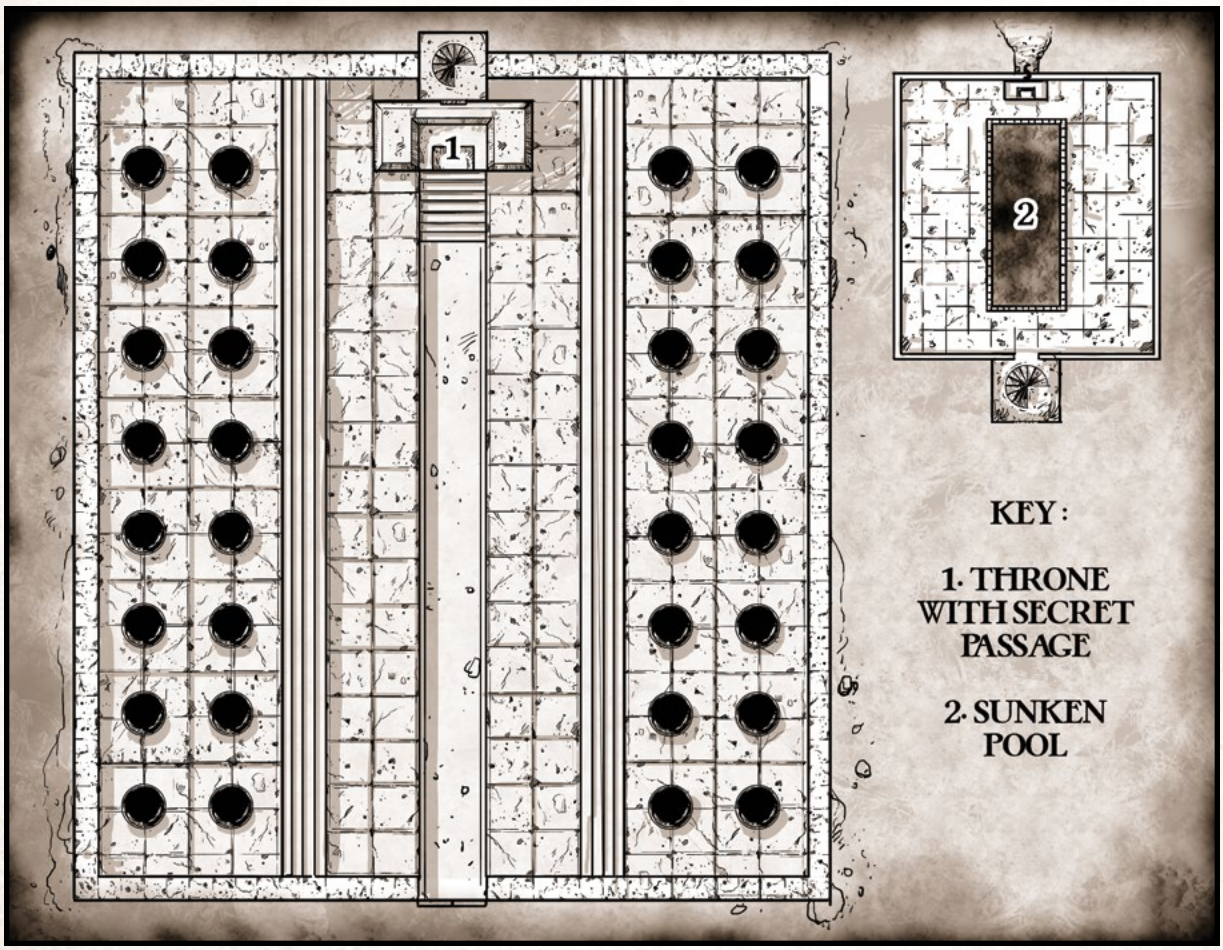
THE TEMPLE

Keeper note: the following assumes the investigators enter the Temple on foot. If the scale model's portal is used to drop the investigators directly inside the Temple somewhere, adjust the text as necessary.

To reach the Temple of the Elder Ones, worshippers first walk the switchback trail up the hill in the center of Ulthar. A successful **Archaeology** roll notes the similarity between this climb and other such holy sites on Earth, like Glastonbury Tor in England, the Acropolis in Athens, or Tel Megiddo in Israel. Making their way toward the Temple, a successful **Spot Hidden** roll notices a man, high above them, tied to the tower—the source of the screams heard across Ulthar. Coming closer, the investigators see the man has been bound to the tower's exterior, upside down, with his arms extended backward in a pose grotesquely reminiscent of crucifixion. This is Atal, the high priest of the Temple of the Elder Ones.

Two moon-beasts guard the Temple's entrance but allow citizens to come and go during the day, paying their obeisance to the Elder Hierophant. The public only has access to the ground floor, a grand columnar hall with an empty throne the size of a city bus against the far wall (the Elder Hierophant rarely descends to public sight). Four moon-beasts patrol between the columns. Behind the throne, a set of stairs spiral up into darkness—a successful **Listen** roll determines that screams coming from above the stairwell are not those of Atal's outside. The moon-beasts understand human speech, if incapable of replicating it themselves. The investigators may gain a bonus die if they masquerade as sacrificial pledges, requiring a **Charm** or **Fast Talk** roll at Hard difficulty, or a **Disguise** roll to convince the moon-beasts.

Gaining the upper floors, the investigators find any laudatory descriptions of the Temple controverted—the Elder Hierophant has perverted the worshipful rooms into torture chambers. Three moon-beasts stalk between tables filled with some of Ulthar's citizens, whom they prod and torture with tools and their paws. Watching such horrific nightmarish scenes calls for a **Sanity** roll (1/1D6 loss). A successful **Stealth** roll allows investigators past the moon-beasts unnoticed.



Upper Temple Floor Map

Keeper note: if the investigators have the cats as allies, and unless other plans were made, the cats strike now, drawing the moon-beast torturers from the tower.

The Ritual Chamber

At the temple's apex, the investigators enter the Ritual Chamber, in the center of which is a sunken pool 10 feet (3 m) wide and three times as long, now filled with blood. The pool has its own unknown current, and small waves break across its surface. At the chamber's far end stands a human-sized stone throne—a successful Hard **Spot Hidden** (from this distance; Regular when nearer) notices an iron trapdoor beneath the throne.

If Locke was not rescued from **The Black Galley** (page 226), his beaten and mauled form is chained to the throne. The throne can be moved to the side with an Extreme **STR** roll, reduced to Hard with two people pushing, or Regular if three work together—four people gain a bonus die to the roll, while six gain two bonus dice. If the investigators have spoken with **The Saint of Eyes** (page 225), they know that the trapdoor leads to the prison of the Great Ones (**Beyond the Wall of Dream**, following).

When the investigators moving into the chamber, ripples break across the blood pool's surface and a figure rises from it—the Elder Hierophant, dressed in blood-soaked orange robes, which billow and waft, concealing its hideous form beneath. Its face is hidden beneath an ornate golden mask of strange geometric shapes, which present a malign demeanor. Through three eye slits, the Hierophant's spectral green eyes stare at the investigators, chilling their hearts. Unveiled from a robed arm, a twisting mass of small tentacles curl around a set of pipes, which it raises to its mouth. The sight warrants a **Sanity** roll (1D3/1D8 loss).

If the investigators brought the Mask of Dreaming with them, the Elder Hierophant senses it's presence and does everything it can to obtain the Mask. If done, it will attempt to force one investigator to don the Mask, who then becomes the key sacrifice in the culmination of its grand ritual. If the investigators left the Mask behind for safekeeping, the Hierophant senses if any of them have previously worn the mask. If one has, it attempts to grasp that investigator and (in the next round) forces its twisting arm down that investigator's throat, inflicting 1D6 damage, and then pulls its arms out clutching the Mask of Dreaming! For the investigator concerned, ask for a **Sanity** roll (1/1D6 loss), while witnesses suffer only 0/1D3 Sanity loss. On its next turn, the Elder Hierophant starts the final element of the ritual to destroy the Mask, slapping the Mask on the same investigator's face and attempting to sacrifice them by crushing them to death—refer the Elder Hierophant's profile on page 235.

If the Hierophant or the investigators destroy the mask—requiring a successful **POW** roll while expending 15 MP and sacrificing a mortal who has worn the Mask—the Dreamlands and Waking World collapse in on themselves, merging the realities and allowing Dreamlands inhabitants to manifest in the Waking World. This event is effectively world-ending, as all manner of Dreamlands beings—zoogs, spiders of Leng, moon-beasts, et al.—begin to manifest across the world, while Dreamlands locations superimpose onto the Waking World: Central Park appears around Ulthar, with familiar New York skyscrapers warped against a purple sky; the River Skai and the Hudson become one. The laws of physics change, and time and the seasons fall out of sync. The collapse remains permanent unless the investigators manage to enter the prison of the Great Ones (**Beyond the Wall of Dream**) and assist the old gods in forging a new mask—the scope of such dramatic events falls outside of this scenario, but offers the Keeper the chance to explore a strange new world with these seeds for adventure.

Beyond the Wall of Dream

Having accessed the door beneath the throne in the Ritual Chamber, the investigators may open it and step through to enter a wide-open plain lit by strange constellations and a waxing moon. Not far away, beneath a broad-branched tree (a successful **Natural World** roll recognizes it as a baobab tree), a bright orange bonfire illuminates a dozen people dressed in dark red tunics and wraps. Other bonfires dot the landscape for miles around. Noticing the investigators' arrival, several members of the group approach, leaning on simple wooden canes.

Keeper note: if the Elder Hierophant remains in the Temple, the investigators are safe here, at least for a while, if the Hierophant does not yet possess the Mask of Dreaming.

A successful **Dream Lore**, **Cthulhu Mythos**, or Hard **Occult** roll confirms these beings are the Elder Ones, while an **Anthropology** or Hard **History** roll may recognize their West-African attire, and the names they call one another—Obatala, Oduduwa, Oshun, Shango, and so on—as the names of the Orisha, the Great Ones.

The Orisha speak no earthly living language, although an **Anthropology** roll combined with time spent with the Orisha makes communication easier. Alternatively, the Orisha can call upon visions imparted to the investigators to tell their story. The Orisha describe the Mask of Dreaming's creation in ages past when the Earth was young. The Mask was designed to strengthen the barrier between waking and dream, thereby weaken the thread spun by Alant-a-

kun (Atlach-Nacha), whose web when one day finished will draw all things together. The Orisha cannot leave this place, a prison for their daring to act against the Spider God, but neither can Alant-a-kun's servants enter. If the Mask is returned to the Orisha, the boundary is safe (or can be reestablished)—the Seven Hundred Steps of Deeper Slumber and the Cavern of Flame reappear, and the Dreamlands reform, safe from further strife (for now). With such events, the Elder Hierophant vanishes from the temple, as do the moon-beasts, and the investigators reappear in a restored Ulthar, its people returned and all is well. Hailed as heroes, the investigators enjoy the next few days among Ulthar's folk and cats.

EPILOGUE: NEW YEAR'S DAY

When the Keeper determines, the investigators wake in their beds at sunrise on January 1st, 1928. While snow falls on Harlem, its citizens take to the streets. Signs saying, "Justice for our youth!" and "No more brutality!" can be spied. Perhaps the investigators join the marchers, but the choice is up to them.

REWARDS

- Rescuing Locke from the Black Galley or the Temple: +1D2 Sanity points.
- Defeating the Elder Hierophant: +1D8 Sanity points.
- For each Moon-Beast defeated: +1 Sanity point.
- Returning the Mask of Dreaming to the Great Ones: +1D4 Sanity points.
- Failing to stop the Hierophant's diabolical plan: –1D10 Sanity points.

MORE ADVENTURES IN THE DREAMLANDS?

Having saved the Dreamlands, the investigators may be tempted by further adventure in the land of dream. Concluding this scenario, Captain Dallfane's black galley is at their service. Perhaps not all the moon-beasts are gone? Or, maybe the monsters seek revenge and call upon their allies, the cats from Saturn or the spiders of Leng, to aid in tracking down the meddlesome investigators.

CHARACTERS AND MONSTERS

For ease of reference, the Keeper may wish to copy or print out these pages as a handy reference when running this chapter. NPCs, monsters, and others are gathered by type or distinct groupings.

Note: certain NPCs have Luck values, as well as talents for *Pulp Cthulhu* games; ignore these if playing regular *Call of Cthulhu*.

ALLIES OR INDEPENDENTS

Jackson Elias,
appears age 40, dreaming investigator

STR 70	**CON** 85	**SIZ** 65	**DEX** 65	**INT** 80
APP 55	**POW** 80	**EDU** 70	**SAN** 76	**HP** 15
DB: +1D4	**Build:** 1	**Move:** 7	**MP:** 16	**Luck:** 40

Combat

Brawl	60% (30/12), damage 1D3+1D4
Cutlass	50% (25/10), damage 1D8+1+1D4
Dodge	50% (25/10)

Skills

Art/Craft (Writing) 70%, Charm 45%, Climb 60%, Credit Rating 40%, Cthulhu Mythos 4%, Dream Lore 55%, Fast Talk 70%, Language (Cantonese) 30%, Language (English) 85%, Language (French) 40%, Language (Hindustani) 40%, Language (Portuguese) 45%, Language (Spanish) 50%, Library Use 65%, Listen 55%, Mechanical Repair 50%, Natural World 45%, Occult 70%, Persuade 40%, Psychology 50%, Spot Hidden 60%, Stealth 65%, Survival (Mountains) 35%, Throw 35%.

Pulp Talents

- **Alert:** never surprised in combat.
- **Tough Guy:** soaks up damage, may spend 10 Luck points to shrug off up to 5 hit points worth of damage taken in one combat round.

Pulp Skills

- Brawl 80% (40/16)
- Cutlass 70% (35/14)
- Dodge 60% (30/12)

Captain Dallfane, *age 38, rebellious servant*

STR 60	**CON** 70	**SIZ** 60	**DEX** 70	**INT** 65
APP 60	**POW** 50	**EDU** 45	**SAN** 53	**HP** 13
DB: 0	**Build:** 0	**Move:** 8	**MP:** 10	**Luck:** —

Combat

Brawl	70% (35/14), damage 1D3 or knife 1D4
Cutlass	60% (30/12), damage 1D8+1
Dodge	45% (22/9)

Skills

Charm 50%, Climb 70%, Cthulhu Mythos 23%, Dream Lore 70%, Fast Talk 50%, Intimidate 60%, Listen 40%, Persuade 40%, Pilot (Boat) 70%, Psychology 55%, Spot Hidden 50%, Stealth 60%, Throw 60%.

Pulp Talents

- **Smooth Talker**: gains a bonus die to Charm rolls.
- **Tough Guy:** soaks up damage, may spend 10 Luck points to shrug off up to 5 hit points worth of damage taken in one combat round.

Pulp Skills

- Brawl 80% (40/16)
- Cutlass 70% (35/14)
- Dodge 55% (27/11)

The Cats of Ulthar, *feline protectors*

Use this profile for all Dreamland cats, as well as for Tilby.

STR 10	**CON** 40	**SIZ** 5	**DEX** 150	**INT** 65
APP —	**POW** 65	**EDU** —	**SAN** —	**HP** 4
DB: –2	**Build:** –2	**Move:** 10	**MP:** 13	**Luck:** —

Combat

Attacks per round: 3 (claw, bite, rip)

Rip: if the first two claw attacks are successful, the cat may hang onto its opponent for a third bite attack or rip with its hind legs. Once attached, the cat gains a bonus die to further attacks in the following rounds. The opponent may try to dislodge the cat with a successful STR or DEX roll opposed by the cat's DEX.

Fighting	45% (22/9), damage 1D4–2
Rip	80% (40/16), damage 2D3–2
Dodge	75% (37/15)

Skills

Dream Lore 80%, Find Warm Perch 90%, Military Tactics 60%, Navigate 70%, Listen 80%, Spot Hidden 70%, Stealth 70%.

Armor: none.

Spells: able to leap through space and travel to the Dreamlands at will.

Cat of Ulthar

ADVERSARIES AND MONSTERS

The Zoogs, *devious devils*

Use this profile for all zoogs.

STR 15	**CON** 35	**SIZ** 10	**DEX** 100	**INT** 65
APP —	**POW** 50	**EDU** —	**SAN** —	**HP** 4
DB: –2	**Build:** –2	**Move:** 12	**MP:** 10	**Luck:** —

Combat

Attacks per round: 1 (bite, claw, or weapon)

Tactics: will feign being docile (and somewhat cute-looking) until their target is close enough to be attacked. Works in packs to ambush the unwary.

Fighting	40% (20/8), damage 1D4+1–2, or by weapon (knife 1D4–2)
Dart (thrown)	50% (25/10), damage 1D6–2
Dodge	50% (25/10)

Skills

Act Cute 70%, Dream Lore 60%, Military Tactics 30%, Navigate 40%, Listen 40%, Spot Hidden 60%, Stealth 60%.

Armor: none.
Spells: zoogs with POW 70 may know 1D4 spells.
Sanity loss: 0/1D3 Sanity points to see a zoog.

The Moonbeasts, *toad-like foot soldier*

Use this profile for all moon-beasts.

STR 80	**CON** 65	**SIZ** 100	**DEX** 50	**INT** 80
APP —	**POW** 50	**EDU** —	**SAN** —	**HP** 16
DB: +1D6	**Build:** 2	**Move:** 7	**MP:** 10	**Luck:** —

Combat

Attacks per round: 1 (paw smash, spear or another weapon)

Fighting	45% (22/9), damage 1D3+1D6, or spear 1D10+1+1D6
Dodge	25% (12/5)

Armor: none, although missiles and bullets deal minimum damage.
Spells: 30% chance of knowing 1D3 spells.
Sanity loss: 0/1D8 Sanity points to see a moon-beast.

The Elder Hierophant, *cruel despot*

STR 100	**CON** 250	**SIZ** 150	**DEX** 60	**INT** 80
APP —	**POW** 150	**EDU** —	**SAN** —	**HP** 40
DB: +2D6	**Build:** 3	**Move:** 8	**MP:** 30	**Luck:** —

Combat

Attacks per round: 1 (play pipes, smash, grab, or crush)

Pipes of Horror: hearing the Elder Hierophant's music causes those within 20 feet (6 m) to make a Sanity roll (1/1D6 loss), as well as suffer 1 damage per round as the music causes ears to bleed and organs to twist. While the music plays, all actions suffer a penalty die. Plugging one's ears negates the damage and reduces Sanity loss by a half and a Luck roll is made to determine whether the penalty die applies.

Grab and Crush: with a successful maneuver, the target is held but may attempt to break free with a STR or DEX roll opposed by the Hierophant's STR. If held, the target may be crushed for 1D6+2D6 damage on the following round, or might have the Mask of Dreaming shoved onto their face (as applicable).

Combat

Fighting	50% (25/10), damage 1D4+2D6
Grab opponent (mnvr)	50% (25/10), target held, may crush on following round
Dodge	20% (10/4)

Skills

Art/Craft (Flute/Pipe) 90%, Be Malign 100%, Intimidate 90%.

Armor: none, but all mundane weapons do minimum damage
Spells: Cloud Memory, Contact Nyarlathotep, others at the Keeper's discretion.
Sanity loss: 1D3/1D8 to see the Elder Hierophant.

WHISPERS OF HARLEM

It is 1928 and Charles "Flip" Wilmore is fleeing Los Angeles, heading back to his hometown of Harlem after living nearly a decade in the shadow of Hollywood's limelight. Wilmore is dead broke, fearful of what is chasing him, and wants to reestablish his old life. What he is not short of are words, plans, and one last trick. If he gets that trick right, it could save his life, career, and future. Harlem is a land of hope, where the written word has the power to change the world. This scenario is suited to a team of two to five investigators.

BACKGROUND: HOLLYWOOD GLORY DAYS

Charles Wilmore loved his life in Hollywood, though he was sure it would never amount to much. He spent his time punching up, revising, and writing scripts for his white counterparts who took all the credit. Some of his film work included *Black Oxen* (1923), *The Last Man on Earth* (1924), *Secrets* (1924), *The Big Parade* (1925), *For Heaven Sake* (1926), and the serial *Blake of Scotland Yard* (1927). His working arrangement wasn't the best deal but it allowed him to live close to the silver screen and to see the stars.

Irving Thalberg, known as the "Wonder Boy," paired him with another ghostwriter, Ethan Gault, a man from Georgia with a white father and a black mother. Wilmore hoped the two would become a dynamic writing duo, making movies and creating opportunities for others like themselves. Yet, instead of being his partner, Gault turned out to be Wilmore's undoing, taking advantage of his "passability" (the skin tone granted to him by his father to pass within white society)—Gault soon became the *de facto* face of the pair.

Both Wilmore and Gault were indoctrinated into a shadowy Hollywood cult a year after they met, each believed it would open doors and, on the surface, appeared little more than a hedonistic gathering with strange chants. After joining, things seem to improve for both writers. Gault's "acceptable" looks and Wilmore's unquestionable talent garnered them notice. Once Wilmore had finished his screenplay *Perilous Night*, a gothic horror tale of African-American life in 1870s Harlem, a friendly movie director looked it over and loved the script, swearing to make the movie. Wilmore believed his luck had changed. Elated, he shared his good news with Gault; however, Gault had other plans.

After months spent plotting and locating a certain Mythos artifact, Gault was ready to act, and during a cult gathering of naked debauchery, Wilmore's fate was sealed. High, drained, and exhausted, Wilmore stumbled into Gault's trap when he staggered back to his usual room in the manor house and looked deeply into a strange mirror he had never seen before. A pair of crimson eyes peered back at him and the unspeakable terror he encountered (a hound of Tindalos) temporarily shattered his sanity—the realization that all of the cult's chants, practices, and activities were real completely floored him.

The last thing Wilmore remembered from the event was Gault laughing at him, his betrayer telling him to run before the "hound" could find him, and that he'd drink to Wilmore's memory when Gault's new movie, *Perilous Night*, was released. The two wrestled for the briefest of moments before Wilmore fled into the night with only a handful of pages torn from a book his tormentor had in his hand.

On the train headed into the night, Wilmore read the torn pages—which had come from the *Book of Azathoth*—revealing the doom Gault had unleashed upon him. Realizing those pages outlined a ritual that could save him, Wilmore understood he needed the complete book, as well as people with imagination and talent to provide the power to work the ritual. He knew of one place that held all of those: Harlem, his home.

HARLEM BY NIGHT

Once back in Harlem, Wilmore begged A'Lelia Walker to allow him to unveil his latest screenplay at the end of one of her Dark Tower's performances. Calling in an old favor, he asked James Reece, a dealer in rare oddities and a bookie for Stephanie St. Clair, to acquire an edition of the *Book of*

PASSING PRIVILEGE

Passing privilege is when someone from a minority racial group can effectively be seen as or accepted as a member of a different racial group. Frequently, the dominant group grants the person several benefits, preferential treatment, and considerations that would be denied to a person of color.

Nella Larsen's novel *Passing* revolves around the reunion of two friends, Clare Kendry and Irene Redfield. Due to Kendry's light skin tone, others mistake her for a white woman. When she is "passing" for white, Clare finds herself with access and experiences denied to her darker-skinned black friends and family, and comes to consider how race and identity factor into human connections and values.

Azathoth. Unfortunately for Reece, Wilmore is not the only party interested in obtaining the book.

Jack "Legs" Diamond needed the book for his employer, Arnold Rothstein. Tracking down James Reece, Diamond was annoyed to hear that Reece no longer had the book and so murdered him to cover his tracks and keep Rothstein's business private. After finding a flyer for the Dark Tower with the Zora Neale Hurston's name on it, Diamond decided it is worth a shot to see if Hurston had a copy of the book.

Poor James Reece's body lay in the alley for hours before being discovered by Walter "Thunder" Rollins, who knew that Reece worked for St. Clair. Not one to let an opportunity pass by, Rollins stole the bookie's bankroll and left the scene; however, in a fit of conscience, Rollins returned to the murder scene, thinking to call the police, but found they had already arrived. Rollins plans to play A'Lelia Walker's gig tonight, aiming to use the money from the performance, the cash he took from Reece's body, and his prize winnings to start a new life overseas.

INTRODUCING THE INVESTIGATORS

The scenario is suitable for investigators of any experience level and would have particular resonance with artists, patrons, writers, journalists, or those with musical backgrounds. The scenario's primary action is confined to the Dark Tower—well, two versions of it.

The Keeper is encouraged to read the scenario multiple times before play to ensure they gain a familiarity with, and can portray the numerous NPCs in the Dark Tower, as well as decide which interactions between performances should take precedence for their group—ideally, the ones that best dovetail with the investigators' motivations. If necessary, the Keeper is advised to narrow down the number of NPCs, focusing on and presenting those with the most obvious relationships or affinity to the investigators.

The scenario, which could serve as an introductory adventure for a new investigator group, provides four avenues of entry: **Recruiting the Talented Masses** (page 242), **Millionaire Brunch** (page 244), **Working Stiffs** (page 246), and **Pawns of the Queen** (page 248). The four options include working at the Dark Tower, being one of the acts, being hired by Stephanie St. Clair, or being recruited by A'Lelia Walker as a patron of the arts.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Note that each character has one of three "choices" noted in their writeups: a change is gonna come, world in my eyes, and I'm going home. At the end of the scenario, the survivors are offered a choice to decide their fate. Everyone's initial choice is listed here, but this decision can be changed by the investigators with the successful use of interpersonal skills. For the meaning of the choices, see the **Conclusion**, page 263.

POTENTIAL ALLIES

Zora Neale Hurston, *age 37 (says 27), folklorist and anthropologist*

- **Link:** investigating the crime (**Death of Knowledge,** page 249).
- **Link:** searching for clues (**Evening in the Dark Tower**, page 252).

Hurston has seen things on the back roads of the Deep South that opened her eyes to the horrors of the Cthulhu Mythos. She did not break like so many before her but rather took up the struggle to combat such horrors. James Reece contacted her, after acquiring the *Book of Azathoth*, mentioning that he had a buyer for the book. Now Reece is dead and *that* book is on the loose. Hurston has an open invitation to the Dark Tower whenever she is in town, and she aims to see if anyone there knows of the book's whereabouts.

- **Description:** a striking woman with knowing eyes; she is always fashionably dressed in darker colors and wears magnificent hats.
- **Traits:** adventurous and stubborn, willing to fight for what is right and doesn't tolerate racists.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** wants to bring Reece's killer to justice and locate the *Book of Azathoth*. She can provide the investigators with insights into the Mythos, the occult, and aid in their investigation if she trusts them. Hurston is likely minutes behind the investigators during the case.
- **Choice:** I'm going home.

A'Lelia Walker, *age 43, adventuress and patron of the arts*

- **Link:** possibly recruits investigators (**Millionaire Brunch,** page 244).
- **Link:** the Dark Tower's hostess (**Evening in the Dark Tower**, page 252).

Walker has plans to be in Paris next week and go on a safari afterward, but tonight, it is all about showcasing Harlem's talent and possibly connecting the artists with new patrons. Charles Wilmore was desperate and begged her to be included in tonight's gathering; she understands how important one's livelihood is, and so agreed. Despite such matters, Walker is concerned to ensure that the gathering goes off perfectly.

- **Description:** stands over 6 feet (1.8 m) tall, radiates power, grace, and elegance; she is dressed in the finest of French fashion.
- **Traits:** powerful and engaging, her presences draws all eyes to her.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** a hostess and facilitator, she actively engages in conversation and connects people with similar interests while highlighting the artists in attendance. During the second act, if no one takes charge, she orders people to find safety in small groups—which can be a mechanism to bring the investigators together if they are a new group and don't know each other.
- **Choice:** world in my eyes.

Horace Vincent, *age 33, honorable illusionist*

- **Link:** one of the acts (**The Show Goes On!**, page 253).
- **Link:** harassed by Legs Diamond (**The Book's All the Rage**, page 255).

Vincent was trained by Harry Houdini and has mastered most of his tricks. Houdini's passing a few years ago has not left his mind, and the world is a darker place without him. Thus, Vincent wants to carry on Houdini's legacy, and that's why he volunteered to perform at the Dark Tower.

- **Description:** tall and lanky, with a captivating smile; his skin is darker than most, having grown up in the fields of Georgia.
- **Traits:** perfectionist.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** projects a mysterious persona—his stage act seems to be always "on" when in public—while engaging with anyone. In private or with close friends, he tends to be withdrawn. He is hesitant to believe in the veracity of supernatural events, seeking to expose frauds, but, when no obvious solution is forthcoming, he becomes obsessed with trying to understand the mystery.
- **Choice:** world in my eyes.

INDEPENDENTS AND ANTAGONISTS

Charles "Flip" Wilmore, *age 35, writer, wronged man*

- **Link:** recruits the investigators (**Recruiting the Talented Masses**, page 242).
- **Link:** accidentally traps everyone (**Tower of the Doomed**, page 257).

Wilmore knows that he must use other people to enact his plan. His only concern is making sure the event goes off as planned; he needs to begin the casting of the spell at 11:30 p.m., creating enough power to cast his mind backward in time into his own body, allowing him to stop himself from looking into the mirror, breaking the connection with the horror pursuing him and stopping Gault from stealing his work.

- **Description:** handsome and weary in a crumpled gray suit.
- **Traits:** nervous and guilty; he always carries his movie manuscript with him and constantly touches his leather backpack to make sure it is there.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** says whatever it takes to keep the show moving and everyone happy. He is beyond positive and inspiring, with speeches about how important the arts are. He truly believes that if his plan works, everyone will be fine.
- **Choice:** a change is gonna come.

Det. Charleston Chase, *age 44, racist and corrupt detective*

- **Link:** harasses everyone (**Evening in the Dark Tower**, page 252).

"Charlie" Chase, as his friends call him, is doing what many cops in the 1920s do with Prohibition in full swing: he is on the take. It is a sweet life. No one questions it when he knocks down a door, shoots a few blacks, Irish, or Jews and plants evidence on them for the Mob. Charlie doesn't hate these people, they're just not *real* Americans; you know, unlike him.

Chase's professional life is dangling by a thread, mainly due to him looking the other way (from being in the pay of the Genovese family) rather than closing cases—the whole department's statistics are way down. Hence, Chase taking the Harlem call, as it shows his captain (who's getting heat from the mayor) that he's a team player. Closing this case and avoiding ending up in the Hudson River with concrete slippers are his only goals. He desperately needs the credit for closing this case and plans to find the culprit one way or another.

- **Description:** white man in a fifteen-dollar black suit, with salt and pepper hair.
- **Traits:** always smiling but deceitful; he acts as if he's everyone's friend.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** while a racist and a bully, he knows he needs to put on a more civil air to solve the case. He is jealous of anyone who served in the Great War, as his flat feet and cowardice kept him Stateside. Chase wants to arrest someone but is first trying to figure out what "Legs" Diamond is up to. He questions everyone, takes lots of notes, and orders patrolmen to do the dirty work when needed.
- **Choice:** I'm going home.

Walter "Thunder" Rollins, *age 24, troubled man looking for an out*

- **Link:** harassed by Jack "Legs" Diamond (**The Book's All the Rage**, page 255).

"Thunder" Rollins is a good but not great boxer, and everyone knows it. He's a good but not great horn player also, and everyone knows it. That means he's living in the shadow of everyone around him, with no chance of change unless he changes the game. And, that means he needs cash.

He saw some white guy (Legs Diamond) in a cheap suit stab James "I can get you anything" Reece to death outside of the Hobby Horse bookstore. Rollins knew that Reece worked for Madam Queenie and rolled the dead fixer for cash before beating the scene. The fat envelope he took from Reece's body held almost a grand—enough cash to start over. While a touch a conscience led him back to the murder scene, when he got there and saw the police already in attendance, he took a sharp right to avoid getting embroiled.

Rollins can't tell a soul about what he saw or did, as otherwise, he'll end up dead by the hand of Queenie, that crazy white guy, or the cops. If the police catch him carrying the cash, he's dead. Even if he wanted to, he knows he can't tell the police because they won't believe a black man over a white man. He would have left town but Jack Johnson, his father figure, needs him to get into the Dark Tower to meet with A'Lelia Walker. So that means one last horn performance in Harlem before hitting the road tomorrow morning.

- **Description:** a wall of muscles in a cheap blue suit, his nose is bent as it didn't set right after a fight a few years ago.
- **Traits:** determined.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** be a "hepcat" and be cool, act like everything is fine, and roll out after this show is over. Rollins is only here because he owes Johnson, who's treated him like a son since he was 16.
- **Choice:** a change is gonna come.

Jack "Legs" Diamond, *age 31, charming mob enforcer*

- **Link:** killed James Reece (**Harlem by Night**, page 237).
- **Link:** searches for the book (**The Book's All the Rage**, page 255).

Legs Diamond killed James Reece this morning and went for cocktails with his mistress afterward. He then had dinner with the family before suiting up. It's been a great day.

Arnold Rothstein, the boss, wants the book Reece acquired—he understands it to be quite rare, and therefore quite valuable—to pay off a debt. Diamond does not ask how a book could pay off over a million-dollar loss because that's not his job. When questioned, Reece said he didn't have the book and had already passed it on, but Diamond didn't have time to play around and risk someone spilling the beans. His plan is to find the book, make Rothstein happy, and indulge in his vices.

- **Description:** a rail-thin and energetic white man in an expensive and stylish suit.
- **Traits:** radiates a slimy charm and enjoys everything he does.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** would rather be partying than working, but you've got to do what the boss wants. Cold hearted, Diamond will just as easily kill someone as take a drink and dance. He'll ask questions, listen to other people's conversations, and do a little dancing while trying to narrow down who might have a copy of the book.
- **Choice:** world in my eyes.

FABULOUS GUESTS

Adam Clayton Powell Sr., *age 63, pastor and activist*

- **Link:** knows about Wilmore (**Who is Charles Wilmore?**, page 245).

Powell was born in southwest Virginia to poverty and struggled to put himself through Wayland Seminary School. He was ordained in 1892 and began serving churches in Pennsylvania and Connecticut. In 1908, he took over Abyssinian Baptist Church of Harlem and, under his leadership, the congregation purchased new land and built a larger church to enable more blacks to join the church during the Great Migration. The church's membership has since expanded to over 12,000 people.

- **Description:** gray hair and friendly smile; always dressed in a dark colored suit.
- **Traits:** spiritual, a natural leader, and a mover for change.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** warm and welcoming to all, he is happy to answer questions if it will help a soul in need. He is happy to hear that Charles Wilmore is still alive and striving to make his dreams come true.
- **Choice:** I'm going home.

Jack Johnson, *age 50, former champ and life of the party*

- **Link:** trying to make some money (**Funding a Legacy**, page 254).

It has been a hell of a ride. Johnson has lost the Cotton Club but he married Irene Pineau in 1925, turning his life back around. The world is still his, he just needs the right gig, and that's when Irene suggested starting a boxing school. "Thunder" Rollins can connect him to A'Lelia Walker—the pair can't afford to build their own school and need to find a backer.

- **Description:** an aging superstar, with the vestments of an athlete inside an exquisitely expensive suit.
- **Traits:** bon vivant.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** usually the life of the party but tonight has an air of desperation. Johnson knows this is a great chance to meet people with money and make a difference. He plans to make it work.
- **Choice:** a change is gonna come.

Irene Pineau, *age 27, last of the flappers*

- **Link:** knows "Thunder" Rollins has a secret (**Funding a Legacy**, page 254).

Throughout her life, Pineau has listened to people saying she is pretty, but they don't understand her true strengths: perseverance and charm. Being married to Jack Johnson is a blast—he's a lion and grabs life by the reins—but he's also a loose cannon. Pineau came up with the plan to get her husband to open a training gym, but he wants something big scale and the pair just can't afford it; however, Johnson says "Thunder" Rollins knows a millionaire who they can meet tonight. While Johnson would trade his life for Rollins, the boxer and hornman doesn't see the big picture like Pineau does.

- **Description:** a beautiful white woman with eyes betraying her intellect.
- **Traits:** charming and sharp-witted.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** enjoys their life and wants to protect her husband from himself—that means figuring out what Rollins knows.
- **Choice:** a change is gonna come.

Oscar Devereaux Micheaux, *age 44, director and author*

- **Link:** possibly asks the investigators for help (**Working Stiffs**, page 246).

Micheaux is revising *Within Our Gates*, as the Film Board of Virginia demanded some major cuts to his vision last year. Walker asked Micheaux to aid Charles Wilmore and find him a mentor. At tonight's gathering, Micheaux has decided to show *Within Our Gates* and speak about its creation. He hopes that, among the attendees, he can find some acts for his next film.

- **Description:** average build and a kind face, wearing a business-like charcoal-gray suit.
- **Traits:** visionary and enterprising.
- **Roleplaying Hooks:** in preparing to show his film, he may ask for the assistance of the investigators, especially if they have been recruited via the **Working Stiffs** angle.
- **Choice:** world in my eyes.

Other Guests

- Viscount Lucien Lalaing from France. *Choice: I'm going home.*
- Lady Catherine Dawson-Damer from the United Kingdom. *Choice: world in my eyes.*
- Richard S. Aldrich, a US congressman. *Choice: a change is gonna come.*
- Joseph V. McKee, President of the New York City Board of Aldermen. *Choice: world in my eyes.*
- Anna Wallace of the Harmon Foundation. *Choice: I'm going home.*
- Julius Rosenwald, the chair of the Board for Sears. *Choice: a change is gonna come.*
- Willie "The Lion" Smith (see **The Show Goes On!**, page 253). *Choice: world in my eyes.*
- Nella Larsen (see **The Book's all the Rage**, page 255). *Choice: a change is gonna come.*

SCENES

The scenario has four possible starting points, each outlined in the following sections. The Keeper should determine which is most appropriate to their group.

START ONE: RECRUITING THE TALENTED MASSES

The investigators receive a letter (**Whispers Handout 1: Recruitment Call**) requesting their presence at Morris Park. The park is quiet as the morning sun struggles to escape its prison behind the clouds on a cold November morning. In the northern corner of the park, a small gathering of talented Harlemites stand with Charles "Flip" Wilmore in front of them. The screenwriter's tattered brown trench coat and rumpled gray suit provide little warmth against the biting wind, both billowing in the breeze. A packed-full and stained leather backpack rests on his shoulder—a successful **Spot Hidden** roll catches sight of the top corner of a massive, aged book in the backpack.

A pair of finely dressed Dark Tower staff prance among the gathered creatives, serving piping hot coffee and donuts. Both appear lithe and almost genderless; their posture and manners are perfect.

Wilmore steps forward and addresses the crowd, *"My name is Charles Wilmore, or Flip to my friends. Most of you don't know me, and I don't know you other than by reputation. I will keep this short because of this cold slinking into your soul. You are thinking, who is this guy? Well, I am a Hollywood writer and hopefully... with your help, a movie producer. I need all of your talents for a show tonight. It's short notice, but opportunity doesn't court us when we want it to. The show is at the Dark Tower. Ms. Walker is hosting this event, so that means the best food, the best company, and a chance to highlight your talent. For me, I want to do a reading from my new screenplay and attempt to finance it there. I need you to read and perform the script."*

TIMELINE 1928

January 31: Ethan Gault and Charles Wilmore unknowingly join a cult of Azathoth disguised as "The Society."
April 20: Gault understands the nature of The Society and beings plotting against Wilmore.
June 1: Wilmore begins to question The Society but is swayed by the status it grants.
September 18: Gault learns of Wilmore's success securing interest in his movie script.
October 5: Wilmore sees a hound of Tindalos and it begins to hunt him.
October 8: Wilmore flees Hollywood.
October 13: Wilmore arrives in Harlem and tasks James Reece to find a copy of the *Book of Azathoth*.
October 28: Reece informs Wilmore he has found the book.
October 29: Reece calls Zora Neale Hurston and requests her guidance. Wilmore convinces A'Lelia Walker to let him attend the Dark Tower.
November 2: early morning, Wilmore obtains the *Book of Azathoth* from Reece. Later, Legs Diamond kills Reece. Walter Rollins finds Reece's body and takes the dead man's bankroll. Evening, the scenario begins.

RACIAL TENSION MODIFIER

When the investigator and their target are of different races or cultures, increase the difficulty of the roll (such as a social skill roll) by one level (Regular becomes Hard, Hard becomes Extreme). If necessary, at the Keeper's discretion, an additional penalty die may be applied, dependent on the circumstances. This modifier reflects the mistrust between different groups.

KEY LOCATIONS

- **Mount Morris Park:** 123rd Street and Madison Avenue.
- **The Dark Tower:** 108–110 West 136th Street.
- **Queenie's Lair:** 154th Street and Nicholas Avenue.
- **Hobby Horse:** 205 West 135th Street.
- **Police Station:** 123rd Street and Amsterdam Avenue.
- **Reece's Rowhouse:** 138th Street and Seventh Avenue.
- **Abyssinian Baptist Church:** 132 West 138th Street.
- **Displaced Tower of the Doomed:** other.

Whispers of Harlem Keeper map

Hudson River
QUEENIE'S LAIR
W 155th St
SUGAR HILL
Macombs Pl.
W 145th St
Hamilton Pl.
W 141st St
St. Nicholas Park
SMITH'S ROWHOUSE
ABYSSINIAN BAPTIST CHURCH
HOBBY HORSE
THE DARK TOWER
W 138th St
W 136th St
W 135th St
Broadway
Amsterdam Ave.
Eighth Ave
Seventh Ave
Lenox Ave
POLICE STATION
W 132nd St
W 131st St
Morningside Park
W 124th St
W 125th St
Mt. Morris Park

Keeper note: every Harlemite knows the Dark Tower is a serious business that turns hobbies into careers and careers into gold. The chance to get noticed there is too good an offer to turn down. A Hard **Psychology** roll may detect a hint of desperation in Wilson's voice, and that there's more to it. If this is followed up with a successful **Charm**, **Fast Talk**, or **Persuade** roll, Wilson admits that his script won't get financed tonight, but if he can garner some interest and maybe an offer of sorts, he could use that to negotiate with a progressive Hollywood money man in Los Angeles. That is all Wilmore will say on the matter.

Wilmore is happy to answer questions and makes additional offers, if needed, to recruit people. Use the following to guide the conversation and refer to **Who is Charles Wilmore?** (page 245) as necessary.

- Wilmore is a Harlem native, *"Hell, I went to school just around the corner and used to deliver newspapers."*
- He talks about his work on the movies and the script work he did, and how he didn't get credit but is making a difference. A successful **Psychology** roll confirms he believes everything he is saying.
- If asked why he is back in Harlem rather than Hollywood, he shakes his head and says, *"I had a run of bad luck, trusted the wrong people, and needed to come back home to gather resources before returning."*
- If asked how he convinced A'Lelia Walker to let him perform his script tonight, he talks about his mother, who worked for the Walker family, and how he is on good terms with A'Leia.
- For those disinclined to go along with his proposal, Wilmore talks about how this gig could open the door to success for those who take part, that the place will be packed with old money looking to feel they are part of something, and lastly, he offers to pay each person $5.

Whispers Handout 1: Recruitment Call

HEY HEP CATS.

YOU LOOKING TO BLOW THAT HORN?
YOU NEED TO GET THE WORD OUT ABOUT
THAT NEW PLAY? OR SONG?
SHOW OFF THAT LATEST PIECE OF ART?

COME MEET ME TOMORROW AT MORRIS
PARK AT 9:30 A.M. AND TAKE A LISTEN.

I AM PUTTING TOGETHER A SHOW AT
THE DARK TOWER – THIS IS A PAYING GIG.

FLIP WILMORE
HARLEM

START TWO: MILLIONAIRE BRUNCH

The investigators receive a letter from A'Lelia Walker requesting their presence (**Whispers Handout 2: Walker's Brunch Invitation**). Those invited to the brunch are greeted by a sharply dressed member of the staff dressed in a black tuxedo, regardless of gender. After checking coats and any personal effects, the investigators are escorted through a pair of ornately carved doors. The long, winding hallway is covered in a blue velvet carpet that leads directly into the lush tearoom.

Looking around the room reveals the Langston Hughes poem *The Weary Blues* is sketched onto a wall. A long table, covered in a white cloth with silver embroidered doves, is set out with enough chairs for the investigators plus eight more. Each seat has a handwritten place card for each person.

Once everyone has arrived, Walker makes introductions, citing everyone's name and a little bit of information about each of their backgrounds, *"This is Viscount Lucien Lalaing of France, Lady Catherine Dawson-Damer of the United Kingdom, Congressman Richard S. Aldrich, Anna*

Wallace of the Harmon Foundation, and Julius Rosenwald, the chair of the board for Sears."

The first 30 minutes are filled with introductions, small talk, and pleasantries. A six-course meal is served over a leisurely three hours; neither cup nor plate is ever empty, as servers materialize and disappear silently from the kitchen. A Hard **Listen** roll may hear the faint sound of children laughing—if mentioned, no one claims to have seen any children in the manor.

After an hour, Walker turns to the reason for inviting them all, *"My dears, an old family friend from Harlem has returned from a stint in Hollywood. Charles' mother and mine were very close. While young Charles grew up in Harlem, he had much grander dreams. He wanted to become an entertainment producer—that is one of the reasons I have asked director and filmmaker Oscar Micheaux to be in attendance tonight with a short film. Charles has requested that I allow him an opportunity to showcase both some local Harlem talent and his latest play at the Tower tonight. These lovely people have passion, drive, and a dream to achieve something magnificent. And, is it not our duty to help them? My hope is that you can all attend and..."* At this point, Miguel Hernandez enters and asks to speak with Walker privately. The pair leaves the room for 10 minutes. A successful Hard **Psychology** roll notes a moment of distress in Walker's eyes before she quickly regains her composure.

Keeper note: refer to **Who is Charles Wilmore?**, page 245.

Walker returns and continues to speak about how significant change is to reshape America, and that the power of art, protests, activism, and unity is on the rise and how everyone can play a part. *"We may not have their talent but we do have the wealth to empower them."* Walker mentions the last salon she attended a week ago, and how things are in Paris, as well as her upcoming trip to Ethiopia. She ends the gathering with, "My dears, it pleases me beyond measure that you could all attend this brunch. Hopefully, I can count you among the guests for this evening."

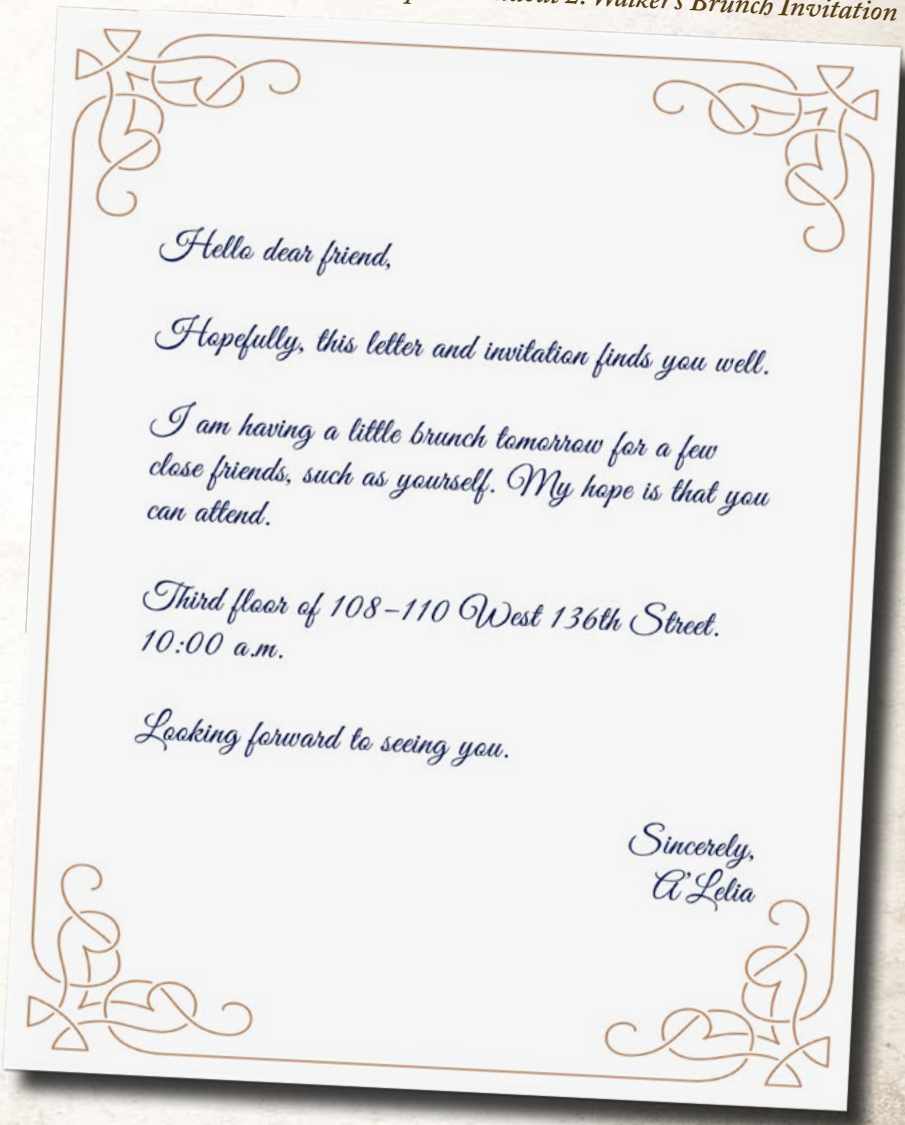
Keeper note: if asked about Hernandez's interruption, Walker says, *"We are doing some modifications for the performances tonight and I needed to approve them."* A successful **Psychology** roll notes the partial truth in the statement but confirms she is not happy to talk about it, perhaps as to not dissuade patrons from attending tonight's soirée.

WHO IS CHARLES WILMORE?

- **Link:** A'Leia Walker mentions his origins. (**Recruiting the Talented Masses**, page 242, and **Millionaire Brunch**, page 244).

If asking around about Flip Wilmore, it takes a few hours before the investigators are given the name of Father Adam Clayton Powell, Sr., who can be found sweeping the front steps of the church whenever the investigators arrive. If

Whispers Handout 2: Walker's Brunch Invitation



asked about Wilmore, he smiles and says, "*You mean Charles. I have not thought about that young man for ages. Last I heard, he was in Hollywood chasing his dreams.*" A successful **Charm** or **Persuade** roll gets him to open up a bit more. Use the following to guide the conversation.

- Charles' father and mother both passed away when he was a teenager. His father was one of the sandhogs and died while digging tunnels beneath Harlem. His mother died of whooping cough some months after his father had passed.
- His parents saved their money for over a year and bought him an Underwood typewriter when he was twelve. Charles always loved to write and they wanted him to be somebody. *"I think he even gave the typewriter a name—Chance."*
- After both of his parents died, Charles packed up and vanished. Probably off to Hollywood to make his fortune. *"I only know what happened to him after I saw* The Big Parade *movie, when a newspaper did an article about him being a scriptwriter."*

Whispers Handout 3: Working Request Letter

To—

I am Miguel Hernandez, the engineer at the Walker Mansion on 108–110th 135th Avenue. Ms. Walker is hosting an event tomorrow evening and I need additional crew to prepare the building and work through the evening to ensure all goes well. A friend recommended that you needed some work and could do the job. I need reliable people.

The job pays $20. If this works out, I may be able to get you a regular-paying job here. Just be here by 5:30 a.m. tomorrow morning and ready to work. Tools, food, clothing, and everything will be provided.

Yours sincerely,
Miguel Hernandez

START THREE: WORKING STIFFS

The investigators receive a letter requesting their presence (**Whispers Handout 3: Working Request Letter**). The letter, from Miguel Hernandez, asks everyone to arrive at 5:30 a.m. to the 108th Street address of A'Leia Walker's mansion. The crew of workers includes the investigators plus three other mechanics (Alice, Sal, and Tom).

Hernandez spends the first hour walking everyone through the massive mansion and its layout, along with its construction. He ends the talk in the kitchen, providing breakfast for everyone before handing out assignments based on areas of expertise. Electrically skilled investigators are assigned to lighting, mechanically skilled investigators are assigned to maintenance, and everyone else is put to general labor.

Later on, the Keeper should determine which investigators see Hernandez and Sal moving a large mirrored box across the main stage to be mounted in a raised positioned behind a set of concealing curtains. A successful **Fast Talk** or **Persuade** roll encourages Hernandez to talk about the box and, perhaps, lower it down for the investigators to inspect. *"Mr. Wilmore asked that we place it above the stage and lower it slowly during his reading. He said it would add dramatic effect or something. When he shined a flashlight through it, the light bounced around weirdly."* If inspecting the mirror box, the following details are revealed.

- It is not a standard glass—it's thicker glass and very heavy.
- Reflections in the mirror are distorted like in a funhouse.
- There's nothing inside the box.

Keeper note: anyone with a watch who stands inside the box for more than five minutes later notices that their watch stopped at the time they entered the box. In addition, a successful Hard **POW** roll enables an investigator to sense some kind of energy or power radiating from the box, while a Cthulhu Mythos roll may determine that breaking the box could be dangerous—it's more a feeling or sensation than anything specific.

Another Keeper note: if the box is damaged or destroyed, when Wilmore finds out, he acts as if it was not important and continues on regardless, although a successful Hard **Psychology** roll reveals he is actually worried and upset by such an event, but cannot be pressed as to why this is.

Theater Help

Later that morning, Oscar Micheaux is working on the fourth floor, attempting to set up a projection booth (at the rear of the stage area) for his showing of *Within Our Gates*. He recruits any nearby investigators to assist him with a problem issue. A successful **Electrical Repair** or **Mechanical Repair** roll isolates either a wiring or insulation issue. Meanwhile, Micheaux instructs the general laborers on where to place seats and tables for optimal viewing—a Hard **INT** roll catches a flaw in his seating plan, and should the investigator concerned offer some helpful advice, they gain Micheaux's favor and he will listen to them in the future.

Whispers

Around 11:00 a.m., a Hard **Listen** roll hears the faint sound of whispers; the roll can be repeated every four hours—at 11:00 it is Hard, at 3:00 p.m. it is Regular, and at 7:00 p.m. it is Regular with a bonus die. If everyone nearby is told to hold what they are doing and quiets down, an investigator can try to locate the source of the whispers, although the voice (or voices?) seem to fade before anyone else notices them. If pursued, the whispering leads the investigator out of the main floor and down the east hall toward a door, before fading completely. Opening the door down the hallway reveals a closet, a coat check, a bathroom, and a small sitting room, but no people.

WITHIN OUR GATES

Oscar Micheaux's second film was released in 1920 and explores the tale of a beautiful, mixed-raced black woman who moves North in hopes of raising money for a school in the South. The film portrays a complex black relationship previously not seen, and highlights the deadly violence of the Jim Crow South, with flashbacks of the woman's family being killed by a white mob after a wrongful accusation.

Book Collection

A few hours later, A'Leia Walker appears and gives the investigators $20 and a list of books to buy from the Hobby Horse (**Death of Knowledge**, page 249). The investigators (can be all or fewer of them) can talk their way out of the task with a successful **Fast Talk** roll, which gets Walker to ask Alice and Tom to go instead.

Rest of the Day

As work progresses throughout the day, weird power fluctuations begin to be noticed. Fuses blow out, short circuits cut lights, and so on. Despite best attempts, no one can track down where the issue arises. A successful combined **Electrical Repair** and **Mechanical Repair** roll (which may be performed by two investigators rolling each of the skills) bypasses the issue for a few hours. Every failed attempt adds a penalty die as the issue seems to increase in severity.

Keeper note: if not repaired, the lights go on and off at appropriately dramatic moments. They may provide Legs Diamond time to kill someone and escape before anyone misses him, or to go out in sync with an impressive moment in an act on stage.

The rest of the day is spent working until 6:00 p.m. when the workers are allowed to freshen up before the guests arrive. If needed, Walker provides Hernandez with clothes for his team.

START FOUR: PAWNS OF THE QUEEN

A runner delivers a calling card from Stephanie "Queenie" St. Clair (**Whispers Handout 4: St. Clair's Calling Card).** It's clear she expects the investigators to promptly respond.

Keeper note: residents of Harlem know of Stephanie St. Clair, the "Queen of Harlem." She is a crime lord and philanthropist focused on making Harlem a better place for the community. Rumor has it, she has been trying to keep white mobsters out of the neighborhood, and a gang war is brewing.

On arrival at the address on the card, a Ms. Lane greets each investigator by name and escorts them upstairs to St. Clair's flat. Faint music can be heard coming from under the door. A few knocks later, and a tall, muscular man answers the door—this is Bumpy Johnson, St. Clair's bodyguard, confidant, and lover. He is dressed in an expensive pinstripe suit and his coat is draped over a chair.

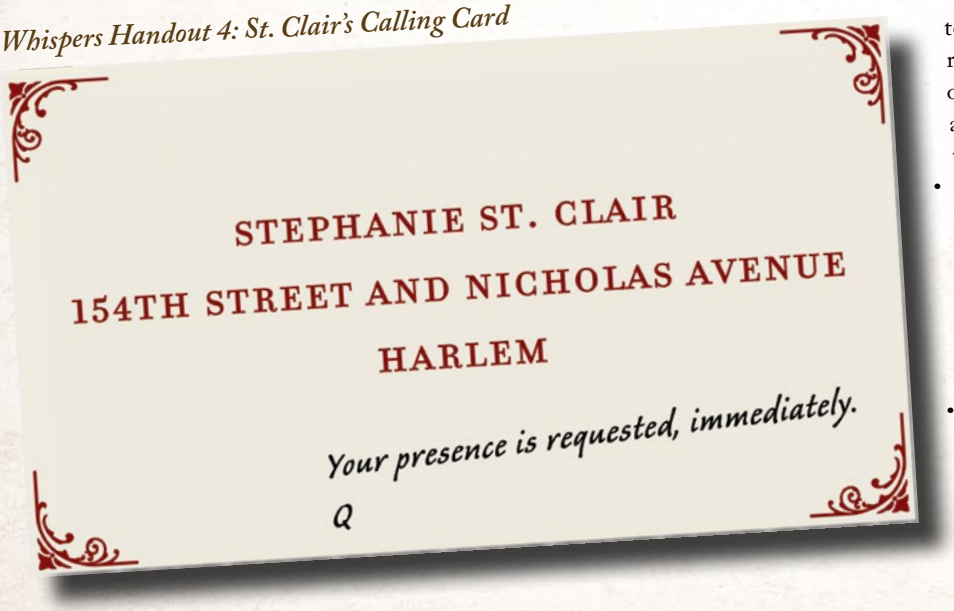
Stepping inside, the apartment is stunning, simply opulent: fine silk curtains, a grand piano, plush furniture, and a record player churning out the latest Duke Ellington tune. A gaggle of cushioned chairs awaits the investigators as a maid comes in and offers them scotch, bourbon, or coffee. Once settled in, St. Clair, Queen of Harlem, strides into the room, radiating authority and power. On her hip is a sawed-off shotgun, and in her right hand, a three-finger pour of scotch.

"I see you all have been served. Good. What do you think? I am fond of Lagavulin myself." St. Clair chats for a few moments before diving into business. *"You all know who I am and what I do for the neighborhood. I need reliable people and have heard quite a bit about you all. Some good, some bad, but all interesting and that intrigues me. I need agents in the coming days and I need you to audition for the job. It'll pay better than anything you have ever seen and you will have a very powerful friend."* It is obvious this is not a request, but a command. She pauses and then continues, "Someone killed one of my people, James Reece. He was found this morning at the Hobby Horse (**Death of Knowledge**, page 249). I want to know who did it and why. Oh, and Reece was holding some of my money, which, I want back."

St. Clair is happy to answer a few questions before sending the investigators on their way. Use the following to direct her answers—some require a successful skill roll as noted in parentheses.

- Regarding the money, she needs to know if the police already have it or whether it was taken by the killer.
- If asked how much money, she thinks it is likely around $1,000.
- She is not concerned about money but its theft represents weakness if not recovered (**Psychology** roll).
- She cannot use her regular crew as she wishes things to remain low key for the present time, and wants to know who it is before acting. A gang war is bad for Harlem and bad for business.
- She admits wanting to know if Dutch Schultz is somehow behind the murder (requires a **Charm** or **Fast Talk** roll), which, if so, could start a war.
- James Reece lived in a rowhouse at 138th Street and Seventh Avenue (**Dead Man's Hustle**, page 251).
- She is willing to pay $20 per day, for up to three days, but wants daily reports (a **Charm** or **Fast Talk** roll can increase this to $30 per day).
- If this works out, she wants to keep the investigators on retainer, but at a distance, so no one knows they work for her, although if asked, she is willing to consider this a one-time deal.
- This is not an offer but a command (confirmed with a **Psychology** roll). If they fail, she will move on to another group and be disinclined to remember the investigators fondly.
- She does not to be involved in this matter. Find out what happened and report back.

Whispers Handout 4: St. Clair's Calling Card



NEXT STEPS

The following **Death of Knowledge**, **Dancing with the Devil** (page 249), and **Dead Man's Hustle** (page 251) scenes are relevant only to the **Pawns of the Queen** (page 248) and **Working Stiffs** (page 246) start points of the scenario, and should be ignored if the Keeper is using another entry point, in which case, the next scene begins with **Evening in the Dark Tower** (page 252).

DEATH OF KNOWLEDGE

- **Link:** Walker sends the investigators to buy books (**Working Stiffs: Book Collection**, page 247).
- **Link:** Information given by St. Clair (**Pawns of the Queen**, page 248).

When the investigators arrive at the Hobby Horse, they can see a heated discussion taking place in the alley outside. Detective Chase is interviewing a store worker, called Bobby, who appears to be barely twenty years old. On the periphery, a number of policemen have cordoned off a body (James Reece) and are keeping the gathering crowd at a distance.

Observing the situation, a successful **Spot Hidden** roll may notice the following details.

- The body is lying in a pool of congealed blood.
- The man was in an expensive suit, easily costing over sixty dollars.
- (Hard success) on his right, pinky finger is a silver ring with a crown emblem.

Keeper note: a Harlem resident or a **Lore (Harlem)** success recognizes the crown emblem as signifying that the man worked for Queenie St. Clair (**Pawns of the Queen**, page 248).

Those shifting closer to the scene may attempt a **Listen** roll to hear the conversation taking place:

- Bobby claims not to know anything about the crime—a successful **Psychology** roll detects the lie in the youth's body language; he's most likely fearful of the police and what they might do to him if taken downtown.
- The detective asks, "What is the Dark Tower? What going on there tonight?" (**Dead Man's Hustle**, page 251), to which the youth explains he doesn't know.

After Chase has finished questioning Bobby, he enters the bookstore to question those inside. Looking around at the gathered onlookers, a successful **Lore (Harlem)** roll recognizes Zora Neale Hurston among the crowd; she is staring at the body, and barely visible. If approached, she may confide in the investigators if they already made her acquaintance or with a Hard **Charm** or **Persuade** roll. Hurston reveals that the victim is James Reece, an old flame of hers. He had a talent for acquisitions and worked in that trade. He called her a week ago about a deal he felt uncomfortable with, asking her to look at something. *"We were supposed to meet here early this morning but my Sassy Susie… my car, broke down. It took me a long time to get here. We had arranged to meet at the Dark Tower tonight if neither could make the early meeting."* With that, she departs—a successful **Psychology** roll detects her determination to find the murderer.

If the investigators manage to corner Bobby, a successful **Charm**, **Fast Talk**, or **Persuade** roll reveals the following information.

- The victim was James Reece, a smuggler and bookie for Queenie.
- Reece was stabbed six times.
- (Hard success) he sold antique weapons and old books behind Queenie's back, *"I saw a bloody page under the body"* (**Dead Man's Hustle**, page 251).
- The body was reported to the police a few hours ago.
- Some white goon has been asking around about Reece for the last few days, *"Word got to Reece about it, and he looked scared. I have never seen him look scared before."*

While watching the scene, the investigators can easily determine that the detective is from the 123rd Street and Amsterdam Avenue stationhouse (**Dancing with the Devil**, following). If waiting for the police to clear the area in the hopes of speaking to the bookstore's staff, the investigators' patience is, unfortunately, unrewarded. The staff knows nothing more, although they could pass on the information above if the investigators miss the opportunity to speak with Bobby.

DANCING WITH THE DEVIL

- **Link:** wishing to find out more about Reece's murder (**Death of Knowledge**, page 249).

The police station is a two-story brick building with half a dozen patrol vehicles parked out front. If any non-white investigators enter the station, all eyes fall on them and they are constantly scrutinized by nearby officers at all times.

Sergeant May, a portly and white desk sergeant, greets anyone entering the station. He speaks directly to any white members of the team or to the highest **Credit Rating** person if no whites are present—a **Psychology** roll may deduce that

he just wants any non-whites gone, but won't take any action unless provoked; in which case, he fines each person $2 and threatens to arrest those that won't leave after the fine. While a successful **Law** roll knows such actions are illegal, it won't actually change the situation.

If deferential treatment is given to Sergeant May, or a white investigator engages with him, a successful **Fast Talk** or **Persuade** roll get him to say, *"Yeah. There was a murder outside of the Hobby Horse this morning. Detective Chase is working the case. He does not have time to talk to random people off the street. I was onsite briefly before coming into the station and it was a bloodbath. In my opinion, it was a gang killing. That is what 'they' do."*

Pushing him further gets May to confirm the deceased was named James Reece. A Hard success warrants the investigators gaining Reece's address of 138th Street and Seventh Avenue (**Dead Man's Hustle**, page 251) and that he was stabbed half a dozen times—the same information can be obtained with a successful Spot Hidden to notice May's notes in his open notepad on the desk, or if the investigators somehow get to talk with Detective Chase.

An investigator physician may, with a successful **Medicine** or **Persuade** roll, convince Sergeant May to escort them down to the morgue. Alternatively, a Hard **Stealth** roll, or if somehow disguised as maintenance workers, could enable the investigators to creep into the morgue through the back door—the attendant is out for an early lunch, giving the team half an hour.

Whispers Handout 5: Dark Tower Flyer

Down in the Morgue

James Reece's body lies on a table in the center of the room, it's completely exposed, which may provoke a **Sanity** roll for less hardened investigators (0/1 loss). If Sergeant May is with the investigators, he says they have twenty minutes to review the medical chart and look through Reece's belongings. Looking at Reece's the chart and a visual inspection of the body confirms, with a successful **Medicine** or **Science (Forensics)** roll, that the cause of death was six deep stab wounds, causing massive internal damage. The power and precision of the wounds implies that the killer was incredibly strong and/or very skilled, and most likely a professional "hit."

Inspecting Reece's possessions reveals a silver ring with a crown emblem, a flyer for the Dark Tower (**Whispers Handout 5: Dark Tower Flyer**), and the man's home address (**Dead Man's Hustle**, following).

Keeper note: Harlemites knows such rings are given to Queenie's trusted agents (**Pawns of the Queen**, page 248), while a successful **INT** roll guesses she would favor information about the murder being brought to her.

When necessary, the morgue attendant, Aaron Harris, returns from lunch, smoking a cigarette, with an armful of books under his arm. A successful **Listen** roll detects Harris' approach, providing just enough time to escape. If the investigators are unaware of Harris's entering the room, and if May is

not present, he screams for help. Quick thinking with a **Charm** or **Fast Talk** roll may calm him enough to allow the investigators to leave, assuming they have a good cover story. If not, a number of policemen promptly arrive and arrest the investigators (inflicting 1 damage in the process). A suitable bribe or obfuscation with a successful **Law** roll or another bluff might get them out of hot water; otherwise, they are roughed-up (1D3 damage) and escorted out of the building.

DEAD MAN'S HUSTLE

- **Link:** St. Clair provides Reece's address (**Pawns of the Queen**, page 248).
- **Link:** address gained at the police station (**Dancing with the Devil**, page 249).

James Reece's apartment building is well kept, with friendly neighbors waving or saying good morning as the investigators approach. A successful **Charm** or **Fast Talk** roll gets one of the neighbors to point out Reece's apartment; otherwise, a small bribe to the landlady, Anne Tillman, directs them to apartment 3A, along with the key. If neighbors or Tillman are asked about Reece, use the following to devise answers.

- Reece was a nice man and always smiled.
- He was always coming and going at all hours of the day and night.
- Everyone knew he worked for Queenie, but felt his association actually made the building safer for the residents, as, *"Who would mess with her?"*
- Reece had a small antiques business that he kept very quiet about.
- *"Some weaselly white man in a nice suit was snooping around the building earlier today."*

Keeper note: a Hard success with a social skill roll may encourage the person being interviewed to recall more description about the "weaselly white man" they spotted earlier: he was rail-thin, his suit was expensive, and he radiated a slimy charm. The man was, of course, Legs Diamond.

Inside, the once neatly arranged apartment is a total wreck. Tables are flipped over, books have been pulled off shelves, couch cushions ripped open, and clothes litter the floor. Searching through the debris finds a letter (**Whispers Handout 6: Zora's Letter**), while a successful **Spot Hidden** roll notes the following items:

- Very fine ash with a peculiar smell of smoke. A **Science (Chemistry or Pharmacy)** or Hard **Know** roll determines the ash is from a high quality and expensive cigarette brand. It is definitely recent, maybe from two hours ago, as the ash covers objects cast to the floor; however, no cigarettes or empty packages can be found.
- A ledger showing items sold, dates, and amounts. The items bought and sold include a multitude of uses, including furniture, clocks, and various other antiques. There's no real pattern and simply reveals that Reece ran a profitable sideline in obtaining items desired by a variety of clients.

Whispers Handout 6: Zora's Letter

Hey Jimmy,

That book is not something to pass around. I don't know how much they're paying, but it isn't enough.

I miss you too and don't fret about what happened between us in the past. You called and I am coming. We can meet outside the Hobby Horse or at the Dark Tower before the show.

Yours,
Zora

EVENING IN THE DARK TOWER

- **Link:** hired by Charles Wilmore (**Recruiting the Talented Masses**, page 242).
- **Link:** recruited by A'Lelia Walker (**Millionaire Brunch**, page 244).
- **Link:** hired by Miguel Hernandez (**Working Stiffs**, page 246).

DARK TOWER OVERVIEW

The neo-Georgian brick-and-limestone structure appears to tower over other buildings and has a constant flow of foot traffic during the day. The building comprises:

- **Basement:** classrooms for the Lelia College of Beauty Culture.
- **1st Floor:** Walker Hair Parlor.
- **Upper Floors:** Walker Studios and the Dark Tower.
- **Staff:** 30 consisting of 15 waitstaff, 6 security, and 9 miscellaneous.

The fourth floor is primarily a large room (with bar, dancefloor, and stage) with multiple doors and hallways leading in and out. For ease of reference, consider the floor as being divided into four quadrants. Consider any quadrant within two numbers to be Regular difficulty for **Spot Hidden** and **Listen** rolls, and increase the difficulty by one level for anything beyond due to the noise of the crowd or acts.

- **Quadrant One (Q1):** the bar and surrounding tables.
- **Quadrant Two (Q2):** the main audience chairs.
- **Quadrant Three (Q3):** the dance floor.
- **Quadrant Four (Q4):** the stage.

Where each investigator is located impacts their ability to know what is transpiring in the main room. The room is massive, the lights are low, it is packed with guests, and the entertainment is nonstop. Apply the following modifiers to all perception-based rolls:

- **(Q4) on stage:** gain a bonus die to **Spot Hidden** and a penalty die to **Listen** rolls.
- **(Q4) near the stage:** gain a bonus die to **Listen** and a penalty die to **Spot Hidden** rolls.

- **Link:** Whispers Handout 5 (**Dancing with the Devil**, page 249)
- **Link:** Whispers Handout 6 (**Dead Man's Hustle**, page 251).

Keeper note: the following scenes occur more or less in the order presented, with each rolling into the next. Adjust timings and encounters to suit the pace of your game, and avoid giving the investigators the sense of events being "on the rails."

Guests, entertainers, and others are all greeted and directed to the fourth floor for refreshments and socializing, while on stage, a lone warbler, Emmanuel Taylor Gordon, keeping it light, singing for an hour to upbeat piano tunes. While everyone mingles, the Keeper can introduce key NPCs to the investigators. The atmosphere is vibrant and everyone is open to conversation and free expression. One of the guests is reading a newspaper, putting it down when they wander off to socialize; investigators taking a look, find its this evening's edition, carrying a short article about this morning's murder (**Whispers Handout 7: Evening Edition**).

Whispers Handout 7: Evening Edition

HORROR AT THE HOBBY HORSE

Residents were shocked to discover the body of a man near to the Hobby Horse bookstore early this morning. While not formally identified, the deceased is believed to be Mr. James Reece of Harlem, who died from a brutal knife attack. Police Detective Charles Chase has been assigned to the case. Readers may remember that Detective Chase has enjoyed an unspectacular record related to solving crimes in Harlem, and this reporter hopes that due care and attention will be taken in finding the culprit and bringing him to justice.

New York Amsterdam News
Friday, November 2, 1928

THE FLATFOOT

About thirty minutes into the gathering, Detective Chase. Along with Sergeant Walton and three patrolmen barge up to the fourth floor—A'Leia Walker's security guards are not far behind them, with apologetic expressions on their faces. Walker smiles before waving her guards back downstairs while she advances on the policemen. A successful **Psychology** roll notes Chase's surprise and concern at seeing all of the people present; spotting the foreign royalty, a few local officials, and the high-class, well-dressed guests.

Walker and Chase speak in hushed tones before the crowd. Those close to Walker can make a Hard **Listen** roll to pick up a few words: *"Reece. Murdered. Suspect."* Walker says something, and Detective Chase steps away from her, nodding in agreement. He then clears his throat and announces to all, *"Good evening, folks. I am sorry to interrupt your gathering here but I am working a case. It is my belief that certain parties here may know something of use. I have told Ms. Walker that I have to ask some questions, and she has kindly agreed. I can assure you that my inquiries will not affect your enjoyment of… this... thing."* With this, Chase turns to the three patrolmen and orders them to secure the building to make sure no one leaves. The trio leaves to guard the ground-floor exits.

Chase begins his interviews with the entertainers first, per Walker's suggestion, so the show can go on—he only questions people with a **Credit Rating** of 40 or lower. Sergeant Walton patrols the room keeping an eye on everyone present to make sure no one leaves.

Chase's questions focus on finding James Reece's killer. Walker provides Chase with a small office in a room adjacent to the bar. In terms of his questions, Chase starts with broad questions and then slowly moves to specifics, hoping the interviewee might let something slip. If he catches someone in a lie, and if he likes the person, Chase rephrases the question to give them a chance to answer honestly; otherwise, he threatens jail time and begins to throw punches (1 damage) with each question asked. If an investigator attempts to deceive Chase, the skill roll is opposed by Chase's Psychology 60% skill.

CONNECTED AND INFORMED

Anyone connected with the underworld may attempt a **Know** roll to determine whether Chase is known to them. If so, the investigator recalls that he is rumored to be a "bent cop," as he is happy to take bribes from any of the crime organizations and also moonlights as a freelancer—a good bribe is certain to make him look the other way, regardless of the crime or person.

THE SHOW GOES ON!

While initially disconcerting, concern over the police presence dissipates for most of the guests when Walker takes to the stage. The lights grow dimmer, while a bright spotlight illuminates the stage. *"Well, friends, here we all are. The law, the government, and the world can't stop us from enjoying this evening. Get those feet tapping because The Lion is about to take the stage…"* A second spotlight comes on and illuminates Willie "The Lion" Smith at the piano.

Those near to the stage can find one of the many slips of paper detailing tonight's performances (**Whispers Handout 8: Playbill**). Between each act, Walker rejoins the stage for a few minutes to talk to the crowd while the next act has

Whispers Handout 8: Playbill

Willie Smith – There's Gonna be the Devil to Pay
Nicholas Brothers – dancing feats
Fanny Brice – Second Hand Rose
The investigators (if they have an act)
Laura Wheeler Waring – oil painting and talk
Horace Vincent – magic show
Oscar Devereaux Micheaux – Within Our Gates
Lottie Gee – songs from Shuffle Along
Zora Neale Hurston – talk How it Feels to be Colored Me
The Waves – Harlem Swings to Joy
Charlie Bronx – play set
Roger West – reading A Lost Star in Harlem
Cutting Contest – Lion and Doc Stewart
Victoria Sparrow – dance
Charles Wilmore – reading and talk

time to prepare. During the acts, she circulates among the guests, who watch the show or attend to quiet conversations, while wait staff fills their glasses. With each act, the crowd's excitement builds. And, by the third act—Fanny Brice singing *Second Hand Rose*—the party is in full swing.

During the evening, ask each investigator for a **Spot Hidden** roll to determine if any of the following are noticed (the difficulty of the roll affected by the investigator's position—see **Dark Tower Overview**, page 252). The timing of the scenes varies, with all taking place sometime during or after the fourth act on the bill and into the night.

- (**Q3**)**:** Sergeant Walton is watching Jack Johnson's every move around the Dark Tower (see **Funding a Legacy**, nearby).

Jack Johnson and Viscount Lalaing

- **(Q3):** a pair of well-dressed white patrons are acting strange and look to be sneaking backstage (see **The Disruption Plot**, page 255)—investigators from **Working Stiffs** know that Oscar Micheaux's projector is set up back there (**Theater Help**, page 247).
- **(Q4):** Legs Diamond is threatening a patron close to a door by the bar (see **The Book's All the Rage**, page 255).

In addition, during the fourth act and beyond, a successful **Listen** roll overhears constant whispers, which seem to come from the hallways. The sounds appear to fade in and out and are at times audible over the music. As the night continues, the whispers grow louder (the Keeper may grant a bonus die to hear them) until the point when a Listen roll is not required to hear them (see **Distant Voices**, page 256).

FUNDING A LEGACY

Jack Johnson has a bourbon in one hand and Irene Pineau by his side. Johnson has a massive smile on his face as he regales guests (currently, Viscount Lalaing and Lady Dawson-Damer) with his story about his title bout fight from years ago; Lalaing and Dawson-Damer hang on his every word, while his animated and loud storytelling draws glances from the stage performers. Oblivious to the band, and with the same grace he used in the ring, Johnson turns his tale into how he wants to train other boxers internationally—he just needs some capital to start a school in Switzerland. While she smiles and laughs effortlessly on cue (she has heard this tale a hundred times), Pineau's face shows concern and she is clearly bothered about something.

If the investigators introduce themselves to Pineau, she welcomes the opportunity for the diversion. A successful **Charm** or **Persuade** roll gets her to reveal what is on her mind—refer to Pineau's and Johnson's write-ups in the **Dramatis Personae** (page 241) and to the following information currently whirling inside Pineau's head.

- Johnson trained Walter "Thunder" Rollins and considers him a son, but he doesn't see that something is wrong with him.
- Rollins refuses to admit anything is wrong and says everything is fine. He even told Johnson they could spar tomorrow night, but Pineau knows Rollins is lying (see **The Book's All the Rage**, page 255).
- Pineau does not want to worry Johnson, but they need someone to fund the boxing school or else they will be on the streets.

If Sergeant Walton is confronted, he denies stalking Johnson, although the lie is easily noted. If pushed, Walton admits he has been following Johnson all night. *"Jack Johnson is why I became a cop. I grew up watching him fight. My dad and*

I would travel to wherever the Galveston Giant would fight." Walton looks toward Johnson before continuing, *"I didn't understand why he stopped fighting until my old man explained it to me, talking about the corrupt and broken laws used against Johnson. I wanted to stop it from happening to someone else, so I joined the police. This is the first time I have ever seen Johnson up close."* The awe is apparent in his voice.

THE DISRUPTION PLOT

The two well-dressed white men appear cautious. Observing the pair, the investigators see them slip past the bar and out of the main room into a hallway that connects with the rear of the stage. If followed, they attempt to sneak backstage to where the ad hoc film projector "booth" has been arranged for the showing of Oscar Micheaux's film.

If confronted, a successful Hard **Intimidate** roll gets both men to surrender; if failed, they draw knives and threaten attack while attempting to escape the mansion. If escape is impossible or if a fight ensues, the men call out to the police for help, believing that Detective Chase will side with them over anyone else—call for a group **Luck** roll to determine if the police arrive before the investigators get a chance to properly question the men. Use the **Thugs** profile (page 266) for the pair.

If captured, Eric and Mark Thompson explain their insidious plan. Believing the same as former President Woodrow Wilson that, "Blacks only belong in the fields and should know their place," they were going to switch out *Within Our Gates* with *Birth of a Nation* to show that there is no safe place regardless of wealth. The brothers admit it was not their plan but a fellow Ku Klux Klan member (named Fred) who owns a realty business in Queens—this scheme was their inauguration into the ranks of the Klan.

If not stopped, they switch out the movie, burning *Within Our Gates* in a trash can after escaping into the night. When the wrong movie plays, the uplifting feeling of unity is tarnished but not destroyed for the evening. The movie is quickly removed but the indignity is not forgotten.

BIRTH OF A NATION (1915)

One of the most racist movies of all time, *Birth of a Nation* is based on the novel *The Clansman* by Thomas Dixon Jr. The three-hour film follows two southern families after the Civil War and casts African-Americans (white actors in blackface) as rapists and unintelligent, while the Ku Klux Klan are portrayed as heroes. The film was critically received, airing in the White House at President Woodrow Wilson's request, and aided in the reformation of the Ku Klux Klan (a white nationalist terrorist organization).

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People led protests and requests for the film to be banned. This was all to no avail, as the primarily white-controlled film industry saw nothing amiss in the film.

THE BOOK'S ALL THE RAGE

Legs Diamond has been busy working from the moment he entered the mansion, watching the guests and trying to figure who might know of (or have) the book he wants for his boss. Diamond is narrowing down his search by questioning people he thinks might have useful information. He figures that Horace Vincent, Zora Neale Hurston, and Thunder Rollins might be good candidates for information, but has yet to catch up with them.

Earlier, during the first couple of acts, Diamond questioned one the waiters, Walter Williams, about the guests, but when Williams refused to answer his questions and threatened to call security, Diamond grew angry and quietly murdered the poor waiter, hiding the body in a broom closet, beneath a pile of laundry.

Keeper note: William's body will not be found tonight unless the someone notices he is missing and reports it. If this does occur, A'Leia Walker dispatches her security and any investigators currently in the employ of Miguel Hernandez to search for the waiter. If the body is found, Detective Chase covers up the murder (for now), as he is focused on finding Reece's killer and doesn't want anything to get in the way of that. He'll deal with William's killing later.

If the investigators confront Diamond (ideally, between acts five and eight), as they approach, they see he has just finished talking to a woman (Nella Larsen), who is walking away from him. Larsen appears shaken by the conversation. If questioned, Larsen claims she doesn't know *"What that creep wants,"* and advises the investigators to stay away from him. *"He's dangerous and looking for something."*

Diamond smiles as the investigators approach, asking if they have seen a boxer that plays the horn, as he wants to compliment him on his last fight. A successful **Psychology** roll detects the lie and senses the violence on Diamond's mind. If pointed to Rollins, Diamond flips a quarter at the investigators for their trouble; otherwise, he brushes past them without saying a word. Angry investigators may be tempted to knock some manners into Diamond and if a

fight breaks out, Walker's security team is called to quickly separate those involved. The investigators now have a new enemy in Diamond.

Diamond finally tracks down Rollins around 11:30 p.m., just outside the main room in one of the hallways. The pair have a heated discussion for about ten minutes before a fight breaks out. The noise is drowned out by Victoria Sparrow's dance music, although a Hard **Listen** roll might detect the struggle. If the investigators help to break up the fight, Diamond accuses Rollins of stealing and demands to have Detective Chase resolve the matter. Chase arrives and finds a roll of money on Rollins—which is enough for Chase to accuse Rollins of James Reece's murder and arrests him on the spot. Rollins denies the charges but his protestations are ignored. Having rid himself of Rollins, Diamond smiles and moves on in his search for the book.

DISTANT VOICES

The whispers intensify as the night progresses. A few other patrons notice the sounds and some leave the main room to investigate during the last hour—if the investigators are not aware of the whispers or have ignored them till now, the other patrons can pull them into this scene. Following the sounds down the hallways leads to two different doors—see **Trial by Fire** (following) and **Two-Fisted Tango** (page 257).

Trial by Fire

When the door is opened, the world tumbles away as the investigators are pulled into the room beyond. The cramped wooden room contains two sets of eight-row pews. Holes in the walls indicate where glass panes were once fitted, and through them comes the smell of animal waste. The pews are filled with simply dressed farm people, all white, who appear to be armed with makeshift weapons centuries out of date. A manacled black woman stands before the gathered people, in front of a table behind which sit three stone-faced white men. It appears the woman is on trial. An investigator looking through one of the "windows" sees a group of children piling wood onto a pyre in the center of the village. This sudden change of scene provokes a **Sanity** roll (1/1D4 loss).

Keeper note: a successful **History** roll deduces the church's style, the people's dress, and the weapons were common to the Dutch in 1640s-1690s.

A **Psychology** roll may note the anger and fear in the crowd. One of the men behind the table turns toward the crowd while pointing a finger at the newly arrived investigators. *"Look, the witch Agathe Bruyn has summoned these devils from the nether realm! This is proof of her congress with the Black Man!"* Two dozen villagers rise from their seats, advancing on the investigators with makeshift weapons in their hands. An older man, with a cross around his neck and a Bible in his raised left hand, begins to chant. Beside the door stand two guards, who raise their muskets toward the investigators.

A successful Hard **Fast Talk** roll enables the investigators to say enough to give the mob pause for a few minutes; otherwise, they must act quickly or face the mob. If the investigators can speak convincingly (a successful Hard **Persuade** or **Intimidate** roll), one of the aldermen behind the table pronounces, "I see you have been sent by the Devil to represent this woman. Though you may try to trick us with your tongues, we shall hear only the divine word, and truth will win out." With this, it is agreed to let the investigators speak for Bruyn, and they are given some time to confer with her before the trial continues—use the following notes to guide the conversation.

- Bruyn states she is innocent. The landowners' crops failed and they believe Bruyn caused the blight due to her knowledge of herbal remedies.
  - She knows that the community was visited by the Black Man, who plied his devilish trade over a year ago in the village. The Beast was driven away, although most are not aware of his visit.

Keeper note: a successful **Psychology** roll confirms Bruyn is telling the truth, while an **Occult** roll may recall that the Black Man is believed to be a representation of the Devil or a demon that steals souls, who recruits witches into its service, often granting favored witches with animal familiars. A successful **Cthulhu Mythos** roll cites the Black Man as a form believed taken by Nyarlathotep, the Crawling Chaos.

If the investigators question the trial's witnesses, they recount how they saw Bruyn and the Black Man in the dead of night, running among the crops. The crops died the following day. A successful **Psychology** roll detects the lie.

Keeper note: the Racial Tension Modifier is in effect and applies to a **Law** or social skill roll directed to the crowd to argue Bruyn's case. With success, the aldermen agree to exile rather than execute Bruyn, while an Extreme success guarantees she is found innocent. If the arguments fail and should the investigators present themselves poorly, the crowd is liable to turn on them. In such an event, the mob attacks—refer to the **Mob's** profile on page 264. While threatening, the mass of people confined within the church means that there is little room to bring the mob's weapons to bear with significant force; all their attacks suffer from a penalty die

TIME-TRAVELING AGATHE

Canny investigators may decide to bring Agathe Bruyn with them; she survives the trip and suffers minimal Sanity loss. Bruyn is an experienced conjure woman with some knowledge of the Mythos, protective spells, and knowledge appropriate to someone living 250 years ago.

and result in only 1D4 damage. Fleeing the scene is the best course of action, as when the investigators go through the room's doors, they reappear in the Dark Tower. (**Winding Halls**, following).

Two-Fisted Tango

Opening the door pulls the investigators onto the streets of Harlem but, unbeknownst to them, they have traveled back in time. The sun is high in the sky on a warm summer day. Looking around, they see the mansion appears newer and the signs outside the window are missing.

Ask for a **Listen** to hear a car moving swiftly toward them. Suddenly, a Tommy gun begins roaring from the car's window, its bullets chewing up the ground at their feet! Call for a **Dodge** roll to dive out of the path of danger (award a bonus die to those who passed the Listen roll); if failed, a bullet grazes an arm or leg and inflicts 1D4 damage.

The car pulls up just short of the investigators. A burly man in a cheap suit gets out of the car and sprays bullets into a small man cowering nearby—the sudden and callous execution provokes a **Sanity** roll (0/1D3 loss). The gunman reaches down and picks up a pack of numbers books dropped by the murdered man and smiles at the investigators. *"You folks going to keep to yourselves, right? Old Torpedo would hate to pay you a visit."* He waits for them to nod or disagree—if anyone disagrees, he gets in the car saying, *"See you tonight,"* as the driver guns the engine and Torpedo makes a finger gun at them. As the investigators regain their composure, the doors to the Dark Tower shimmer into existence behind them, allowing them to retreat inside.

Keeper note: a successful **Lore (Harlem)** or Hard **Know** roll recalls that Torpedo worked for crime lord Casper Holstein; however, Torpedo was killed in 1926. Realizing they have somehow traveled back in time by two years provokes a **Sanity** roll (0/1 loss).

WINDING HALLS

As the investigators (probably) flee from the **Trial by Fire** or **Two-Fisted Tango**, they appear in a hallway that suddenly turns into a spiraling dark tunnel. Along its sides, thousands of exits can be seen, each leading to a hallway. The dizzying experience calls for a **Sanity** roll (1/1D4 loss). Moving through the tunnel, the investigators may try to throw themselves through one of the exits, only to find it barred by a locked door.

Attempting to return to the Dark Tower requires a successful **Navigate**, Hard **INT**, or (at the Keeper's discretion) **Luck** roll to find the correct exit, which when approached is not blocked by a door. For every failed roll, the investigators lose 1 Sanity point, and after three such failed rolls, they locate the door automatically.

TOWER OF THE DOOMED

Charles Wilmore's scheme is nearly complete when the investigators return from their journey into the past, arriving back in the Dark Tower at 11:50 p.m. As they enter, Wilmore is on the stage, reciting passages from his "screenplay"—actually passages from the *Book of Azathoth*.

Watching Wilmore, a successful **Spot Hidden** roll (possibly at Hard difficulty, depending on where the investigators are standing) sees him reading from some ancient tome and not a typewritten play. As he reads aloud, a mirrored glass box (see **Working Stiffs**, page 246) is slowly lowered above him, sending a cascading rainbow of colored light across the room.

Keeper note: if the mirror box was previously broken or destroyed, Wilmore instead raises a shard of mirror in his hand, with the cascading rainbow effect still evident. A successful **INT** roll enables the investigators to realize there is no spotlight shining on Wilmore, so what is producing the light from the mirror box? While a **Cthulhu Mythos** roll may identify that Wilmore is casting some sort of spell, which appears to be drawing its power from the audience.

Wilmore's voice grows in intensity and he speeds up his delivery. Suddenly, it seems like everyone in the room is moving in slow motion. The investigators have but a moment to act as the clock reaches 11:56 p.m., but before they can get to Wilmore, Detective Chase bursts into the room brandishing a pistol and shouting, *"You killed him!"* Chase fires his gun and a bullet strikes the mirrored box (or shard)—just as it is about to encompass Wilmore—sending tiny shards of glass into the audience, with those in front

of the stage (Q4) and on the dancefloor (Q3) suffering 1 point of damage. A second later, the room is bathed in a blinding rainbow of light overloading the senses and causing everyone to pass out.

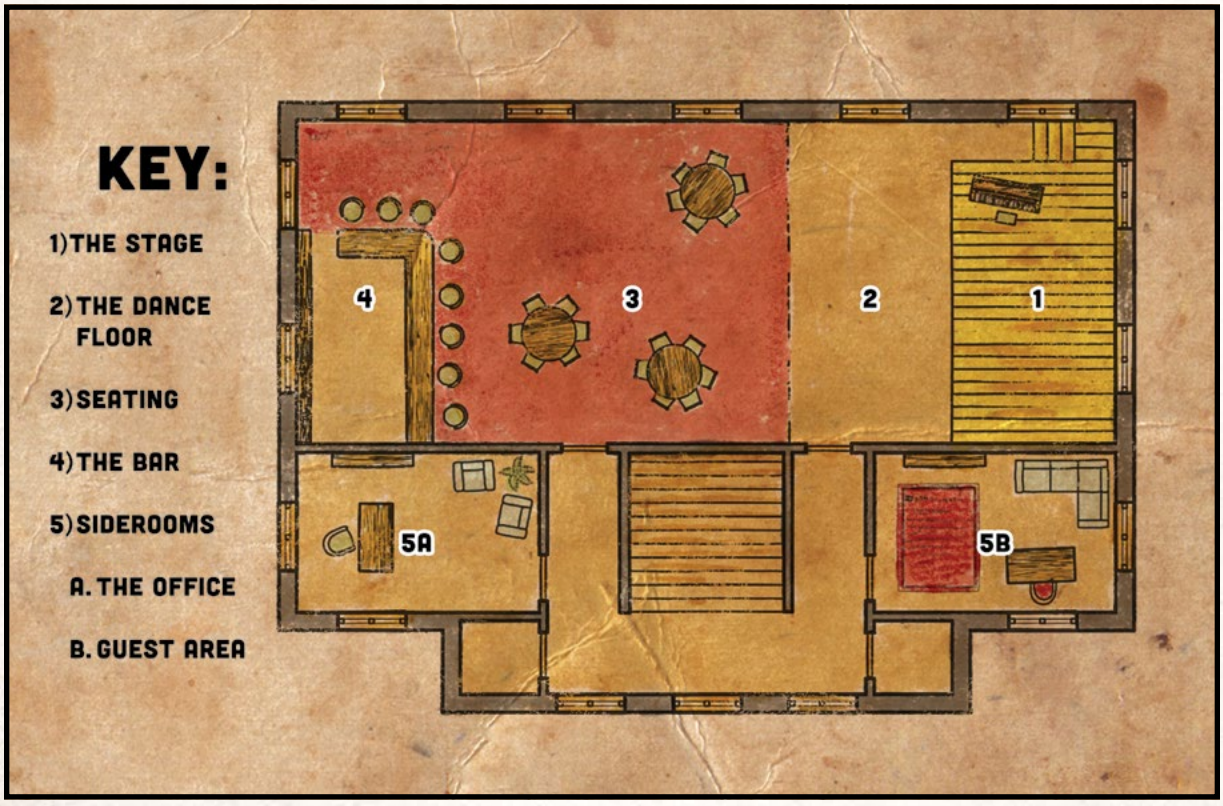
TEMPORALLY DISPLACED

Everyone gradually returns to consciousness after an unknown amount of time. The walls of the room glow with a faint and eerie dark-green hue, providing the only light in the room. Looking around, the investigators see that the room has strangely expanded to quadruple its original size, its walls no longer straight but comprised of many angles. While the room's original doors and furniture remain, they are somewhat dwarfed by the sheer scale of the "new" room; the whole experience is disorientating and disconcerting, provoking a **Sanity** roll (1/1D4 loss).

The investigators also now realize that not everyone in the audience is here. Originally, there were over one hundred souls in the Dark Tower but now, there is less than half that number. If exploring the space around them, the investigators find that the room's electricity no longer works, and any lighters or mechanical devices requiring a spark do not ignite. Looking out of a window presents the streets of Harlem below but the image moves slowly and is cloudy, as if seen through gauze.

Keeper note: a successful **Cthulhu Mythos** roll determines that some spell-like effect is taking place or that the building (or possibly just the fourth floor) are somehow unstuck in time. A **Science (Physics)** or **Occult** roll may also deduce that something weird is affecting the flow of time.

Those attempting to escape may smash or unlock (**Locksmith** roll) a window but, when accomplished, the investigator suddenly feels invisible forces pulling them apart as they move through the window: they feel their skin tightening, only to realize that they are regressing, their body reverting to childhood. The experience calls for a **Sanity** roll (1/1D6), while a successful **POW** roll allows the investigator to jump back into the room with the knowledge that they have just avoided being turned back into a child or baby—the regression does have repercussions, with the affected investigator suffering a permanent age reduction of 2D6 years; modify the character as appropriate. For those who remain outside the window, they eventually regress into nothingness.



Fourth Floor of the Dark Tower Map

Keeper note: if an investigator does not attempt to go through a window, have one of the NPCs do so, allowing all to see their bizarre fate. Allow the investigators time to take stock of their situation.

A headcount of the "active" people turns up all of the entertainment acts, A'Leia Walker, most of Walker's staff, and either the patrons from the lunch (per **Millionaire Brunch**, page 244) or those who met Charles Wilmore in the park (per **Recruiting the Talented Masses**, page 242). Detective Chase and Legs Diamond are among the people here, but Wilmore and over fifty of the guests are missing. Of those who remain, are cries of horror, bewilderment, and amazement—a handful of them go to explore and race out the nearest "tunnel" exit. A Hard **Persuade** or **Fast Talk** roll may quell the rising panic of agitated guests—if none of the investigators do so, another panicked handful of people run to and open the room's doors, heading out, before Walker steps forward to calm everyone.

THE CHASE

When the doors to the main room are opened, a thick and sickly colored voluminous cloud of smoke begins to billow out of one of the corners of the room. The cloud is icy to the touch and those nearby can't help but feel a deep sense of foreboding, as if something terrible was approaching.

Keeper note: a successful **Cthulhu Mythos** roll recognizes the tell-tale signs of the imminent arrival of a hound of Tindalos, while a Hard **Occult** roll may glean that some form of magical summoning is taking place.

The hound materializes in 1D6 rounds—unless Wilmore had to use a glass shard, in which case it arrives in 1D3 rounds (as he had less control over the spell). The creature emerges through the billowing smoke, at first indistinguishable from strange angles it manifests through, suddenly launching forward to kill the nearest non-investigator guest. Call for a **Sanity** roll (1D3/1D20 loss). With this, it dives into the nearest angle and disappears, only to reappear in a different part of the room to take down another guest. Clearly, it is hunting and no one is safe. The guests and investigators are advised to flee!

Keeper note: if necessary, a successful **INT** or **Cthulhu Mythos** roll enables the investigators to determine that Charles Wilmore is the key. It was his magic spell that sent the Dark Tower into this nightmare and which summoned the foul hound to feed upon the guests. Perhaps, if they can find him, they can break the spell and dismiss the hound?

RESTORATION

While within the mansion's temporal influence, wounds do not heal naturally. Those who become injured, suffer points of damage but do not bleed or bruise. This unusual effect also means that investigators do not fall unconscious; instead, they remain conscious until they die from a reduction of hit points to zero or pass out from reaching zero magic points. Injuries may only be treated once.

Temporal displacemnt

The Hunting Hound

The hound is able to jump through angles; thus, it can appear anywhere in the mansion. Anyone who remains in the same location for more than a few minutes is liable to find the hound materializing next to them. For investigators who remain still, the Keeper might use a **Luck** roll to determine if the hound launches an attack on them.

Mundane weapons have no effect upon the hound, although magically enchanted weapons do inflict damage—see **Hound of Tindalos** at the end of the scenario for its full profile. Despite its protections, the hound is susceptible to sound, as Wilmore's performance of its spell, perhaps an incomplete gesture or some odd phrasing, altered the parameters of the summoning. The hound may become transfixed and motionless if music is played or words are spoken in its presence—accomplished with an opposed **Persuade**, **Fast Talk**, or **Art/Craft (Music and related)** roll versus the hound's **POW**. If successful, the hound is held motionless for at least 1 round or for as long as the sound continues without pause.

SEARCHING FOR WILMORE

Wandering through the mansion's rooms and halls searching for Wilmore is a dangerous but necessary task for the investigators. Some rooms are as they were before the mansion was "changed" while others are strange "doorways" into Harlem's past. Use **Table: Room Generator** to determine what the investigators encounter when entering a room and also when.

The Keeper can expand or condense the search for Wilmore as best suits their game. In playtesting, two to four additional rooms were created. A good trick is to create a room based on the investigators' history in Harlem—it may be something from their recent history, like a scene from an earlier *Harlem Unbound* scenario, possibly replaying a tense moment to show what might have happened.

CONFRONTING WILMORE

Wilmore has reached the ground floor of the mansion. He is standing before the open double doors in the entrance hall with seventeen guests who appear to be frozen in dance poses. Tears are streaming down his face, and he appears overcome with despair, clutching the old tome in his hands. When the investigators spot him, he is a room's length away from them—at a dash, it would take five rounds to reach him through the weirdly expanded space. A successful **Psychology** roll confirms he looks as if he is about to leap through the door, probably to his death.

If the investigators can gain his attention, Wilmore turns to face them but threatens to jump through the doors if anyone comes any closer, shouting out, *"This is all my fault! This is the only way to fix it!"* He warns them only once, and should they ignore him, he leaps through the door to his death.

Keeper note: a successful **Occult** or **Cthulhu Mythos** roll recalls that it is believed that if a spellcaster dies, their spells may also end; however, the spell Wilmore has wrought is strange one and who knows what will happen. In fact,

STRANGE ROOMS

The Dark Tower's rooms appear to be windows into the past but are actually exact moments caught in time, all of which occurred within a block of the mansion building's site. Anyone moving beyond the mansion building suffers the fate as those who tried to leave the tower via a window, regressing in age until they no longer exist. Wilmore's understanding and performance of the spell was limited, causing unusual side effects.

PULP CONSIDERATIONS

If using *Pulp Cthulhu*, the Keeper might ignore the constraints of the scenario and, rather than regress the heroes, allow them to become trapped in the past. Fleeing from the mansion, they find they are in an earlier time of the Keeper's choosing and must find a way back to the present. Of course, such an event would leave everyone else still inside the mansion to an unknown fate. The hound, following the investigators' scent, could be a constant threat in the temporally displaced investigators' lives—they have seen it and it has seen them.

While the hound is a serious threat, consider the creature to be immortal while inside the Dark Tower. If the heroes do, somehow, manage to kill it, it reappears after 2D6 minutes—the spell's side effects causing it to be stuck in time, never quite able to die and unable to leave until it is dispelled or the spell is broken.

Wilmore's spell is linked to every person who was in the main room when it was cast.

Presumably delayed by the investigators, Wilmore continues, *"I risked all of your lives... for what... a movie... my moment in the sun... for revenge on Gault*?" He takes a step closer to the door. A **Charm**, **Fast Talk**, or **Persuade** roll at Hard difficulty makes him stop and allows the investigators to approach him a little further (about 2 round's worth of distance). Looking a little relieved, he tells them about Gault, his time in Hollywood, and how he planned to use the book's spell for revenge—he's somewhat unhinged at this point, so his logic isn't exactly flawless—refer to the **Background** section at the start of the scenario (page 237). In telling the tale, he grows wild again, and again makes threats to jump through the doors.

A final opposed **Fast Talk**, **Persuade**, or **Psychology** roll opposed by Wilmore's POW of 60, or a straight **Psychoanalysis** roll, talks him down—if the investigators somehow mention Wilmore's typewriter (the one he named "Chance") they gain a bonus die to the roll. He drops the book and collapses toward the investigators, spent and broken, finally coming to terms with everything he has done.

The Baron's Bargain

Wilmore can lead the investigators through the mansion with unerring accuracy as if he is somehow attuned to it. As they retrace their steps, the hound appears in 1D6 minutes, sensing the book and/or Wilmore.

Keeper note: if Wilmore is not with them (probably having gone through the door to his death in **Confronting Wilmore**, above), the investigators must risk the winding halls and rooms (use **Table: Room Generator**, below) until they find the stage in the main room on the fourth floor.

TABLE: ROOM GENERATOR

Roll 1D6 and consult the table for the contents of a room and the "current" year inside the room.

- **Years in the Past:** how far back in time the room exists.
- **Encounter:** the antagonist the investigators must overcome in some fashion (or flee from); examples are given but the Keeper should be creative.
- **Situation:** tone and theme of the encounter.
- **Hound:** the percentage chance of the hound of Tindalos appearing and targeting the investigators (roll for every ten minutes spent in the room).

Result	Years in Past	Encounter	Situation	Hound
1	1D10	Personal (skill roll, personal history)	Hostile	5%
2	4D10	Human (drunk, police, criminal)	Humor	10%
3	1D100	Mythos (deep one, ghoul)	Hostile	20%
4	1D10 centuries	Environmental (storm, blood rain, earth tremor)	Beneficial	40%
5	1D100 centuries	Animal (dog, bird, snake, spider)	Hostile	60%
6	Prehistoric	Mythos	Deadly	80%

The Baron in Blues

Wilmore (or a successful **Occult** or **Cthulhu Mythos** roll) knows that the spell must be dispelled in the room when the original version was cast. If the investigators try to blindly cast a spell by reading from the *Book of Azathoth* while about the mansion, it fails and costs 1 magic point. Once back in the main room, Wilmore (or a successful combined **INT** and **POW** roll to locate and perform the spell from the book) casts the spell needed to break the original magic. At first, nothing seems to happen, but then a wailing of jazz horns and a cacophony of voices fills the room, and appearing from nowhere comes the Baron in Blues (see (see **Baron in Blues**, page 100)—call for a **Sanity** roll (1D4/1D10 loss).

If the hound is present, the Baron plays a tune, lulling the creature into slumber. He then looks at the gathered crowd and waits for them to impress him with their art, saying, *"Who will play?"* Hopefully, one of the investigators takes the hint and sings or plays an instrument (a piano and some other musical instruments can be found around the stage). All it takes is one masterful performance, with a Hard **Art/Craft (Instrument, Singing, and so on)** roll to gain the Baron's favor.

Keeper note: if none of the investigators can play, presumably at least one of the evening's performers (Willie "The Lion" Smith, Fanny Brice, Lottie Gee, The Waves, or Charlie Bronx) remains alive to entertain the Baron. If not, then the investigators may have to sing! In such an event, the Keeper might like to use a **Luck** roll to determine how successful the amateur performance is in the Baron's "eyes."

Once the Baron is pleased, he nods to the crowd and places a horn to his "face" and plays. The music seems to span eternity and end instantly at the same time. Three portals appear around the group. From the swirling black mass that should be his face comes a single, melodic sentence, *"The plurality must choose."* Each portal seems to represent a choice:

- **Portal One (A Change is Gonna Come)**: the portal shows a vision of Harlem in 1928 but, as each person looks closer, it reshapes the world in small ways to the viewer's wishes and a handful of people are seen to die. The image conveys that the world could be made better but at the cost of innocent lives. The world remade to their will. If this portal is chosen, the Baron plays an upbeat jazz tune.
- **Portal Two (World in My Eyes):** the portal shows the astounding wonders of the universe and different dimensions. The idea of endless travel to witness vistas humanity was never meant to know is conveyed through the images. If chosen, the Baron plays a smooth ethereal-like tune.

- **Portal Three (I'm Going Home):** the image shows the Dark Tower mansion on 135th Street in 1928, a trio of patrolmen stand outside—it is the night of Walker's gathering. The image conveys a sense of home. If chosen, the Baron plays for what feels like an eternity, a crescendo of music, building in intensity.

The portals begin to shrink every round and do not allow anyone to enter until the group (as a whole) has decided what they all wish to do. After two rounds, if no one has suggested it, Zora Neale Hurston or A'Leia Walker says, "We must all agree or else we are trapped here." Every round, the portals get smaller and smaller. By the eighth round, only half of the group can escape, a quarter on the ninth round, and a handful on the tenth (call for **Luck** rolls as required to determine which investigators can escape). The portals vanish on the eleventh round while the Baron plays a sorrowful tune, the hound wakes up and advances to kill anyone who remains.

The investigators can try to sway the crowd to what they believe to be the best choice. A successful **Persuade** roll with someone like A'Leia Walker helps to influence most of the group, while an Extreme success guarantees that everyone follows the investigators' direction. How this scene plays out depends greatly upon the players and the Keeper should encourage whatever scheme the players think best to resolve matters, while also reminding them of the shrinking portals.

CONCLUSION

Depending on the choice of the group and their timing in deciding, the following options can take place; otherwise, presumably, everyone is killed by the hound. The hunt could be an elaborate but futile cat and mouse game.

- **A Change Is Gonna Come:** the world begins changing quickly in small ways (faster than "our" history); however, such change comes at a price: the greater the change, the higher the cost. If Charles Wilmore is alive, he returns to Hollywood and establishes his own movie studio, producing incredible work that sees white actors begging to appear in his films. But, for some reason, everyone that ever gets close to him seems to encounter terrible misfortune (some die in accidents, suffer from ill health, and so on). Wilmore lives a long, successful, and isolated life, never finding companionship until he eventually commits suicide. For the investigators, they find their lives continue as normal; however, in time, those around them grow more distant, and friends and acquaintances fall prey to injury and death, as though everyone they come into contact with is cursed. The Keeper should build such events into future scenarios with the same investigators, and perhaps drain Sanity points accordingly as the investigators begin to recognize the Baron's curse: for their every success, someone else must pay.
- **World in My Eyes:** the Keeper has free rein to drop the investigators into any place they like—the entire Lovecraftian multiverse is at their fingertips. While the investigators have been granted transport, they are still merely human and insignificant in the scope of the universe. How they get back to "home" could well be another story.
- **I'm Going Home:** the world seems unchanged; however, everyone who survived the Dark Tower hears, from time to time, the faint and distant sounds of the Baron's final tune. As they age, the music swells louder the closer they come to death, along with the terrible realization that the Baron will eventually claim their soul. But, until then, the world moves on unchanged.

REWARDS

- Saving Agathe Bruyn from a fiery death: +1D3 Sanity point.
- Not saving Agathe Bruyn: –2 Sanity points.
- Defeating the hound of Tindalos: +1D10 Sanity points.
- Saving Charles Wilmore: +1D3 Sanity point.
- Surviving the Dark Tower: +1D8 Sanity points.
- For saving the majority of the guests: +1D4 Sanity points.
- For not saving the majority of guests: –1D8 Sanity points

CHARACTERS AND MONSTERS

For ease of reference, the Keeper may wish to copy or print out these pages as a handy reference when running this chapter. NPCs, monsters, and others are gathered by type or distinct groupings.

Note: certain NPCs have Luck values, as well as talents for *Pulp Cthulhu* games; ignore these if playing regular *Call of Cthulhu*.

Spells: spells are taken from the *Call of Cthulhu Rulebook* and the *Grand Grimoire of Cthulhu Mythos Magic*; if necessary, the Keeper may replace *Grimoire* spells with others from the *Rulebook*.

ALLIES AND INDEPENDENTS

Zora Neale Hurston, age 37 (27 if asked), folklorist and truth seeker

STR 55	**CON** 65	**SIZ** 55	**DEX** 60	**INT** 65
APP 60	**POW** 80	**EDU** 70	**SAN** 71	**HP** 12
DB: 0	**Build:** 0	**Move:** 8	**MP:** 16	**Luck:** 40

Combat

Brawl	43% (21/8), damage 1D3
Pearl-handled revolver	62% (31/12), damage 1D10
Dodge	56% (28/11)

Skills

Anthropology 59%, Arts/Craft (Writing) 78%, Cthulhu Mythos 9%, Dreaming 18%, Dream Lore 20%, Drive Auto

GUESTS, VARIOUS ATTENDEES

Use these profiles, adjusted as necessary, for other Dark Tower guests.

	Young Guest	*Middle-Aged Guest*	*Elderly Guest*	*Tough Guest*
STR	40	50	45	70
CON	70	60	50	70
SIZ	50	60	55	60
DEX	80	60	50	60
INT	55	65	70	60
APP	60	50	55	50
POW	50	60	55	55
EDU	50	65	70	60
SAN	50	60	55	55
HP	12	12	10	13
DB	0	0	0	+1D4
Build	0	0	0	1
Move	8	7	6	8

Combat

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

66%, History 53%, Language (Arabic) 42%, Language (French) 63%, Language (Haitian Creole) 57%, Language (Hebrew) 37%, Language (Kreyòl Ayisyen) 73%, Language (Navajo) 55%, Language (Spanish) 46%, Library Use 61%, Listen 54%, Mechanical Repair 44%, Occult 71%, Persuade 55%, Spot Hidden 50%, Stealth 47%.

Spells: Blunt Weapon, Chant of Thoth, Defy Gravity, Elder Sign, Perceive Text.

Pulp Talents

- **Resilient:** may spend Luck points to shrug-off points of Sanity loss, on a one-for-one basis.
- **Resourceful:** always seem to have what they need on hand; may spend 10 Luck points (rather than make Luck roll) to find a certain useful piece of equipment (e.g. a flashlight, length of rope, a weapon, etc.) In their current location.

Horace Vincent, *age 33, Magician*

STR 50	**CON** 70	**SIZ** 60	**DEX** 55	**INT** 55
APP 75	**POW** 60	**EDU** 57	**SAN** 60	**HP** 13
DB: 0	**Build:** 0	**Move:** 7	**MP:** 12	**Luck:** —

Combat

Brawl	33% (16/6), damage 1D3
Cape*	60% (30/12), special (see note)
Sword cane	40% (20/8), damage 1D6
Dodge	70% (35/14)

***Cape:** Vincent may use his cape to disarman opponent; the attack is a maneuver and does not cause damage and, if successful, wraps the cape around an opponent's weapon and pulls it from their hand. This maneuver may only be performed as Vincent's action and cannot be used in response to an attack (i.e. not used while "fighting back").

Skills

Charm 66%, Fast Talk 60%, Hypnosis 60%, Language (German) 42%, Language (English) 55%, Locksmith 60%, Psychology 55%, Occult 40%, Read Lips 50%, Spot Hidden 55%, Stealth 60%.

Thunder Rollins, *age 24, boxer*

STR 90	**CON** 80	**SIZ** 90	**DEX** 45	**INT** 50
APP 55	**POW** 30	**EDU** 35	**SAN** 23	**HP:** 17
DB: +1D6	**Build:** 2	**Move:** 8	**MP:** 6	**Luck:** 30

Combat

Brawl	70% (35/14) damage: 1D3+1D6
Dodge	40% (20/8)

Skills

Charm 50%, Climb 40%, Firearms (Rifle/Shotgun) 40%, Intimidate 40%, Listen 55%, Psychology 40%, Stealth 45%, Swim 65%, Throw 50%.

Pulp Talents

- **Tough Guy:** soaks up damage, may spend 10 Luck points to shrug off up to 5 hit points worth of damage taken in one combat round.
- **Heavy Hitter:** may spend 10 Luck points to add an additional damage die when dealing out melee combat (die type depends on the weapon, e.g. 1D3 for unarmed combat, 1D6 for a sword, etc.).

Detective Charleston Chase, *age 44, racist and corrupt policeman*

STR 60	**CON** 55	**SIZ** 70	**DEX** 55	**INT** 50
APP 75	**POW** 50	**EDU** 55	**SAN** 53	**HP:** 12
DB: +1D4	**Build:** 1	**Move:** 7	**MP:** 10	**Luck:** —

Combat

Brawl	60% (30/12), damage 1D3
.38 automatic	65% (32/13), damage 1D10
Dodge	30% (15/6)

Skills

Climb 35%, Firearms (Rifle/Shotgun) 45%, Intimidate 60%, Listen 50%, Psychology 50%, Stealth 40%, Throw 55%.

Charles "Flip" Wilmore, *age 35, writer and would-be cultist*

Note: Wilmore is currently being pursued by a hound of Tindalos.

STR 60	**CON** 70	**SIZ** 50	**DEX** 50	**INT** 60
APP 45	**POW** 60	**EDU** 55	**SAN** 23	**HP:** 12
DB: 0	**Build:** 0	**Move:** 8	**MP:** 12	**Luck:** —

Combat

Brawl	50% (25/10), damage 1D3
.38 automatic	45% (22/9), damage 1D10
Dodge	47% (23/9)

Skills

Art/Craft (Screen Writing) 65%, Charm 50%, Climb 40%, Cthulhu Mythos 5%, Fast Talk 60%, Listen 60%, Psychology 60%, Stealth 45%, Throw 35%.

Spells: Summon Baron in Blues (Summon Azathoth variant).

ADVERSARIES AND MONSTERS

Jack "Legs" Diamond, *age 31, cold-blooded killer*

STR 50	**CON** 90	**SIZ** 50	**DEX** 90	**INT** 50
APP 70	**POW** 65	**EDU** 50	**SAN** 68	**HP** 14
DB: 0	**Build:** 0	**Move:** 8	**MP:** 13	**Luck:** 32

Skills

Charm 40%, Fast Talk 50%, Intimidate 70%, Locksmith 50%, Psychology 50%, Spot Hidden 71%, Stealth 70%, Throw 60%.

Combat

Brawl	33% (16/6), damage 1D3 or knife 1D4+2
.45 automatic	65% (32/13), damage 1D10+2
Dodge	70% (35/14)

THUGS, VARIOUS TOUGHS

Use the following profiles for thugs, Klan members, patrolmen, and Dutch settlers as necessary.

	1	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*
STR	40	55	80	55	60	50
CON	70	65	55	75	40	60
SIZ	60	55	50	45	70	60
DEX	80	50	60	55	70	50
INT	60	50	45	55	60	65
APP	55	50	35	55	70	50
POW	50	50	80	65	50	50
EDU	55	60	40	55	70	50
SAN	50	50	80	65	50	50
HP	13	12	10	12	11	12
DB	0	0	+1D4	0	+1D4	0
Build	0	0	1	0	1	0
Move	8	8	9	9	8	7

Combat

Brawl	40% (20/8), damage 1D3+DB
Club* (farm weapon)	40% (20/8), damage 1D6+DB
Musket*	30% (15/6), damage 1D6
.38 automatic**	50% (25/10), damage 1D10
12-g shotgun*** (2B)	35% (17/7), 4D6/2D6/1D6
Dodge	40% (20/9)

* *Dutch settlers only.*
** *Patrolmen and thugs only.*
*** *Klan members only.*

Hound of Tindalos, *temporal hunter*

STR 80	**CON** 150	**SIZ** 90	**DEX** 50	**INT** 75
APP —	**POW** 120	**EDU** —	**SAN** —	**HP** 24
DB: +1D6	**Build:** 2	**Move:** 6/20*	**MP:** 24	**Luck:** —

**Flying.*

Combat

Attacks per round: 1 (bite, claw)

Fighting attacks: may use its paws or bite to attack. Each hound is covered with a sort of bluish pus; when a victim is attacked, a gout of this mucoid stuff is smeared over them. This pus-like substance is alive and active; causing 2D6 damage to the victim, and new damage is dealt in the same amount for each round following that the pus remains on the victim's body. The pus can be wiped off with a rag or towel with a DEX roll, or can be rinsed off with water and so on. Fire destroys the pus, though 1D6 hit points would be lost to burns from the flame.

Tongue: once per round, with a successful tongue attack, a deep, penetrating (though bloodless and painless) hole is formed. The victim takes no physical damage, despite the peculiar wound, but loses 3D6 POW permanently.

Fighting	90% (45/18), damage 1D6+DB + pus (2D6 damage per round, ongoing until removed)
Tongue	90% (45/18), damage 3D6 **POW** drained
Dodge	30% (15/6)

Armor: 2-point hide; regenerates 4 hit points per round unless on zero hit points; mundane weapons have no effect on a hound, though enchanted weapons and spells deal full damage.

Spells: Breath of the Deep, Improved Raise Night Fog, Nightmares, Find Gates, and Eyes of a Stranger

Sanity loss: 1D3/1D20 Sanity points to see a hound of Tindalos.

WHISPERS: TOME AND SPELL

Book of Azathoth

Kreyòl Ayisyen (Creole), unknown, 18th century

A flawed and incomplete collection of stories, conjectures, and rituals concerning the idiot god, Azathoth. The tome is hand-sewn and bound in weathered black leather. Three copies are known to exist.

- **Sanity loss:** 2D4
- **Cthulhu Mythos**: +3/+6 percentiles
- **Mythos Rating:** 27
- **Study:** 3 months
- **Suggested spells:** Summon Baron in Blues, Mist of R'lyeh, Create Barrier of Naach-Tith, Temporal Cycle Renewed, Brew Space Mead.

Call Baron in Blues (Summon Azathoth variant)

- **Cost:** variable magic points; 1D6 Sanity points
- **Casting time:** 1D10 minutes

This spell has been cobbled together from pages taken from the flawed *Book of Azathoth*. Casting requires those involved to be engaged in unison in an artistic endeavor to garner the attention of the Baron in Blues. The chance of success is equal to the number of magic point invested, rolled as a percentile (e.g. 20 magic points provides a 20% chance.

Keeper note: Charles Wilmore believed casting this spell would allow him to strike a deal with the Baron, whereby Wilmore's pursuit by a hound of Tindalos could be canceled. Wilmore's miscasting of the spell causes the Dark Tower to be ripped from time, with associated effects. When he later attempts to cancel the spell, his meddling draws the attention of the Baron in Blues.

JMW
18

YOUR NAME IN THE BOOK

Your Name in the Book deals with a community forged in fire, and how hard the Cthulhu Mythos must shake at it before it comes apart. The choice the Black Man represents is daunting—how does someone sign their soul away? How can they not, if the prize is freedom for their loved ones?

The year is 1680, and the Black Man, an avatar of Nyarlathotep, walks the streets of Harlem. He carries the *Black Book of Azathoth* in one hand and an impossible offer in the other. *"Sign your name in the book,"* his voice says, draped in honey and silk, "*pledge your soul to Azathoth and He will grant you power and secrets.*" Power great enough to claim freedom, and secrets dark enough to safeguard it from white men.

Few people are willing to trade one master for another, resulting in Harlem soon becoming a divided community. Some hide the secret of meeting the Black Man and entertaining his offer, as signing the *Black Book* is reason enough to be cast out; thus, those who pledged their souls must meet in secret. Amid the rising chaos, servants and enemies of the Black Man pursue their own purposes. In this scenario, suitable for three to five investigators, the task is two-fold: stop the Revenant and the Black Man, and work quickly and discreetly to forestall Mayor Dyre from sending British troops to quell the mounting issue.

BACKGROUND: NO SAFE HARBOR

The Protestant beliefs of the Dutch settlers influenced their laws. Their religious views affected how they interacted with the vile act of slavery and the legal rights they provided to the enslaved. Dutch law, combating the inhuman nature of slavery (and wanting to see themselves in a positive light), translated the belief of, "all men should be free" to "all men should have a chance to earn freedom." The Dutch allowed the enslaved to marry, have children, work in their "free hours," earn wages, own movable property (such as pots and pans), and raise crops and livestock on designated lands, so long as their white masters approved.

Enslaved people could sue white people who discarded these rights in a white court system. Children with a white father could apply for freedom and could be baptized. Those enslaved people who earned enough could purchase their freedom, as did those who served for eighteen or nineteen years—if their white owners agreed. The Dutch held to a three-part slavery system: enslaved, half-enslaved, and freedman. Late Dutch rule saw some forty freedmen living in Nieuw Haarlem.

The British government purchased Nieuw Haarlem from Peter Stuyvesant in 1664. The few legal rights granted by the Dutch were reviewed, with some repealed by the British—each white governmental system taking a different view on the evil act of slavery. Under British rule, the black and enslaved mother's status dictated the status of her children and adopting the Christian faith was no longer grounds for freedom, while marriage between enslaved was discouraged. The British erected a enslaved peoples market (near what is now Wall Street) to accommodate the vast amount of new enslaved coming into New York.

New York did not issue Freedom Papers, forcing freedmen to rely on white people—now the British who'd already reduced their rights—holding up their end of the deal. Moving away from Harlem was expensive, required travel papers, and put people of color in the sights of bounty hunters looking for "escaped" enslaved people. Most, as former house enslaved people, had skills they could put to use in Harlem, so many remained within reach of the British, who would rather see them move elsewhere—not out of any sense of guilt, but because they considered free black people a danger to white families.

Opposite page: The Offer

HARLEM, THEN (1860)

The following historical information provides the Keeper with insights, scenario hooks, and material to play in Harlem in the 1680s. While it is a brief overview, hopefully, the Keeper can elaborate and expand as required.

- **Population:** 32 freedmen (1673 census), roughly 300 people, and over 100 free blacks.
- **Location:** a few hours from New York City by skiff or horseback.

As discussed in **Chapter 1: Song of Harlem** (page 9), Harlem has been known by different names, changing multiple times based on who controlled the city. What the Weckquaesgeek first called the area is lost to history, although we know the Dutch called it Nieuw Haarlem, the British called it Lancaster and then Haarlem, until it finally became known simply as Harlem.

HISTORY

Despite the British taking control of New Amsterdam in 1664 and renaming it New York, the old Dutch council still meets and largely controls Harlem. The place is a crime-ridden pariah of a city, full of dangerous streets where pigs run wild and free, rooting through garbage. Despite the frequent travelers, Harlem is a quiet community, even relatively isolated, without much traffic in enslaved people, the sugar, or the rum trade. To safeguard the residents, night watchmen patrol the streets after sundown.

Harlem runs on the Dutch system of *burgomaster* (mayor), *schepen* (alderman), and *schout* (sheriffs), though all three differ subtly from their English counterparts. After the third Anglo-Dutch war (1673), the inhabitants of Harlem threw off the political-governmental culture of New York's English masters, although Britain retained overall control of the colony.

A Rich Religious Tapestry

Most of the Dutch residents are Reformed Protestants, a Christian sect formed around Calvinism. They view their way of life and their faith as increasingly under attack, as immigration brings increasing numbers of English Anglicans and Quakers, French Calvinists, German Lutherans, and Irish Catholics. There are also small populations of Jews, Sabbatarians, and Anti-Sabbatarians—and a few avowed atheists.

The enslaved people bring their own religions from Africa, such as various Yorùbá faiths, although such beliefs are largely destroyed in the slave trade, surviving in part through oral traditions and hymns, which in time are attached to Christian practices via forced conversion by English and Dutch masters. The few Muslim enslaved people (familiar with religious books) are largely literate and, among themselves, use Arabic to communicate in secret. Sometimes, a white slave owner would force enslaved Muslims to write Arabic Bible verses for Muslims who did not understand English—instead, they would write quotes from Qur'anic verses condemning slavery.

LOCATIONS

Roads

Two roads—the Eastern Post Road and the Kingsbridge Road—follow the course of old trails that pass through a bear-ridden wilderness. Wolves can be found throughout the land and provide the occasional menace, although hunters have had great success in killing the beasts and their cubs. Still, the roads are wide and well-kept for reliable wagon travel—Harlemites are required by law to spend two work days per year maintaining these roads.

Houses

The Dutch homes in Harlem are large and spacious, although many are dilapidated and wholly unsuited to surviving the winter. Most Harlemites work in the small yards attached to their homes or till garden plots outside the main community, growing wheat, rye, corn, and flax alongside turnips, pumpkins, and buckwheat, with two plantings a year. Freestanding apple and peach trees, as well

as the plentiful game in the nearby forests, supply additional food to the small holdings. Harlemites of this era are likely to keep livestock, which along with wheat and lumber, are sent to New York for sale.

First Dutch Church

The church can be found on the north end of the Great Way, renamed Church Lane in honor of the structure. The church is a modest affair, constructed of wood, with a small steeple and weathervane. Congregants bring foot stoves with them to listen to Sunday services, called there not by a clanging bell (which the church has, but does not use) but a loud drumbeat (preferred by the villagers). The church also doubles as a schoolhouse, where Jan de la Montagne, Jr. teaches the three r's and religious tracts. In winter, poor families are allowed to move into the church if their homes are unsuitable to survive the cold.

Grist Mill

Formed by damming the creek that runs through Harlem, the town's single mill sits near the ferry and the old tavern and is severely overworked by the needs of the community—often unable to produce enough bread to fulfil demand. Still, it is a major source of income for Harlem and a source of sustenance. It's also the most functionally defensible structure, having been built to defend the community and provide shelter in case of attack from the Indigenous peoples.

Public Houses

Public houses (taverns) were strange places that operated under a different set of rules than the rest of the world. Most Harlemites saw these places as a second home, even keeping a personal pint glass or pipe at them. Different classes, religions, genders, races, and politics interacted pleasantly here to some extent.

Halfway House

This expansive tavern is located at the foot of Harlem Lane, which will one day be East 109th St. It's halfway between downtown and the edge of the island, and is very attractive for city folk looking to get away and rough it a little. It's a frequent meeting place for the movers and shakers of New York, many of which are drawn by the terrapin soup. Like many public houses, it's a very cosmopolitan establishment, a place where all creeds and races come to enjoy themselves.

Ferryside Tavern

The Ferryside Tavern was once run by a enslaved person named Matthys. It is currently owned by Cornelius Jansen Kortright, who bought it when he bought the ferry. Two complexes of houses and plots sit nearby. The site plays host to auctions, games, puppet shows, live music, and readings from religious tracts and newspapers. Locals enjoy a "flip," mixed beer and rum heated with a hot poker from the fireplace.

Ferry

The ferry is owned by Cornelius Jansen Kortright, who bought it from Johannes Verveelen after the latter opened a much bigger and better ferry at Spuyten Duyvil. The old boat carries grain, livestock, and passengers across the river. The ferry dock also serves as both a strategic staging point and a place of interception for the Weckquaesgeek, who sometimes try to smuggle grain upriver in canoes.

Sint Antonius (Saint Anthony's)

Sint Antonius is also known as "the Dutch hospital," serving as an almshouse and hospital. The hospital treats freedmen in theory, but traveling there presents practical issues as it lies squarely in the white part of Harlem—and New York did not issue freedom papers.

Underground Tunnels

The mi-go came to what is now Harlem eons ago and built a hive-like structure underground. They since abandoned the tunnels, but **The Revenant** (page 276) found two entrances and made his lair within. The maze-like tunnels are traversable but forgotten horrors and traps lie in wait for the unwary.

Black Community

The freedmen of Harlem live in a tight-knit and self-contained community, taking up about two streets, and even have their own burial ground at what will one day become East 126th Street and Second Avenue.

LOCATIONS (CONTINUED)

Church of Our Lady of Harlem

Enslaved people met in secret to engage in acts of worship, usually with a semblance of Christianity to avoid white pastors preaching obedience as the highest virtue. Once freed, they could join a white church or form a congregation with other Harlemites. Some enslaved people (wholly on the whim of their owners) received Sundays off, and captive and freedmen could worship together.

The Church of Our Lady of Harlem practices Protestantism, though it is not officially recognized by the Protestant church and was founded when Harlem was still under Dutch rule. Pastor Carmichael took over from Pastor Harald in 1667, when Harald passed away after a winter battling pneumonia. The British often call on Carmichael as they regard him to be more civilized than other Harlemites.

Our Lady of Harlem is housed in a small wooden church just outside Harlem, and with 30 free blacks and 10 of their still-enslaved relatives, is the largest black congregation.

The Bowl and Spoon

This small cookshop serves an excellent daily dinner, lunch, and breakfast (consisting of yesterday's leftovers). Proprietress Hekata runs a boarding house, with room for 12 people above the cook shop. The cookshop has wooden floors, and while dust is a constant problem, the place is otherwise clean. Hekata commissioned a carpenter to carve a large wooden bowl and spoon, which she uses as a hanging sign for the cookshop. The Bowl and Spoon is commonly referred to as "Hekata's," or simply "the cookshop."

Nell's Barbershop

Hair carries cultural meaning in Africa, especially West Africa, and white people shaved enslaved people to erase their culture. George Nell the barber tends to hair and teeth both, and his nimble fingers coax even the shortest strands into braids, twists, and Bantu knots. Though not the only hairdresser in Harlem, Nell is the only one with enough customers to afford a shop, which also sells a homemade ointment to treat sensitive skin for shaving. Nell picked dentistry up "along the way" and is much less skilled in that area, but has no local competitor willing to treat black people.

Shrine to the Mother Goddess

This small house is decorated with wooden amulets, bird skulls, small mammals hanging from strings, pieces of driftwood from the Hudson, and small bells and pieces of glass. Cloth packages containing bread, onions, and other offerings sit on the doorstep. The house holds a single downstairs room, overflowing with occult and medical items, and a shrine dedicated to the Mother Goddess at the back of the room. The smell of incense and herbs fills the room.

The house and shrine belong to Agathe Bruyn, and the door is always open to supplicants. The house is unmarked to avoid British coming down on "a place of heresy," but Harlemites know where to find it—especially women, as Bruyn knows all secrets of preventing or terminating unwanted pregnancies.

FIRST NATIONS OF THE AMERICAS

The white colonists were just as cruel in their treatment of the Indigenous peoples of America. Between 1492 and 1880, Europeans enslaved 2 to 5.5 million Indigenous people. Most were taken during the 1675–1676 war that pitted Indigenous King Metacom, also known as King Philip, against the British. Toward the end of the war, many Indigenous people surrendered as the British promised leniency. The settlers broke this promise immediately, as they considered letting Indigenous people go free too dangerous, and also lacked the resources to house them; thus, found selling them into slavery the most convenient option. In addition to making money, this also cleared lands for more white colonists.

WHITE COLONISTS

In 1680, in addition to the British, Harlem was home to Dutch families who, with the exception of government officials and soldiers, remained after the British takeover.

Where the Dutch once kept to themselves, their richest families began to emulate the British elite. Where this scenario refers to white people, investigators may encounter British or Dutch as the Keeper sees fit—speaking to Dutch people in their own language warrants a bonus die or reduced difficulty for social interactions. References to the British specifically mean British authorities.

Englishman William Dyre served as the thirteenth mayor of New York (from 1680 to 1682). Little is known of William but his mother was the colonial Puritan-turned-Quaker Mary Dyre, who was hanged in 1660 in Boston for defying Puritan law banning Quakers. William's father, also named William, remained a Puritan. The mayor's own religious leanings are not recorded but, as he was allowed to serve as mayor of New York and two of his siblings were specifically tried for being Quakers while William was not, he was likely of the Puritan faith.

FIVE DAYS AGO

On Sunday, following one of the two annual road-clearing days, the congregation of Our Lady of Harlem gathers outside the church before the service. Pastor Jones welcomes worshippers, while Terrence Walker watches from the shade of the trees, dark circles under his eyes from lack of sleep. On the other side of the clearing stands Hekata Bos, face upturned to enjoy the last of the warm autumn sun. The congregation is happy and strong, though not completely relaxed, as they live under constant pressure. The community is taking time to reflect on yesterday's activities as they slowly makes their way into the makeshift church.

George Nell pales as he sees something staring at him from the surrounding woods. Looking down from the sun and preparing to enter the church, Hekata Bos feels a pair of eyes on her and turns to look. David Martin escorts Terrace Walker inside the church and comes back out to retrieve his dropped cross and he also sees it. The thing in the woods is visible to any looking toward it, but, for now, it is only seen by these three people. Perhaps, it allowed only those three to see it for some unknown as of yet purpose…

Nell, Bos, and Martin all see the same thing—the Black Man striding toward them with an inhuman gait. Black, yes, but not like them. The tall man's skin is "unholy" to view, as it conveys an absence of color and seems to consume all light, casting back an empty nothingness, best described as an "abyss of darkness," and certainly unlike anything human. The "man" lacks hair and has marble-smooth features, with two ebony goat horns atop his skull. His eyes present the darkness of space. Clasped in his hands is a massive tome. The trio recognizes the thing for what it is... the Devil.

The Black Man casually touches his heart, then the large book, which he extends toward the trio. His expression speaks of an unknown promise, appealing to each of the viewers' inner secrets. Then, it speaks, *"Sign your soul to the Black Book and your worries shall vanish."*

Nell cries out, pointing toward the thing. The Black Man looks upon them as if searching for that sweet spot where his offer will be impossible to resist. Before leaving, he smiles at each of the trio before retreating back into the trees he emerged from.

On hearing the cry, Pastor Jones steps out toward the three but sees only a slight movement within the trees. Bos and Martin turn on their heels and quickly walk past him, into the church, lost in thought. Nell takes the pastor's hand and enters the church. The three, having witnessed the Devil, feel something take root deep within them—something no one else can understand.

INTRODUCING THE INVESTIGATORS

The investigators may enter the scenario in two ways. The first, **A Pastor's Request**, assumes the Keeper is running a 1680s campaign or one-off session, with the investigators being local and trustworthy Harlemites. The second, **Temporal Ripples**, assumes they are from another time and have been accidentally transported back to the 1680s.

Investigators skilled in Medicine, Occult, Spot Hidden, Track, and social skills may fare better in this scenario. While Language (Dutch) is not required, the skill makes some interactions easier when speaking to Dutch people (granting a bonus die or lowering difficulty).

A PASTOR'S REQUEST

The investigators are people of standing in the community, who can be relied upon for their discretion. Pastor Jones recruits the investigators to look into the body (**Dead Man's Plight**, page 278) before the British intercede. Four ready-made investigators are provided for this option (see **Book: Pre-generated Investigators**, page 297).

TEMPORAL RIPPLES

The investigators discover an ancestral journal that references an unsolved murder to which the local pastor at the time was linked, along with a page of indecipherable writing (Aklo) that is actually a spell. When the strange writing is read aloud, the spell automatically transports the investigators back in time to 1680, either wholly or by projecting their minds into host bodies present at the murder site (**Dead**

Man's Plight, page 278)—the process costs each investigator 6 magic points and 1D6 Sanity points.

Investigators arriving in host bodies keep their original mental characteristics (the Keeper should provide or ask the players roll the physical characteristics of their host bodies). Modern investigators are likely motivated to discover a way to return to their own time and may guess that the murder investigation may provide some form of a link. In addition, given that the English language used in 1680 is somewhat different to modern usage, all modern-day investigators suffer an increased difficulty (or a penalty die) to social skill rolls—each interaction becomes easier with experience, so, after two successes at Hard difficulty (or where a penalty die has been applied), this penalty is thereafter negated.

As an option for modern characters, the investigators' host bodies, or any of the NPCs in the **Dramatis Personae**, could actually be one of their ancestors. Investigators may recognize a name—*"Wait, Hekata Bos? That's my grandmother's last name!"*— or encounter some well-known family heirloom in 1680. Perhaps, on returning to the modern-day, an investigator uncovers an old diary written in 1680 that confirms their history and the role "they" played in it!

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

ALLIES AND INDEPENDENTS

Pastor Carmichael Jones, *age 46, pillar of the community*

- **Link:** Jones contacts the investigators (**Dead Man's Plight**, page 278).

Pastor Carmichael Jones, who prefers to go by his first name, is an admired leader. He is a devout Christian, likening slavery to the tribulations of Moses' people. He believes the ten plagues of Egypt were righteous, though he vacillates between praying to God to visit the same punishment on white people and praying for a peaceful end to slavery. He is the community's main contact with the Dutch authorities and the British government.

- **Description:** tall, with a mass of gray curls and trimmed beard. He has a sonorous voice that can soothe or whip people into a frenzy.
- **Traits:** gentle and patient with his flock, while strong and commanding when taking charge or setting a sinner straight. Quietly simmering rage boils beneath the surface.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** Jones is the investigators' primary contact. He can provide a wealth of knowledge about other characters, though he never breaks confessional secrets. He speaks multiple languages and can translate Dutch. Jones has noticed Terrence Walker's troubling behavior and is unsure of how to help the man. Jones wants to protect his folk, including their souls, and believes not all people are called to vengeance. He is unsure of how to proceed.
- **Signing the Black Book:** Jones committed his soul to Jesus; he becomes vulnerable to the Black Man if he loses faith in God.

Hekata Bos, *age 36, proprietor and truth keeper*

- **Link:** researching David Martin (**Dead Man's Plight**, page 278, **Conversations with Nell**, page 280).
- **Link: Speaking with Pastor Jones** (page 279).

Hekata Bos owns and runs the cook shop in Harlem. Her food is rich and spicy, and her alcoholic homebrew has never blinded anyone. People come to her with all manner of problems, and she gives good, if blunt, advice. Bos has found herself to be one of the pillars of the Harlem community and values that position.

- **Description:** beautiful, curvaceous, and dressed in bright colors to catch the eye.
- **Traits:** friendly and loud, welcoming anyone to her bar. She never over pours, never forgets a bill, and keeps a heavy club under the bar.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** Bos knows everyone in Harlem, though it takes a good reason for her to share anyone's secrets. She is undecided on signing the *Black Book* and, given her standing, whatever she does sways many Harlemites. She is a survivor and has done things she is not proud of; her hope is to prevent others from suffering as she did. She can read and translate Dutch.
- **Signing the Black Book:** Bos knows that fate and people can both be fickle. The more threatened she feels, the greater the odds she'll sign in hopes of saving others.

Agathe Bruyn, *age 41, conjure woman with an old soul*

- **Link:** seeking Bruyn's help (**Dead Man's Plight**, page 278).
- **Link:** Hekata Bos mentions directing David Martin to Bruyn (**Visiting Hekata**, page 280).
- **Link:** discovery of map marking Bruyn's home (**David Martin's Room**, page 282).
- **Link:** seeking out Bruyn (**Visiting Agathe**, page 283).

Agathe Bruyn was born with a gift of power and learned hoodoo from her mother before being sold into a different household (never seeing her family again). After a decade of being a house slave, Bruyn placed a luck spell on another enslaved person and stole freedom in the night alongside them. She fled to Harlem and built a small shrine to her goddess and now lives in the woods outside of Harlem, away from prying eyes.

Bruyn can cast "folk magic"—boons of luck and fortune, as well as curses. She charges a "single secret" for her services and a gift of goods or favors that must never be more or less than the petitioner can bear.

- **Description:** wears a fine, hand-woven cloth dress, with her long black hair braided into cornrows. She wears or carries a variety of amulets that are easily hidden from Christians when walking the streets of Harlem.
- **Traits:** practical, with a forceful presence. She Silently watches and observes.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** Bruyn remembers rumors about **The Revenant** (page 294) from her youth in Harlem, and that Palmer Stoddard was the sheriff. She knows the rhyme about the Black Man and about his limited amount of time in Harlem. If someone wants to barter for knowledge, she provides them what she considers to be relevant—she understands that providing too much information could draw the attention of the Black Man or the white authorities. Her greatest shame is being taken away before she could learn much of the Yorùbá religion. The goddess Bruyn worships is an amalgamation of Olókun, Yemoja, and the Virgin Mary.
- **Signing the Black Book:** No; Bruyn already promised her soul to the Mother Goddess. A day ago, the Black Man came to her and she refused his offer.

Palmer Stoddard, *age 74, grizzled survivor*

- **Link:** directed by Agathe Bruyn (**Visiting Agathe**, page 283).

Palmer Stoddard lives in a small house on the cusp of the white and black communities. He doesn't talk much but most know he is the oldest man in town. His food is delivered, and he rarely leaves his house—a pattern he's followed for the last three decades.

Stoddard was the *schout* (scout) during Schipper family's hardships; he discovered the grisly murder site and witnessed **The Revenant** (page 294) fleeing. He took a number of items from the Schipper house, including a statue stolen from an old Harlem family that had moved here from the Netherlands only to be later killed. He never told anyone about the "beast" and instead attempted to stalk it.

Thirty years ago, he found the beast on a snow-covered field and battled it, losing badly and barely escaping alive. When found nearly frozen to death by a rescue party, Stoddard claimed to have been attacked by a bear. His reputation and status prevented anyone from questioning him. Since then, he has become a hermit dependent on people bringing him food.

- **Description:** a grizzled and scarred white male dressed in furs and leathers, and always with a matchlock pistol or knife close at hand. He can barely walk since his "bear attack" decades ago.
- **Roleplaying hooks**: wants to be left alone. Since the attack, he has learned that all human life is equal. He can be convinced to aid the investigators should he learn the Revenant is still at large.
- **Signing the Black Book:** Stoddard won't sign the book if asked. He would rather fight a monster than serve one.

Terrence Walker, *age 32, victim of unwanted visions*

- **Link:** introduces himself to the investigators (**Dead Man's Plight**, page 278).
- **Link:** interviewing Walker (**Visions of What Will Come**, page 282).

Terrence Walker's life has always been troubled; like so many others of Harlem's population, he fell victim to yellow fever. In dreams, Walker recalls a traveling doctor who read from a strange book, whose ministrations saved him while others, black or white, died of the fever. Walker has struggled and survived under oppressive conditions, buying his freedom in 1676.

Of late, he has been having more strange dreams in which a man in flowing yellow robes answers questions before he is even asked. Walker was unsettled by the dreams, telling David Martin about them, and believes his friend traded secrets with Agathe Bruyn to cure Walker's dreams.

- **Description:** tall and dark brown, with haunted eyes; his smile betrays a deep weariness and the need to sleep.
- **Traits:** compassionate.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** knows David Martin was arrested trying to sneak into the Dutch hospital. He believes his friend was trying to find medicine to cure Walker's dreams and constant weariness. He blames himself for Martin's death.
- **Signing the Black Book:** if he discovers that the Black Man and the Revenant killed Martin, he will never sign; otherwise, he can be convinced or threatened into signing.

ADVERSARIES AND MONSTERS

George Nell, *age 22, foolish and loyal brother*

- **Link:** seeking information (**Conversations with Nell**, page 280).

George Nell signed the *Black Book* in secret to free his sister. He brags loudly about how he raised enough money to buy his sister's freedom, while negotiating with his former owner, a British doctor, to do so. He excitedly tells anyone that will listen how his sister will soon be joining him, and how he plans to open the barber's shop to women. Unbeknownst to him, he is now a pawn of the Black Man, able to be controlled via impulses to do or say whatever the Black Man desires.

Keeper note: when under the Black Man's control, a successful Hard **Psychology** roll allows the investigators to notice a strange "deadness" in Nell's eyes.

- **Description:** light brown skin, with immaculate hair twists, and long, delicate fingers.
- **Traits:** loves to gossip but not maliciously so—he wants to know all the best scandals but cuts the conversation short if anything seems too painful or private.
- **Roleplaying hooks**: Nell was one of the last people to see David Martin alive and can provide his name and address. Nell still works at his former owner's house and he is known to the local watch. If on friendly terms with the investigators, he can provide cover if they need to access the white part of Harlem. Nell does not know that everything he sees and hears is conveyed back to the Black Man—he is little more than a puppet waiting for his strings to be cut.
- **Signing the Black Book:** Nell signed before the scenario begins in exchange for his sister's freedom and former owner's acceptance of the offer. He does not want his sister to sign the book.

The Revenant (Pieter Schipper), *servant of the Black Man*

- **Link:** tracking the monster down (**The Revenant's Lair**, page 288).

Pieter Schipper was one of the early Dutch settlers in Nieuw Haarlem. Having arrived with his family to escape poverty, he believed they could make a better life for themselves. The first few months were pleasant but soon the family was going hungry and he could find little for them to eat. He encountered the Black Man in the grove on a visit to Harlem in search of food. He forsook hope, humanity, and unbeknownst to him, his family, in exchange for power. He burned with the secrets and spells of the cosmos, becoming the Revenant. Eventually, the Black Man departed Harlem and released his servant. The Revenant returned home and murdered his family when they recoiled from him in horror.

The Revenant lives near the Hudson River, in the old mi-go tunnels. He worships the Outer Gods and serves the Black Man. He murdered David Martin and will kill again.

- **Description:** previously a white male, now he appears sickly and pale, his yellowing and gray skin blistered with burn marks—the result of channeling dark powers. The Revenant's skin continually flakes and oozes green pus, while reeking of burning flesh. When speaking, he stares beyond, into the distance. His vocal cords are strained, making him speak in a cracked whisper.
- **Traits:** full of self-pity and prone to violence. Loyal to the Black Man.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** the Revenant killed David Martin and will kill anyone that does not sign the book. It wishes to please the Black Man and thereby be allowed to sign the book.
- **Signing the Black Book:** Yes! However, the Black Man has not asked him to sign the book. The Revenant is determined to prove his worth by killing anyone who refuses to sign. The Black Man wants the Revenant as his servant and will never offer the book to him.

SCENARIO PACING

The pacing of *Your Name in the Book* is vital. The scenario opens on a Thursday morning, five days after the first encounter with the Black Man (**Five Days Ago**, page 273). Each day should be composed of two or three scenes due to the investigators' limited free time—trying to locate the person to speak with, avoiding troublesome areas of town, and so on. The Black Man needs to claim three willing souls within nine days (starting the scenario with one, George Nell, already in the book). The Black Man leaves after nine days or after capturing a third soul, with the British harshly quelling any trouble caused by recent deaths.

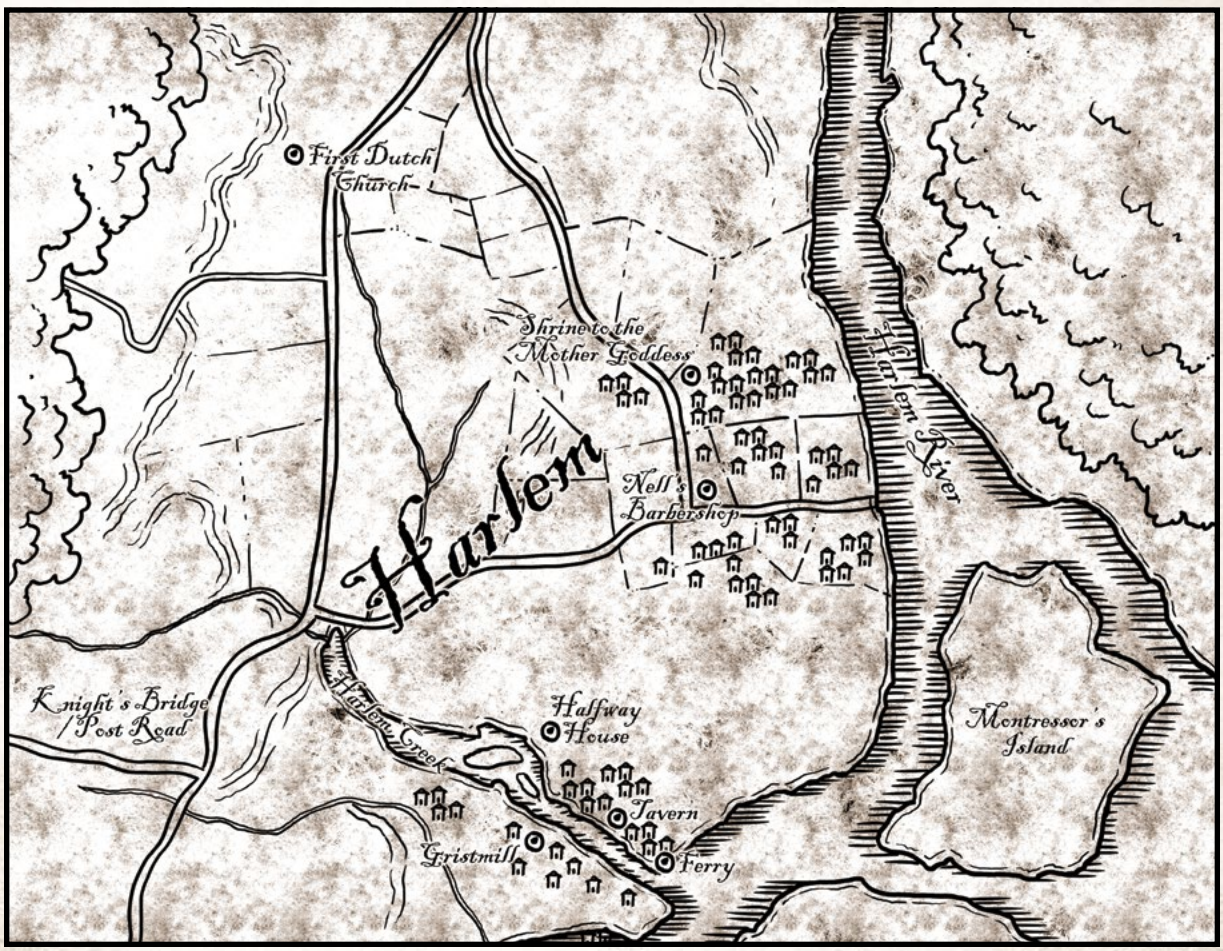
George Nell signed the *Black Book*, while Agathe Bruyn and Terrence Walker refused. The Revenant murdered David Martin when he too refused the Black Man's offer (and was found spying on Nell). So far, no one else that has been approached has signed the book, but each murder increases the likelihood of someone signing by +30% per day— the

roll receives a penalty die for each day the investigators are seen actively working to solve the murders (to protect the community); their actions, if positive, may help to stem the number of people signing the book. If Pastor Jones or Hekata Bos signs the book, their influence means that three more souls sign with them, which moves events directly to **The British Are Coming** (page 286).

The Revenant will kill Henry Mitchells (see **Visiting Hekata**, page 280), Agathe Bruyn, and lastly Pastor Jones. Any failed murder attempt has the Revenant move on to the next target the following day—a successful **Spot Hidden** or **Track** roll finds piles of purple ash around the intended victim's residence. The investigators have a dual purpose: stop the Revenant and the Black Man, while working quickly and discreetly to forestall Mayor Dyre sending British watchmen.

RACIAL TENSION MODIFIER

When the investigator and their target are of different races or cultures, increase the difficulty of the roll (such as a social skill roll) by one level (Regular becomes Hard, Hard becomes Extreme). If necessary, at the Keeper's discretion, an additional penalty die may be applied, dependent on the circumstances. This modifier reflects the mistrust between different groups.



Your Name in the Book Keeper map

SCENES

START: DEAD MAN'S PLIGHT

It's dawn on Thursday, the body of a young black man lies near the banks of the Hudson River. Only the sound of running water can be heard. The scene begins with the investigators at the site, either having been sent by Pastor Jones or arriving in this time after reading the journal (**Introducing the Investigators**, page 134)—the scenario, from here, presumes the investigators have been sent by Pastor Jones.

Investigating the scene, no footsteps or drag marks near the body can be found, and the body is too far from the river to have simply washed up here. Strangely, there is a remarkable absence of animal sounds in the vicinity. A successful **Know** roll recognizes the corpse as that of David Martin, a local man sometimes seen at the cook shop (**Visiting Hekata**, page 280); otherwise, he looks familiar but they can't quite place him. Thoughtful investigators may make a sketch of the victim's face to show around to confirm his name.

When examining the body, a faint smell of perfumed lotion is detectable and it appears the man recently had his hair cut—investigators who have had their hair cut at Nell's Barbershop (**Conversations with Nell**, page 280) may recognize the scent; a **Luck** roll may help determine this. Around the dead man's neck is a string on which hangs a wooden cross, bespeaking a Christian man—perhaps the Pastor knows of him (**Speaking with Pastor Jones**, page 279). The hand-carved cross has a distinctive spiral design etched into it. Besides the cross, the young man carries nothing to identify him.

The body is badly burnt—a successful **First Aid** or **Medicine** roll reveals streaks of purple-colored necrotic flesh around the neck, and that the man appeared to have been strangled. His throat and lungs are filled with thick ash, still warm to the touch—the discovery of which provokes a **Sanity** roll (0/1 loss). It's particularly hard to determine the source of the ash, although locals may think to consult with the mystic, Agathe Bruyn, as its origins (**Visiting Agathe**, page 283).

Once the investigators have finished tending to the scene, they may notice Terrence Walker approaching and standing quietly nearby. When seen, he comes forward. Assuming the investigators are locals, they know Walker as something of a rabble-rouser. Without much in the way of a hello, Walker

The Revenant

simply says he was sent by Pastor Jones to clean the site and take the body before anyone should call in the local watch or the British. Observing Walker, his slow movements and a certain lack of balance suggest that he could be drunk.

Walker doesn't reveal he knows the murdered man as he doesn't know if the killing is related to Martin's recent troubles trying to get into Sint Antonius (the Dutch hospital), which he prefers to keep secret at this point (**Visions of What Will Come**, page 282). A successful **Psychology** roll catches that Walker seems to know more than he is saying. If asked whether he is drunk, Walker shakes his head and says he is sick.

SPEAKING WITH PASTOR JONES

- **Link:** seeking information on the murdered man (**Dead Man's Plight** page 278).

Pastor Jones is usually at Our Lady of Harlem working: helping congregants, repairing the small church, or cleaning. The wooden building seems to have been cobbled together more with love than actual time dedicated to it, given the little free time the black community can afford to give. If the investigators arrive at the church in the late morning, Jones is talking with a local (white) Dutch pastor about scripture. Jones motions for the investigators to wait and comes over once the other man has left. If asked about the conversation, Jones shakes his head and says the other man periodically inspects his sermons to, "*Keep us in line. We only have the illusion of freedom and the larger community fears our strength and unity.*"

Presumably, the investigators report on the murder scene. If shown the wooden cross found around David Martin's neck, Jones recognizes it, running a finger along the spirals and nodding more to himself than the investigators. Jones provides or confirms what little information he knows or considers relevant—use the following information to develop the conversation.

- The murdered man's name was David Martin.
- Martin did not have any family in Harlem.
- Martin was a parishioner. He joined the church a few months ago, adding that Martin wasn't overly engaged of late and seemed distant. Jones puts such thoughts down to Martin's youth. He is with God now.
- Jones doesn't know where Martin lived—he deliberately neglects this part of his pastoral duties to deny the British authorities a list of who lives where in the community. A successful **Law** or **Religion** roll knows that Jones could be fined or imprisoned for not providing such information; a successful **Charm** or **Persuade** roll elicits the same information.
- If told about or shown some of the ash from Martin's throat, Jones is perturbed and a little confused. He suggests that it may be prudent for the investigators to consult with Hekata Bos (**Visiting Hekata**, page 280) or perhaps make subtle and quiet inquires at **Sint Antonius** (page 286).
- If mention is made of the man's perfumed scent, Jones suggests speaking with George Nell, the barber (**Conversations with Nell**, following).

A successful **Psychology** roll reveals the pastor is unnerved by the victim's identity; a Hard success lets the investigator know Pastor Jones is hiding something. If pressed, he only says Martin was a good man who should not have died like that—far too young. He is concerned and worried, as should the authorities learn of Martin's murder, things could get very bad.

Keeper note: David Martin confided in Pastor Jones about seeing the "Devil." Jones did not believe him, attributing it to drunken revelry—he is quite reluctant to share this information yet and concludes his conversation with the investigators by going to pray.

INFORMATION GATHERING

While most groups will follow the clue trail set out in the various scenes, much of the information leading to people like Terrence Walker, George Nell, and Agathe Bruyn can also be obtained by simply asking around the neighborhood, should the investigators forget to ask the right question or if they traveled from the future and are less knowledgeable about who's who. Use social skill rolls, gossip, and encounters with unnamed NPCs as necessary to ensure the investigators pick up the trail. Doing so counts as one of the daily scenes for the purpose of scenario pacing. As needed, create residents to help flesh out the community.

CONVERSATIONS WITH NELL

- **Link:** seeking information on the murdered man (**Dead Man's Plight**, page 278).

George Nell's shop is a large house in the Dutch style, with the front half for business while the back provides living quarters. Early mornings are the busiest periods and interactions at this time suffer an increased difficulty or a penalty die, as Nell's attention is on his customers. At other times of the day, there are at least two people are in the shop. If they call in the evening or on a Sunday, see **Thursday's Child**, below for additional information.

Whenever the investigators walk in, Nell is excitedly telling customers about negotiating with his former owner, a British doctor named Colin, to purchase his sister's freedom. If asked about how he was able to accomplish the deal, call for a **Charm** or **Persuasion** roll; if successful, Nell admits it took more money than he had and that he needed to borrow funds, but that it was worth it to have his sister returned. Otherwise, he smiles and he says it's down to his shrewd business mind. Nell won't divulge where he got the money, but a **Psychology** roll may note the fear in his eyes when he talks about it.

Keeper note: if the investigators learn of the Black Man and accuse Nell of signing the book, he adamantly denies doing so but is obviously lying.

If shown a sketch or given a description of the victim, Nell identifies him as David Martin. Nell is deeply concerned by Martin's death, quickly asking if it was murder. A successful **Psychology** roll notes Nell has no guilt about the death and no malice toward Martin; a Hard success senses Nell has a strange look in his eyes for a moment, possibly that he is simply considering the gossip for his customers. In truth, the Black Man is sending Nell impressions of what to say, and wants to glean more information about the investigators. Use the following to construct the conversation.

- Martin attended Our Lady of Harlem (**Speaking with Pastor Jones**, page 279).
- Nell saw Martin yesterday when he came to have his hair cut. He later saw him again that day at the cook shop, when Nell was telling people his good news about his sister (**Visiting Hekata**, page 280).
- Martin was connected with Terrence Walker's gang who cause trouble for the British and the Dutch (**Visions of What Will Come**, page 282).

Keeper note: the investigators might ask Nell to accompany them to the **Sint Antonius** (page 286) at some point, which requires a Hard **Persuade** roll (if they offer him money), or a **Charm** roll (if they appeal to his sense of community). The Black Man may direct Nell to aid the investigators as a means to keep track of them or have Nell turn them over to the watch in the white part of town.

Thursday's Child

Investigators coming to the shop Thursday evening are greeted by the loving sight of George Nell and his sister Bertie. The two are close together and whispering shared childhood stories—relieved to at last be reunited, as so few ever are.

Keeper note: Nell never admits signing the book, as he doesn't want to saddle his sister with that burden. A successful **Psychology** roll reveals he did sign the book but is trying to protect Bertie.

If visited on Saturday, a **Psychology** roll may note Bertie's (now) cold demeanor and that she stands apart from her brother. A successful **Charm** or **Fast Talk** roll encourages her to share the following information.

- While at first overjoyed to be with her, Bertie's brother now seems cold and distant.
- Nell has been sneaking out at night and Bertie is worried about him.
- She fears something strange is happening; each morning, there are piles of ash appearing outside the house, which she sweeps away.
- She overheard Nell say to someone, "More shall sign the book," and something about Pastor Jones (see **A Pastor's Confession**, page 285).

VISITING HEKATA

- **Link:** seeking information (**Dead Man's Plight**, page 278, **Speaking with Pastor Jones**, page 279).
- **Link:** asking George Nell about the body (**Conversations with Nell**, page 280).

Unless the investigators specifically pick a quiet time to visit Bos, the place is bustling. The sprawling building serves as a cook shop, bar, and boarding house for up to twelve people. The investigators may catch a few words of a conversation between Louis Brown and Henry Mitchells, discussing a mysterious offer over a meal and furtive glances around

the room. A successful **Listen** roll overhears most of the conversation; otherwise, they only catch the second sentence from Henry Mitchells (see **The Conversation**, below). Brown is a congregant at Our Lady of Harlem, and both regularly visit the barbershop.

The Conversation

Brown: *"Did the Black Man visit you? Did he show you the book, like he did Nell?"*

Mitchells: *"No. We both know that things like that don't exist. My father is ailing. He was born free. If there was a Black Man's offer of help, I would consider it, so he could die free."*

Brown: *"Your father wouldn't ask that."*

If approached, the duo denies everything and immediately leave, while a successful **Psychology** roll notes Brown believes what he is saying and that Mitchell seems to be humoring his friend.

Speaking with Hekata

Bos is a busy woman, and getting her to answer questions requires a successful **Charm**, **Fast Talk**, or **Persuade** roll, although a bonus die may be granted if investigators have purchased a meal or drink—dropping Pastor Jones' name makes no difference as Bos carries enough clout to defy the pastor.

If shown a sketch or David Martin's is described, Bos recognizes him and expresses concern—a successful **Psychology** roll detects her sincerity. She asks what happened to him and, after the investigators talk, provides Martin's current address (**David Martin's Room**, page 282). She also recalls that Martin spent most of his time with Terrence Walker's gang (**Visions of What Will Come**, page 282). The pair started drinking together some months ago; Walker has always been bad news and Bos keeps an eye on him.

Bos asks to be kept informed about the investigation, as she worries Martin was killed by British troops. Just as the investigators leave, she mentions that Martin came to her recently asking about how to cure bad dreams. She had no idea of how to help him and provided him a free bottle of her homebrew and told him where to find Agathe Bruyn (**Visiting Agathe**, page 283).

Alone in the Night

Should the investigators spy on Bos (combined Hard **Stealth** and Regular **Spot Hidden** roll) on Friday night, they witness the Black Man (**Sanity** roll; 0/1D4 loss) approaching her behind the cookshop when she is alone. He touches his heart, then the book, and extends the book for her to sign while speaking some unheard words. Bos pauses for a moment before silently walking away. The Black Man seems to motion that he will return again, soon.

If confronted about the encounter with the Black Man, Bos admits it happened, but she says she did not take the "Devil's bargain." She also admits to seeing the Black Man at the church last week but did not tell anyone about it. The Black Man said she had two days. Depending on what the investigators say to Bos, a successful **Charm** or **Persuade** roll could sway her toward a yes or no in terms of her position on signing the book—thus, influencing the wider community. If presenting a good case and appealing to Hekata's practical side, a bonus die might be awarded to the roll. Note that if more than four people die, Bos seeks out the Black Man to sign the book in exchange for the British not coming to Harlem.

VISIONS OF WHAT WILL COME

- **Link:** hearing that David Martin was connected with Terrence Walker's gang (**Conversations with Nell**, page 280).

Terrence Walker lives in a narrow house, wedged in a row between similar homes. The investigators either already know him or recognize him from **Dead Man's Plight** (page 278). A successful **Charm**, **Intimidate** or **Persuade** roll coaxes Walker to speak. Use the following points to construct the conversation.

- He became friends with Martin a few months ago, soon after Martin got to Harlem.
- Martin was a runaway and had a slave catcher after him. Walker's gang helped to drive off the white slave catcher, although he knows it is only a matter of time before he returns.
- Walker admits he runs a gang of people who banded together to fight the British oppression, just like they do the Dutch.
- Walker believes it's his fault that Martin is dead, *"He was trying to help me. That is why he was detained and then killed."*
- Walker admits to having strange dreams and feeling constantly tired. Whenever he goes to sleep it feels like his mind is elsewhere else. He told Martin about his condition and Martin went to Sint Antonius (the Dutch hospital) to obtain some kind of medicine to help stop the dreams (see **Sint Antonius**, page 286).
- If asked about his dreams, Walker can't explain them but hands over a drawing, saying he felt compelled to draw it (**Book Handout 1: The Yellow Sign**).

Book Handout 1: The Yellow Sign

Keeper note: a successful **Cthulhu Mythos** roll identifies the symbol is connected to He Who Is Not To Be Named (Hastur).

A successful **Psychology** roll confirms the truth in Walker's words and that he is genuinely sorry for Martin's death. He ends the conversation by saying that he hopes the investigators find whoever killed Martin and bring some semblance of peace to his soul.

DAVID MARTIN'S ROOM

- **Link:** Hekata Bos provides Martin's address (**Visiting Hekata**, page 280).

The boarding house is barely standing, untended and unrepaired, yet overfilled with residents. Investigators easily assess that the condition of the building is ill-suited for the coming winter season. Asking around, they discover that David Martin shared a room with three other people: Carl, Jack, and Abhram. Gaining entrance to the room is relatively easy, which is always empty unless the investigators arrive after dusk, at which point they meet one of the three residents. All three work hard in the fields during the day, keep their heads down, and say they don't want any part of whatever trouble Martin was involved in. A successful **Charm** or **Persuade** roll at Hard difficulty, or an **Intimidate** roll, gets them to open up. Use the following to guide the conversation.

- Martin was an escaped enslaved man and was terrified of being captured by the white authorities.
- Martin talked about moving out west but was too afraid of being kidnapped on the roads.
- There was a slave catcher in Harlem recently, Martin saw him and barely avoided being captured.
- Terrence Walker recruited him into some sort of gang; the two frequently drank at the cook shop (**Visiting Hekata**, page 280, and **Visions of What Will Come**, page 282).
- Martin went to the Dutch hospital twice. The first time was about medicine but then he went again and needed someone who could read to go with him (**Sint Antonius**, page 286).

Searching the room takes a matter of minutes, with a successful **Spot Hidden** roll turning up a map with an "X" marked in the center of the nearby woods—if followed, the X is Agathe Bruyn's home (**Visiting Agathe**, following). If the investigators miss the map, one of Martin's roommates later seeks them out with the map, hoping it is of use in their inquiry.

VISITING AGATHE

- **Link:** seeking information about the ash (**Dead Man's Plight** (page 278).
- **Link:** finding the map (**David Martin's Room**, page 282).
- **Link:** Hekata Bos mentions directing David Martin's to Bruyn (**Visiting Hekata**, page 280).

Getting what direction they can, it takes the investigators over half a day to travel to and from Agathe Bruyn's hidden home in the woods. Her house is so well hidden that until they are virtually on her doorstep, they don't know how much further to travel. Cruel Keepers may ask for a **Track**, **Navigate**, or **Spot Hidden** roll to find the house. Of course, if they already possess the map (**David Martin's Room**, page 282), finding Bruyn is somewhat easier, requiring only a few hours.

Having arrived, Agathe Bruyn offers the investigators a cup of tea and some bread before broaching any topics. When Bruyn is ready, she makes it clear that she will answers questions, but first one of the investigators must tell her a secret—this can be personal, something about the investigation, or someone else's secret they've uncovered. Bruyn requires one secret per question, as well as practical payment of some type (money, food, or materials), but that is negotiable. She never asks for more than people can part with. Use the following, guided by the investigators' questions.

Questions about the Yellow Sign

- Harlem first saw the Yellow Sign twelve years ago, when yellow fever broke out. It has not been seen since.
- The Sign is ominous and portends to ill omens.

Questions about the Ash or Strange Burns

- The marks are the same as left by a murderer who struck before. Some forty years ago in the days of Peter Stuyvesant.
- A white family was killed in their home, parents and children, all with the same burns and ash in their throats.
- The old *schout* knows more, seek out Palmer Stoddard (**The Old Man and the Truth**, page 284).
- The murderer stalks Harlem below her streets.

Questions about the Black Man

- He is the herald of the Daemon King, claiming souls for his unholy father's book.
- They come from the dark between the stars, where neither light nor good can survive.
- You must resist him and help the people of Harlem resist.
- He requires three within nine before his departure.
- Pastor Jones has much to deal with, and Bruyn notes such a man could easily lose faith, given what is happening (**A Pastor's Confession**, page 285).

Questions about Returning to their Own Time

- The way lies through the darkness to see the light.
- Your actions here shape your future.
- Die in this time and you shall never see home again.

Returning with the Basalt Statue

If the investigators go to Palmer Stoddard (**The Old Man and the Truth**, page 284) and then return with the statue, Bruyn spends time examining it before explaining how it operates (see **Book Object 1: Basalt Statue**).

BOOK OBJECT 1: BASALT STATUE

The small basalt statue is approximately 12 inches (30cm) high and resembles an Egyptian pharaoh in full regalia. Vertical seams run down the statue, dividing it into four pieces, which can be taken apart. When taken apart, the air between the four pieces seems to shimmer—the effect dissipates if the pieces are more than an arm's length apart.

Brought here and forgotten by the mi-go, the artifact is a type of Gate, capable of sending a willing or unwilling being to the planet Saturn. To activate, the statue must be divided into its four parts with the target(s) in the center; each segment can be no further than 10 feet (3 m) away from the caster. The "caster" (who can be a target) focuses their mind on travel, spends 8 magic points, and suffers the loss of 1D6 Sanity points, causing the target to be transported to Saturn and suffers 1D6 Sanity loss from the experience. Witnessing the effect calls for a **Sanity** roll (1/1D4 loss). The target gains no protection from Saturn's atmosphere nor a means to return.

BOOK OBJECT 2: BIRD AMULET

A string necklace on which hangs the skull of a sparrow. Touching the skull provides a warm feeling of protection. If worn, the amulet grants a bonus die to the wearer's next **Sanity** roll, after which the skull immediately crumbles to dust.

BOOK OBJECT 3: LIZARD AMULET

The claw of a small lizard, wrapped in a small piece of cloth. When carried on their person, the amulet imposes a penalty die on the user's next **Sanity** roll, after which the claw crumbles to dust.

Should the investigators impress Bruyn by being courteous or giving her secrets of emotional value, she gives them **Book Object 2: Bird Amulet**. If they were rude or mocking, she instead gives them **Book Object 3: Lizard Amulet—**a successful Hard **Psychology** roll made at this time allows the investigators to read that Bruyn means them harm.

THE OLD MAN AND THE TRUTH

- **Link:** Agathe Bruyn directs the investigators to Palmer Stoddard (**Visiting Agathe**, page 283).

Keeper note: while Bruyn provides the only direct link to Stoddard, the investigators, should they make inquiries about the history of the community, may hear about the 28-year-old murders from someone else in the community (possibly Pastor Jones or Hekata Bos). Likewise, for local investigators, a Hard **Know** roll may recall fragments about the old murders, leading the inquiry to Bruyn, Jones, or Bos, who can direct the investigators to Stoddard.

Palmer Stoddard's small wooden cabin sits a block over from the black community. The cabin has seen better days, built nearly four decades ago and originally meant as a temporary home, it has become worn down and generally isolated from the larger community. A successful **Charm**, **Credit Rating**, or **Stealth** roll allows the investigators to reach the cabin unmolested by white residents; otherwise, the eyes of white residents fall on them with whispers and pointed fingers. Nothing eventful happens at the moment, but if the investigators later encounter either the night watch or British forces, all social rolls suffer a penalty die due to whispered gossip about them hanging around the white neighborhood.

Knocking at the door in the early-to-late morning period garners no response, although a Hard **Listen** roll may detect the sound of heavy snoring from within (Stoddard). If roused from sleep, all social rolls suffer a penalty die when dealing with Stoddard, who drank heavily the previous night.

If the investigators arrive during the afternoon, the aged white man is seated on his porch with a wheellock rifle draped over his lap, carving a whistle. Eagle-eyed investigators may also note the flintlock pistol on the side table within easy reach. Once it's obvious the investigators have arrived to talk to him, Stoddard says, *"Get off with you. There ain't nothin to cook or clean here."*

What Stoddard Knows

A successful **Charm**, **Fast Talk**, or **Persuade** roll has Stoddard put down his carving and look the investigators in the eye. "*Well, you have my attention. What?*" If the investigators say Agathe Bruyn sent them, he grows interested in their story but waits expectantly for their question. Direct Stoddard's responses from the points below and subsequent sections.

- There have been a handful of murders—like the one the investigators are dealing with—over the last few decades, but only one (till now have) has seen the victim's remains left out in the open, as all others have been found in the woods rather than in or near the community.
- With the new killing, this is the second time a body was actually found in Harlem. The first murder happened 28 years ago to the day—he remembers it well as it was the day his son was born. At this, Stoddard falls silent. If pressed, he angrily says that his wife and son both died on that day too. While grieving, a deputy came to him about the Schipper murders, so he had to go and inspect the scene.
- On arrival, Stoddard found carnage, with a family of six murdered. Mother and son beaten to death in the kitchen, the eldest daughter murdered on the stairs, and the three children burned in the bedroom. No sign of the father, Pieter Schipper.
- Stoddard arranged to have the house boarded up and, since then, the plot has been left alone, believed cursed. He can provide directions to the house (**The Schipper House**, page 287).

Conjecture about Pieter Schipper/the Murderer

If a successful **Psychology** roll is made, it's clear that Stoddard is holding something back from his account, and if pressed with a successful **Persuade** or **Intimidate** roll, he confides the following information.

- When he was at the Schipper place, he saw "something" leave the house, "*Stole out, but I saw the beast from the upstairs window as dusk began to fall. It was like a man but different. Something was wrong about it. Couldn't tell if it was Pieter Schipper, but my gut told me it was him.*"
- He never told anyone about the figure, which he calls the "beast," but spent years trying to track it down. *"I guess the loss of my family drove me to seek some kind of retribution."*
- Nearly 30 years ago, Stoddard found the "beast" on a snow-covered field. The beast was a man but Stoddard didn't recognize the face, so twisted and unholy as it was; thus, while he thinks it was Pieter Schipper, he cannot with all honesty confirm it. In the ensuing fight, he was wounded and barely escaped with his life. *"I was found, near frozen to death. I said it was a bear attack."*

If Asked about his Injury or the Consequences of his Fight with the Beast

Stoddard admits that his encounter with the "beast" left his leg wounded. With this, he pulls up his shirt to reveal the right side of his body where rotted, purple-colored necrotic flesh festers. *"Runs all the way down to my leg. It started just as a wound on my leg, but over the years it's grown worse and spread. I reckon it's the beast's poison and it'll kill me someday. I tried cleaning it but it did no good, it always comes back worse than before. I'm reconciled with it now."*

A successful **Medicine** roll determines that the flesh, while looking dead, is alive but hotter than the rest of his body; there's no clear answer as to what is causing the necrosis-like effect, other than some form of slow poison. While being examined, Stoddard admits to drinking to dull the pain.

If the Investigators Mention Hunting the Killer

If the investigators say they are hunting the murderer, Stoddard stands shakily and stumbles into his home, waving the investigators in behind him. The roof sags under the weight of disrepair and the loose floorboards buckle slightly when stepped upon.

"I know why you're here. I spoke to Agathe Bruyn's mother all those years ago about something I found in that house. It unnerved me. I knew the family could not have afforded anything like it. At first, it seemed to hum but then went silent, that is until last week when it started up again. Can you hear that?" He moves his soiled straw mattress to one side, reaches beneath, and pulls out a statue, handing it to the investigators (**Book Object 1: Basalt Statue**). Whoever takes the figure hears a faint humming and feels the statue radiating cold. "*Bruyn's mother, Ani, told me she could sense power in it, but not what it was. After it went silent, I forgot about it, and I never showed it to Bruyn. But when it started humming again last week I knew someone would come calling. Here, take it with you for whatever good it'll do.*"

In addition, he gives his wheellock rifle (and enough powder and bullets for six shots) to the investigator who has done most of the talking, bidding them to be careful and hoping they can take down the beast.

A PASTOR'S CONFESSION

- **Link:** Agathe Bruyn mentions Pastor Jones' faith (**Visiting Agathe**, page 283).
- **Link:** the investigators return to Jones to update him (**Dead Man's Plight**, page 278).

If and when the investigators return to Pastor Jones, either to update him as to their progress or question him further, they find he is tired and pale. If commented upon, Jones explains he is weary and feels under strain from David Martin's murder (and any others that may have now taken place). A successful **Psychology** roll detects the truth in Jones' words but notes there is something else troubling the pastor. A **Charm** or **Persuade** roll, both at Hard difficulty, gets Jones to open up—use the following as necessary to relay Jones' condition.

- Jones does not know how things will turn out and feels like he is lying to everyone when saying things will get better.
- While the British authorities have not yet intervened, he fears news of the killing will reach them soon, which means their presence will be felt here and their eye will be on all of the freedmen.
- Jones admits that David Martin came to him after services and told him he saw the Devil outside of the church. Jones thought he was drunk, but when Martin came back on Tuesday, saying the Devil had offered his book to sign and that he must reach a decision in two days. Of course, the following Thursday found Martin dead.

THE WATCHMEN

Harlem's early law enforcement was modeled after the English structure, with watchmen acting as community-based police. Many police forces originate from the roots of slave catchers being turned into a legalized enforcement service.

Several times in this scenario, investigators risk white people calling the watchmen out of fear of seeing black people about white residential areas. Such folk may flee to warm the watchmen and then hide—it takes time for the watchmen to arrive (at a time of the Keeper's choosing). The investigators can decide to run and hide from the watchmen or try to talk their way out of trouble with a **Fast Talk** or **Persuade** roll (the offer of a bribe grants a bonus die). If the roll is successful, the investigators can safely return to the scene after half a day. If they opt to fight the watchmen, they soon find reinforcements arriving, forcing them to run and hide or risk being beaten and thrown in jail. Note that jailed investigators are held for an indeterminate period and are effectively out of the scenario, so avoiding the watch is actually preferable in this situation. Use the **Watchmen's** profile on page 295 as necessary, noting that they will resort to firearms only as a last resort.

- Now, Louis Brown has come to him, saying the "Black Man" has offered him temptation, just like Martin.
- Is the hand of the Devil really at work in Harlem? What of our souls?
- Jones is contemplating offering himself to the Black Man in the hope that his giving his soul will spare the rest of the community.

Keeper note: a successful **Psychology** roll gleans that, deep down, Jones knows such bargains with the Devil are unlikely to work, while a Hard success reveals Jones' responsibility to his congregation is the only thing holding him together. Reasoned debate, ideally calling upon the Bible, and/or a **Persuade** roll, may help shore up Jones and keep him true to his beliefs—if so, he thanks the investigators and goes to pray, hoping to move past this moment of weakness.

SINT ANTONIUS

- **Link:** investigating the wounds from **Dead Man's Plight** (page 278).
- **Link:** Pastor Jones directs the investigators to the Dutch hospital with regard to the ash found in David Martin's throat (**Speaking with Pastor Jones**, page 279).
- **Link:** Terrence Walker speaks of his ailment and says Martin went to the hospital (**Visions of What Will Come**, page 282).
- Carl, Jack, and Abhram mention Martin visiting the hospital (**David Martin's Room**, page 282).

Apart from the various directions to the hospital, the investigators, upon hearing about the Schipper murders (**The Old Man and the Truth**, page 284), may think to visit to see if there are any records of murders. If the investigators ask around if somewhere in Harlem has records of people suffering "purple burns" and the like, most will point them toward the medical records held at Sint Antonius.

The hospital is minimally staffed, with a "receptionist," four nurses, a doctor, and one member of the watch dedicated to keeping an eye on the building, which stands in the white neighborhood of Harlem. The building is mostly empty, with some beds and examination rooms. Medical supplies are locked in various chests in the doctor's office.

Investigators attempting to steal into the hospital require a Hard **Stealth** roll—if pretending to clean or perform other menial tasks, grant a bonus die. Entering at night requires a combined **Locksmith** and **Stealth** roll to enter without drawing attention for the watchman on duty. Talking their way in calls for a Hard **Fast Talk** roll, unless they act subservient, which reduces the difficulty to Regular. If George Nell (**Conversations with Nell**, page 280) accompanies them, there are no issues for entry, as Nell is known as "the doctor's man."

Once inside, a successful **Library Use** roll uncovers medical reports written in Dutch (**Book Handout 2: Medical Records**), which detail the Schipper family deaths of 1652—which may lead the investigators to **The Schipper House** (following), if they have not yet spoken to Palmer Stoddard (**The Old Man and the Truth**, page 284).

THE BRITISH ARE COMING

- **Link:** the British authorities learn about the murder of David Martin.
- **Link:** the investigators' actions are such as to call British attention to the black community.

Book Handout 2: Medical Records

Margarete Schipper (b. Margarete Merwede)	*Age 34*	*34 Broad Street, Harlem*	*Married Pieter Schipper 1636. Beaten to death in the kitchen.*
Peter Schipper	*Age 13*	*34 Broad Street, Harlem*	*Beaten to death in the kitchen.*
Maria Schipper	*Age 15*	*34 Broad Street, Harlem*	*Beaten to death on stairs. Light burn marks with purple edges.*
Johanna Schipper	*Age 9*	*34 Broad Street, Harlem*	*Found dead in bedroom. Badly burned, flesh purple.*
Josefien Schipper	*Age 6*	*34 Broad Street, Harlem*	*Found dead in bedroom. Badly burned, flesh purple.*
Johannes Schipper	*Age 4*	*34 Broad Street, Harlem*	*Found dead in bedroom. Badly burned, flesh purple.*

The investigators should take heed of Pastor Jones when he explicitly warns them to be discreet during their inquiries. The involvement of the British plays out in two ways:

- The British authorities become concerned that violence may spread from Harlem to the rest of New York. Mayor Dyre instigates a law prohibiting freedmen from traveling in groups larger than three. Watchmen are sent to Harlem to arrest Pastor Jones and Hekata Bos. Jones is released two days later and, on his return, signs the Black Man's book (f the Black Man is still in Harlem). Otherwise, Jones completely loses his faith within the year and resigns from the church.
- Slave catchers appear in Harlem to search for escaped enslaved people, which—as New York does not issue Freedom Papers—can be *any* black people. The bounty hunters target lone black people; an opposed **Fast Talk** or **Persuade** roll allows a cornered person to escape (for the moment). This hellish nightmare plays out for a fortnight before being rescinded by Mayor Dyre.

THE SCHIPPER HOUSE

- **Link:** learning about the Schipper family (**The Old Man and The Truth**, page 284, **Sint Antonius**, page 286).

The old Schipper house stands in the white part of Harlem, requiring the investigators to get there without drawing undue attention. Keeping their heads down (as a show of deference) requires a successful **Charm** or **Stealth** roll, while a Hard **Fast Talk** roll may defuse tense situations. Failed outcomes may see a white resident escorting the group out of the area with a stern warning not to return. Significant failures (including pushed fails) probably results in the watchmen being called.

The house has been left derelict for nearly 30 years, and it shows. Entering inside is easy. If inspecting the rear door, a successful **Spot Hidden** (possibly **Track**) roll notices recent marks in the ground around the door and curiously fresh purple-colored burn marks on the door itself, both suggesting someone has been here numerous times in the past few days.

The home remains untouched, with old dried blood still marking the murder scenes in the kitchen, on the stairs, and in the upper master bedroom. A small portrait sits on the living room mantlepiece, showing Margarete Schipper and her children; interestingly, the portrait is free of dust, and dust marks on the mantlepiece suggest the picture's frame has been recently picked up numerous times, as elsewhere the dust is thick and undisturbed. A second, smaller picture lies nearby, but this is overturned and coated in dust—it shows a portrait of Pieter Schipper. The family portrait's wooden frame is strangely burned in places, as if handled with hot tongs (or fingers), with the marks having an odd purple tinge to them.

If searching the area around the building, a Hard **Spot Hidden** or a **Track** roll discovers a hidden entrance leading **Into the Tunnels** (page 287).

Keeper note: the investigators may link the purple burn marks on the door and portrait frame to whoever murdered David Martin (and the Schipper family) to their killer. In consequence, they might decide to wait for the murderer (the Revenant) to return. Lying in wait calls for a **Stealth** roll.

The Revenant Returns

If the investigators prepare a trap and confront the Revenant inside the Schipper house, refer to **Confrontation** in **The Revenant's Lair** (page 288). The house isn't covered in enough ashes to allow the Revenant to use all of its powers. Unless they specifically and soundly block all of the exits, the creature attempts to flee at the first sign of trouble. The Revenant uses the old mi-go tunnels to travel around Harlem, and may be followed with a successful **Spot Hidden** or **Track** roll into its lair (**Into the Tunnels**, following).

INTO THE TUNNELS

- **Link:** finding the tunnel entrance or following the Revenant (**The Schipper House**, page 287).

The Revenant discovered the old tunnels shortly after it fled its family home. The tunnels crisscross the land and in places burrow deep into the Earth. At various points, the tunnels are collapsed—the mi-go destroyed certain tunnels to ensure their laboratories remained undisturbed and safe until their eventual return. The Revenant has spent most of the last 28 years unearthing four of the tunnels and two entrances into the system. One entrance is near its old home in Harlem (Broad Street) and the other lies near to the Hudson River.

When venturing inside and after traveling 500 feet (152 m), a strange moss growing on the tunnels' walls provides a faint greenish illumination. A successful **Natural World** roll confirms that the moss is unfamiliar and most likely a hitherto unknown variety.

A successful **Track** roll follows the Revenant's course, noting the occasional purple-colored burn marks on the walls and odd remnants of ash that litter the ground. If the roll is failed, the investigators become lost for 2D6 hours and a group **Luck** roll should be requested to determine if a sudden tunnel collapse occurs, resulting in 1D4 damage to those who fail to make a Dodge roll. If lost, a **Navigate**

roll gets the investigators back in 1D4 hours; otherwise, they find their way after the 2D6 hours noted above. As the tunnels lead downward, a **Climb** roll is needed to descend safely; otherwise, a stumble and slip result in 1D2 damage.

Forgotten Experiments

Making their way through the descending tunnels, the investigators find the tunnel forks. A successful **Track** roll determines the path continues left (**The Revenant's Lair**, following). If the right-hand path is taken, the investigators enter a chamber, where the walls are coated in some sort of shell-like surface. Once everyone enters the room, a smell of lightning (ozone) fills the air and the room is flooded by blue lights from the ceiling. The investigators feel waves of heat emanating from the entranceway, forcing them to back away into the chamber. The bizarre effect is both otherworldly and unnerving, provoking a **Sanity** roll (0/1 loss).

The blue lights expose a room wherein sits a strange crustacean-like device, with multiple flashing lights and buzzing sounds. Beyond that, on the far side, is a 10 foot (3m) tall glass-like cylinder containing a gelatinous substance. Every two minutes, the crab-like device sends an electrical jolt to the cylinder, causing whatever is inside to thrash from side to side.

Searching the room finds a panel on the opposite side of the strange device on which lies a blade (**Book Object 4: Experimental Blade**), while at various points around the chamber's floor are small piles of ash.

Heat Trap

The only way out of the chamber is back through the entranceway, although now a wall of super-heated air poses a serious threat. The hot air was a form of sterilization process, used by the mi-go to ensure a "clean" experimentation area. While the investigators can simply walk through the wall of heat, doing so results in 2D10 damage; however, if the heat level can be reduced or switched off, an exit is less likely to kill them. The system's power has enough energy to last for another 2D6 hours before it finally fails; thus, another option is to wait (although the investigators won't know this).

Depending on the investigators' skill sets, a Hard **INT**, **Cthulhu Mythos**, or **Luck** roll (or a Hard **Computer Use**, if modern-era investigators) allows them to deduce (or strike lucky) what knobs to turn to deactivate the heat shield—kind Keepers may elect to have a failed roll reduce the heat damage to 1D10, while fumbled or pushed fails could result in increased heat damage to 3D10—alternatively, a small pulse of heat might envelop the room for one round, causing 1D6 damage to everyone.

Keeper note: the Revenant accidentally activated the chamber but was able to pass unharmed through the heat shield.

BOOK OBJECT 4: EXPERIMENTAL BLADE

The blade is approximately 12 inches (30cm) long, with a 6 inch (15cm) long handle, both are a single piece of metal of unknown origin, which pulses from within with a faint white glow.

The blade serves as a magical weapon, able to damage objects and creatures normally immune to mundane weapons, causing 1D4+1+DB damage with a successful attack. In addition, the blade is capable of slicing through most earthly metals as if they were butter. Despite such benefits, the user instinctively feels the blade is "wrong" whenever it is handled, requiring a successful **Sanity** roll whenever they wish to hold or use it—a failed roll means the user cannot hold the blade (wrapping it in cloth or some other material does not diminish this effect) and loses 1 Sanity point in attempting to do so.

The Revenant's Lair

The Revenant's path continues on until it arrives at a large chamber with two exits (one from which the investigators enter and another, on the opposite side, heading east). Within, a thick layer of ash clings to the walls, floor, and ceiling of this space, while in its center, an *icosahedral* (20-sided) construction of metal beams rises to just under the 20-foot (6m) height of the ceiling.

If previously attacked by the investigators, the Revenant attempts to perform a surprise attack, moving directly to confrontation; otherwise, the investigators get the opportunity to try and speak with the thing that was once Pieter Schipper. A Hard **Spot Hidden** roll may allow the investigators to detect the Revenant as it rises silently from a large pile of ash on the ground in the center of the *icosahedron*.

Conversation?

The Revenant rises from the ash pile and stands, its visage provoking a **Sanity** roll (1/1D6 loss). It reaches up, and pulls itself onto one of the icosahedron's upper bars, climbing upwards until it rests on the topmost beams. The investigators can attempt to converse with a successful **Charm**, **Fast-Talk**, or **Persuade** roll—if mention is made of the Schipper family, a bonus die should be granted to the roll. Use the following points to develop the Revenant's answers.

Opposite: Discovering the mi-go tunnels

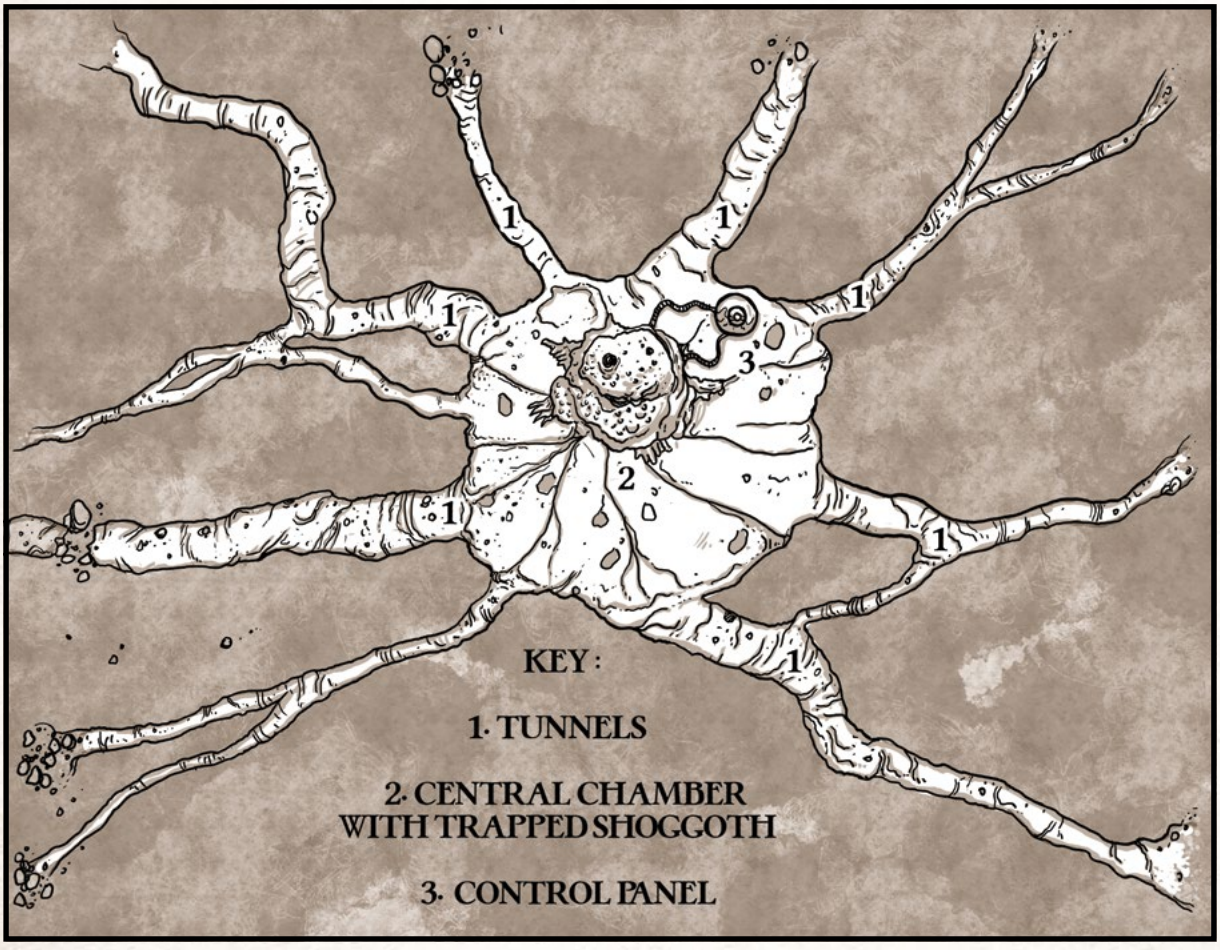
- If asked about the Black Man: "He *is a saint, come from the stars to bring redemption. Come to write our names in the book and bring us to the Throne of His Father. For everyone has a place in His book."*
- If asked if he has signed the book: *"I must prove my worth and bring him the three willing signatories."*
- *"I can take you to Him, so that you may sign the book."*
- If asked about his family: *"It was an accident. I yearned to be powerful and provide for my kin. The Black Man gave me power but they failed me."*

Keeper note: a Hard **Psychology** roll may detect the partial truth of the Revenant's words, as well as his seething rage of self-loathing. If persuaded of their intent to sign the Black Man's book, the Revenant agrees to take them to his master, climbing down and leading them through the eastern exit down a tunnel (see **The Black Man's Offer**, following).

Confrontation?

If the investigators accuse the Revenant of killing his own family, calling him Pieter Schipper, the Revenant howls in anguish and attacks. The Revenant prefers to remain on the higher bars of the icosahedron, allowing him to throw liquid fire down upon the investigators and then, at a suitable moment, leap on top of an investigator and attempt to burn them to death.

If the investigators begin to climb to reach the Revenant, call for a combined **Climb** and **Dodge** roll to determine if they both avoid damage and stay clinging to the metal framework. If the investigators corner or otherwise overwhelm the Revenant, he uses the Ignis Step power to dissolve into a pile of ash, only to reappear elsewhere in the chamber (on his next turn) from another ash mound—the only clue being that the pile of ash the Revenant materializes from glows red prior to his appearance. Having this seen happen once, a quick-thinking investigator may spot the glowing ash and think to scatter its ashes, thereby preventing the materialization—call for a combined **Spot Hidden** and **DEX** roll to notice and get to the glowing ash pile in time. While such an action doesn't actually stop the monster from reappearing in that place, the act does cause harm, inflicting 1D10 damage to the Revenant—if using their hands or



Tunnels below Harlem Map

feet (rather than a tool) to disperse the ash, the investigator suffers 1D4 burn damage in the process. When the Revenant materializes, the damage can be characterized by hot smoke billowing from his person accompanied by howls of pain, which should give the investigators a clue that such an action is working and having a detrimental effect.

Using the Basalt Statue

If they have obtained **Book Object 1: Basalt Statue** from Palmer Stoddard (**The Old Man and the Truth**, page 284) and understand how to operate it (**Visiting Agathe**, page 283), the investigators may try to use the artifact to dismiss the Revenant. It's a relatively easy matter to place the four segments around the Revenant, provided his attention is being distracted by another investigator. Thus, as long as at least one investigator is engaged with the monster, the others may place their segments without his being aware. Of course, unless the engaged investigator throws themselves outside of the statue's radius when it is activated, they too are sent to Saturn for an unwelcome death. The Keeper may wish to call for a combined **Luck** and **DEX** roll to determine the investigator's fate.

Searching the Lair

If the lair is searched, a successful **Spot Hidden** roll finds **Book Object 5: Pocket Watch**. The exit tunnel leading east is 500 feet (152m) long and takes the investigators directly into the chamber of the Black Man (**The Black Man's Offer**, following).

THE BLACK MAN'S OFFER

If the investigators sincerely express an interest in signing the *Black Book* to the Revenant, he willingly takes them to meet his master. Alternatively, the Black Man may approach an investigator one night to offer a bargain. In either case, use the following to guide the encounter.

BOOK OBJECT 5: POCKETWATCH

A silver pocket watch on a silver chain. The watch case is charred and the chain has partially melted in places, suggesting both have suffered from fire damage. Opening the watch case, the interior face has been engraved with an inscription that reads "Pieter Schipper, 1636."

The Black Man Knows All

Once before the Black Man (**Sanity** roll, 0/1D4 loss), the investigators may wish to ask questions concerning the Revenant. Such questions surprise and delight the Black Man, who enjoys playing the role of secret keeper. After being asked a question, the avatar appears to ponder for a moment before answering. Use the following answers as necessary. The Black Man answers one or two questions, but if asked more, he smiles and says, *"Let your minds be still, for sometimes too much knowledge can be a curse. Let us talk of other things."*

- The Revenant once lived in a house on Broad Street (**The Schipper House**, page 287).
- He denies any knowledge of the creature working for him, stating, "It was here before I came."
- If asked how to kill it, **Book Object 4: Experimental Blade** appears in his hand, which he then offers to the investigators—if the investigators already possess the blade (**Forgotten Experiments**, page 288), he gestures toward it.

Will You Sign the Book?

The Black Man says, *"The delights of the world could be yours. Riches, wine, pleasure shall come to you. Or, perhaps you yearn for knowledge or seek power and dominion over others? All good things shall be yours but for a single token price. Sign your name in my book and the bargain is sealed."*

While listening to the Black Man's words, the investigator(s) mind pictures their desires, whatever it may be—ask the player concerned to say what their investigator desires, then have the Black Man speak it aloud as though he had read their mind. If unsure, tempt the player with knowledge of spells, insight into the Mythos, gold, wealth, and so on.

At this point, the Black Man brings forth the *Black Book of Azathoth*, which he holds open, allowing the investigator(s) to see visions of the cosmos and scenes in which the investigator has their desire. The vision is appealing, and the investigator feels power running their body. Suddenly it all stops and the visions end. The investigator feels crestfallen and hollow for having lost the sensations of extreme delight. The Black Man smiles and says, *"Sign the book… or perhaps there are others whose names would better fit in your stead?"*

Each investigator has free choice whether to take the Black Man's bargain or not. If yes, signing their name grants an immediate boon of +5 percentile points to the Cthulhu Mythos skill, while also exacting a price of 1D10+2 Sanity points. Having signed the book, they are forever a vessel of the Mythos, able to be controlled by Nyarlathotep (with an opposed **POW** roll, although Nyarlathotep gains a bonus die for this roll), and destined to one day be taken to the court of Azathoth for all eternity.

Negotiation

The investigators may try to bargain with the Black Man, especially if they surmise that they are not really the souls the Black Man wants—the Black Man wants Pastor Jones and Palmer Stoddard to sign his book willingly— a successful **INT** roll may provide this clue if necessary. If pressed on what souls he really desires, the Black Man is honest, saying, *"I am here for Jones and Stoddard, but will take others in their place if necessary. Why do you ask?"* He smiles at the investigators, his black teeth glinting in the light. *"Both are broken men, who squandered the power they once held. Now, their tortured existence brings only pain and suffering. I offer them a kinder fate. See them for who they truly are. Stoddard, a blind drunk who spent his years failing to protect his community, and who now suffers from wounds no doctor can mend. And Jones, a man without faith who preaches empty words to others. How long before he falls and takes them with him."*

He looks back toward the investigators, *"Get them to sign my book and my need for signatures in Harlem is satisfied. You may go free and ignorant of my pleasure."*

Dismissal or Confrontation?

The investigators may decide to combat the Black Man, although such a venture would be foolhardy and risk their lives. If the investigators launch an attack, the Black Man summons the Revenant (if still alive) and uses Schipper to bear the brunt of the combat while the avatar cast spells and drains the life of the investigators. If the Black Man is bested in combat, his body ruptures and a flood of black rats with human faces pour out of him, biting and clawing and they escape into the earth. The sudden assault of hundreds of rats inflicts an automatic 1D10 damage to everyone present.

Dismissal by Basalt Statue

If they have obtained **Book Object 1: Basalt Statue** from Palmer Stoddard (**The Old Man and the Truth**, page 284) and understand how to operate it (**Visiting Agathe**, page 283), the investigators may try to use the artifact to dismiss the Black Man. Unfortunately, the Black Man is not as easily outwitted as the Revenant and must be held down to remain within the statue's area of effect. Given the Black Man's STR 115, it may take 2 or 3 people to hold him—ask each supporting investigator to make a **STR** roll, for each success grant 1 bonus die (maximum of 2 bonus dice in total) to the primary investigator's **STR** roll, which is opposed by the Black Man's STR—this presumes one investigator jumps on and others follow suit. Without such a sacrifice (those holding the Black Man down are transported as well) the dismissal is unlikely to work, as the Black Man will move out of the danger zone. If held down and transported to Saturn, the statue's pieces shatter, rendering the artifact useless from hereon.

Did it Work?

Dismissing the Black Man by using the basalt statue or defeating him in combat means that he will not return to trouble Harlem for several years. Getting both Pastor Jones and Palmer Stoddard to sign his book (or two of the investigators in their stead) means the Black Man's work here is done, and he departs, for now at least.

CONCLUSION

Presumably, the Black Man is gone, yet the events of recent days reverberate throughout the community. If the investigators allowed the Revenant to escape, he returns in later months looking to exact vengeance. He hates the investigators and attempts to target them and those close to them. If Palmer Stoddard and/or Pastor Jones signed the book, their sudden change of demeanor and, in Jone's case, departure from the church, concern most people.

If the investigators signed the *Black Book of Azathoth*, they gain whatever reward the Black Man promised, but now they know they are linked the Black Man, and their souls are doomed for eternity. Given that they are not aware that the Black Man is able to control them, such investigators may unconsciously go on to cause all manner of trouble, being unable to recall their actions when being controlled. Finding a way to undo the bargain could drive a continuing battle against the Mythos in future scenarios.

Temporal Ripples

For modern-day investigators sent back in time, the Keeper should decide what happens next. Are they forever trapped in the past? Does defeating the Black Man cause their minds to return to the present?

If the investigators played their own ancestors in 1680 or are descendants of any of the key NPCs in the scenario, on their return to the present, they unexpectedly receive a bequest containing **Book Object 4: Experimental Blade** (if not destroyed earlier) along with some family heirlooms—perhaps even an old diary that describes their actions in Harlem in 1680! If so, grant the investigators +2% **Cthulhu Mythos**, but increase this to +5% if their ancestor signed the *Black Book of Azathoth*—the Keeper should make sure that this family debt comes back to haunt them.

REWARDS

- Reinvigorating Pastor Jones in his faith: +1 Sanity point.
- Defeating the Revenant: +1D4 Sanity points.
- Thwarting the Black Man: +1D8+1 Sanity points.
- Convincing Pastor Jones and/or Palmer Stoddard to sign the book: –1D6+1 Sanity points.

FURTHER ADVENTURES

Here are some possible follow-up scenarios the Keeper may wish to explore in the 1680s period of Harlem.

Church of the Yellow Sign

Terrence Walker has been touched by the King in Yellow, arising from when Doctor Cornelius Jacobs "healed" him of yellow fever. Doctor Jacobs is a devotee of Hastur, who wishes to start a cult in Harlem. He has caused an outbreak of yellow fever in the community and believes those who survive are eligible to become his followers.

Walker has begun having strange dreams and urges he can't explain and calls on the investigators to help him. Little does he know that Doctor Jacobs has him in his sights as a new recruit, and is sending him visions of Carcosa and the King in Yellow to ready his mind for conversion.

Mi-Go Alone

The mi-go left what become Harlem long ago to focus on other matters, but the investigators' exploration of their old tunnels activated something and caused a lone mi-go scientist-scout to investigate. Humanity has changed since the mi-go were last here and the scientist-scout is intrigued enough to undertake some experiments on the community. It starts first with a few cats and dogs, then cows, and eventually humans—unless stopped.

Coven of the Black Man

If either Pastor Jones or Hekata Bos signed the Black Man's book, they instigate and grow a coven of witches, serving Nyarlathotep and Azathoth. The community is plunged into chaos, as animals and people fall sick, and accusations of witchcraft are flung around. Of course, fermenting chaos is the goal, and the head of the coven makes sure that the accusations point toward innocent people rather than at themselves.

CHARACTERS AND MONSTERS

For ease of reference, the Keeper may wish to copy or print out these pages as a handy reference when running this chapter. NPCs, monsters, and others are gathered by type or distinct groupings.

Note: certain NPCs have Luck values, as well as talents for *Pulp Cthulhu* games; ignore these if playing regular *Call of Cthulhu*.

Spells: spells are taken from the *Call of Cthulhu: Keeper Rulebook* and the *Grand Grimoire of Cthulhu Mythos Magic*; if necessary, the Keeper may replace *Grimoire* spells with others from the *Rulebook*.

ALLIES OR INDEPENDENTS

Agathe Bruyn, *age 41, conjure woman*

STR 40	**CON** 70	**SIZ** 60	**DEX** 55	**INT** 70
APP 50	**POW** 80	**EDU** 40	**SAN** 68	**HP** 13
DB: 0	**Build:** 0	**Move:** 7	**MP:** 16	**Luck:** 40

Combat

Brawl	25% (12/5), damage 1D3
Dodge	50% (25/10)

Skills

Anthropology 35%, Cthulhu Mythos 9%, Divination 75%, History 55%, Language (Dutch) 35%, Language (English) 40%, Language (Munsee) 35%, Medicine 60%, Persuade 70%, Occult 70%, Science (Astronomy) 60%.

Spells: Create Mist, Curse, Deflect Harm, Elder Sign, Heal, Mindblast, and Send Dreams.

Pulp Talents

- **Strong Willed:** gains a bonus die when making POW rolls.
- **Alert:** never surprised in combat.

Pastor Carmichael Jones, *age 46, preacher losing faith*

STR 45	**CON** 60	**SIZ** 65	**DEX** 50	**INT** 80
APP 50	**POW** 55	**EDU** 60	**SAN** 55	**HP** 12
DB: 0	**Build:** 0	**Move:** 6	**MP:** 11	**Luck:** —

Combat

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

Skills

Charm 45%, First Aid 40%, History 60%, Language (Dutch) 40%, Language (English) 60%, Lore (Religion) 65%, Persuade 65%, Occult 15%.

Palmer Stoddard, *age 74, retired scout*

STR 35	**CON** 85	**SIZ** 75	**DEX** 30	**INT** 55
APP 35	**POW** 60	**EDU** 54	**SAN** 54	**HP** 16
DB: 0	**Build:** 0	**Move:** 5	**MP:** 12	**Luck:** —

Combat

Brawl	50% (25/10), damage 1D3 or knife 1D4+1
Matchlock pistol	40% (20/8), damage 1D6+1
Wheellock rifle	70% (35/14), damage 2D6+1
Dodge	15% (12/3)

Skills

Cthulhu Mythos 5%, Intimidate 50%, Language (Dutch) 54%, Language (English) 40%, Law 30%, Psychology 44%, Occult 10%, Spot Hidden 75%, Track 80%.

ADVERSARIES AND MONSTERS

The Revenant, *formerly Pieter Schipper*

STR 90	**CON** 90	**SIZ** 90	**DEX** 60	**INT** 70
APP —	**POW** 55	**EDU** —	**SAN** —	**HP** 18
DB: +1D6	**Build:** 2	**Move:** 9	**MP:** 11	**Luck:** —

Powers

Ignis Step: may spend 1 magic point to dissolve into a pile of ash and reappear, on the following round, in a different ash pile up to 50 yards/meters away. The destination ash pile glows red with heat just prior to the Revenant's materialization. Destroying the destination ash pile (scattering the ashes) before the Revenant appears inflicts 1D10 damage to the Revenant, and may cause 1D4 burn damage to the person scattering the hot ashes.

VARIOUS RESIDENTS

Use these profiles as needed for other characters encountered around Harlem.

	1	*2*	*3*	*4*
STR	40	60	70	80
CON	50	60	60	70
SIZ	60	55	50	70
DEX	70	50	60	60
INT	80	60	50	60
APP	55	50	40	45
POW	50	50	50	60
EDU	35	35	40	30
SAN	50	50	50	60
HP	11	11	11	14
DB	0	0	0	+1D4
Build	0	0	0	1
Move	8	8	9	8

Combat

Brawl	30% (15/6), damage 1D3+DB or knife 1D4+1+DB	Club (farm weapon)	30% (15/6), damage 1D6+DB
		Dodge	40% (20/9)

Heat damage: anything the Revenant touches burns, causing wood to blacken, plants to wilt, and so on. In combat, a successful attack may cause the target's clothing to set on fire if the target fails a Luck roll, causing 1 damage on the first round, 2 on the next, and doubled per round thereafter until the fire is put out.

Combat

Attacks per round: 1 (burning touch)

Fighting	60% (30/12), damage 1D6+1D6 (heat damage)
Dodge	30% (15/6)

Skills

Climb 65%, Cthulhu Mythos 14%, History 55%, Listen 60%, Navigate 70%, Spot Hidden 55%, Stealth 80%.

Armor: none, but all mundane attacks deal minimum damage.
Spells: none.
Sanity loss: 1/1D6 Sanity points to see the Revenant.

WATCHMEN, RESIDENT ENFORCERS

	1	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*
STR	40	55	80	60	60	70
CON	70	65	60	80	40	60
SIZ	60	55	50	50	70	60
DEX	80	50	60	50	70	50
INT	60	50	45	55	60	65
APP	55	35	40	55	45	50
POW	50	50	60	60	40	40
EDU	35	35	40	45	45	50
SAN	50	50	60	60	40	40
HP	13	12	11	13	11	12
DB	0	0	+1D4	0	+1D4	+1D4
Build	0	0	1	0	1	1
Move	8	8	9	8	8	8

Combat

Brawl	40% (20/8), damage 1D3+DB	Matchlock rifle	30% (15/6), damage 2D6
Club (farm weapon)	40% (20/8), damage 1D6+DB	Dodge	40% (20/9)

The Black Man,
avatar of Nyarlathotep, god of the witches

STR 115	**CON** 175	**SIZ** 85	**DEX** 100	**INT** 30
APP —	**POW** 250	**EDU** —	**SAN** —	**HP** 26
DB: +1D6	**Build:** 2	**Move:** 9	**MP:** 25	**Luck:** —

Powers

POW Drain: the Black Man's touch drains 3D10 points of POW (permanent) and converts it to temporary magic points.

Change Form: if reduced to zero hit points, the Black Man's form ruptures and out pour hundreds of rats with human faces. The rats bite and claw those within 10 yards/meters as they escape into the earth, causing an automatic 1D10 damage.

Combat

Attacks per round: 1

Fighting	90% (45/18), damage 1D6+1D6 or 3D10 POW drain

Armor: none, but may regenerate hit points at a rate of 1D6 per magic point expended.
Spells: any the Keeper desires.
Sanity loss: 0/1D4 Sanity points to see the Black Man.

WEAPONS 1680

Weapon	Skill	Damage	Base Range	Uses per Round	Bullets in Gun	Malf.
Matchlock Pistol	Firearms (Handgun)	1D6+1	10 yards	1 per 4 rounds	1	95
Matchlock Rifle	Firearms (Rifle)	2D6	60 yards	1 per 4 rounds	1	95
Wheellock Rifle	Firearmsn(Rifle)	2D6+1	60 yards	1 per 4 rounds	1	95

Gun Malfunction

Matchlock notes: held a slow-burning match in a clamp at the end of a curved lever (the serpentine), and when clamped down by a lever or trigger would ignite the priming powder, thereby initiating the shot. Naturally, the match would need to be lit before firing, and in wet conditions was liable to go out. In addition, the light from the match could be seen in the darkness, revealing the shooter's position. With these requirements, as well as the need to manually load each ball (pounded down into the barrel), the weapons were slow to reload.

Wheellock notes: a friction-wheel mechanism causes a spark to ignite the shot. After loading the powder and ball, the user fixes a "spanner" to the wheel shaft on the side of the weapon, turning it until a click is heard (the spanner is then removed) On pulling the trigger, the spring-loaded wheel strikes to ignite a spark, igniting the gunpowder. While reloading remains a slow process, the wheellock provides better resistance to wet conditions and has no light to be seen in darkness.

YOUR NAME IN THE BOOK: PRE-GENERATED INVESTIGATORS

HENRY SMITH

Age: 36 **Occupation:** Blacksmith
Nationality: African-American

STR 85	**CON** 75	**SIZ** 85	**DEX** 55	**INT** 50
APP 60	**POW** 45	**EDU** 35	**SAN** 45	**HP** 16
DB: +1D6	**Build:** 2	**Move:** 8	**MP:** 9	**Luck:** *

Luck: *roll 3D6 ×5*

Skills

Art and Craft (Blacksmith) 75% (37/17)
Art and Craft (Drawing) 45% (22/9)
Charm 60% (30/12)
Climb 50% (25/10)
Credit Rating 20% (10/4)
First Aid 50% (25/10)
Intimidate 45% (22/9)
Jump 45% (22/9)
Language (English*) 35% (17/7)
Language (Dutch*) 35% (17/7)
Listen 55% (27/11)
Locksmith 45% (22/9)
Lore (Harlem) 40% (20/8)
Mechanical Repair 50% (25/10)
Natural World 35% (17/7)
Stealth 40% (20/8)
Throw 50% (25/10)
**Spoken only.*

Combat

Brawl	55% (27/11), damage 1D3+1D6
Hammer	55% (27/11), damage 1D8+1D6
Dodge	35% (17/7)

Equipment

blacksmith tools, hammer, cloths, and a silver mug (at tavern).

Backstory

Smith was bought by Williams, a blacksmith, when he was 5-years-old and he never saw his family again. Smith has spent his entire life enslaved and on call for the Williams family. They never let him learn to read nor have much in the way of free time. It was a grueling existence until the Williams family died of yellow fever. Smith managed to buy his freedom and opened a small, struggling blacksmith shop. He knows both the white and black parts of Harlem better than most.

- **Description:** a wall of man, muscled and covered in scars from childhood maltreatment.
- **Traits:** stoic and reliable.
- **Significant People:** Emily (friend, housemaid), Mathis (friend, runs the tavern).
- **Treasured Possession:** a letter from his former owner about buying his freedom.
- **Birthplace:** Unknown.

HELEN CLARK

Age: 41 **Occupation:** Shopkeeper
Nationality: African-American

STR 40	**CON** 75	**SIZ** 65	**DEX** 55	**INT**60
APP 70	**POW** 65	**EDU** 60	**SAN** 65	**HP** 14
DB: 0	**Build:** 0	**Move:** 6	**MP:** 13	**Luck:** *

Luck: *roll 3D6 ×5*

Skills

Accounting 55% (27/11)
Charm 60% (30/12)
Climb 80% (40/16)
Credit Rating 22% (11/4)
Drive (Carriage) 70% (35/17)
History 40% (20/8)
Language (English) 60% (30/12)
Library Use 40% (20/8)
Lore (Harlem) 30%
Natural World 40% (20/8)
Persuade 70% (40/16)
Psychology 65% (35/15)
Occult 30% (21/8)
Spot Hidden 55% (27/11)
Survival (Wilderness) 60% (30/12)
Track 60% (30/12)

Combat

Brawl	25% (12/5), damage 1D3 or knife 1D4
Wheellock rifle	48% (24/9), damage 2D6+1
Dodge	70% (35/14)

Backstory

Clark was born to a family of hunters who lived deep in the woods outside the community. Her childhood was spent free, with parents living off of the land. The family settled in Harlem after she was ten, opening a small trade shop (the Trading Post). Her father made some unknown deal with Palmer Stoddard, a former scout and watchman, and the family have remained, more or less, untroubled by white folk.

- **Description:** dresses in loose-fitting clothes; she dresses to blend into her surroundings.
- **Traits:** determined and honest.
- **Significant People:** Charles (Husband), Lily (her daughter).
- **Treasured Possession**: bear coat (skinned from the first big animal she hunted).
- **Birthplace:** New York.

YONAS ASFAW

Age: 33 **Occupation:** Farmer
Nationality: Ethiopian

STR 65	**CON** 60	**SIZ** 60	**DEX** 65	**INT** 55
APP 50	**POW** 60	**EDU** 55	**SAN** 60	**HP** 12
DB: +1D4	**Build:** 1	**Move:** 9	**MP:** 12	**Luck:** *

Luck: *roll 3D6 ×5*

Skills

Art/Craft (Woodwork) 60% (30/12)
Climb 40% (20/8)
Credit Rating 3% (1/1)
Fast Talk 45% (22/9)
First Aid 40% (20/5)
Navigate 55% (27/11)
Language (English) 40% (20/8)
Language (Amharic) 55% (27/11)
Listen 60% (30/12)
Persuade 65% (32/13)
Pilot (Boat) 55% (27/11)
Psychology 45% (22/9)
Spot Hidden 60% (30/12)
Stealth 50% (25/10)
Swim 36% (18/7)
Throw 45% (22/9)

Combat

Brawl	30% (15/6), damage 1D3+1D4 or knife 1D4+1D4
Shotel (curved sword)	55% (27/11), damage 1D6+1+1D4
Matchlock pistol	40% (20/8), damage 1D6+1
Dodge	40% (20/8)

Equipment

Clothes, shotel, knife, and spyglass.

Backstory

Asfaw does not discuss his earlier life, instead, he prefers to focus on the now. He has lived in Harlem for a little over three months and currently works as a cartwright. In truth, he is a former pirate attempting to make a home in Harlem far away from the horrors of his previous life.

- **Description:** athletic and toned.
- **Traits:** dutiful and humorous.
- **Significant People:** Alicia (courting waitress at the cookshop), Octavia (friend), Mathew (friend working at the ferry).
- **Meaningful Location:** his small, hand-built home outside of Harlem.
- **Treasured Possession:** an ancient urn he believes is cursed, picked up in pirating days.
- **Birthplace:** a small village in Ethiopia.

OCTAVIA PAGE

Age: 31 **Occupation:** Teacher
Nationality: French

STR 70	**CON** 55	**SIZ** 55	**DEX** 70	**INT** 60
APP 50	**POW** 55	**EDU** 77	**SAN** 55	**HP** 11
DB: +1D4	**Build:** 1	**Move:** 9	**MP:** 11	**Luck:** *

Luck: *roll 3D6 ×5*

Skills

Climb 35% (17/7)
Disguise 50% (25/10)
Fast Talk 45% (22/9)
First Aid 40% (20/5)
Library Use 50% (25/10)
Language (English) 80% (40/16)
Language (French) 40% (20/8)
Language (Latin) 40% (20/8)
Listen 50% (25/10)
Natural World 60% (30/12)
Persuade 50% (25/10)
Psychology 45% (22/9)
Ride 45% (22/9)
Science (Biology) 45% (22/9)
Spot Hidden 60% (30/12)
Stealth 60% (25/10)
Throw 35% (17/7)

Combat

Brawl	35% (17/7), damage 1D3+1D4 or knife 1D4+1D4
Dodge	45% (22/9)

Equipment

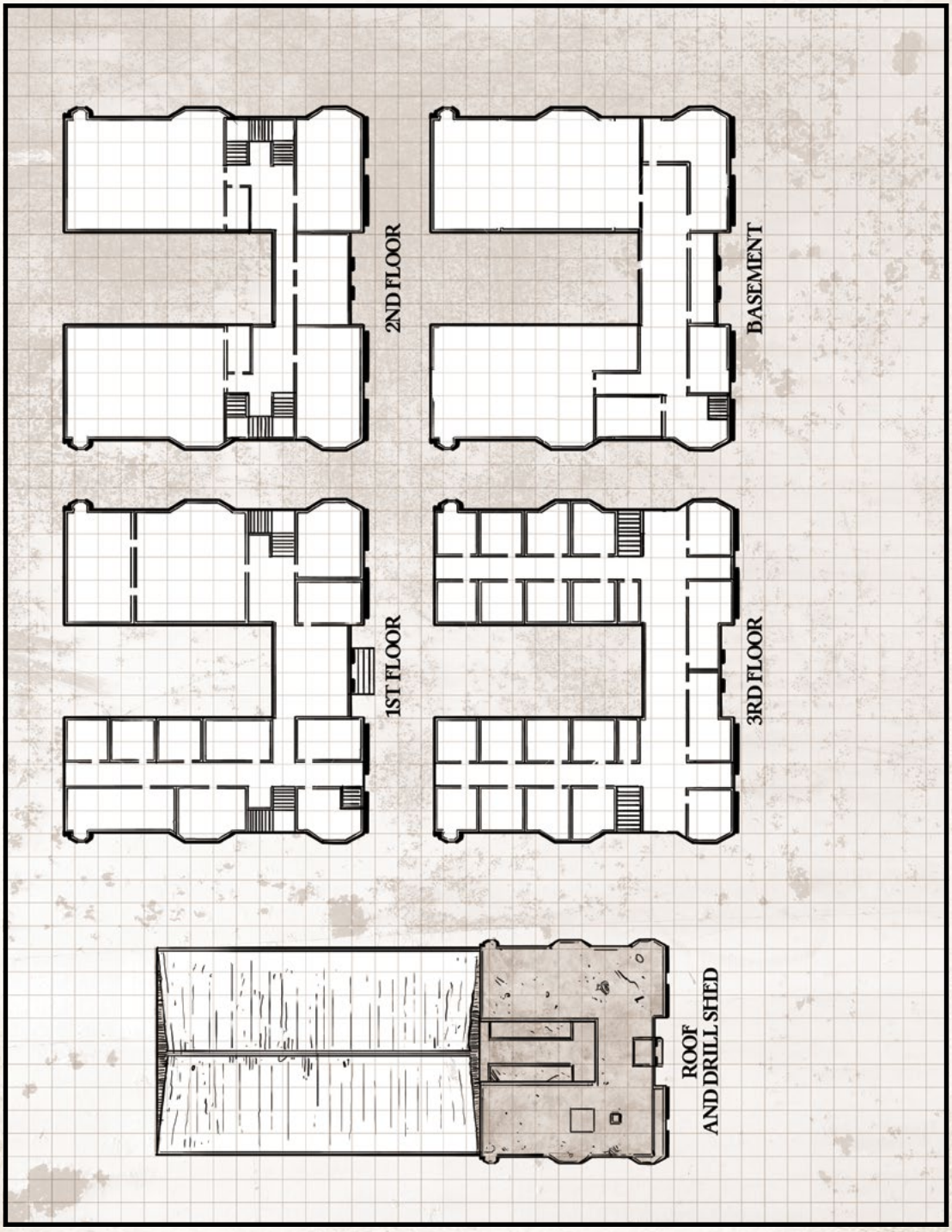
Fine clothes, a handful of coins, journal and pen, and a small knife.

Backstory

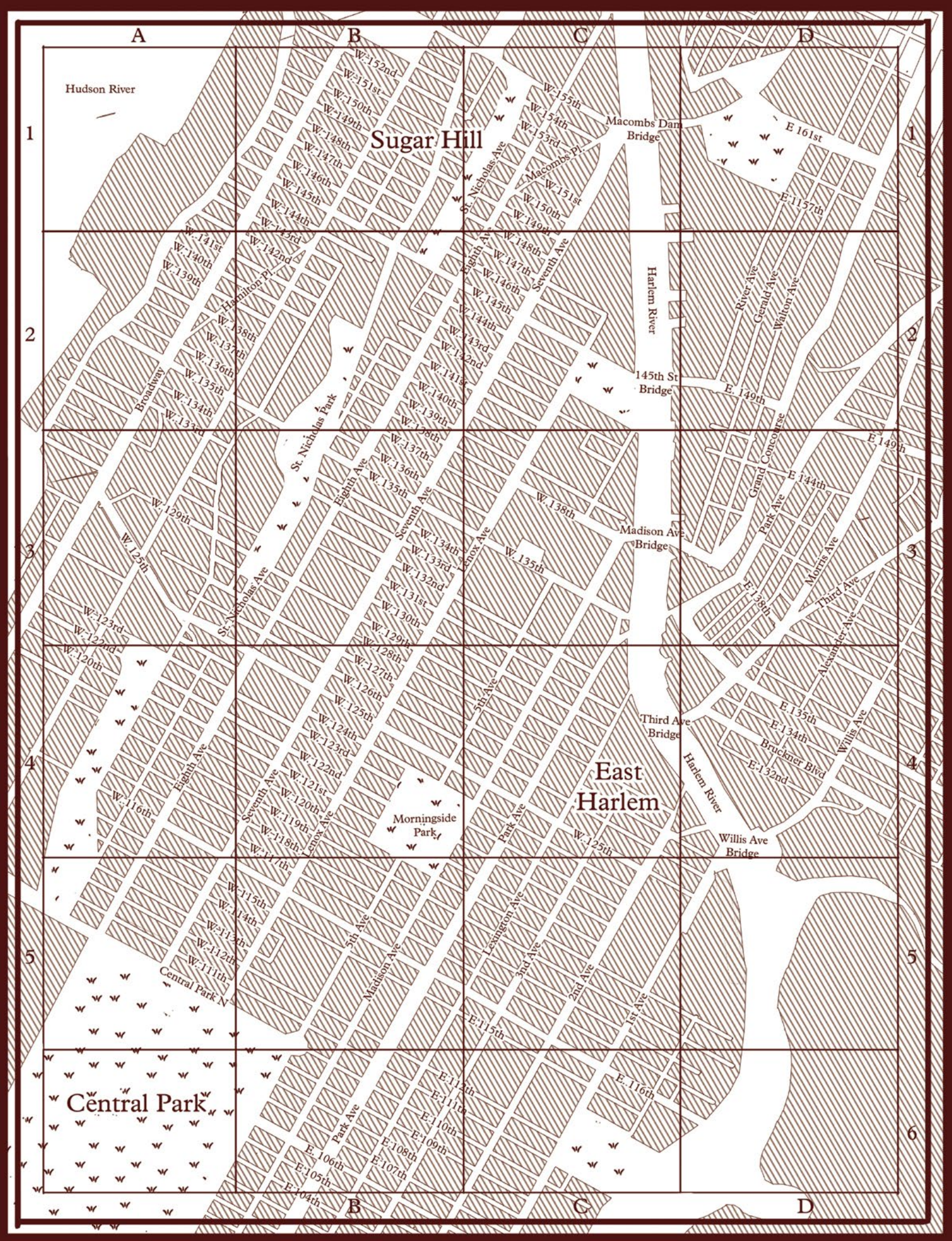
Page's story is different than most, she has spent her life in the service of France; her mistress was a diplomat who used Page as a spy, teaching her a variety of unusual skills. Her mistress, Emily, brought her to England, then to New York, and lastly to Harlem 3 years ago. Currently, Page works as a teacher of missionaries, gathering intelligence to pass on to her mistress, who is currently away in France.

- **Description:** athletic and sharply dressed.
- **Traits:** resourceful, risk-taker.
- **Significant People:** Emily (mistress), Pastor Jones (friend), and Yonis (friend).
- **Treasured Possession:** handcrafted knife.
- **Birthplace:** Paris, France.

COLLECTED PLAYER HANDOUTS FOR ALL SCENARIOS



Hellfighters: Armory Map (Player Version)


A
B
C
D
1
2
3
4
5
6
Hudson River
Sugar Hill
East Harlem
Central Park
Morningside Park
Central Park N
Macombs Dam Bridge
145th St Bridge
Madison Ave Bridge
Third Ave Bridge
Willis Ave Bridge
Harlem River
St. Nicholas Park
Hamilton Pl.
Macombs Pl.
Broadway
Eighth Ave
Seventh Ave
Lenox Ave
St. Nicholas Ave
5th Ave
Park Ave
Lexington Ave
3rd Ave
2nd Ave
1st Ave
River Ave
Gerald Ave
Walton Ave
Grand Concourse
Morris Ave
Third Ave
Alexander Ave
Willis Ave
Bruckner Blvd
W. 152nd
W. 151st
W. 150th
W. 149th
W. 148th
W. 147th
W. 146th
W. 145th
W. 144th
W. 143rd
W. 142nd
W. 141st
W. 140th
W. 139th
W. 138th
W. 137th
W. 136th
W. 135th
W. 134th
W. 133rd
W. 132nd
W. 131st
W. 130th
W. 129th
W. 128th
W. 127th
W. 126th
W. 125th
W. 124th
W. 123rd
W. 122nd
W. 121st
W. 120th
W. 119th
W. 118th
W. 117th
W. 116th
W. 115th
W. 114th
W. 113th
W. 112th
W. 111th
W. 155th
W. 154th
W. 153rd
W. 151st
W. 150th
W. 149th
W. 148th
W. 147th
W. 146th
W. 145th
W. 144th
W. 143rd
W. 142nd
W. 141st
W. 140th
W. 139th
W. 138th
W. 137th
W. 136th
W. 135th
W. 134th
W. 133rd
W. 132nd
W. 131st
W. 130th
W. 129th
W. 128th
W. 127th
W. 126th
W. 125th
W. 123rd
W. 122nd
W. 120th
W. 116th
E 161st
E 157th
E. 149th
E. 149th
E 144th
E. 138th
E 135th
E. 134th
E. 132nd
E. 125th
E. 116th
E. 115th
E. 114th
E. 111th
E. 110th
E. 109th
E. 108th
E. 107th
E. 106th
E. 105th
E. 104th

Hellfighters Handout 1: French Officers' Fate

Le Petit

Monday, October 25, 1920

GREAT WAR OFFICERS KILLED AND DESECRATED

From the desk of Coralie Descoteaux

It is with great sorrow we report that a national hero, retired Lieutenant de Vaisseau Macon, was found murdered in his home yesterday. Lieutenant de Vaisseau Macon was a decorated French citizen who served honorably in the Great War as Commander of the United States forces of the 369th Infantry Regiment. A regiment which played a vital role in the liberation of Belleau Wood.

While police have kept the state of the body undisclosed, from witnesses interviewed by this reporter, it was believed to be mutilated in some fashion. It has also come to our attention that another officer, Jean Wolfe, who served with Lieutenant Macon, unfortunately, passed a year ago, and whose grave was dug up, and the body was desecrated. The police are keeping the details to themselves, but this is truly a sad day.

Hellfighters Handout 2: Recruitment Office

ATTACK ON RECRUITMENT OFFICE

Friday, December 17, 1920

A terror that reminded people of the Red Summer of the Great War struck last night! An army recruitment office close to the New York Harbor was brutally attacked by what can only be called a team of gangsters. These Tommy-gun-wielding mad men assaulted the station in the dead of night, killing two of the three servicemen guarding the building. The one surviving soldier, Private Rocco Mastroianni, has been placed on leave and sent home to his mother in Italian Harlem. It was only thanks to that young man's bravery that the gangsters did not take anything of value. According to police reports, the culprits just stole some records of the blacks that dug ditches in the Great War. The names of the deceased have yet to be disclosed.

by Tobin Harris
NEW YORK TRIBUNE

Opposite: Hellfighters: Harlem Map (Player Version)

Hellfighters Handout 3: Hellfighters Arrested

MORE BLACK VETERAN TROUBLE IN HARLEM

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 22, 1920

Yes, dear readers, yet again those troublesome colored veterans are causing a ruckus. It looks like we had a couple of those "Men of Bronze" shooting up a neighborhood after being thrown out of a party. Fortunately, the police of the 30th Precinct were on hand to quell this unrest before it grew into another riot. May justice be swift and their jail sentences lengthy.

By Keith Blaine
NEW YORK TIMES

Hellfighters Handout 4: Final Battle

"DON'T TREAD ON ME"

Friday, December 24, 1920

I am Captain Samuel J. Wright (Ret.), of Phoenix Squad of the 369th Infantry. I am calling you out, you racist son of a bitch. I did not run during the war, and am not running now. Let's end this like soldiers and not cowards, if you can even call yourself that, tonight at midnight at the 369th Infantry Armory, 2360 5th Ave, New York, NY 10037.

Opposite: Craze: Harlem Map (Player Version)

Craze: Harlem Map (Player Version)

Craze Handout 1: Recording Contract

Blue Moon Gramophone Company

The Bronx, New York City

1. This contract is for an exclusive recording agreement between Wendell Young, from here on known as "artist" and Blue Moon Gramophone Company, from here on known as "production company."
2. This contract is for 1 complete, two-sided gramophone discs, to be recorded by the artist for the label under the Holstein Recording Company, Harlem, NY imprint, under the conditions provided for in this contract. That is, _____ complete recording sessions of no more than 8 hours, resulting in a master gramophone disc.
3. Production company will produce 1000 duplicates of the master recording, complete with Standard cardboard sleeve Holstein cardboard sleeves, and deliver them to Casper Holstein 234 W. 153th St. NY.
4. Artist agrees not to record the same repertoire through other recording studios. Production studio agrees not to duplicate or distribute the results of the recording sessions, which remain the sole property of Wendell Young and Casper Holstein
5. Production company is not responsible or liable for any criminal or civil charges arising from the recording, production, or distribution of these sessions.
6. Session musicians are provided by the artist, and are not due compensation or royalty payments. These musicians include Buddy Morena, drums Fred Nerns, trombone Anthony Clackson, cornet/trumpet.
7. Sessions will be recorded by George Levine, who is solely responsible for the quality of recordings. By accepting the master recording, the artist absolves themselves of the right to contest the quality of performance, recording, or duplication.
8. Duplication will occur at Blue Moon Duplication 251 W. 154th St. NY.

Signed,

"Artist"
Wendell Young
145 W. 153rd St
Harlem

Cliff Perkins
Cliff Perkins
Blue Moon Gramophone Company
300 Canal Pl. NY, NY 10451

Craze Handout 2: Ownership Transfer

Blue Moon Gramophone Company

The Bronx, New York City

This legally binding contract transfers partial ownership of Blue Moon Gramophone Company and all it's subsidiary assets and holdings to Paul Scarlotti and the East Harlem Construction Company. Cliff Perkins will henceforth in legal documents be referred to as "owner" and Paul Scarlotti will be referenced as "business partner."

Signed,

Cliff Perkins

Cliff Perkins
Owner, Blue Moon Gramophone Company

Co-Signed,

Paul Scarlotti

Paul Scarlotti
2151 3rd Ave

Anthony LaRochelle
NOTARY PUBLIC
ID Number
23689623123356
Comm. Expires
Oct 29, 1927
Qualified in New York County
STATE OF NEW YORK

Craze Handout 3: Death Announcement

MISSING HARLEM RESIDENT FOUND IN EAST RIVER

The body of Anthony Jackson, age 21, was recovered from the East River near Brooklyn late last night. Jackson, a professional cornet-player and trumpeter from Harlem, had been missing for several days. New York police have not ruled out foul play, but are assuming suicide or death by misadventure for the young Negro.

Craze Handout 4: Farino's Note

Blue Moon Gramophone Company

The Bronx, New York City

Craze Handout 5: Production Ledger

Blue Moon Gramophone Company
The Bronx, New York City

Blue Moon Duplication 241 W. 154th St, New York City, NY

Production Ledger

Order #	Artist Name	Recording Name	Units	Details	Shipped to
SS845	The Bronx Crooners	For My Sweetie/Shut Up and Kiss Me	500	Standard Sleeve	Wardown, 1572 Webster Ave, The Bronx
" "	" "	" "	5	Promotional Copies	The Bronx Crooners, c/o Blue Moon Offices
" "	" "	" "	1	Promotional Copy	Cliff Perkins, Blue Moon Offices
SS844	Freddie Forbes Comedy Crackads	Circus is in Town/Because I Said So	2000	Deluxe Sleeve	Wardown, 1572 Webster Ave, The Bronx
" "	" "	" "	1	Promotional Copy	Frederick Forbes, c/o Blue Moon Offices
" "	" "	" "	1	Promotional Copy	Cliff Perkins, Blue Moon Offices
SS843	The White Brothers' Singers	Blue Skies/Countown Races	1000	Deluxe Sleeve	Wardown, 1572 Webster Ave, The Bronx
" "	" "	" "	1	Promotional Copy	James White, c/o Blue Moon Offices
" "	" "	" "	1	Promotional Copy	Cliff Perkins, Blue Moon Offices
SS842	Jubilation Harding Band	Enjoy the Parade/Proud American	1000	Deluxe Sleeve	Wardown, 1572 Webster Ave, The Bronx
" "	" "	" "	1	Promotional Copy	Harold John Chapman, c/o Blue Moon Offices
" "	" "	" "	1	Promotional Copy	Cliff Perkins, Blue Moon Offices
SS841	Dolores Lee Orchestra	Two Step Blues/Windmill Jumps in	1000	Standard Sleeve	Wardown, 1572 Webster Ave, The Bronx
" "	" "	" "	1	Promotional Copy	Paul Scarlotti, 2451 3rd Ave, East Harlem
" "	" "	" "	1	Promotional Copy	Cliff Perkins, Blue Moon Offices

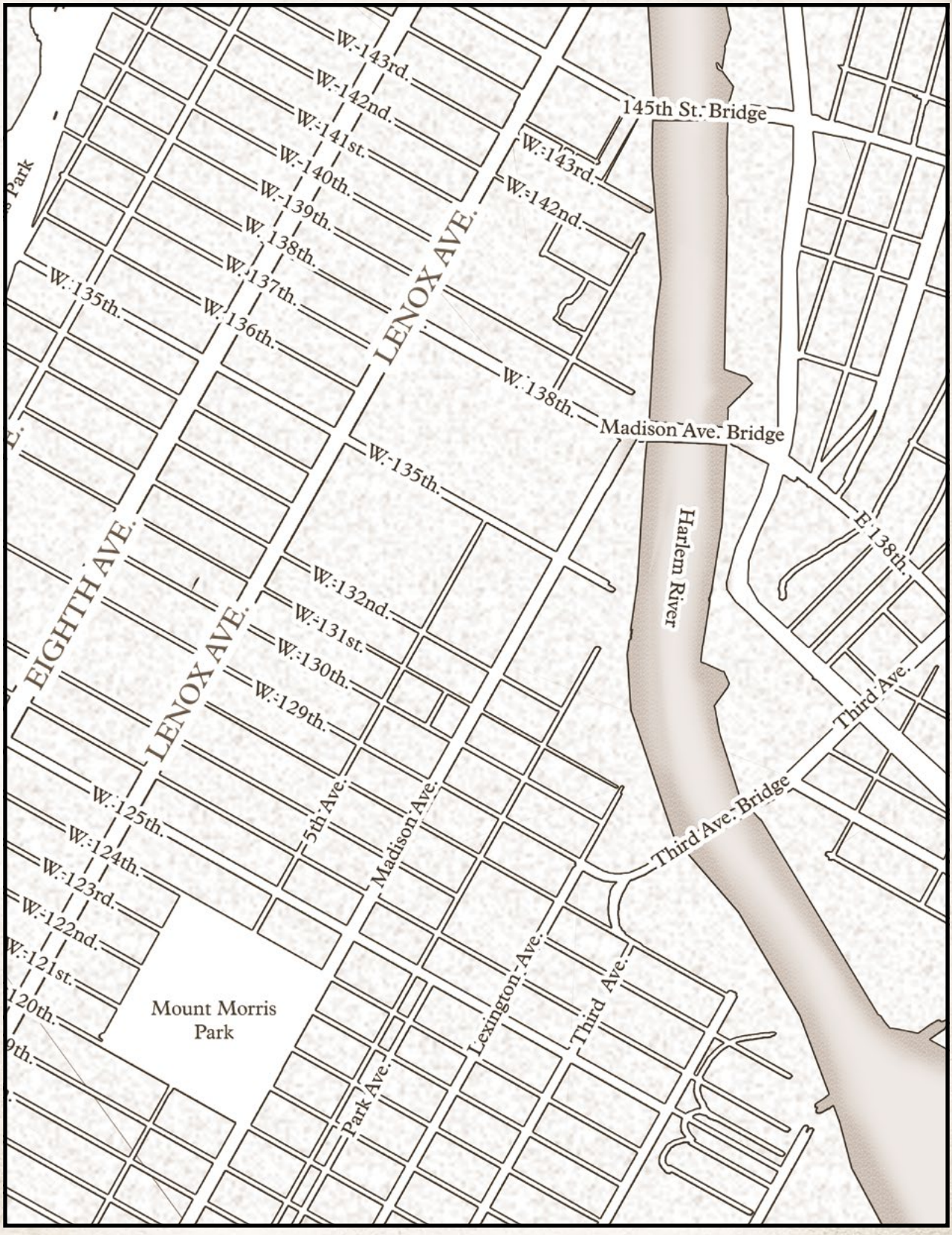
Contender Handout 1: Rawls Fight

FIGHT ENDS IN TRAGEDY

The fifteen-round fight started out well for Sir Lance Rawls, who was clearly much quicker than the older Stefano Rossi, and whose punches carried more snap. Rossi's punches were slower but he was bigger than Rawls, and he appeared stronger. Rossi "heavy hands" delivering noticeable results. As the fight wore on, Rossi's slow pace felt relaxed and calculated, keeping him fresh throughout the fight. Rawls, on the other hand, was taking hard damage, seemingly wearing him down as the bout wore on, and opening him up to a series of devastating punches from the plodding Rossi. At the end of the fourteenth round, Rossi looked unfazed, while Rawls was exhausted and scarcely able to stand. Despite the look of the fighters, Rawls was leading on point. All he had to do was finish on his feet and he'd win the match.

Rawls' corners were shouting for him to "Get on his bicycle" but despite his best efforts, the young fighter was too tired. Rossi continued to hound his opponent, forcing Rawls into a corner, allowing Rossi to unleash a ten-punch combination, each hit landing with a heavy thud. Rawls went down, and the fight was stopped, with Rossi the victor. In a tragic postscript to the bout, Rawls collapsed in his dressing room and later died of his injuries.

Craze: Warehouse Map (Player Version)



Contender: Harlem Map (Player Version)

Contender Handout 2: Ponape Scripture

"COPIOUS PUS!" EXCLAIMED GILTAMAG. AFTER HAVING HEARD THEIR ENTREATIES AND PLAINTIVE CRIES I CAST THEM FORTH. THEY WERE USURPERS HERE, TRYING TO SPREAD THEIR CONTAGION AMONGST MY PEOPLE. TO THIS ZANTHU CONCURRED.

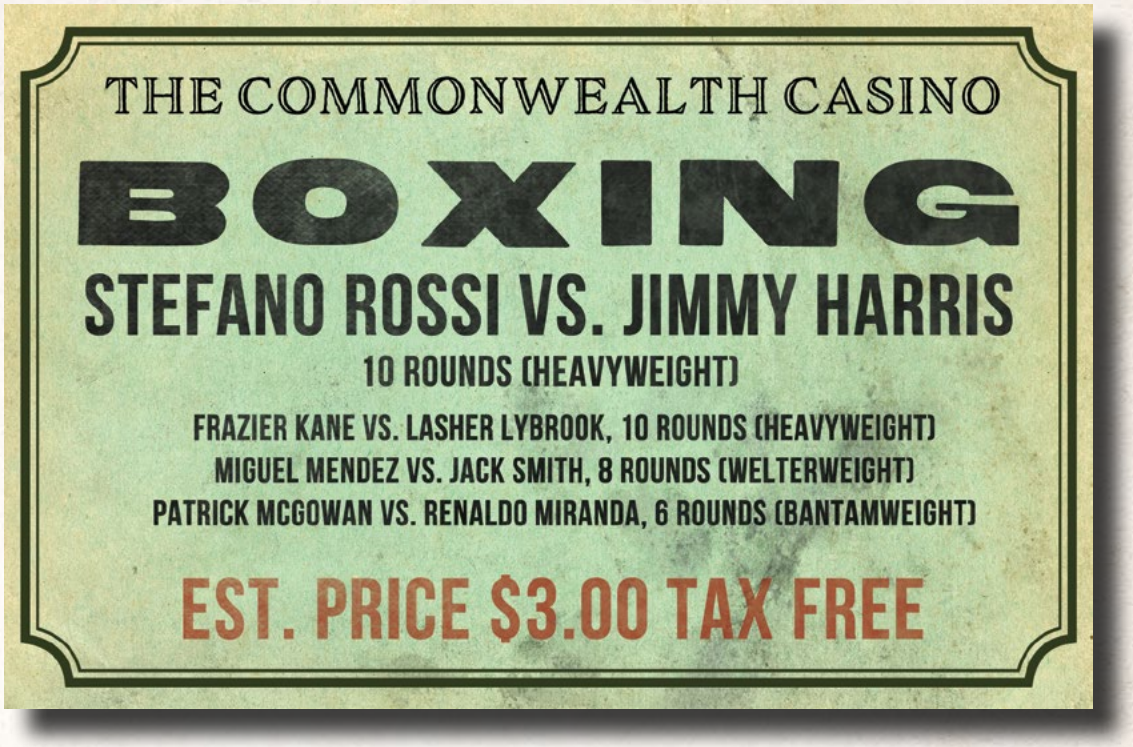
I SPAKE LOUDLY, "BEGONE MEWLERS FOR IN MU TERRIBLE GHATANOTHOA IS CHIEF GOD AND IS A JEALOUS AND VENGEFUL GOD. YOUR SOFT IMMORTALITY WILL SURELY ANGER HIM FOR HE OFFERS ONLY LINGERING UNDEATH AND SEDUCTIVE MADNESS. WE WILL NOT CONSORT WITH THE ONES FROM THE DEEP, NO MATTER WHAT OFFERINGS OF GOLD AND PROVENDER THEY PROPOSE."

ZANTHU INTERJECTED, "FI, HONORABLE IMASH-MO, THERE IS ROOM FOR DAGON IN MU, HE IS KIN TO YTHOGTHA AND THE BARGAIN THEY OFFER IS GENEROUS. A FEW OF OUR YOUNG MEN TAKE THE ONES FROM THE DEPTHS AS BRIDES. WE TEACH THEIR NEVER-DYING OFFSPRING THE WORSHIP OF MU'S GODS AND THEN WHEN THEY RETURN TO THE SEA THESE LESSONS WILL SPREAD. FOR AS GILTAMAG SAYS, THE SPAWN OF THOSE UNIONS WILL ALL BEAR THE MARK OF DAGON AND CHANGE OVER TIME, BECOMING STRONGER AND EVER-LIVING. AND THOUGH THEY WILL BECOME LIKE THOSE FROM THE SEA, THEY WILL RECALL OUR LESSONS."

TO THIS I REPLIED, "YOUR WORDS ARE SWEET ZANTHU, LIKE THE FLESH OF YOUR MOTHER STUCK IN MY TEETH." WHEREUPON HE DID SCREAM AND CAME AT ME.

COULD THIS GILTAMAG BE THE SAME AS THE FOLK OF THE OCEAN WHO SPOKE TO MARSH IN INNSMOUTH?

Contender Handout 3: Fight Card



Dreams Handout 1: Newspaper Article

ANOTHER HARLEM SHOOTING

A fatal shooting occurred last evening near the intersection of 127th and 7th streets, shortly after 11 p.m. The incident is being described as a mugging, although the shooting victim was an innocent bystander and not a party to the crime. The shooter, who has been identified as 32-year-old Maxwell Gaddis, has been taken into custody pending an investigation. Gaddis claims not to have the instigated the shooting, stating that 22-year-old Linden Brown threatened him with a knife and that the shooting was committed in self-defense. The victim was named as 26-year-old Lena Morris, resident of Harlem.

The Independent
January 9, 1927

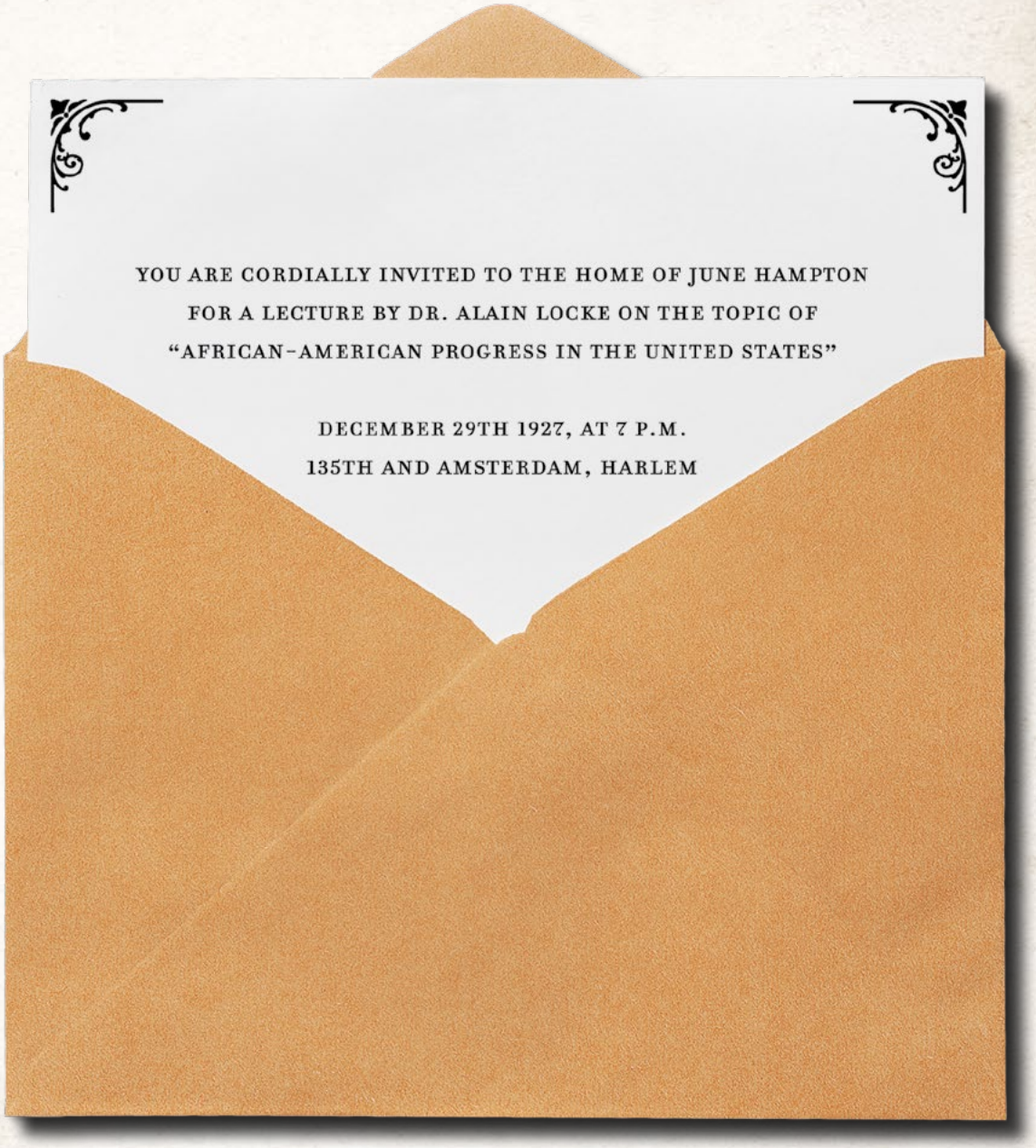
Contender: Rossi's Apartment Map (Player Version)

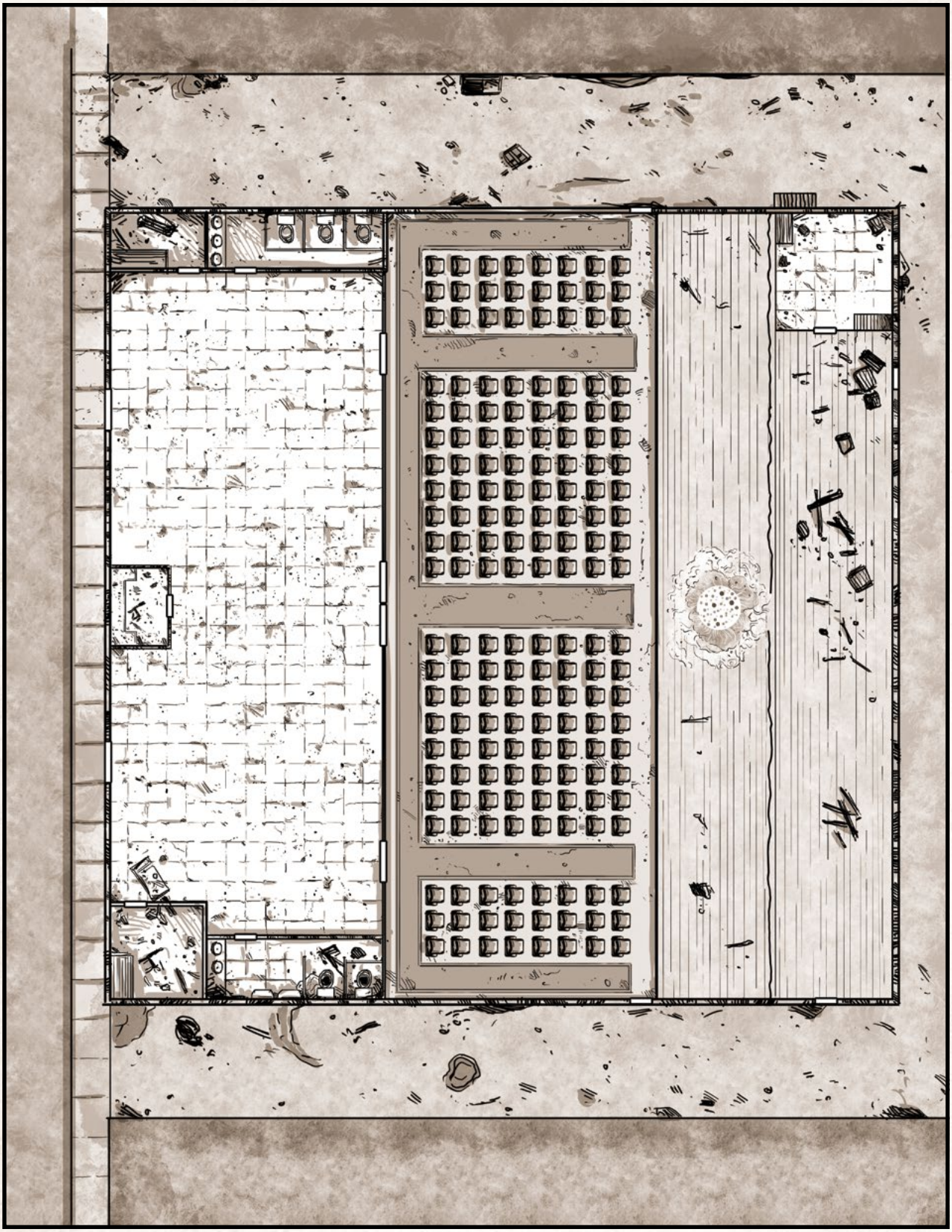
Dreams: Harlem Map (Player Version)

Dreams Handout 2: Obituary

LENA DELACROIX MORRIS A fatal shooting occurred last evening near the intersection of 127th and 7th streets, shortly after 11 p.m. The incident is being described as a mugging, although the shooting victim was an innocent bystander and not a party to the crime. The shooter, who has been identified as 32-year-old Maxwell Gaddis, has been taken into custody pending an investigation. Gaddis claims not to have the instigated the shooting, stating that 22-year-old Linden Brown threatened him with a knife and that the shooting was committed in self-defense. The victim was named as 26-year-old Lena Morris, resident of Harlem.

Ode Handout 1: An Invitation





Dreams: Theater Map (Player Version)

Ode Handout 3: Letter to Hughes

My dear Langston,

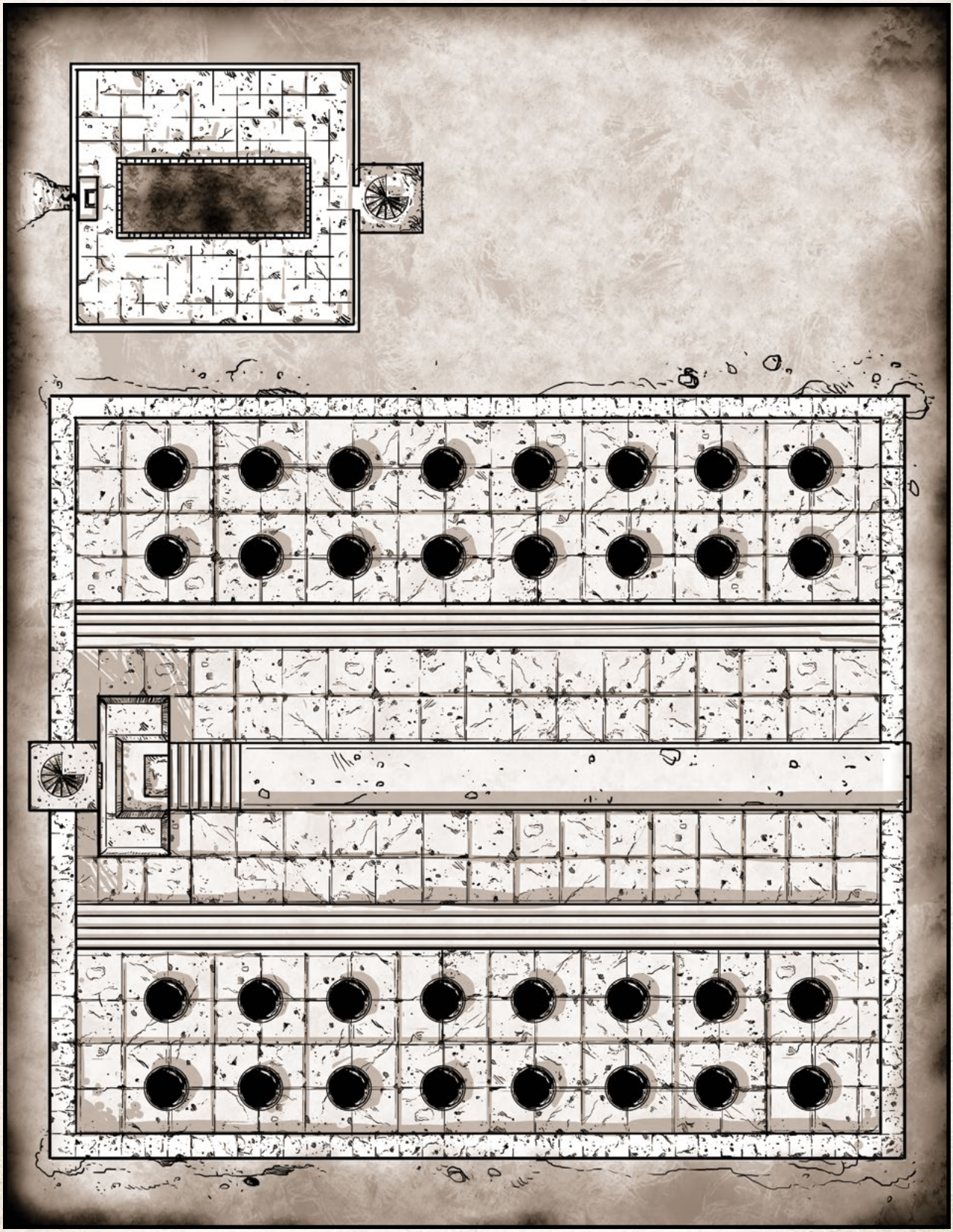
I received your recent poems with pleasure. I hope it is not strange for me to say I feel proud to see you becoming such a fine writer. I encourage you to continue submitting to publishers! It can only be a matter of time.

I am currently bound for Nairobi from Lagos. I tell you, being here feels... sound. Like coming to rest after a long day's work. Being on the continent, that is. The work itself, my notes for the next book, I'm afraid I have been plagued by—well, never mind. I wouldn't want to worry you with all that.

I anticipate being in New York again in January. Will you see me?

Ever yours,
J. E.
17 June 1924

Ode: Dreamlands Map (Player Version)



Upper Floor, Temple Map (Player Version)

Ode Handout 2: The Mask of Dreaming

Whispers Handout 4: St. Clair's Calling Card

STEPHANIE ST. CLAIR

154TH STREET AND NICHOLAS AVENUE

HARLEM

Your presence is requested, immediately.

Q

Whispers: Harlem Map
(Player Version)
Hudson River
SUGAR HILL
W 155th St
Macombs Pl.
W 145th St
Hamilton Pl.
W 141st St
St. Nicholas Park
Broadway
Amsterdam Ave.
W 138th St
W 136th St
W 135th St
Eighth Ave
Seventh Ave
Lenox Ave
W 132nd St
W 131st St
Morningside Park
W 124th St
W 125th St
Mt. Morris Park

Whispers Handout 1: Recruitment Call

HEY HEP CATS.

YOU LOOKING TO BLOW THAT HORN?
YOU NEED TO GET THE WORD OUT ABOUT
THAT NEW PLAY? OR SONG?
SHOW OFF THAT LATEST PIECE OF ART?

COME MEET ME TOMORROW AT MORRIS
PARK AT 9:30 A.M. AND TAKE A LISTEN.

I AM PUTTING TOGETHER A SHOW AT
THE DARK TOWER - THIS IS A PAYING GIG.

FLIP WILMORE
HARLEM

Whispers Handout 2: Walker's Brunch Invitation

Hello dear friend,

Hopefully, this letter and invitation finds you well.

I am having a little brunch tomorrow for a few close friends, such as yourself. My hope is that you can attend.

Third floor of 108–110 West 136th Street.
10:00 a.m.

Looking forward to seeing you.

Sincerely,
A'Lelia

Whispers Handout 3: Working Request Letter)

To—

I am Miguel Hernandez, the engineer at the Walker Mansion on 108–110th 135th Avenue. Ms. Walker is hosting an event tomorrow evening and I need additional crew to prepare the building and work through the evening to ensure all goes well. A friend recommended that you needed some work and could do the job. I need reliable people.

The job pays $20. If this works out, I may be able to get you a regular-paying job here. Just be here by 5:30 a.m. tomorrow morning and ready to work. Tools, food, clothing, and everything will be provided.

Yours sincerely,
Miguel Hernandez

Whispers Handout 5: Dark Tower Flyer

Whispers Handout 6: Zora's Letter

Hey Jimmy,

That book is not something to pass around. I don't know how much they're paying, but it isn't enough.

I miss you too and don't fret about what happened between us in the past. You called and I am coming. We can meet outside the Hobby Horse or at the Dark Tower before the show.

Yours,
Zora

Whispers Handout 8: Playbill

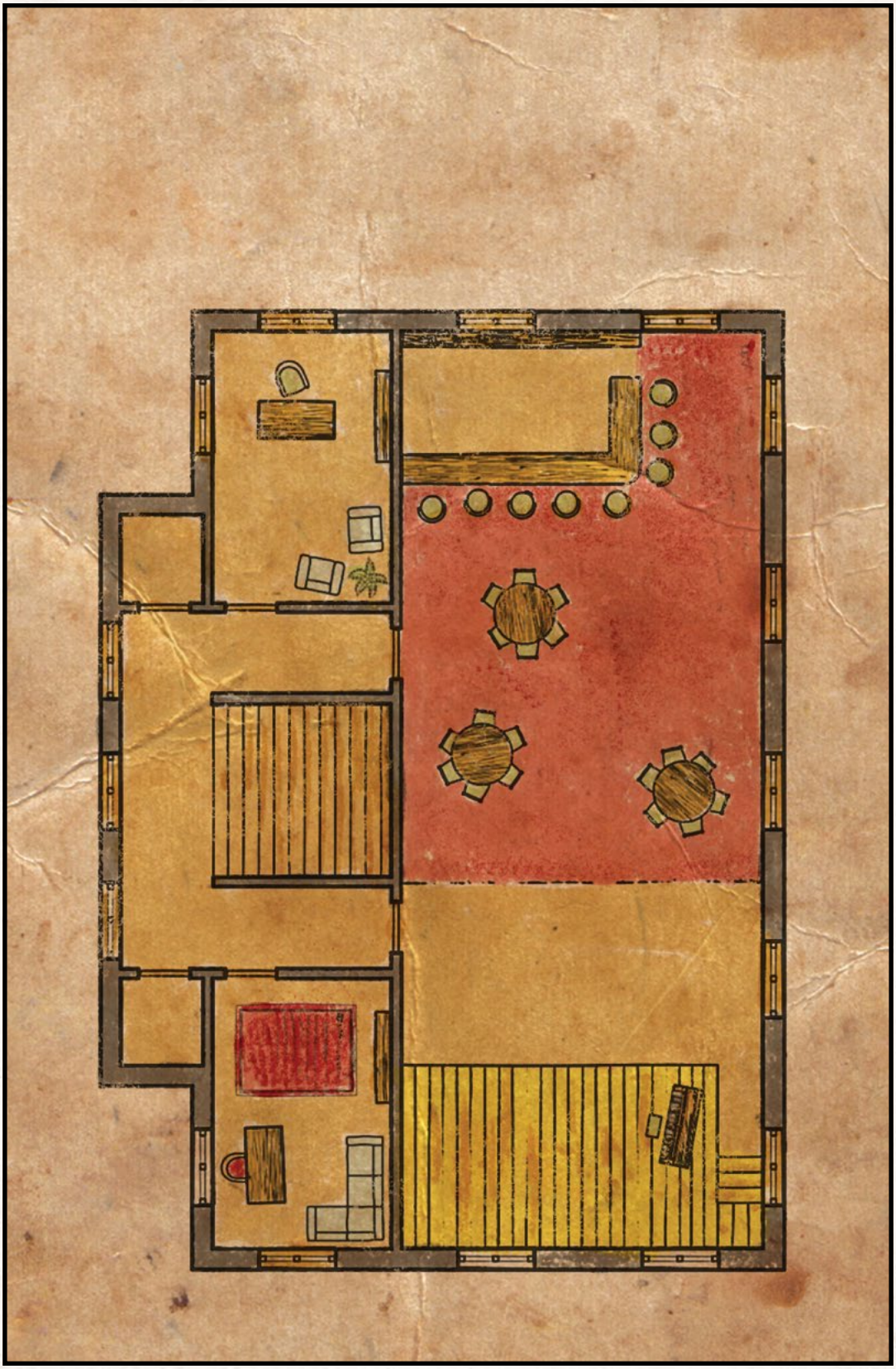
Willie Smith – There's Gonna be the Devil to Pay
Nicholas Brothers – dancing feats
Fanny Brice – Second Hand Rose
The investigators (if they have an act)
Laura Wheeler Waring – oil painting and talk
Horace Vincent – magic show
Oscar Devereaux Micheaux – Within Our Gates
Lottie Gee – songs from Shuffle Along
Zora Neale Hurston – talk How it Feels to be Colored Me
The Waves – Harlem Swings to Joy
Charlie Bronx – play set
Roger West – reading A Lost Star in Harlem
Cutting Contest – Lion and Doc Stewart
Victoria Sparrow – dance
Charles Wilmore – reading and talk

Whispers Handout 7: Evening Edition

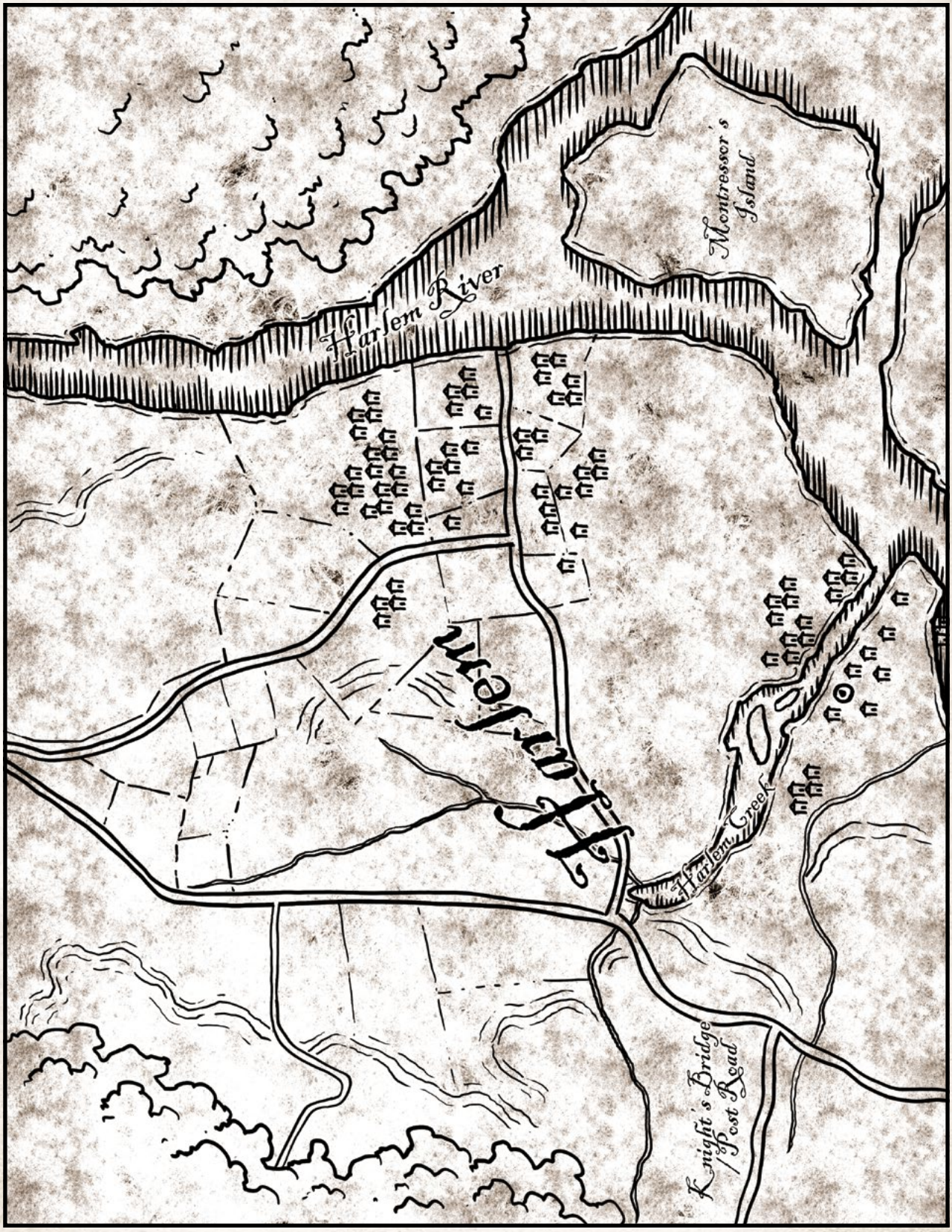
HORROR AT THE HOBBY HORSE

Residents were shocked to discover the body of a man near to the Hobby Horse bookstore early this morning. While not formally identified, the deceased is believed to be Mr. James Reece of Harlem, who died from a brutal knife attack. Police Detective Charles Chase has been assigned to the case. Readers may remember that Detective Chase has enjoyed an unspectacular record related to solving crimes in Harlem, and this reporter hopes that due care and attention will be taken in finding the culprit and bringing him to justice.

New York Amsterdam News
Friday, November 2, 1928



Whispers: Fourth Floor, Dark Tower (Player Version)

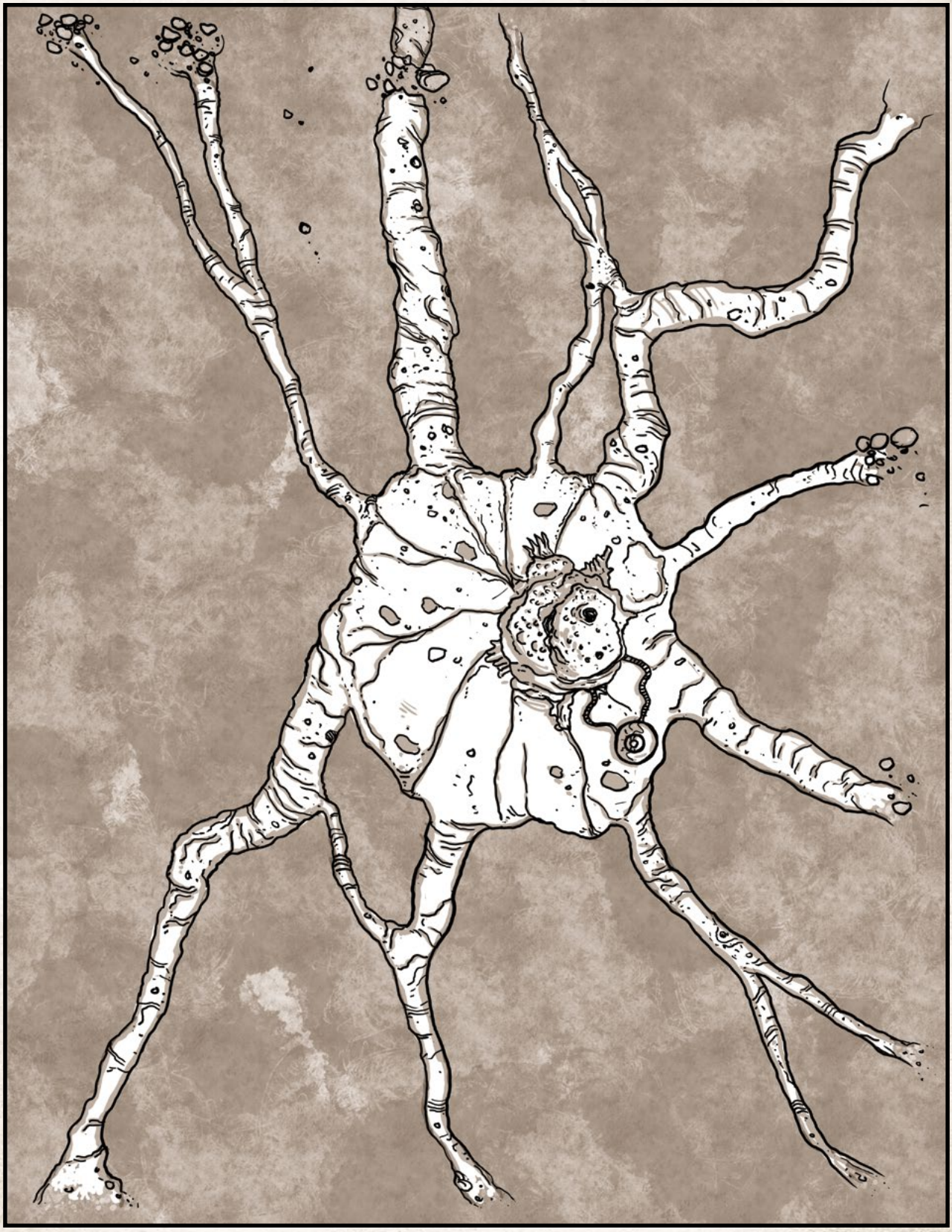


Book: Harlem Map (Player Version)

Book Handout 1: The Yellow Sign

Book Handout 2: Medical Records

Margarete Schipper (b. Margarete Merwede)	Age 34	34 Broad Street, Harlem	Married Pieter Schipper 1636. Beaten to death in the kitchen.
Peter Schipper	Age 13	34 Broad Street, Harlem	Beaten to death in the kitchen.
Maria Schipper	Age 15	34 Broad Street, Harlem	Beaten to death on stairs. Light burn marks with purple edges.
Johanna Schipper	Age 9	34 Broad Street, Harlem	Found dead in bedroom. Badly burned, flesh purple.
Josefien Schipper	Age 6	34 Broad Street, Harlem	Found dead in bedroom. Badly burned, flesh purple.
Johannes Schipper	Age 4	34 Broad Street, Harlem	Found dead in bedroom. Badly burned, flesh purple.



Book: Tunnels below Harlem (Player Version)

APPENDIX

A

SUPPORTING CAST

Use the following characters to populate Harlem—some might be used as replacement investigators. While a Harlemite now, the character could herald from anywhere, perhaps even from somewhere like Kingsport or Arkham. For example, Samuel Wright is from Attucks, an all-black town named after Crispus Attucks, located 30 miles (48 km) from Arkham.

These supporting characters help to bring Harlem to life. They might be an old friend or contact, a random person in need of help, or someone who comes to the investigators' aid at the right moment. A few of the characters come directly from the genius of the *Harlem Unbound* (1st edition) Kickstarter backers, and are ready for the gaming table.

ATTUCKS AND HARBORMILL

Harlem Unbound introduces two new towns to the landscape of Lovecraft's fiction: Attucks and Harbormill.

Attucks

Attucks is named after Crispus Attucks, a black man and the first person to die in the American Revolution (Boston Massacre 1770). The all-black town was founded in 1789 by a small band of free people of color to be a safe haven, following attempts to pass abolitionist laws to end slavery in the wake of the American Revolutionary War—it would be nearly a hundred years before the end of slavery in 1863.

While living under the shadow of bounty hunters, kidnapped townspeople, and horrors beyond description, the town has flourished. It welcomes escaped slaves, freed people, and focuses on protecting its own. Some locals claim the statue of Crispus Attucks, which old Tuma carved out of some strange stone, came to life and attacked a group of slavers hunting after refugees. Many stories circulate around the town, but no one can recall the truth of the matter with any certainty.

Harbormill

Founded shortly after the American Civil War, Harbormill lies a short distance from Innsmouth. Unfortunately, the town has not fared as well as Attucks. The place appeared cursed from its inception, when the mayor died in his bed (his lungs strangely filled with water). Citizens still claim to see the mayor's bloated form haunting the town square on nights with a new moon.

The town has struggled to make ends meet over the last decade, although the Great War actually helped the city, with returning veterans bringing money and new skills. A few years ago, a new church—the Esoteric Order of Dagon—arrived in town and has garnered a small congregation of malcontents.

Miskatonic Country map

MORGAN MATHEW MOSLEY

Age: 39 **Occupation:** Professor (Epidemiology)
Nationality: African-American

STR 55	**CON** 65	**SIZ** 65	**DEX** 50	**INT** 60
APP 55	**POW** 50	**EDU** 96	**SAN** 50	**HP** 13
DB: 0	**Build:** 0	**Move:** 7	**MP:** 10	**Luck:** *

Luck: *roll 3D6 ×5*

Skills

Credit Rating 22% (11/4)
Drive Auto 45% (22/9)
First Aid 40% (20/5)
Library Use 50% (25/10)
Medicine 75% (37/15)
Language (English) 96% (48/19)
Language (Greek) 40% (20/8)
Language (Latin) 40% (20/8)
Persuade 65% (32/13)
Psychology 45% (22/9)
Science (Biology) 50% (25/10)
Science (Epidemiology) 70% (35/14)
Spot Hidden 60% (30/12)
Stealth 50% (25/10)

Combat

Brawl	25% (12/5), damage 1D3
.41 revolver	40% (30/12), damage 1D10
Dodge	25% (20/8)

- **Description:** a striking man, who wears dark tweed suits; his rough hands belie a life of hard work.
- **Traits:** cynical and something of a know-it-all.
- **Significant People:** Nella Larsen (friend) and Diane Smith (singer and friend).
- **Meaningful Location:** the Harlem Library.
- **Treasured Possession:** Miskatonic University tenured identification letter.
- **Birthplace:** Attucks.

Backstory

Mosley never talks about his early childhood nor his parents, who struggled to get him a better education and the freedom they never had. He took their pain and ran with it, running all the way to Harlem, and making a new life. He followed in Richard Theodore Reecer's footsteps and became one of the few black students to attend Harvard—his learning journey never stopped.

Years later, after numerous letters of recommendations, exceptional grades, and honed skills, he landed a tenured position at Miskatonic University under the watchful eye of Chester Armwright (Science Department head), who seems to dislike Mosley for some reason. The recent events concerning student Herbert West caused something of a scandal and, subsequently, Mosley has taken a sabbatical. He returned to Harlem to write a book, which when accomplished, he hopes will garner him some credibility and favor back at Miskatonic.

PULP ADJUSTMENTS

Archetype: Hardboiled (page 19, *Pulp Cthulhu*)
Core Characteristic: change CON to 90
Hit Points: 30
Add/Adjust Skills: Firearms (Handguns) 65%, Law 30%, Spot Hidden 85%, Stealth 75%.

Talents

- **Photographic Memory:** can remember many details; gains a bonus die when making Know rolls.
- **Rapid Attack:** may spend 10 Luck points to gain one further melee attack in a single combat round.

ADELINE "BOMBER" JACKSON

Age: 24 **Occupation:** Nurse
Nationality: African-American

STR 45	**CON** 60	**SIZ** 50	**DEX** 50	**INT** 55
APP 55	**POW** 80	**EDU** 78	**SAN** 72	**HP** 11
DB: 0	**Build:** 0	**Move:** 8	**MP:** 16	**Luck:** *

Luck: *roll 3D6 ×5*

Skills

Credit Rating 16% (8/3)
Cthulhu Mythos 5% (2/1)
Drive Auto 45% (22/9)
Fast Talk 50% (25/10)
First Aid 72% (35/14)
Language (English) 78% (39/14)
Language (German) 30% (15/6)
Listen 55% (27/11)
Lore (Harlem) 25% (12/5)
Mechanical Repair 35% (17/7)
Medicine 40% (20/8)
Psychology 52% (26/10)
Science (Biology) 40% (20/8)
Science (Chemistry) 40% (20/8)
Spot Hidden 60% (30/12)

Combat

Brawl	25% (12/5), damage 1D3
Luger	40% (20/8), damage 1D10
Dodge	45% (22/9)

Backstory

Jackson would never say she was remarkable, she would just say she was trying to find a place for herself. Born with a steady hand, steel nerves, and a friendly laugh, her early life was mostly a blur of road trips; her baseball-player father bounced from one Negro League team to another, while her seamstress mother kept food on the table and taught her needlecraft. When their big break hit in 1902 (with the Philadelphia Giants), they settled into a new life, and Jackson's love of learning took root.

The family moved to New York in 1911, when her father joined the Lincoln Giants, and Jackson began working in the Bellevue Hospital Center laundry room. In her first year, she witnessed a white nurse save a man's life and stitch up ghastly wounds. That moment changed her life, driving her to spend countless nights reading and days at work watching and learning.

When the Red Cross needed volunteers for the Great War, Jackson went without hesitation. In 1918, she saved a soldier from an attack by... something... a thing that wouldn't die. Four soldiers kept shooting the thing, but it came at them out of the darkness, ripping one to pieces, shattering the sanity of two others, and sending another flying across the ground. Jackson rammed the thing with her ambulance, destroying the vehicle and possibly the thing as well—no one can be certain. She can never forget that night.

Nowadays, she lives in tenement housing in the Valley with three other young women. She spends her days working on a novel and debating with others at the Hobby Horse.

- **Description:** a steely demeanor, she dresses in simple clothes.
- **Traits:** tough.
- **Significant People:** her father, mother, and two young cousins.
- **Meaningful Location:** the Hobby Horse bookstore.
- **Treasured Possession:** a Luger she found and use to defend the wounded in France.
- **Birthplace:** Montgomery.

PULP ADJUSTMENTS

Archetype: Adventurer (page 15, *Pulp Cthulhu*)
Core Characteristic: change DEX or APP to 90
Hit Points: 22
Add/Adjust Skills: Dodge 65% (if DEX 90), Drive Auto 75%, Firearms (Handgun) 70%, Science (Biology) 60%, Science (Chemistry) 60%.

Talents

- **Rapid Fire:** ignores penalty die for multiple handgun shots.
- **Horrors of War:** spend 10 Luck points to ignore temporary insanity for 1D6 rounds.

LUTHER ALEXANDER

Age: 28 **Occupation:** Conjure Man
Nationality: Martinican

STR 60	**CON** 55	**SIZ** 65	**DEX** 50	**INT** 70
APP 50	**POW** 75	**EDU** 64	**SAN** 60	**HP** 12
DB: +1D4	**Build:** 1	**Move:** 7	**MP:** 15	**Luck:** *

Luck: *roll 3D6 ×5*

Skills

Anthropology 40% (20/8)
Credit Rating 30% (15/6)
Cthulhu Mythos 10% (5/2)
Fast Talk 60% (30/12)
History 35% (17/7)
Library Use 50% (25/10)
Medicine 35% (17/7)
Occult 55% (27/11)
Language (Creole) 64% (32/12)
Language (English) 30% (15/6)
Language (French) 64% (32/12)
Language (Spanish) 40% (20/8)
Locksmith 51% (25/10)
Lore (Vampires) 40% (20/8)
Science (Astronomy) 31% (15/6)
Spot Hidden 45% (22/9)

Combat

Brawl	45% (22/9), damage 1D3+1D4
12g Shotgun	50% (25/5), damage 4D6/2D6/1D6
Dodge	25% (12/5)

Spells

Implant Fear.

Backstory

No one knows much about Alexander's past, something he keeps tight-lipped about. It's almost like he appeared out of the ether one day, to help Sam Battle catch a thief (who had previously eluded the white police).

When Alexander speaks, a trained linguist might catch occasional slips in his accent and word choices. If pressed, he simply smiles and changes the subject. For the last few years, that has been the way it is. His landlady, Ms. Herndon, has tired of asking from where he hails. He works as a conjure man, whose door is always open to those in need, and his prices are reasonable.

- **Description:** athletic, dressed in black clothing, with knowing eyes.
- **Traits:** aloof and likes to portray a mysterious aura.
- **Significant People:** Ms. Herndon (landlord) and Sam Battle (patrolman), both friends.
- **Meaningful Location:** the graveyard near Harlem Hospital.
- **Treasured Possession:** book of African fairy tales.
- **Birthplace:** Martinique.

PULP ADJUSTMENTS

Archetype: Mystic
Core Characteristic: change POW to 90
Hit Points: 24
Add/Adjust Skills: Dodge 45%, Natural World 30%, Psychometry 60%
Spells: Cast Out Devil, Powder of Ibn-Ghazi.

Talents

- **Photographic Memory:** can remember many details; gains a bonus die when making Know rolls.
- **Old Lore:** has a Lore specialism (Vampires) and gains a bonus die (or reduces the difficulty roll) for all rolls with that skill.

KAREN "EARS" WILSON

Age: 30 **Occupation:** Journalist
Nationality: Italian-American

STR 45	**CON** 65	**SIZ** 35	**DEX** 75	**INT** 65
APP 50	**POW** 60	**EDU** 91	**SAN** 60	**HP** 10
DB: –1	**Build:** –1	**Move:** 9	**MP:** 12	**Luck:** *

Luck: *roll 3D6 ×5*

- **Description:** muscular physique, with keen eyes.
- **Traits:** an activist, ready to stick her neck out.
- **Significant People:** Amy (mother), Sarah (girlfriend).
- **Meaningful Location:** Tammany Hall, NYC.
- **Treasured Possession:** a broken camera (belonged to a lost love).
- **Birthplace:** Brooklyn.

Skills

Art and Craft (Acting) 70% (35/14)
Art and Craft (Sketching) 50% (25/10)
Charm 60% (30/12)
Credit Rating 40% (20/8)
Fast Talk 50% (25/10)
History 60% (30/12)
Language (English) 91% (45/18)
Language (Italian) 50% (25/10)
Language (Mandarin) 25% (12/5)
Listen 70% (35/14)
Persuade 70% (35/14)
Psychology 65% (32/13)
Spot Hidden 60% (30/12)
Stealth 65% (32/13)

Combat

Brawl	25% (12/5), damage 1D3
Sword Cane	55% (27/11), damage 1D6–1
Dodge	65% (32/13)

Backstory

Since the first time Wilson asked about her father, her mother Amy (an Italian choir girl from Brooklyn) has claimed he is William Randolph Hearst. She would tell her daughter endlessly about how Hearst loved her first, before her cousin Millicent Veronica Wilson stole him away. Wilson spent much of her youth seeing the great man in action, but always at a distance. No one seemed to tell her the truth.

That constant desire for the truth is what drove Wilson to a career similar to her "father." She decided that trying to prove herself wasn't worth the effort; if he really was her father, he would step up and let her know. But that focus quickly subsided as the thrill of solving mysteries brought greater satisfaction than anything else. She works as a freelance journalist, as few newspapers are interested in employing a woman full-time, despite one attempting to write hard-hitting news. Wilson's journalistic eye is currently trained on Harlem and the impact of the Great Migration on housing conditions. A hot story like that is bound to land her a permanent job... right?

PULP ADJUSTMENTS

Archetype: Harlequin
Core Characteristic: change APP to 90
Hit Points: 20
Add/Adjust Skills: Credit Rating 70%, Dodge 85%, Persuade 90%, Stealth 85%.

Talents

- **Hard Life:** permanently gain +5 hit points (increasing the hero's maximum hit point value).
- **Master of Disguise:** may spend 10 Luck points to gain a bonus die to Art/Craft (Acting) rolls; includes ventriloquism (able to throw voice over long distances so it appears that the sound is emanating from somewhere other than the hero). Note that if someone is trying to detect the disguise their Spot Hidden or Psychology roll's difficulty is raised to Hard.

LIAM "DEVIL" MCSHANE

Age: 31 **Occupation:** Stuntman
Nationality: Irish-American

STR 85	**CON** 80	**SIZ** 70	**DEX** 65	**INT** 50
APP 40	**POW** 50	**EDU** 43	**SAN** 43	**HP** 15
DB: +1D4	**Build:** 1	**Move:** 8	MP 10	**Luck:**

Luck: *roll 3D6 ×5*

Skills

Climb 60% (30/12)
Credit Rating 8% (4/1)
Cthulhu Mythos 5% (2/1)
Drive Auto 50% (25/10)
Intimidate 50% (25/10)
Jump 60% (30/12)
Listen 45% (27/9)
Psychology 40% (20/8)
Ride 50% (25/10)
Spot Hidden 45% (27/9)
Stealth 60% (30/12)
Swim 60% (30/12)
Throw 50% (25/10)

Combat

Brawl	70% (35/12), damage 1D3+1D4 (brass knuckles +2 damage)
Machete	70% (35/12), damage 1D8+1D4
Dodge	70% (35/14)

Backstory

McShane was the only son, in a family of nine, of an Irish beat cop in NYC. His father, Gareth, was a good man and taught him what he could. To help out his family, McShane took up various jobs and ended up working in a factory until a fire in which he saved a number of people's lives. The incident was reported and he was hailed a hero. The resulting publicity attracted Hollywood, and he found himself recruited to work on films as a stuntman, known as the "Death-Defying Devil." It was a nice life until Wilson Wallace, the producer who started McShane's new life, needed a favor.

The stuntman and Wallace went downtown to a warehouse, where something that can't be put into words happened. He still has nightmares about the pulsating, gelatinous mass of eyes that crawled up from the beneath the building, and Wilson's screams as he was crushed to death.

McShane fled back to New York and found that no one had work for a washed-up Hollywood type. He fell in with a low-level crime boss (who had seen all of his movies). He gives McShane occasional odd jobs that keep him afloat.

- **Description:** a white thug, and a wall of muscle.
- **Traits:** vicious, with little to no conscience.
- **Significant People:** Owl (newsboy and biggest fan of his movies).
- **Meaningful Location:** YMCA, NYC.
- **Treasured Possession:** reel of his last unaired film.
- **Birthplace:** Harlem.

PULP ADJUSTMENTS

Archetype: Two-Fisted
Core Characteristic: change SIZ to 90
Hit Points: 30
Add/Adjust Skills: Brawl and Machete 90%, Climb 80%, Intimidate 70%, Listen 75%.

Talents

- **Hardened:** ignores Sanity point loss from attacking other humans, viewing horrific injuries, or the deceased.
- **Tough Guy:** soaks up damage, may spend 10 Luck points to shrug off up to 5 hit points worth of damage taken in one combat round.

BETTY TUESDAY

Age: 39 **Occupation:** Antiquarian
Nationality: African-American

STR 65	**CON** 60	**SIZ** 60	**DEX** 40	**INT** 65
APP 60	**POW** 70	**EDU** 74	**SAN** 63	**HP** 12
DB: +1D4	**Build:** 1	**Move:** 8	**MP:** 14	**Luck:** *

Luck: *roll 3D6 ×5*

Skills

Accounting 20% (10/4)
Appraise 30% (15/6)
Credit Rating 65% (32/13)
Cthulhu Mythos 9% (4/2)
History 65% (32/13)
Language (Ancient Greek) 40% (20/8)
Language (English) 74% (37/14)
Language (French) 50% (25/12)
Language (Hyperborean) 20% (10/2)
Language (Latin) 35% (15/6)
Language (Mandarin) 50% (25/12)
Library Use 55% (27/11)
Occult 45% (22/9)
Persuade 55% (27/11)
Spot Hidden 55% (27/11)

Combat

Brawl	25% (12/5), damage 1D3+1D4
Fencing foil* (cane)	60% (30/15), damage 1D6+1D4
Dodge	20% (10/4)

**Foil is blessed: acts as a magical weapon and ignores armor.*

Backstory

Tuesday was born and raised in Harlem. The Tuesdays started their business in 1885 after her father, a freed enslaved man, fled the South and started a general store in 1897. She inherited her mother's talent for languages and mastered three by the age of eight. Her parents spent what money they had to send her overseas for a formal education.

Tuesday spent a lot of time traveling after college, sending antiques back home to the family. She made a number of contacts with dubious collectors, several questionable choices, and ended up on the wrong end of the attention of the Order of the Bloated Woman, barely escaping their wrath. Tuesday returned home to Harlem and took over the family business, believing she was safer here than anywhere else. Over the years, she has built a reputation for reliably finding rare artifacts and having keen translating skills.

- **Description:** beautiful, with a youthful face.
- **Traits:** knowledgeable and adventurous.
- **Significant People:** Andre (assistant at store), Horace Vincent (illusionist friend), Jana Gersh (smuggler).
- **Meaningful Location:** the family business; she will do anything to keep it safe.
- **Treasured Possession:** her sword cane that she acquired overseas.
- **Birthplace:** Harlem.

PULP ADJUSTMENTS

Archetype: Rogue
Core Characteristic: change DEX to 90
Hit Points: 24
Add/Adjust Skills: Dodge 45%, Occult 65%, Persuade 75%, Stealth 75%.

Talents

- **Linguist:** able to determine what language is being spoken (or what is written); gains a bonus die to Language rolls.
- **Heavy Hitter:** may spend 10 Luck points to add an additional damage die when dealing out melee combat (die type depends on the weapon being used, e.g. 1D3 for unarmed combat, 1D6 for a sword, etc.)

JAKE "BLESSED" WILLIAMS

Age: 42 **Occupation:** Warbler
Nationality: African-American

STR 60	**CON** 55	**SIZ** 65	**DEX** 65	**INT** 65
APP 60	**POW** 55	**EDU** 45	**SAN** 55	**HP** 12
DB: +1D4	**Build:** 1	**Move:** 6	**MP:** 11	**Luck:** *

Luck: *roll 3D6 ×5*

Skills

Art and Craft (Acting) 50% (25/10)
Art and Craft (Singing) 75% (37/15)
Charm 65% (32/15)
Fast Talk 55% (27/11)
Listen 45% (27/9)
Locksmith 45% (22/8)
Lore (Harlem) 25% (12/5)
Natural World 45% (22/9)
Psychology 45% (22/8)
Sleight of Hand 40% (20/8)
Spot Hidden 40% (20/8)
Stealth 50% (25/10)

Combat

Brawl	45% (22/9), damage 1D3+1D4
.30-06 bolt-action rifle	45% (30/12), damage 2D6+4
Dodge	40% (20/8)

Backstory

During the rare moments Williams chooses to remember the past, he recalls growing up in Brooksville, Oklahoma. It was a small, all-black town, and it was nice. Nice but quiet. Too quiet. William's family were hunters, so he learned how to kill, skin, and sell.

The family moved to New York in 1911, when her father joined the Lincoln Giants, and Jackson began working in the Bellevue Hospital Center laundry room. In her first year, she witnessed a white nurse save a man's life and stitch up ghastly wounds. That moment changed her life, driving her to spend countless nights reading and days at work watching and learning.

Williams was in the local choir, as he loved to sing and enjoyed the spotlight. His life changed the day a traveling show came to town. He ran away from home to join the troupe. Since then, it has been a life on the open road: singing, gambling, and drinking. Good luck has been a constant companion, so despite a few scrapes, he has always come out on top.

Recently, tired of traveling, Williams has washed up in Harlem. Everyone knows his name due to his voice, which seems to be able to calm a hostile crowd while bringing joys to everyone's ears. Old habits die hard, and Williams is also known for his gambling, recently leaving a crime boss penniless at the table. But such good fortune always has a price: sometimes that means living in flophouses or working menial jobs until things turn around.

- **Description:** handsome in a slightly disheveled black tuxedo.
- **Traits:** charming, the life of the party.
- **Significant People:** "Lucky" (policy runner), Duke Ellington, Nathan Wallace (café manager and boyfriend).
- **Meaningful Location:** Club Deluxe (and later the Cotton Club).
- **Treasured Possession:** .30-06 rifle that belonged to his aunt.
- **Birthplace:** Brooksville.

PULP ADJUSTMENTS

Archetype: Femme
Core Characteristic: change APP to 90
Hit Points: 24
Add/Adjust Skills: Brawl 75%, Charm 85%, Psychology 65%, Sleight of Hand 70%.

Talents

- **Born Lucky:** spend 5 Luck points and use current Luck value in place of any one skill roll (except Cthulhu Mythos).
- **Lucky:** regains an additional +1D10 Luck points when Luck Recovery rolls are made.

ROSE GOLDSTEIN

Age: 40 **Occupation:** Sociologist
Nationality: Jewish-American

STR 50	**CON** 65	**SIZ** 45	**DEX** 70	**INT** 75
APP 60	**POW** 60	**EDU** 83	**SAN** 60	**HP** 11
DB: 0	**Build:** 0	**Move:** 8	**MP:** 12	**Luck:** *

Luck: *roll 3D6 ×5*

Skills

Anthropology 60% (30/12)
Archeology 60% (30/12)
History 60% (30/12)
Language (English) 83% (41/16)
Language (Hebrew) 45% (22/9)
Language (Portuguese) 45% (22/9)
Language (Yucatec Maya) 45% (22/9)
Library Use 65% (32/13)
Lore (Harlem) 15% (7/3)
Persuade 55% (27/11)
Spot Hidden 55% (27/11)

Combat

Brawl	45% (22/9), damage 1D3
Whip	50% (25/11), damage 1D3, entangle
.38 automatic	35% (17/7), damage 1D10
Dodge	35% (17/7)

Backstory

Goldstein heralds from an upper-crust Jewish family in Arkham. Her lawyer father and nurse mother raised her in the Synagogue and attempted to impart their strongly conservative views. Much to their chagrin, they saw Goldstein follow her heart rather than their rules. She graduated in the top five percent from Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island. A talented researcher, with a flair for history, Goldstein would likely have become a teacher (as her parents wanted) if not for taking a class taught by Elsie Clews Parsons, anthropologist and feminist.

Parsons studied the Indigenous people of New Mexico and Mexico, and changed Goldstein's life. The next few years were more of a blur spent traveling with Parsons and undertaking research. Goldstein eventually settled down, getting a job as an assistant librarian in Harlem. At night, she studies the political, social, and artistic movements of her new home, desiring to understand what is going on and how Harlem will change the world. Goldstein knows it's important, but it's not her story to tell. She occasionally teaches pre-teen Harlemites.

- **Description:** a white woman, classically elegant with a hint of mystery.
- **Traits:** studious and approachable.
- **Significant People:** her students, Ms. Williams (head librarian and unwanted mother figure).
- **Meaningful Location:** Harlem Library.
- **Treasured Possession:** a vase from New Mexico.
- **Birthplace:** Arkham.

PULP ADJUSTMENTS

Archetype: Swashbuckler
Core Characteristic: change DEX to 90
Hit Points: 22
Add/Adjust Skills: Climb 60%, Handgun 75%, Pilot (Aeroplane) 70%.

Talents

- **Alert:** never surprised in combat.
- **Resourceful:** always seems to have what they need to hand; may spend 10 Luck points (rather than make Luck roll) to find a certain useful piece of equipment (e.g. a flashlight, length of rope, a weapon, etc.) in their current location.

"OWL"

Age: 14 **Occupation:** Runner
Nationality: Venezuelan

STR 55	**CON** 45	**SIZ** 45	**DEX** 85	**INT** 60
APP 50	**POW** 80	**EDU** 40	**SAN** 80	**HP** 9
DB: 0	**Build:** 0	**Move:** 9	**MP:** 16	**Luck:** *

Luck: *roll 3D6 ×5*

Skills

Accounting 35% (17/7)
Charm 50% (25/10)
Climb 60% (30/12)
Fast Talk 60% (30/12)
First Aid 35% (17/7)
Jump 45% (22/9)
Locksmith 60% (30/12)
Psychology 60% (30/12)
Sleight of Hand 60% (30/12)
Spot Hidden 50% (25/10)
Stealth 55% (27/11)

Combat

Brawl	25% (12/5), damage 1D3 or knife 1D4
Dodge	80% (40/16)

Backstory

Owl's first real memory is being held in his father's arms while below decks of a ship with thousands of people packed around them, making it hard to breathe. A voice cried out and everyone moved onto the deck of the vessel where the freezing-cold wind greeted the crowd under a winter sun. His father, whose name he doesn't remember, looked up in awe at something off in the distance, smiled, and then lifted Owl up to see what they had traveled so far to find... the Statue of Liberty. His father's words still ring in his ear, "*Son, this is a land of hope and promise. If we work hard enough, all of our dreams can come true.*" That was the happiest moment of Owl's life, as his father put a locket around his neck with a portrait of his family (father, mother, two sisters, and a younger brother).

The next memory comes from a few months later: sitting in an alleyway holding his father's burning-hot hand tightly and crying. Of people pulling him away and saying, "*…don't think the child has it.*" Owl was sick for over a year before being placed in an orphanage at the age of six. He saw some children leave the orphanage with families, but most did not. For the last eight years that has been his life, not knowing who his family was, where he is from, or what it means to be connected. A year ago, he started running numbers for a small policy shop while delivering newspapers. Owl is not close to folks but knows everyone around town—and some of the best hiding places.

- **Description:** athletic and young looking, wears loose fitting clothes for easy escape.
- **Traits:** brave and smart.
- **Significant People:** Devil McShane (former stuntman), Jackson (newsstand owner), Maggie (fellow newsies), Jonny (Policy Agent).
- **Meaningful Location:** the Hobby Horse bookstore.
- **Treasured Possession:** locket with picture of family, his only link to the past
- **Birthplace:** unknown.

PULP ADJUSTMENTS

Archetype: Sidekick
Core Characteristic: change CON to 90
Hit Points: 18
Add/Adjust Skills: Climb 65%, Electrical Repair 55%, Stealth 80%.

Talents

- **Everybody's Pal:** you know "everyone" and can call in favors from a contact; note that favors may be called in at the discretion of the Keeper.
- **Rapid Attack:** may spend 10 Luck points to gain one further melee attack in a single combat round.

WILMA DE HURST

Age: 27 **Occupation:** Singer
Nationality: Russian

STR 55	**CON** 65	**SIZ** 45	**DEX** 70	**INT** 50
APP 70	**POW** 65	**EDU** 62	**SAN** 65	**HP** 11
DB: 0	**Build:** 0	**Move:** 9	**MP:** 13	**Luck:** *

Luck: *roll 3D6 ×5*

Skills

Art and Craft (Singing) 60% (30/12)
Disguise 55% (27/11)
Firearms (Handgun) 50% (25/5)
Language (English) 40% (20/8)
Language (Russian) 62% (31/12)
Library Use 50% (25/5)
Persuade 55% (27/11)
Psychology 60% (30/12)
Spot Hidden 45% (27/9)
Stealth 60% (30/12)

Combat

Brawl	40% (20/8), damage 1D3 or knife 1D4+2
.38 auto (& silencer)	50% (25/5), damage 1D10
Dodge	35% (17/7)

Backstory

De Hurst is an up-and-comer; no one heard of her three months ago, but now she's booking gigs all over Harlem. She's striking, with pale skin and azure eyes that seem to attract the light, while her voice is nearly hypnotic. When asked about herself, she sheepishly smiles and says, "*I am from old money, darling. I don't have to sing, but I need to sing.*".

In truth, De Hurst is actually Ditra Popov from Russia. Her mission is to find a runaway ward, Catrina Sokolov, and return her to the motherland—Sokolov wanted to become famous in America for her dancing—despite a thorough search, De Hurst is no closer to finding the missing girl.

- **Description:** pale-skinned white woman dressed in a slinky colorful dress.
- **Traits:** appears sultry and carefree; in reality, she is calculating and determined.
- **Significant People:** Anna (her girlfriend), William (her agent), Clark (a fan and patrolman).
- **Meaningful Location:** the Cotton Club.
- **Treasured Possession:** custom silenced pistol.
- **Birthplace:** Kazan (De Hurst is from Linz, Austria).

PULP ADJUSTMENTS

Archetype: Hunter
Core Characteristic: change INT to 90
Hit Points: 22
Add/Adjust Skills: Fighting (Brawl) 80%, Firearms (Handgun) 80%, Spot Hidden 75%, Stealth 80%, Track 70%.

Talents

- **Harden:** ignores Sanity point loss from attacking other humans, viewing horrific injuries, or the deceased.
- **Keen Vision:** gain a bonus die to Spot Hidden rolls.

APPENDIX B

GLOSSARY OF HARLEMESE

Ab-so-lute-ly: affirmative.
Air out: leave, flee, stroll.
Astorperious: haughty, biggity.
Bailing: having fun.
Baloney: nonsense!
Bam, or down in Bam: down South.
Beating up your gums: talking to no purpose.
Beluthahatchee: next station beyond Hell.
Bible Belt: area in the South and Midwest where fundamentalism flourishes.
Boogie-woogie: type of dancing and rhythm; in the South, also means secondary syphilis.
Bull-skating: bragging.
Cold: exceeding, well, etc.
Collar a nod: sleep.
Conk buster: cheap liquor; also, an intellectual Negro.
Cruising: parading down the avenue.
Cut: doing something well.
Dark black: a casual black person.
Diddy-Wah-Diddy: a far place, a measure of distance.
Dig: understand.
Draped down: dressed in the height of Harlem fashion.
Dumb to the fact: you don't know what you are talking about.
Dusty butt: inexpensive sex worker.
Fall guy: victim of a frame (set up).
Flivver: a Model T Ford; after 1928, could mean any old broken-down car.
Getting on some stiff time: really doing well with your racket.
Get you to go: forcing the opponent to run.
Gin mill: a bar or establishment where hard liquor is sold.
Granny Grunt: a mythical character to whom most questions may be referred.
Ground rations: sex, also, "rations."
Gum beater: a blowhard, a braggart.
Hauling: fleeing on foot.
High-hat: to snub.
I shot him lightly and he died politely: I completely outdid him.
Iron: a motorcycle.
Jake: okay or fine, as in "everything is Jake."
Jelly: sex.
Jooking: playing a musical instrument or dancing in the manner of the jooks.
Juice: liquor.
July jam: something very hot.
Jump salty: get angry.
Kitchen mechanic: a domestic.
Knock yourself out: have a good time.
Lightly, slightly, and politely: doing things perfectly.
Little sister: measures of hotness.
Miss Anne: a white woman.
Mister Charlie: a white man.
Mug man: a small-time thug.
My people!: sad and satiric expression in the Negro language.
Now you cookin' with gas: now you're talking.
Ofay: white person.
Ossified: a drunk person.
Owl: a person who's out late.
Park ape: an ugly, underprivileged Negro.
Peckerwood: poor and unloved class of Southern whites.
Piano: spare ribs.
Pig meat: a young girl.
Pilch: house or apartment.
Playing the dozens: low-rating the ancestors of your opponent.
Righteous rags: the components of a Harlem-style suit.
Russian: a Southern Negro up north, "rushed up here."
Sell out: run in fear.
Sender: he or she who can get you to go, who has what it takes.
Sinker: a doughnut.
Smoking: looking someone over.
Solid: perfect.
Sooner: anything cheap and mongrel.
Spifflicated: drunk.

Stomp: low dance.
Storm Buzzard: a shiftless, homeless character.
Stroll: doing something well.
Take for a ride: to drive off with someone in order to bump them off.
The bear: confession of poverty.
The man: the law or a powerful boss.
Torpedo: a hired gun.
V and X: five-and-dime store.
Your likker told you: misguided behavior.

Recruits for the 15th New York National Guard

Zora Neale Hurston, Rochelle Brown, and Gabriel Brown

APPENDIX C

TIMELINE

1916: Marcus Garvey arrives in the United States.

1917: 10,000 blacks (including W. E. B. Du Bois, Madam C. J. Walker, and James Weldon Johnson) protest the growth of African-American killings with a silent march down Fifth Avenue.

1918: *Negro World* is published, a weekly magazine founded by Marcus Garvey.

1919: Jessie Redmon Fauset becomes literary editor of *The Crisis*; the "Red Summer of Hate" race riots break out in Chicago, Washington, D.C., and more than 20 other American cities, from June to September; Marcus Garvey purchases an auditorium in Harlem and names it Liberty Hall; Second Pan-African Congress (held in France), organized by W. E. B. Du Bois, to discuss impact of the Great War on people of African ancestry; 369th Infantry Regiment returns from the Great War to Harlem; NAACP publication of *Thirty Years of Lynching in the United States, 1889-1918*; Madam C. J. Walker, first female self-made millionaire, dies and donates two-thirds of her fortune to charity and the last third to her daughter, A'Lelia; "If We Must Die," a poem by Claude McKay, published in *The Liberator*.

1920: Harlem Stock Exchange founded; UNIA holds its First International Convention of the Negro Peoples of the World at Madison Square Garden, New York; upon graduation from high school, Langston Hughes writes the first poems regarding black identity, "When Sue Wears Red" and "The Negro Speaks of Rivers;" *The Crisis* publishes "The Catholic Church and the Negro Priest," detailing policies based on race to ban African-Americans from higher positions in the church; Mamie Smith makes the first commercial blues record and opens the gates of the industry to other black artists; W. E. B. Du Bois first states that a "renaissance of American Negro literature" is upon us; James Weldon Johnson becomes head of the NAACP.

1921: Harry Pace founds The Black Swan Phonograph Corporation, producing "race records" that bring jazz (inc. Mamie Smith and Bessie Smith) to a larger audience; Claude McKay offered associate editor position at *The Liberator*; *Shuffle Along* debuts at Cort Theatre; Zora Neale Hurston publishes her first story "John Redding Goes to Sea" in *The Stylus*, a Howard University magazine; Marcus Garvey founds the African Orthodox Church.

1922: *Harlem Shadows*, Claude McKay's novel, is published; the Harmon Foundation promotes black artists, both financially and with exposure; UNIA, NAACP, and YMCA march in support of Congressman Dyer's federal anti-lynching bill; Representative L.C. Dyer-sponsored anti-lynching bill passes, making it a federal crime; Meta Warrick-Fuller's sculpture "Ethiopia Awakening" is part of the Making of America exhibition in New York; Langston Hughes becomes a deckhand.

1923: Bessie Smith becomes famous with recordings of "Down-Hearted Blues" and "Gulf Coast Blues;" the National Urban League founds *Opportunity: A Journal of Negro Life*; a love triangle between Langston Hughes, Alain Locke, and Countee Cullen begins; Jean Toomer publishes the novel *Cane*; Oliver's Creole Jazz Band makes 37 recordings with Louis Armstrong; Duke Ellington and the Washingtonians arrive in New York; the Cotton Club cabaret opens; Jessie Redmon Fauset's novel *There Is Confusion* is published, and is the first Harlem Renaissance book by a female author; four white publications feature Countee Cullen's work; Zora Neale Hurston's short story appears in *Opportunity: A Journal of Negro Life*.

1924: white downtowners embrace jazz and Harlem Mania in full effect; Aaron Douglas arrives in New York; Paul Robeson stars in *The Emperor Jones* in London; Walter White's novel *The Fire in the Flint* is published, its story focuses on the life of a black doctor and Great War veteran before being lynched; Countee Cullen wins first prize in the Witter Bynner Poetry Competition; W. E. B. Du Bois' book *The Gift of Black Folk* is published; at the Civic Club Dinner, *The Opportunity Journal* showcases black writers and artists of Harlem, introducing them to white publishers.

1925: Zora Neale Hurston moves to Harlem; Wallace Thurman arrives in Harlem; Alain Locke is dismissed from Howard for his radical teachings; Marcus Garvey is convicted of mail fraud and imprisoned in the Atlanta Penitentiary; Rudolph Fisher's "The City of Refuge," about a black man escaping lynching in the South by moving to Harlem, is published in *The Atlantic Monthly*; Alain Locke's *Harlem, Mecca of the Negro* is published, featuring black writers and artists; A. Philip Randolph's Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters labor organization is created; Small's Paradise nightclub opens in Harlem and becomes one of the most successful nightclubs; *Appearances*, the first full-length African-American drama, appears on Broadway.

1926: Countee Cullen receives an M.A. in English at Harvard; Langston Hughes' "The Weary Blues" is published; NAACP-sponsored theater group, the Krigwa Players, launches; white author Carl Van Vechten publishes his controversial novel *Nigger Heaven*; the Carnegie Corporation buys Arthur Schomburg's African-American collection; Rudolph Fisher moves to New York and joins the National Research Council at Columbia University's College of Physicians and Surgeons; the Harlem Globetrotters are founded; Carter G. Woodson, historian, creates Negro History Week (which becomes Black History Month); the Savoy Ballroom opens; Langston Hughes, Wallace Thurman, and Zora Neale Hurston, with illustrations by Aaron Douglas and Richard Bruce Nugent, release the first issues of the magazine *Fire!! Devoted to Younger Negro Artists*.

1927: Duke Ellington begins a three-year stint at the Cotton Club; Charlotte Mason becomes a patron of both Langston Hughes and Zora Neale Hurston, and is known as the "Godmother" by the New Negro movement; Hughes' poetry collection *Fine Clothes to the Jew* is published; Hurston and Hughes go on a road trip through the South, meeting Bessie Smith, Jessie Fauset, and George Washington Carver; the Dark Tower, night club and literary salon, opens; *Porgy*, the musical, opens on Broadway; *Negro Drawings*, a book of illustrations by Miguel Covarrubias, is published; Arthur Fauset publishes *For Freedom: A Biographical Story of the American Negro*.

1928: the Lindy Hop becomes famous; Claude McKay's novel *Home to Harlem* is published; Rudolph Fisher's first novel, *The Walls of Jericho*, is published; Countee Cullen marries Nina Yolande Du Bois (daughter of W. E. B.) in the social event of the decade, but the marriage ends months later when Cullen moves to Europe with the best man, Harold Jackman, his lover; Wallace Thurman's magazine *Harlem: A Forum of Negro Life* launched as a successor to *Fire!!*, with illustrations by Aaron Douglas and Richard Bruce Nugent; the Harmon Foundation sponsors first all-black art exhibit.

1929: the Negro Experiment Theater is founded; Wallace Thurman's play, *Harlem*, opens on Broadway, and his novel, *The Blacker the Berry*, is published; Broadway premiere of *Ain't Misbehavin'* features Fats Waller's music; the Negro Art Theatre is founded; the National Colored Players is founded; the Great Depression hits and brings an end to the "Jazz Age."

1930: James Weldon Johnson's *Black Manhattan: A History of Harlem* is published; Zora Neale Hurston and Langston Hughes begin work on the play *Mule Bone: A Comedy of Negro Life*; this joint project would ruin their friendship, and the play would not be staged until 1991; Universal Holy Temple of Tranquility is founded by Sufi Abdul Hamid; painter Jacob Lawrence settles in Harlem.

1931: Augusta Savage opens the *Savage School of Arts and Crafts* in Harlem; the Scottsboro Trial begins (9 falsely-accused black youths are put on trial for raping two white women); A'Lelia Walker dies unexpectedly; Louis Armstrong's musical short "A Rhapsody in Black and Blue" opens; Langston Hughes publishes four works: poems "Dear Lovely Death" and "The Negro Mother," the novel *Not Without Laughter*, and a poem and play collection *Scottsboro Limited*; Father Divine's International Peace Movement is established in Harlem.

1932: Rudolph Fisher's novel *The Conjure Man Dies* is published (thought to be the first mystery novel by an African-American writer); a large number of blacks leave the Republican Party; twenty black intellectuals travel to Russia for the ill-fated film *Black and White*; Langston Hughes publishes poetry collection *The Dream Keeper*; Countee Cullen publishes *One Way to Heaven* (his first and only novel); Claude McKay publishes short-story collection *Gingertown*.

1933: the film *The Emperor Jones* opens, starring Paul Robeson; Aaron Douglas creates murals for the Harlem YMCA; President Roosevelt's New Deal program begins; after 33 years of operations, the National Negro Business League closes; Jessie Fauset's final novel *Comedy, American Style* is published.

1934: Aaron Douglas is commissioned by the Harlem branch of the New York Public Library to create a mural entitled "Aspects of Negro Life;" Nancy Cunard, a British socialite, founds and edits the *Negro Anthology*; Oscar Micheaux's film *Harlem After Midnight* opens; the Apollo Theatre opens; W. E. B. Du Bois leaves *The Crisis*; the NAACP's Wallace Thurman dies; Rudolph Fisher dies.

1935: the Harlem Race Riot is sparked by anger over discrimination by white-owned businesses; the Museum of Modern Art features the African Negro Art exhibition; *Porgy and Bess* opens on Broadway with an all-black cast; *Mulatto*, the first full-length play by a black writer (Langston Hughes), opens on Broadway; Countee Cullen's *The Medea and Some Poems* is published; Willis Richardson's *Negro History in Thirteen Plays* is published; more than fifty percent of Harlem's families are unemployed.

1936: Oscar Micheaux's film *Temptation* opens; Aaron Douglas makes murals for the Hall of Negro Life at the Texas Centennial Exposition in Dallas.

1937: Paul Robeson stars in the film *King Solomon's Mines*; Zora Neale Hurston's novel *Their Eyes Were Watching God* is published; Reverend Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. becomes pastor of the Abyssinian Baptist Church.

1938: Zora Neale Hurston publishes the non-fiction book *Tell My Horse: Voodoo and Life in Haiti and America*; Mother Horn, a Pentecostal preacher, opens a church in Harlem.

1939: Zora Neale Hurston's novel *Moses, Man of the Mountain* is published.

1940: Langston Hughes' autobiography *The Big Sea* is published; Claude McKay's non-fiction book, *Harlem: Negro Metropolis,* is published.

2018: Zora Neale Hurston's *Barracoon: The Story of the Last "Black Cargo"* is published, the non-fiction book includes interviews with Cujo Lewis (the last living survivor of the Middle Passage, the transatlantic slave trade, that forced Africans into the bowels of ships, kidnapped them, and forcing them into punishing life of servitude).

APPENDIX D

RECOMMENDED MEDIA

LITERATURE

The Negro Speaks Rivers, Langston Hughes (1921)
Cane, Jean Toomer (1923)
Home to Harlem, Claude McKay (1927)
Slaves Today, George Samuel Schuyler (1931)
Jonah's Gourd Vine, Zora Neale Hurston (1934)

ART

"Fétiche et Fleurs," Palmer C. Hayden (1926)
"Mural at Club Ebony," Aaron Douglas (1927)
"Buddha," Lois Mailou Jones (1927)
"Green Apples," Augusta Savage (1930)
"Chain Gang," William H. Johnson (1939)

THEATRE

Pandora's Box (1923)
Compromise (1925)
The Broken Banjo (1925)
Duchess Says Her Prayers (1930)
The Fool's Errand (1927)
Blue Blood (1927)

MUSICALS

Shuffle Along (1921)
Seven-Eleven (1922)
Dixie to Broadway (1924)
Lucky Sambo (1925)
Africana (1927)
Keep Shufflin' (1928)

MUSIC

"Dippermouth Blues," King Oliver's Creole Jazz Band (1923)
"Back Water Blues," Bessie Smith (1927)
"The Mooche," Duke Ellington (1928)
"I'm Gonna Sit Right Down and Write Myself a Letter," Fats Waller (1935)

PERIODICALS

Negro World
New York Age
The Challenge Seven Arts
The Crisis
The Emancipator
The Messenger
The Opportunity Journal

APPENDIX

E

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ken Burns, *Jazz: The Story of America's Music*; Columbia/Legacy (Sony Music Entertainment Inc.), 2005.

Robert J. Dalessandro and Gerald Torrence, *Willing Patriots: Men of Color in the First World War*; Schiffer Publishing Ltd., 2009.

Jeffrey B. Ferguson, *The Harlem Renaissance: A Brief History with Documents*; Bedford/St. Martin's, 2007.

Jonathan Gill, *Harlem: The Four Hundred Year History from Dutch Village to Capital of Black America*; Grove Press, 2011.

Laban Carrick Hill, *Harlem Stomp! A Cultural History of the Harlem Renaissance*; Little Brown Books for Young Adults, 2004.

Langston Hughes, *The Big Sea* (American Century); Hill & Wang Inc., 1993.

Rick Kennedy, Jelly Roll, Bix and Hoagy, *Gennett Studios and the Birth of Recorded Jazz*; Indiana University Press, 1999.

David Levering Lewis, *When Harlem was in Vogue*; Penguin, 1997.

Alain Locke, *Harlem, Mecca of the New Negro.*; Black Classic Press, 1980.

H. P. Lovecraft, *The Complete Fiction of H. P. Lovecraft*; Chartwell Books, 2016.

H. P. Lovecraft, *The Dunwich Horror and Others*; Arkham House, 1963.

Florette Henri, *Black Migration: Movement North 1900-1920*; Anchor Press, 1975.

Thomas M. Pitkin & Francesco Cordasco, *The Black Hand: A Chapter in Ethnic Crime*; Littlefield Adams, 1980.

Russell Shorto, *The Island at the Center of the World: The Epic Story of Dutch Manhattan and the Forgotten Colony That Shaped America*; Penguin Random House, 2005.

Carl Sifakis, *Encyclopedia of American Crime*; Facts on File Crime Library, 2000.

Shane Vogel, *The Scene of Harlem Cabaret: Race, Sexuality, Performance*; University of Chicago Press, 2009.

Irma Watkins-Owens, *Blood Relations: Caribbean Immigrants and the Harlem Community 1900-1930*; Indiana University Press, 1996.

Web Resources

The Online Reference Guide to African-American History; BlackPast.org.

A Guide to Harlem Renaissance; www.loc.gov/rr/program/bib/harlem/harlem.htm.

The African-American Mosaic, A Library of Congress Resource Guide for the Study of Black History and Culture; United States Library of Congress.

www.ictinc.ca/kahnawake-skywalkers-a-brief-history-of-mohawk-steel-workers

www.mashable.com/2015/03/07/empire-state-building-vertigo/#lFDYaNnRdmqg

www.nytimes.com/1996/12/28/nyregion/an-indian-community-flourished-and-faded-in-a-section-of-brooklyn.html

www.wnyc.org/story/192807-sky-walking-raising-steel-mohawk-ironworker-keeps-tradition-alive/

www.britannica.com/biography/James-J-Walker

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jimmy_Walker

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Francis_Hylan

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_Francis_Murphy

A Harlem tenement in the summer

INDEX

A

Aaron Douglas . . 25, 54, 108, 183, 186, 188, 190, 216, 350, 351, 352

Adelaide Louise Hall. 57

Afro-American Realty Company (AARC) 14, 42, 73

Alain Leroy Locke. 17, 42, 43, 47, 190, 209, 210, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 219, 220, 221, 223, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 231, 232, 349, 350, 353

A'Lelia Walker. 49

A. Philip Randolph 18, 43, 48, 350

Arnold Josiah Ford 67, 110, 115, 121, 123

Arnold Rothstein. 63, 64, 65, 238, 240

Arturo Alfonso Schomburg. 26, 46, 47, 58, 79, 350

Asa Philip Randolph 44

Attucks 108, 335

Augusta Savage 54, 350, 352

B

Backstory Elements, Harlem. 37

Baron in Blues 100, 133, 134, 135, 136, 262, 265, 267

Basketball 68, 78

Benjamin Rucker (Black Herman) 61

Bernheimer & Schwartz Pilsener Brewing Company . . . 85

Bessie Smith 35, 43, 56, 112, 193, 349, 350, 352

Beta Israel 66

Black Book Of Azathoth. 269, 273, 274, 275, 276, 291, 292

Blackface 30, 90

Black Hand, The 11, 133, 135

Black Man, The . . 10, 14, 256, 269, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 280, 281, 283, 286, 287, 290, 291, 292, 293, 296, 350

Black Star Line 46, 76

Black Swan Records 78

Booker T. Washington 17, 49, 54, 106

Brad T. Walker. 98

Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters (BSCP) . .18, 44, 350

C

Candomblé 14

Casper Holstein. . 21, 64, 133, 134, 135, 136, 138, 147, 148, 149, 199, 257

Charles William Anderson 49

Chick Webb 57

Civil Rights 9

Claude Mckay 17, 23, 28, 52, 349, 350, 351, 352

Combat Talents 39

Cotton Club . 21, 33, 35, 55, 57, 59, 75, 81, 82, 83, 154, 156, 157, 161, 167, 168, 170, 178, 183, 241, 343, 346, 349, 350

Countee Cullen 28, 43, 49, 51, 52, 80, 349, 350, 351

Cthulhu Mythos 93

Cutting Contests 56

Cyril Briggs 48, 52

D

Dark Heights 50

Dark Tower 28, 35, 43, 49, 50, 79, 237, 238, 239, 240, 242, 244, 249, 250, 252, 254, 257, 258, 259, 260, 263, 264, 267, 350

Dark Tower, The 79

Dreamlands, The 54, 100, 183, 185, 188, 193, 194, 197, 198, 201, 203, 206, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 216, 219, 220, 221, 223, 226, 228, 229, 231, 232, 233

Duke Ellington . .6, 18, 21, 26, 55, 57, 75, 80, 248, 343, 349, 350, 352

Dunbar National Bank 74

Duppy 100

Dutch Settlers 10, 11, 12, 13, 22, 64, 65, 81, 92, 93, 248, 256, 266, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 279, 280, 282, 286, 293, 294, 297, 353

E

East Harlem . . 16, 18, 37, 41, 42, 97, 98, 136, 147, 163, 184, 187, 189, 199, 200

Ernestine Rose 47, 79

Ethiopian Jews 66

Evelyn Preer 55

F

Fanny Brice 59, 254, 262

Father Divine 84

Fats Waller. 6, 29, 350, 352

Ferdinand "Jelly Roll" Morton. 56

Fire!! 51, 350

Floyd Calvin 51, 53

G

Gangster 103

George Washington. 13, 350

Geraldyn Dismond 51

Giuseppe "Joe the Boss" Masseria 63

Giuseppe "The Clutch Hand" Morello . .63, 184, 187, 199, 200

Golden Edge 49, 87

Golem 101

Grace Nail Johnson 59

Great Depression. 9, 10, 18, 44, 50, 54, 74, 75, 85, 350

Great Migration . 9, 14, 21, 47, 48, 73, 89, 90, 118, 240, 340

Great War 14, 18, 23, 27, 34, 44, 46, 47, 48, 51, 54, 55, 56, 64, 65, 66, 73, 74, 91, 98, 108, 109, 112, 119, 122, 125, 134, 153, 163, 187, 194, 240, 335, 338, 349, 350

Gumby's Bookstore 70

H

Hamilton Lodge 83

Harbormill. 335

Harlemania 33

Harlemese 347

Harlem Hellfighters 15, 16, 30, 55, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 112, 114, 115, 117, 118, 120, 122, 123, 125, 126, 127, 134, 303

Harlem Hospital 75, 78, 120

Harlem Opera House 84

Harlem Renaissance .6, 7, 9, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 28, 30, 31, 33, 35, 37, 41, 42, 43, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 58, 68, 69, 70, 76, 78, 79, 80, 89, 93, 108, 183, 190, 209, 210, 349, 353, 354

Harmon Foundation 25, 26, 61, 241, 245, 349, 350

Harold Nicholas 59

Harry Houdini 59, 86, 201, 239

Hotel Olga 87

Hotel Theresa 87

Hubert Henry Harrison 47

Hubert Julian (Black Eagle) 61

Hunting Horror. 98

I

Innsmouth. 153, 154, 155, 165, 169, 175, 335

Italian Harlem. . 9, 18, 41, 42, 63, 64, 65, 79, 82, 96, 98, 127, 135, 147, 148, 162, 163, 168, 170, 184, 200, 201, 340

J

Jackie Mabley 55

Jack "Legs" Diamond. 65, 238, 239, 240, 242, 247, 251, 254, 255, 256, 259, 266

James Evans. 63, 82

James John Walker 62

J. Edgar Hoover. 46, 82

Jessie Redmon Fauset 28, 45, 52, 349, 350, 351

Jewish Harlem 9, 13, 14, 41, 42, 66, 84, 85, 86, 239, 270

Jim Crow 9, 13, 43, 45, 54, 89, 90, 91, 117, 247

John F. Hylan 62, 354

Josephine Baker 18, 26, 35, 58, 77

Joseph V. Mckee 63, 241

Jungle Alley 81, 82

K

Kahnawake Mohawk 67

Knights of Ouroboros 108, 109, 121, 127

Krigwa Players Little Theater Group 18, 31, 70, 350

Ku Klux Klan . . . 18, 46, 48, 62, 89, 91, 93, 99, 112, 117, 121, 125, 126, 131, 255, 266

L

Lafayette Players 9, 17, 31, 56, 70, 80, 81

La Marqueta 85

Langston Hughes 18, 28, 31, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 77, 80, 108, 209, 210, 211, 212, 214, 215, 216, 217, 219, 220, 221, 229, 244, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353

Lenox Avenue . . 14, 28, 41, 44, 48, 49, 67, 73, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 84, 87, 120, 156, 157, 159, 189, 196

Levi Sandy Alexander Gumby 43, 70

LGBTQ 43

Lillian Harris Dean (Pigfoot Mary) 48

Louis Armstrong 35, 57, 135, 349, 350

Lynching 18, 43, 45, 48, 49, 53, 91, 93, 349, 350

M

Marcus Garvey .14, 17, 18, 23, 28, 43, 46, 47, 48, 49, 61, 64, 66, 67, 76, 78, 110, 116, 349, 350

Mark Huey 97

Mary Edward Chinn. 66, 67

Mary Lou Williams. 57

Mary White Ovington 48

Mask of Dreaming . 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 217, 221, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 231, 232, 235

Miskatonic Valley 10, 22

Monstrosity, The 102

Morris Raphael Cohen 65

Muscoota. 10, 11

Music. 28, 59, 143, 144, 260, 353

N

National Association for The Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) 17, 23, 28, 31, 43, 44, 45, 46, 48, 49, 51, 59, 61, 64, 190, 209, 219, 349, 350, 351

Necronomicon. 12

Negro Players 31

Negrotarians 25, 35

Negro World 28, 46, 47, 49, 349

Nella Larsen 14, 30, 47, 50, 51, 237, 241, 255, 337

New Negro, The. . . 47, 54, 190, 209, 214, 219

Nieuw Haarlem. 11, 12, 269, 270, 276

Niggerati 28, 108

Noble Sissle. 31, 55

Nora Holt 59

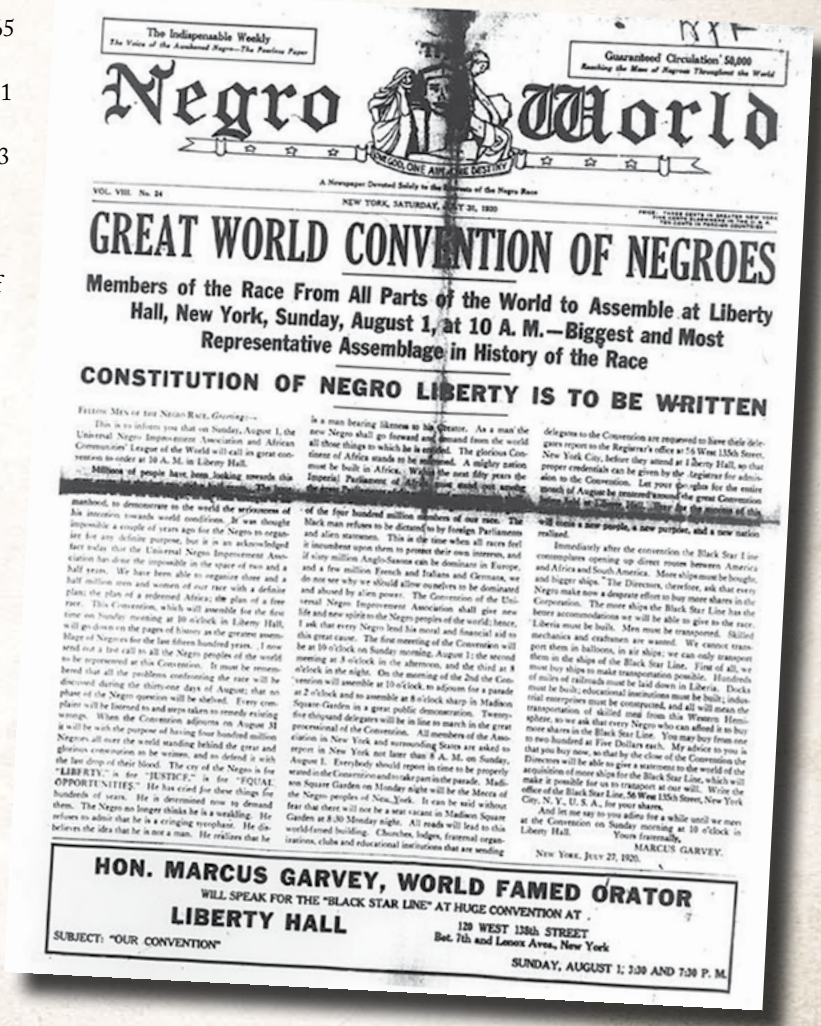
Numbers Game . .37, 64, 65, 78, 84, 134, 186, 187, 189, 194, 199, 200, 201, 343, 345

Nyarlathotep . .10, 12, 22, 211, 212, 235, 256, 269, 291, 293, 296

O

Occupations, Harlem. 34

Oscar Micheaux . . .54, 55, 58, 241, 245, 247, 254, 255, 351



The Indispensable Weekly
The Voice of the Awakened Negro—The Fearless Paper

Guaranteed Circulation 50,000
Reaching the Mass of Negroes Throughout the World

Negro World

ONE GOD! ONE AIM! ONE DESTINY

A Newspaper Devoted Solely to the Interests of the Negro Race

VOL. VIII. No. 24 NEW YORK, SATURDAY, JULY 31, 1920

GREAT WORLD CONVENTION OF NEGROES

Members of the Race From All Parts of the World to Assemble at Liberty Hall, New York, Sunday, August 1, at 10 A. M.—Biggest and Most Representative Assemblage in History of the Race

CONSTITUTION OF NEGRO LIBERTY IS TO BE WRITTEN

FELLOW MEN OF THE NEGRO RACE, Greeting:—

This is to inform you that on Sunday, August 1, the Universal Negro Improvement Association and African Communities' League of the World will call its great convention to order at 10 A. M. in Liberty Hall.

Millions of people have been looking towards this manhood, to demonstrate to the world the wholesomeness of his intention towards world conditions. It was thought impossible a couple of years ago for the Negro to organize for any definite purpose, but it is an acknowledged fact today that the Universal Negro Improvement Association has done the impossible in the space of two and a half years. We have been able to organize three and a half million men and women of our race with a definite plan; the plan of a redeemed Africa; the plan of a free race. This Convention, which will assemble for the first time on Sunday morning at 10 o'clock in Liberty Hall, will go down on the pages of history as the greatest assemblage of Negroes for the last fifteen hundred years. I now send out a last call to all the Negro peoples of the world to be represented at this Convention. It must be remembered that all the problems confronting the race will be discussed during the thirty-one days of August; that no phase of the Negro question will be shelved. Every complaint will be listened to and steps taken to remedy existing wrongs. When the Convention adjourns on August 31 it will be with the purpose of having four hundred million Negroes all over the world standing behind the great and glorious convention to be written, and to defend it with the last drop of their blood. The cry of the Negro is for "LIBERTY," is for "JUSTICE," is for "EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES." He has cried for these things for hundreds of years. He is determined now to demand them. The Negro no longer thinks he is a weakling. He refuses to admit that he is a cringing sycophant. He disbelieves the idea that he is not a man. He realizes that he is a man bearing likeness to his Creator. As a man the new Negro shall go forward and demand from the world all those things to which he is entitled. The glorious Continent of Africa stands to be redeemed. A mighty nation must be built in Africa. Within the next fifty years the Imperial Parliaments of [illegible] must not starve the black man refuses to be dictated to by foreign Parliaments and alien statesmen. This is the time when all races feel it incumbent upon them to protect their own interests, and if sixty million Anglo-Saxons can be dominant in Europe, and a few million French and Italians and Germans, we do not see why we should allow ourselves to be dominated and abused by alien power. The Convention of the Universal Negro Improvement Association shall give new life and new spirit to the Negro peoples of the world; hence, I ask that every Negro lend his moral and financial aid to this great cause. The first meeting of the Convention will be at 10 o'clock on Sunday morning, August 1; the second meeting at 3 o'clock in the afternoon, and the third at 8 o'clock in the night. On the morning of the 2nd the Convention will assemble at 10 o'clock, to adjourn for a parade at 2 o'clock and to assemble at 8 o'clock sharp in Madison Square Garden in a great public demonstration. Twenty-five thousand delegates will be in line to march in the great processional of the Convention. All members of the Association in New York and surrounding States are asked to report in New York not later than 8 A. M. on Sunday, August 1. Everybody should report in time to be properly seated in the Convention and make part in the parade. Madison Square Garden on Monday night will be the Mecca of the Negro peoples of New York. It can be said without fear that there will not be a seat vacant in Madison Square Garden at 8.30 Monday night. All roads will lead to this world-famed building. Churches, lodges, fraternal organizations, clubs and educational institutions that are sending delegates to the Convention are requested to have their delegates report to the Registrar's office at 56 West 135th Street, New York City, before they attend at Liberty Hall, so that proper credentials can be given by the Registrar for admission to the Convention. Let your [illegible] for the entire month of August be [illegible] the great Convention [illegible] for the success of this [illegible] will form a new purple, a new purplet, and a new nation realized.

Immediately after the convention the Black Star Line contemplates opening up direct routes between America and Africa and South America. More ships must be bought, and bigger ships." The Directors, therefore, ask that every Negro make now a desperate effort to buy more shares in the Corporation. The more ships the Black Star Line has the better accommodations we will be able to give to the race. Liberia must be built. Men must be transported. Skilled mechanics and craftsmen are wanted. We cannot transport them in balloons, in air ships; we can only transport them in the ships of the Black Star Line. First of all, we must buy ships to make transportation possible. Hundreds of miles of railroads must be laid down in Liberia. Docks must be built; educational institutions must be built; industrial enterprises must be constructed, and all will mean the transportation of skilled men from this Western Hemisphere, so we ask that every Negro who can afford it to buy more shares in the Black Star Line. You may buy from one to two hundred at Five Dollars each. My advice to you is that you buy now, so that by the close of the Convention the Directors will be able to give a statement to the world of the acquisition of more ships for the Black Star Line, which will make it possible for us to transport at our will. Write the office of the Black Star Line, 56 West 135th Street, New York City, N. Y., U. S. A., for your shares.

And let me say to you adieu for a while until we meet at the Convention on Sunday morning at 10 o'clock in Liberty Hall.

Yours fraternally,
MARCUS GARVEY.

NEW YORK, JULY 27, 1920.

HON. MARCUS GARVEY, WORLD FAMED ORATOR
WILL SPEAK FOR THE "BLACK STAR LINE" AT HUGE CONVENTION AT
LIBERTY HALL
120 WEST 138th STREET
Bet. 7th and Lenox Aves., New York
SUBJECT: "OUR CONVENTION"
SUNDAY, AUGUST 1; 3:30 AND 7:30 P. M.

P

Passing 28, 50, 51, 91, 92, 237
Passing Player 92
Patrolman 103
Paul Robeson 18, 30, 58, 350, 351
Peter Minuit 11
Peter Stuyvesant 11, 12, 22, 269, 283
Philip A. Payton 14, 42, 76
Pops 98
Prince Hall Freemasons 69, 75
Pulp Talents, Harlem 39
Purist Player 92

R

Racial Tension Modifier 92, 105, 117, 220, 256
Racism 7, 89, 106, 107
Ragtime 55, 56, 73, 81, 142
Renaissance Big Five 68, 69
Rent Parties 111
Richard Nicholls 12
Richard Wright 53
Robert Moses 62, 63
Ruth Logan Roberts 49, 107

S

Samuel Haumza 50

Samuel Henry Kress 10

Samuel J. Battle 61

Sandhogs 71

Savoy Ballroom 77

Scat Singing 9, 135, 136

Scenario Generator 93, 99, 102, 130, 131, 150, 180, 266, 339

Segregation 10, 16, 45, 48, 63, 73, 89, 90, 105

Shuffle Along 18, 30, 55, 57, 349

Skills, New. 34

Slavery. 89, 90, 269, 335

Soucouyants. 102

Stephanie Saint-Clair (Queenie) .33, 64, 65, 78, 93, 199, 237, 238, 248, 249, 251

St. Nicholas Park 79

Stride. 29, 56

Sugar Cane Club 83

Sugar Hill 26, 65, 67, 69, 74, 75, 77, 81

Summit, The 69

Supporting Cast (NPCs). 335

T

Talented Tenth 45, 46, 47, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53

Temple of Leviathan 184, 185, 187, 188, 198, 199, 200, 201, 203, 204

The Crisis . 23, 25, 28, 43, 45, 46, 50, 52, 53, 54, 64, 70, 183, 190, 349, 351, 352

Thomas T. Fortune. 48, 49, 196, 199, 203

Timeline, Harlem 349

Tree of Hope 80, 81

U

Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA). 23, 46, 47, 48, 67, 76, 78, 110, 115, 116, 349

V

Valley, The 76, 115

Voice, The 47

W

Wallace Thurman. 28, 43, 50, 108, 216, 350, 351

Walter Francis White 350

Wappinger. 10, 11, 12, 13, 22, 86

W. E. B. Du Bois13, 14, 17, 18, 21, 23, 28, 30, 31, 42, 43, 45, 46, 48, 52, 70, 75, 349, 350, 351

Weckquaesgeek 9, 10, 11, 270, 271

Wentworth Matthew. 66

White Rose Mission 77

Wiley Wilson Sanitarium 77

William Elmer Harmon 61

Willie "The Lion" Smith 17, 29, 56, 80, 241, 253, 262

Y

YMCA 49, 69, 76, 79, 213, 217, 341, 349, 351

Yossele Rosenblatt. 66

YWCA 69

Z

Zonbi. 103

Zora Neale Hurston 6, 25, 28, 35, 50, 51, 53, 108, 209, 216, 238, 242, 249, 255, 263, 264, 349, 350, 351, 352

TABLES

Harlem Backstory Elements: Personal Description. 37

Harlem Backstory Elements: Ideology/Beliefs 37-38

Harlem Backstory Elements: Significant People. 38

Harlem Backstory Elements: Meaningful Location . .37-38

Harlem Backstory Elements: Treasured Possessions 38

Harlem Backstory Elements: Traits. 39

Pulp: Harlem Talents. 39

Room Generator 261

HANDOUTS

Harlem Hellfighters Handout 1: French Officers' Fate . .120, 303

Harlem Hellfighters Handout 2: Recruitment Office 123, 303

Harlem Hellfighters Handout 3: Hellfighers Arrested. 124, 304

Harlem Hellfighters Handout 4: Final Battle 126, 304

Craze Handout 1: Recording Contract 141, 306

Craze Handout 2: Ownership Transfer. 142, 307

Craze Handout 3: Death Announcement 144, 307

Craze Handout 4: Farino's Note 145, 308

Craze Handout 5: Production Ledger. 146, 309

Contender Handout 1: Rawls Fight 158, 309

Contender Handout 2: Ponape Scripture 171, 312

Contender Handout 3: Fight Card 174, 313

Dream Handout 1: Newspaper Article 191, 313

Dream Handout 2: Obituary. 191, 316

Ode Handout 1: An Invitation 215, 317

Ode Handout 2: The Mask of Dreaming 216, 322

Ode Handout 3: Letter to Hughes 218, 319

Whispers Handout 1: Recruitment Call 244, 324

Whispers Handout 2: Walker's Brunch Invitation 245, 325

Whispers Handout 3: Working Request Letter . . 246, 326

Whispers Handout 4: St. Clair's Calling Card . . . 248, 322

Whispers Handout 5: Dark Tower Flyer. 250, 327

Whispers Handout 6: Zora's Letter 251, 328

Whispers Handout 7: Evening Edition. 252, 329

Whispers Handout 8: Playbill. 253, 329

Book Handout 1: The Yellow Sign 282, 332

Book Handout 2: Medical Records. 286, 332

MAPS

Harlem Hellfighters Never Die Keeper Map 113

Harlem Hellfighters Never Die Player Map 302

Armory Keeper Map. 119

Armory Player Map. 301

That Jazz Craze Keeper Map. 137

That Jazz Craze Player Map 305

Warehouse Keeper Map 149

Warehouse Player Map 310

The Contender Keeper Map 157
The Contender Player Map 311
Rossi's Apartment Keeper Map. 178
Rossi's Apartment Player Map 314
Dreams and Broken Wings Keeper Map 189
Dreams and Broken Wings Player Map 315
The Theater Keeper Map 204
The Theater Player Map 204
Dreamlands Keeper Map 224
Dreamlands Player Map 320
Upper Temple Floor Keeper Map 230
Upper Temple Floor Player Map. 321
Whispers of Harlem Keeper Map 243
Whispers of Harlem Player Map 323
Fourth Floor of the Dark Tower Keeper Map. 258
Fourth Floor of the Dark Tower Player Map 330
Your Name in the Book Keeper Map 277
Your Name in the Book Player Map 331
Tunnels below Harlem Keeper Map 290
Tunnels below Harlem Player Map. 333

HARLEM UNBOUND

CALL of CTHULHU — DARKER HUE STUDIOS

NAME | PLAYER | OCCUPATION

SOCIAL CLASS | BIRTHPLACE | AGE | GENDER

CHARACTERISTICS

STR | DEX | POW | CON | MOVE RATE

APP | EDU | SIZ | INT IDEA | RACIAL TENSION

SKILLS

- ☐ Accounting (05%)
- ☐ Anthropology (01%)
- ☐ Appraise (05%)
- ☐ Archaeology (01%)
- ☐ Art & Craft (05%)*
- ☐ Artillery (01%)
- ☐ Charm (15%)
- ☐ Climb (20%)
- ☐ Credit Rating (00%)
- ☐ Cthulhu Mythos (00%)
- ☐ Demolitions (01%)
- ☐ Disguise (05%)
- ☐ Diving (01%)
- ☐ Dodge (half DEX)
- ☐ Drive Auto (20%)
- ☐ Electrical Repair (10%)
- ☐ Fighting (varies)*
- ☐ Firearms(varies)*
- ☐ First Aid (30%)
- ☐ History (05%)
- ☐ Hypnosis (01%)
- ☐ Intimidate (15%)
- ☐ Jump (20%)
- ☐ Language (Other)(01%)*
- ☐ Language (Own) (EDU)
- ☐ Law (05%)
- ☐ Library Use (20%)
- ☐ Listen (20%)
- ☐ Locksmith (01%)
- ☐ Mechanical Repair (10%)
- ☐ Medicine (01%)
- ☐ Natural World (10%)
- ☐ Navigate (10%)
- ☐ Occult (05%)
- ☐ Operate Heavy Machinery (01%)
- ☐ Persuade (10%)
- ☐ Pilot (01%)*
- ☐ Psychoanalysis (01%)
- ☐ Psychology (10%)
- ☐ Read Lips (01%)
- ☐ Renaissance (01%)
- ☐ Ride (05%)
- ☐ Science (01%)*
- ☐ Sleight of Hand (10%)
- ☐ Spot Hidden (25%)
- ☐ Stealth (20%)
- ☐ Survival (10%)*
- ☐ Swim (20%)
- ☐ Throw (20%)
- ☐ Track (10%)
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

WEAPONS

WEAPON	REGULAR	HARD	EXTREME	DAMAGE	RANGE	ATTACKS	AMMO	MALF.
Unarmed				1d3+db	—	1		

COMBAT

DAMAGE BONUS | BUILD | DODGE

*Skill specialization

HIT POINTS

DYING / UNCONSCIOUS					MAJOR WOUND	MAX
00	01	02	03	04	05	06
07	08	09	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20

MAGIC POINTS

MAX	00	01	02	03	04
05	06	07	08	09	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	

SANITY

START		MAX				INSANE 01
02	03	04	05	06	07	08
09	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31	32	33	34	35	36
37	38	39	40	41	42	43
44	45	46	47	48	49	50
51	52	53	54	55	56	57
58	59	60	61	62	63	64
65	66	67	68	69	70	71
72	73	74	75	76	77	78
79	80	81	82	83	84	85
86	87	88	89	90	91	92
93	94	95	96	97	98	99

LUCK

OUT OF LUCK						01
02	03	04	05	06	07	08
09	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31	32	33	34	35	36
37	38	39	40	41	42	43
44	45	46	47	48	49	50
51	52	53	54	55	56	57
58	59	60	61	62	63	64
65	66	67	68	69	70	71
72	73	74	75	76	77	78
79	80	81	82	83	84	85
86	87	88	89	90	91	92
93	94	95	96	97	98	99

BACKSTORY

PERSONAL DESCRIPTION

IDEOLOGY/BELIEFS

SIGNIFICANT PEOPLE

MEANINGFUL LOCATIONS

TREASURED POSSESSIONS

TRAITS

INJURIES & SCARS

PHOBIAS & MANIAS

ARCANE TOMES, SPELLS & ARTIFACTS

ENCOUNTERS WITH STRANGE ENTITIES

GEAR & POSSESSIONS

CASH & ASSETS

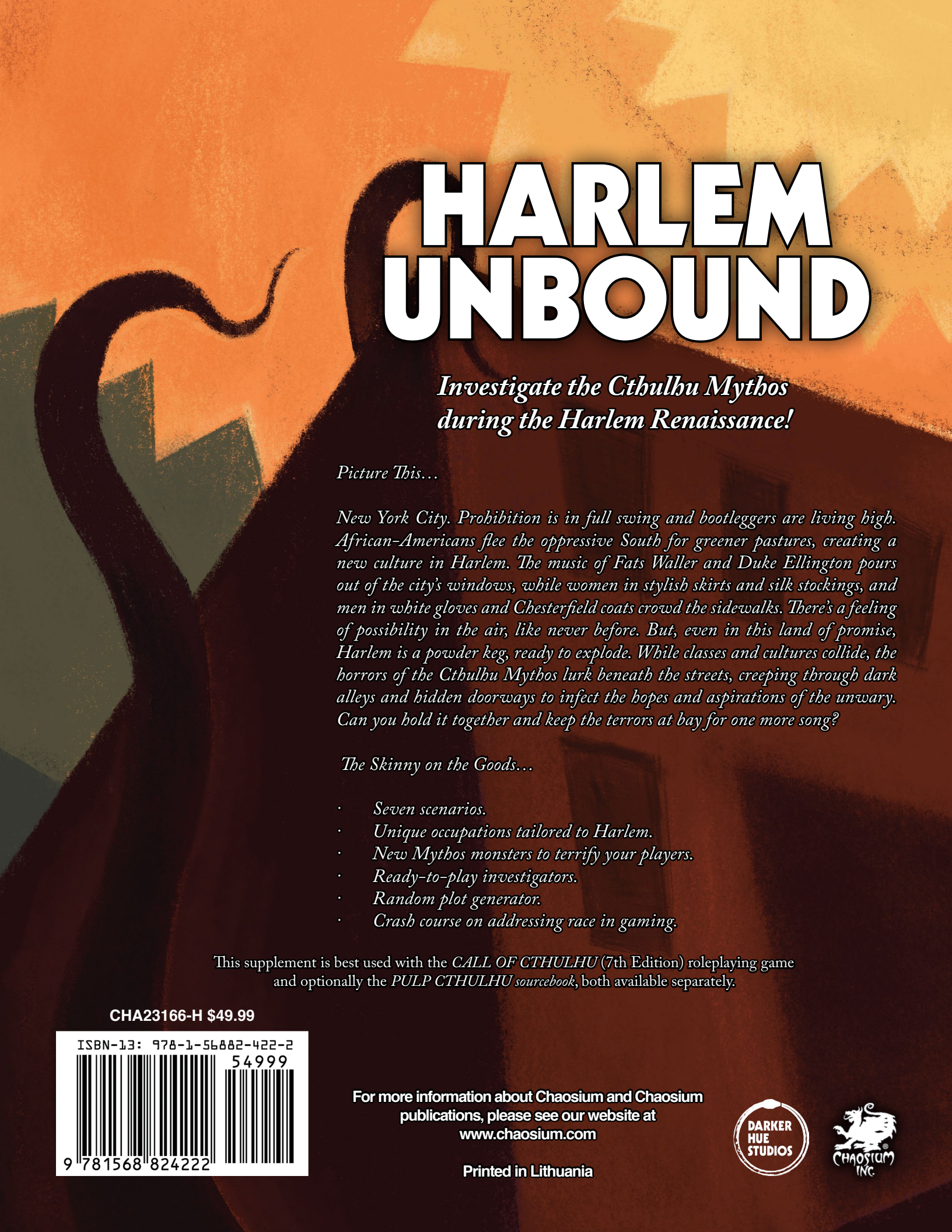
SPENDING LEVEL:

CASH:

ASSETS:

TALENTS

NOTES



HARLEM UNBOUND

Investigate the Cthulhu Mythos during the Harlem Renaissance!

Picture This…

New York City. Prohibition is in full swing and bootleggers are living high. African-Americans flee the oppressive South for greener pastures, creating a new culture in Harlem. The music of Fats Waller and Duke Ellington pours out of the city's windows, while women in stylish skirts and silk stockings, and men in white gloves and Chesterfield coats crowd the sidewalks. There's a feeling of possibility in the air, like never before. But, even in this land of promise, Harlem is a powder keg, ready to explode. While classes and cultures collide, the horrors of the Cthulhu Mythos lurk beneath the streets, creeping through dark alleys and hidden doorways to infect the hopes and aspirations of the unwary. Can you hold it together and keep the terrors at bay for one more song?

The Skinny on the Goods…

- *Seven scenarios.*
- *Unique occupations tailored to Harlem.*
- *New Mythos monsters to terrify your players.*
- *Ready-to-play investigators.*
- *Random plot generator.*
- *Crash course on addressing race in gaming.*

This supplement is best used with the *CALL OF CTHULHU* (7th Edition) roleplaying game and optionally the *PULP CTHULHU sourcebook*, both available separately.

CHA23166-H $49.99

ISBN-13: 978-1-56882-422-2

54999

9 781568 824222

For more information about Chaosium and Chaosium publications, please see our website at www.chaosium.com

Printed in Lithuania

DARKER HUE STUDIOS

CHAOSIUM INC.