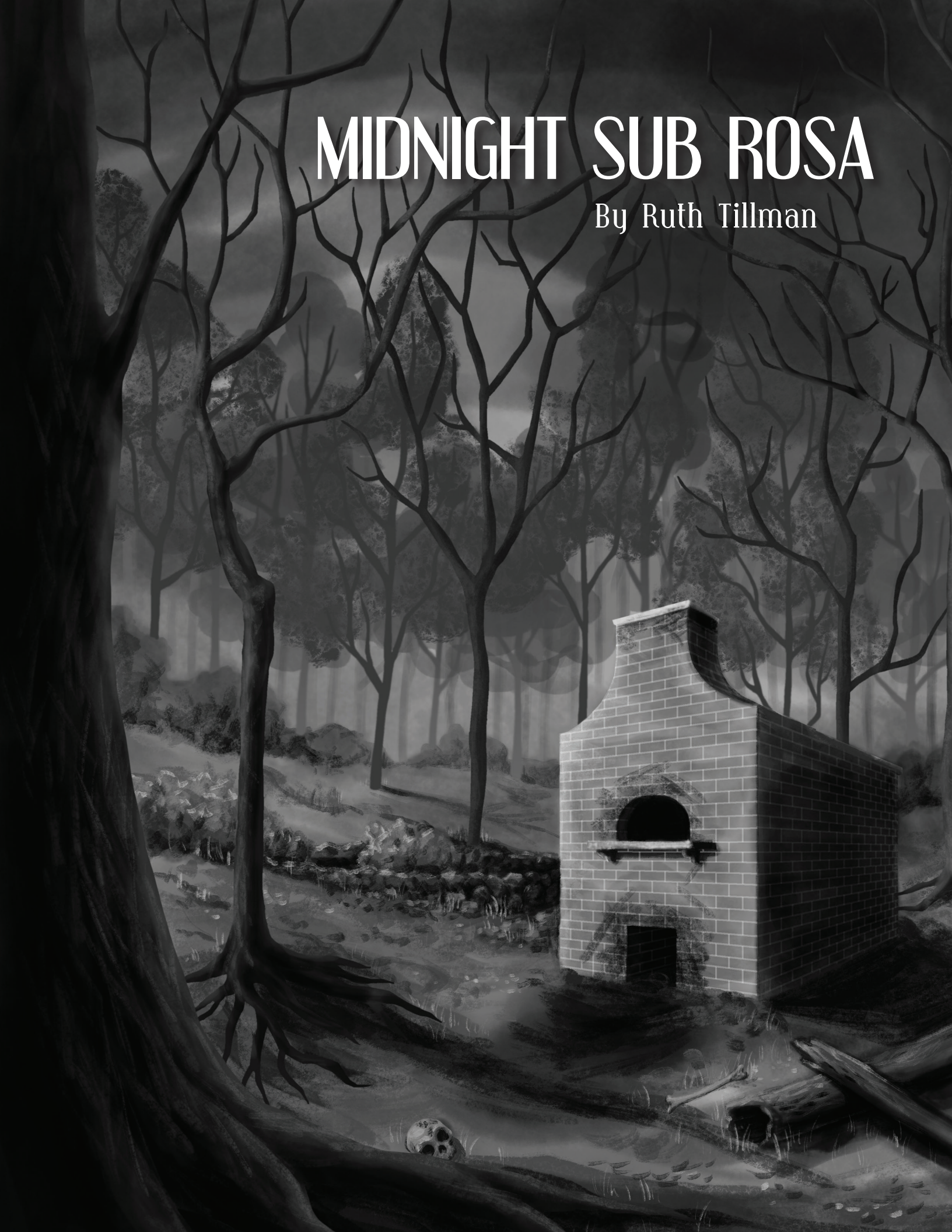


# MIDNIGHT SUB ROSA

By Ruth Tillman



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## Midnight Sub Rosa

### DOE NOT CALL UP ANY THAT YOU CAN NOT PUT DOWNE

— Jedediah Orne, letter to Joseph Curwen

### INTRODUCTION

In a world where overzealous scribes put to paper secrets humans should never know, sharp-eyed rare books librarians and their arcane use policies may be the only thing standing between humanity and its destruction. Yet as such books are bound to disappear, the Arkham Inquiry offers libraries its services for retrieval. When books of occult interest go missing, the Inquiry dispatches teams to retrieve the item or minimize its damage. Librarians only know these teams as qualified retrieval specialists who help them avoid nasty headlines, but they have saved much more than a few careers.

The Inquiry sends Investigators to recover the diary of Ezekiel de la Poer, a colonial-era French necromancer hanged for child-murder in 1736. It belongs to the rare books department of the University of Alabama, but was stolen at the home of an emeritus professor in the small town of Rosa, Alabama. The original owner committed abominable acts to gain preternatural powers, all detailed in his diary. The society doesn't want others following its instructions and unleashing unknown forces.

The Keeper will benefit from having read Lovecraft's "Rats in the Walls" and "Statement of Randolph Carter," though this adventure only alludes and does not mirror.



To run in **Purist** mode, build on the strangeness of Miss Derby: her antique clothing, hints about her ancestry dropped by Professor Katz, a malignant glance, or a likeness Roger Derby sees to his departed grandmother. The scenario's finale doesn't shut the door on future horrors.



In a **Pulp** game, emphasize the implied gore of early scenes, the physical horror of ghouls, and a violent finale.

### THE HOOK

April 1936. To mark the 200th anniversary of his hanging, a group of scholars and interested parties have gathered near the burial place of early American colonist and reputed necromancer Ezekiel de la Poer. They plan to discuss his life and how he bridged the European and American occult heritages. When his necromantic journal disappears, parties quickly accuse each other of academic motives, until the dead begin to come home. Can the Investigators unravel the tangled agendas and secure the journal before something worse happens?

### THE HORRIBLE TRUTH

Irma Derby has endured a great deal in the last two decades. The loss of her fiancé, Jacob Yates, during the Great War, and the ongoing frustration of watching her father take credit for what is increasingly her own work, have generated a simmering mix of grief and resentment, which comes to a head with the sudden shock of her mother's death. Drawing on her occult studies and secret de la Poer ancestry, Irma sought the power to restore life.

First, she encouraged her father to move back to his hometown of Rosa, a place she knew to be a source of necromantic power. Following instructions previously copied from de la Poer's journal, Irma rendered both her mother's body and the necromancer's into their essential saltes. She attempted a resurrection in January, offering the life of a local farmer, Bill Mathers, in exchange for her mother's.

The effort was apparently unsuccessful, though it drew ghoulish attention. Irma became convinced that she needed a proper connection with her ancestor, such as his journal. She planned the event as an excuse to use the journal in a midnight ritual, but damaged it with wax before the ritual while reading by candlelight. Knowing she could not hide the damage or her late night reading, she broke the desk drawer's lock, hid the journal in the pocket of her underskirt, and attempted to cast suspicion on Professor Jack Starling, her intended patsy.

Irma acted quickly, hoping that she could unlock the secret to de la Poer's power before being caught. Unfortunately, she wasn't entirely ready to undertake this kind of magic and her first efforts accidentally raised dead townsfolk. By the time Investigators arrive, her spell refinements have given her the power to command ghouls and, if not stopped, raise both her mother *and* de la Poer.

### THE SPINE

The Investigators assemble at the Birmingham railway station for a **Briefing**. Their **Arrival** in Rosa comes two days after the theft. A local posse member directs them to head straight to **Sheriff Barnes's Office**.

# TRAIL OF CTHULHU

## Midnight Sub Rosa

He's got a surprise in the **Makeshift Morgue**, after which they may conduct a **Graveyard Inspection** or interview **The Company Entire**. If the Investigators wish, they can stay for supper and go through the house **Room by Room** or they can start **Scouring the Lodging House** while their fellow lodgers are at supper. No matter the path they choose, **When Ghouls Attack**, Jack Starling will meet his fate.

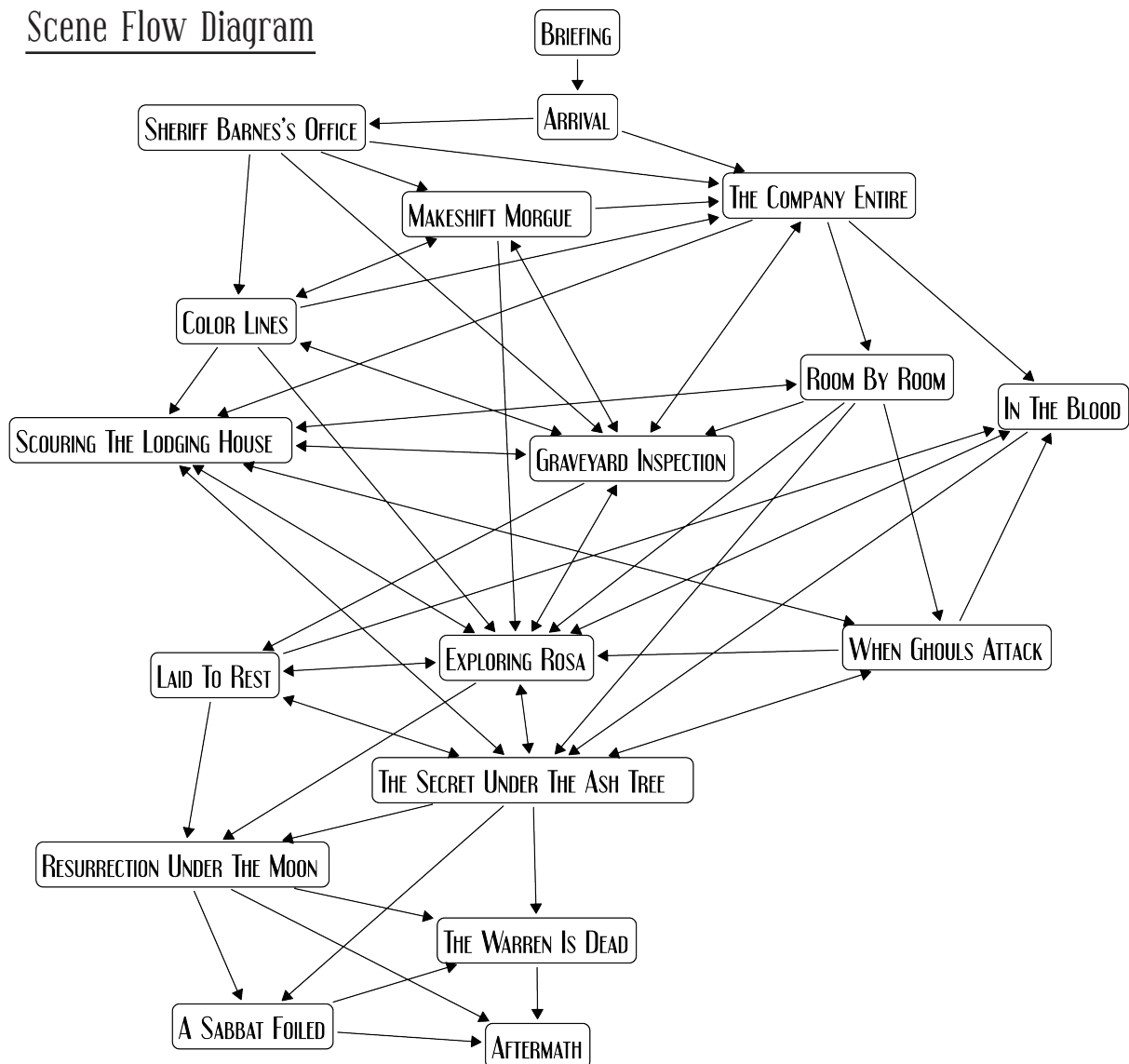
While **Exploring Rosa**, Investigators get a sense of the town's secrets and conflicts. Once they've completed preliminary inspections, they may join the townspeople while the dead are **Laid to Rest**. At some point, they may wish to speak with Roger de la Poer about the curse he knows is **In the Blood**. Clues eventually lead the Investigators to uncover **The Secret Under the Ash Tree**. Everything comes to a head when Irma attempts

a daring **Resurrection Under the Moon**—will the Investigators be prepared?

## VICTORY CONDITION

As instructed by the Inquiry, the Investigators' goal is to retrieve and preserve the journal. Ultimately, however, they must stop Irma from completing the ritual, protect the townspeople, and ensure this won't

### Scene Flow Diagram





## Out of the Woods

happen again. Therefore, destruction always remains an option, but the Investigators know this means defending that action to the Inquiry.

### PRINCIPAL ACTORS

#### Ezekiel de la Poer

b. ? - d. April 30, 1736

Drawn by the New World's possibilities, Ezekiel de la Poer emigrated from France (by way of the French West Indies) to the newly-founded settlement of Fort Louis de la Louisiane (present day Mobile, Alabama — the Louisiana territory's first capital). He lived there

for several years before moving north along a trading route, to what would later become Rosa, Alabama.

Through French traders, De la Poer initially arranged with local Creek to have the use of a large parcel of land directly adjacent to the trading route. His nearest French neighbors lived at a trading post in Oneonta, about 4 miles to the south. In 1920, he married a beautiful Frenchwoman, Louise Suleman, and hired local Frenchmen to clear land to build a large farmstead.

He began corresponding with former acquaintances in the West Indies, and arranged for the import of enslaved Africans from their sugar cane

plantations to work the land. At first, his actions seemed normal for a rich man of his time. After a few years, his actions attracted more notice. First, Madame de la Poer stopped traveling to Fort Louis, and no longer responded to letters. And second, de la Poer's continued purchasing of enslaved Africans and West Indians exceeded the number he might conceivably need on his small plantation. Some speculated that he might be building an enslaved army to forcibly take more land from the Creek Nation.

Rumors about de la Poer came to a head near the end of April 1736, after several children vanished from Oneonta. The superstitious spoke of Walpurgisnacht rituals practiced by

### Running the House Party Whodunit

This scenario trades the stock English country house of the classic whodunit for a Southern farmhouse. In place of aristocrats and the smart set—academics. In place of a Lord Peter or a Miss Marple—Investigators. All action is local action, and a great deal is interpersonal. Red herrings abound.

When running this scenario, be aware of time and timing. As the Investigators will discover, the date on which Irma Derby plans to attempt her resurrection, April 30<sup>th</sup>, has occult significance. Investigators may bog themselves down in trying to get everything out of the academics, in which case the Keeper should push them to explore the house or—shockingly!—split the party and alternate between a few searching the house and a few questioning the house party. Darkness can also be a tool to move or restrain the party, as the sun sets a little before 7pm. All but the first and last few scenes are fairly interchangeable and may be

assembled in many orders with the same overall result.

While the final date has thematic significance, the Keeper may have the journal go missing earlier if she wishes to stretch out the time Investigators spend in the town. Having it go missing on Sunday, for example, would give the Investigators an extra day to work. The Keeper could also choose to pack all the ghoul action into one night by keeping Investigators guessing whether or not Starling was guilty and having him killed early in the evening on April 30<sup>th</sup>.

This overall timeline of events includes a suggested schedule for structuring the adventure:

#### Timeline

- 1664, Dieppe, France — Ezekiel de la Poer is born.
- 1706 — de la Poer arrives in the New World at Fort Louis de la Louisiane.

- 1718 — de la Poer settles in Rosa.
- April 30, 1736 — Residents of Oneonta hang de la Poer.
- September 13, 1935 — Sophie Derby dies.
- November 2, 1935 — Irma and Theodore Derby return to Rosa.
- January 7, 1936 — Bill Mathers found dead in an apparent hunting accident.
- Friday April 25, 1936 (evening) — the academic group assembles at the Derby house.
- Monday April 27, 1936 (morning) — Irma Derby reports journal missing. Scott Bryant telephones the University of Alabama. Their head librarian telephones Arkham Inquiry.
- Wednesday April 29, 1936 (mid-afternoon) — The Investigators arrive in Rosa.
- (late night) — Jack Starling murdered by ghouls.
- Thursday April 30, 1936 (midnight) — final confrontation

## Midnight Sub Rosa

old country sorcerers, and the horrors of child sacrifice. Before the sun set on Walpurgisnacht, the traders at Oneonta formed a search party, and investigated the plantation. First, they gagged the reputed sorcerer, so he might not attack or mislead them with spells. They found a disposal site filled with ashes and child-sized bones, far more than could have come from the missing children—many likely enslaved children.

After hanging him on the ancient ash beside his house, the traders buried him at its base. A Jesuit priest supervised the removal of the bones from the ash pit, and their proper burial at the church in Fort Louis. The house was burned, and the slaves, despite what those who found them knew they had suffered, were auctioned off with the land to newly-arrived French colonizers, who would become the founders of Rosa.

No one rebuilt on the site of his house, and over the centuries the ash tree's offshoots grew up in the foundation's remains, spawning a grove.

- **Anthropology:** Shortly after de la Poer's arrival in the region, some indigenous inhabitants moved south, closer to the forts. Previous anthropologists had thought it trade-related, and a precursor to the alliances in the French and Indian war a century later, but Professor Katz is researching a theory that the two may be connected.
- **History:** Ezekiel de la Poer descended from a cousin-line of the de la Poer family whose ancestors lived in France during the unpleasant incident in which Walter de la Poer massacred the family's main English branch (see Lovecraft's "The Rats in the Walls").

- **Occult:** A popular occult history of French Louisiana from the mid-1800s includes his name on a list of white men who practiced voodoo, particularly zombification. An Investigator truly familiar with the occult recognizes the lurid exaggeration common in such reports, particularly since the modern concept of zombies did not exist until after de la Poer's lifetime. Spurious sensationalism, or is there a historical nugget of truth?

- **Oral History:** Local rumors say he had to leave France after he beat a peasant to death, resurrected the man, and made him continue farming until his body rotted.

### Professor Theodore Derby

Whether his weak eyes, quavering voice, and shaking limbs merely show

## Race and Religion in Rural Alabama in the 1930s

When playing any historical game, the Keeper and players must decide to what degree they wish to confront uncomfortable (and present) truths. Since the country's earliest days, Americans on both sides of the Mason-Dixon line and far to its west have perpetrated or suffered under endemic racism. While large and small pockets of acceptance bloomed all over the country, one would have been unlikely to find them in rural Alabama in 1936.

In the 1920s, KKK members in Alabama numbered over one hundred thousand. By the mid-1930s, those numbers had declined to under five figures, but its influence lingered in some counties, including the area around Rosa. If playing for strict historical accuracy, a black, Asian, or Jewish player character might face

hostility or violence from townfolk. A Catholic priest, gay man, or unconventional woman's attempts to investigate might meet with slammed doors. Just fifteen years before the adventure takes place, a nearby Birmingham jury freed a Methodist minister who murdered the Catholic priest who'd overseen his daughter's conversion and officiated her marriage to a Puerto Rican man.

When describing the town's sociological makeup, Rosa was combined with the post-Louisiana territory French settlement of Demopolis, which had a larger non-white population (segregated) and strong French-Catholic influences. This diverse, ahistorical blend of communities does not magically erase the racial and religious issues of the time. It simply creates a playing

field, with a bit more diversity. Many other facts of Rosa—its location, its roads, its ghouls—remain true to history.

For some groups, confronting the social climate of the time is an important part of historical roleplaying. While the Keeper might describe and role-play the Sheriff (or another character) as openly hostile to a black Investigator, for example, you don't need to use racial slurs in game. Other groups might like to take a campaign character who's a retired, black FBI agent into rural Alabama, without having to encounter horrors which don't originate in the mythos. Many groups fall somewhere in the middle. It's best if Keepers who don't know their players well deal with racism as written in the adventure.

## Out of the Woods

his age (early 70s) or point to a mental decay, Theodore Derby has only recently retired from an emeritus position at the University of Alabama. A native of Rosa, Derby was the first of its sons to pursue a college education. He studied at the University of Alabama before earning his PhD in American Folklore from Tulane University of Louisiana.

Derby married his childhood sweetheart, Sophie Cormier, in 1887. They lived in Tuscaloosa, Alabama for most of their marriage, but Sophie inherited a house in Rosa from her family, and restored it to serve as a summer home. Until a decade ago, Derby held a teaching position at Alabama, but more recently has confined himself to research, publication, and mentoring. After he stopped teaching, he began collecting rare, occult texts. Around the same time, due to the professor's failing eyesight, his daughter Irma became his amanuensis.

In the years before Mrs. Derby's final illness and death, the Derbys often hosted month-long summer salons. They invited young academics and doctoral students to enjoy Rosa's fresh air, and research subjects covered by the professor's extensive library. After Mrs. Derby died on September 13, 1935, the professor no longer had the heart for his life at the university. He left his emeritus position at Alabama, sold the city house, and on November 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1935, he and Irma moved back to the Cormier house in Rosa. Professor Derby had long ago sold his ancestral home to the Mathers family.

### Irma Derby

Miss Irma Derby followed in her father's footsteps, and became the first woman from Rosa to achieve a college education. She has spent her life as her father's research assistant, secretary, and typist. The professor's friends speculate she's much more, and that her father has been riding her academic coattails for the past decade, if not longer. Her air

of obsequious helpfulness can change in a flash to one of confident academic superiority if a speaker is patently wrong about one of her, she's sorry, *her father's* research topics.

### An Ancestral Connection

Irma's mother, Sophie Cormier, was a descendent of Ezekiel de la Poer. A young Jesuit missionary, brave enough to venture inside de la Poer's house before it was burned, found a girl of twelve calling herself H  l  ne de la Poer. She knew nothing of her mother, and would say nothing of her father. The

missionary found a home for her with a family in Oneonta. If H  l  ne knew more than she would tell (and she did) she only passed it to her daughter, who passed it afterward to her own daughter.

When Irma's grandmother Gabrielle married Jacques Cormier of Rosa, only she knew her connection to the otherwise unremarkable town. Irma learned her ancestry before leaving for college, but only became interested in de la Poer after the death of her fianc  , Jacob Yates. She directed her father's research work in a more occult





## Midnight Sub Rosa

direction, particularly toward works concerning ghouls and necromancy.

After damaging de la Poer's journal, Irma sewed a pocket into her

under-petticoat to hide it, as she would only trust its safety if kept on her person. The Keeper may make some vague allusions to the swish of her heavy skirts but should not be

so blatant as to make players suspect its location, at least not until later scenes. Irma's clothes may seem out-of-place in this era, but they recall her happier youth.

### Ghouls

Ghouls have existed beside, or beneath, humans for millennia. They subsist on human dead, and steal human children from the cradle, leaving their own in exchange. While a young ghoul changeling resembles a human, it may become hard for them to hide the snouts, rubbery skin, and pointed ears of adulthood. Some

return to their people, others act as intermediaries, and a few interbreed with humans, producing ghoul-human hybrids. The North American variety have smoother, less doglike faces than their European cousins, although some European ghouls emigrated on "coffin ships", and interbred with those along the East Coast.



Ghoul warrens riddle North America. The major colonies live below large burial grounds, but they make use of sewers, subterranean caves, and their own front paws (perhaps even using a shovel!) to create a network as intricate as the American highway system. Most ghoul colonies form spontaneously, but a sorcerer who pays the charnel price may lure servitor ghouls to a region.

Most of the ghouls the Investigators encounter in Rosa are part of the Birmingham colony. After de la Poer's death, the town's population could not support a warren. It remained on the subterranean network, and wandering packs loped beneath the town, or stopped over for a quick snack. Now, ancient ghouls who may have served de la Poer before his death, and their spawn who still feel the pull of his family's power, have returned to this warren. (See Appendix A: Ghoul Changelings p. 32 for two options that make ghouls an ongoing part of life in Rosa.)

It's important to maintain a certain air of mystery, if the Investigators have not encountered ghouls before. Focus on unnerving elements—the rubbery skin, the foul odor, the canine features—rather than revealing instantly that the creatures are ghouls. The Keeper will find *Hideous Creatures: Ghouls* by Kenneth Hite a useful supplement for ghoul mythology, descriptions, and roleplaying flourishes.

# TRAIL OF CTHULHU

## Out of the Woods

### SCENES

#### Briefing

**Scene Type:** Introduction

**Lead-Outs:** Arrival

The Investigators gather in Birmingham, Alabama, a rail hub and less than a day's drive from Rosa, for a briefing. The Inquiry (or other society) sent each of them a railway ticket two days ago, and an urgent telegram telling them to meet their colleagues at the station and await further instructions. As their trains pull into the station, a large electric sign reading "Welcome to Birmingham, The Magic City" greets them.

By default, the instructions direct them to the main cathedral-like waiting room of Birmingham's Terminal Station. The Keeper may choose a more welcoming place for a diverse group to meet, such as a restaurant in the Ensley region, where most of Birmingham's black, Greek, Jewish, and Italian residents lived. Wherever they meet, Investigators notice signs of the Depression—panhandlers, patched clothes, hungry faces. Birmingham has lost 90% of its steel jobs, and its other

industries have fallen nearly as quickly, making it the hardest-hit major city in Alabama.

Lilian Crawford, a stylish woman in her early thirties, arrives shortly after the players and instructs them about their mission, and presents them with their salon invitations (Handout 1: Salon invitation, p. 35). A professor of classics at Huntingdon College (recently renamed from the Women's College of Alabama), she's a colleague of Miskatonic's Dr. Ferdinand Ashley. Players with **Archaeology** know that she used to specialize in that field before generalizing. Dr. Crawford speaks with a hint of Southern accent, which she's tried to lose so that Northern colleagues will take her seriously. Despite her stylish clothing, her rough, sun-damaged hands reveal her past fieldwork. She carries gloves, but finds them too inconvenient to use.

Dr. Crawford only knows the basics concerning the parties involved in the salon. She's met the host, Professor Theodore Derby, at several conferences and believes his daughter Irma assists him now. She believes they have invited several other professors of folklore, and the librarian said something about

a member of the de la Poer family being present. If the Investigators press her to accompany them, she grows anxious, and explains her nerves prevent her from going. Investigators with **Cthulhu Mythos** feel a strange empathy with her. Investigators with **Archaeology** or **Geology** recall a paper she wrote on glyphs found by the Dyer Antarctic expedition ("At the Mountains of Madness")—it caused a stir back in 1932, and she hasn't published since.

Once oriented, Investigators must coordinate their transportation to their final destination of Rosa. If none of the players is a motorist, anyone with a **Credit Rating 3+** may rent a car from the station.

#### Arrival

**Scene Type:** Pipe/Introduction

**Lead-Ins:** Briefing

**Lead-Outs:** Sheriff Barnes's Office, The Company Entire

Read the following text, or paraphrase it, for the players.

*Your automobile pulls into the sleepy town of Rosa (population 113 and 4*

### Who Called You?

In a standalone game, the Investigators are called in by the Armitage Inquiry. Each Investigator has worked for the Inquiry before—perhaps on purpose, perhaps by falling into its midst during another adventure. As the Investigators arrive in Birmingham, build ties by asking each a question about the last time they worked for the Inquiry, and how it involved another Investigator at the table. What went horribly wrong? What did they leave out of their mission report?

For an existing group of Investigators, stories of their exploits have filtered through esoteric backchannels to the ears of the Inquiry. Dr. Lilian Crawford refers by name to someone in a previous adventure—ideally a librarian, academic, or wealthy patron—as having recommended them to Dr. Armitage. Players in an Armitage Inquiry campaign (*Trail of Cthulhu* p.206, *The Armitage Files*) receive this mission through one of their usual contacts.

In some cases, the adventure may fit so neatly with an ongoing campaign as to suggest an alternative group, or that the Investigators happen upon the theft themselves. For example, Investigators who have already brought their Bookhounds campaign (*Trail of Cthulhu* p.209, *Bookhounds of London*) to America would naturally hear of the book's disappearance through their own contacts.



## Midnight Sub Rosa

*guests) bouncing in the striking red clay earth you've seen throughout Alabama. The last time you saw a paved road was nearly 35 miles ago, just outside of Birmingham. You've crunched over perhaps another thirty miles of packed gravel, but since passing through Oneonta you've been on rutted, country roads. The pollen-dusted clay clings to your tires, creating such a slick surface you're grateful for the ruts keeping you on track.*

*As the first house comes into view, an older man hefting a shotgun over his shoulder steps out of the trees and raises a hand. "Y'all hold up a moment."*

The man introduces himself as Samuel "Sam'll" McGrath. He tells the Investigators they'd better drive straight through the town. The sheriff's deputized him and some other men to make sure nobody stops in Rosa. If the Investigators try to intimidate him, he'll motion and bring in a few other, younger, men with shotguns. While they could begin the game by fighting the townsfolk, it would increase the difficulty of gathering information later on.

- **Cop Talk:** They're having an issue with wild animals. No need for law enforcement, but the town's not safe right now. What kind of wild animals? Must be wolves. Haven't had them around here in a decade, though. It's not safe.

- (core) **Reassurance:** If the Investigators tell him the society called them in about a missing book, McGrath won't relax, but tells them he guesses they'd better speak to the sheriff, and points them to the sheriff's place up the way.

- **Assess Honesty** (1-point spend) reveals that he's telling half-truths about the situation.

As Investigators drive through Rosa, they pass Mrs. Dawes's lodging house, a general store with the fading letters DUBOIS painted over the door, and the Catholic church. Men armed with shotguns and farm implements sit on the lodging house and general store porches. Just past the sheriff's, they see the Methodist church. Small clusters of men huddle in the graveyards behind both churches.

## Sheriff Barnes's Office

**Scene Type:** Core

**Lead-Ins:** Arrival

**Lead-Outs:** Makeshift Morgue, Graveyard Inspection, Color Lines, The Company Entire

Investigators find the sheriff talking quietly with some men on the street, but he immediately directs them to his office. He starts the scene hostile toward Investigators. The librarian assured him that the university would call in people to handle the stolen book situation discreetly, so he hasn't investigated it. Given everything that's happened, he's rethinking his decision to allow outsiders into Rosa. Once he gets them alone, he'll ask them what they know about the book.

- **Cop Talk:** Barnes doesn't know how the book was connected, but he wasn't born yesterday and knows they're tied together somehow. He's told everyone at the Derby house to stay there, or at the boarding house. The library, where the crime occurred, is locked. He has the key for the Investigators. He'd prefer to give it to someone with at least a PI's level of authority.

## Sheriff Barnes

**Abilities:** Firearms 8, Health 8, Scuffling 4, Stability 8

**Alertness modifier:** +1

**Weapon:** +1 (Winchester M1912 12-gauge pump shotgun), +0 (Colt .32)

Ever since Sheriff Barnes returned from the Spanish-American War, he's served his hometown with dedication seasoned by combat. Now nearing his sixties, he's generally content in his work. With only 113 folks, Rosa's a pretty decent place to be a sheriff. There's never been a murder in all his time there. Most of his work

consists of settling squabbles between neighbors, and occasionally locking up someone who was too drunk to go home. In his younger days, you'd be more likely to find him in his fields than his office. Now, he keeps a large garden out back, and can be found there or sleeping at his desk.

When acting in an official capacity, Barnes uses the original one-room house his great-great grandparents built near what's now Route 38. He added a single wall dividing the space into a front room with a single desk

and woodstove, and a back room with a conventional cell door. Barnes calls it the "holding cell," but it has held more firewood, sandbags, and miscellaneous farm equipment than prisoners. He keeps a cot and blanket in there for the rare occasions someone needs a place to sleep it off. Folks around here can't afford any alcohol but what they make themselves, and that's mighty unpredictable.

**Two things:** Looks Investigators straight in the eye. Always chewing tobacco.

## Out of the Woods

- (core) **Oral History:** Last night, Mrs. Dubois woke up the town screaming fit to raise the devil. She'd heard someone breaking into the store and come running only to stumble upon her late husband Dan Dubois, helping himself to the raw rabbit in the store's ice box.

Miss Emmaline they found on the road outside, just the top half of her. No idea where the bottom half is, but someone's out looking for it now. She was pulling herself along by her fingers, headed in the direction of her old home. And Bill Mathers was skulking around outside his house, almost sniffing the air. Sheriff Barnes is relieved they found him before his wife or one of his little ones did. She's about due to deliver and the fright might have brought the baby right then.

- (core) **Forensics:** Sheriff Barnes invites the Investigators to examine the bodies out in the ice house – he can't make hide nor hair of the situation.
- (core) **Biology:** There's something else he'd like them to look at. When they were checking the cemeteries last night, making sure nobody else was walking around, they came across a...thing, which lashed out and attacked the men. It's dead now and torched just to be safe. He's keeping it with the other bodies.
- **Bureaucracy or Notice:** Three church record books are piled in a heap on his desk. The sheriff explains the three who came back all attended different churches, so he was trying to figure out what they had in common. The Investigator spots that these three people are the three most recent burials in Rosa. The one other who died more recently than Bill Mathers was an old Catholic woman buried over in Oneonta, at a family plot.

As an after-thought, the sheriff may suggest that someone should check in

with the black folks up the road (see *Color Lines*, p. 17). They take care of their own burials.

### Makeshift Morgue

**Scene Type:** Core

**Lead-Ins:** Sheriff Barnes's Office, Graveyard Inspection, *Color Lines*

**Lead-Outs:** Graveyard Inspection, *Color Lines*, *The Company Entire*, *Exploring Rosa*

Barnes leads Investigators to the small, square, sunken ice house behind the General Store. Instead of the professionally-made ice the Investigators might expect, over the winter someone packed snow inside, and covered it with layers of sawdust. Putting in the bodies has spoiled what little ice the town had, but it was the only way to keep them from becoming worse until they could be examined and reburied. Only one Investigator can easily fit inside at a time, but a second person can squeeze in to help move the bodies outside.

The ice house contains three beheaded human corpses, all now lightly dusted with sawdust, whose bodies show miscellaneous other marks of injury. The fourth body, a blackened humanoid the size of a human male, has burned too badly for cursory inspection to reveal more than that it recently came into contact with a great deal of fire.

- (core) **Forensics:** All three townspeople have post-mortem gunshot wounds. The sheriff explains shooting them didn't stop them, which is why they resorted to beheading. None of the bodies have been embalmed.
  - Bill Mathers: Adult male in his late twenties. Freshest body. Was killed three months ago in a presumed hunting accident. He has a shotgun wound to the face, which the sheriff points to as being from the accident. He also has deep claw

marks on what's left of his neck, and across his belly. The sheriff explains the corpse spent several days in the woods before it was found, but it doesn't bear other marks of animal predation.

- Emmaline Breton: Adult female in her seventies or eighties. Died of natural causes two years ago. Most of her skin has rotted away. Her legs broke off at the hip joints, possibly due to a pre-mortem vulnerability. Dirt caked her cracked fingernails.
- Dan Dubois: Died six years ago of natural causes. His body is so badly decomposed that he could only be definitively identified by the rosary placed around his neck when he was buried, and the tatters of his best suit. If he'd managed to eat that meat, he had no organs with which to digest it.

- (core) **Biology:** The creature is humanoid, but definitely not human. The front of its skull slopes unnaturally forward, and its canine teeth extend more prominently than a human's. Each of its fingers has an extra segment made of hard cartilage. Its pelvis would give it a loping walk, and its feet splay oddly.

- **Outdoorsman:** The creature has an unusually tough hide and a smell of burned hair persists. It calls to mind an animal which was cooked without being properly skinned. A faint odor of death clings to it.
  - 1-point spend: The sheriff sees you examining its skin, and remarks how ineffective they found pistols and shotguns against that hide. One man hit it with an axe, and another with his father's artillery sword. Those two finally took it down.

The Investigators may choose next whether they proceed with a *Graveyard Inspection* (p. 17) or visit the house and interview *The Company Entire* (p. 17). They may also wish to visit the Lodging House to take their rooms.



## Midnight Sub Rosa

### Graveyard Inspection

**Scene Type:** Pipe

**Lead-Ins:** Sheriff Barnes's Office, Makeshift Morgue, Color Lines, The Company Entire, Room by Room, Scouring the Lodging House, Exploring Rosa

**Lead-Outs:** Makeshift Morgue, Color Lines, The Company Entire, Scouring the Lodging House, Exploring Rosa, Laid to Rest

Each graveyard sits adjacent to, or behind, its respective church. The Catholic graveyard is the oldest, with tombstones dating back to the mid-1700s. Father Martel has not been in the church since the incident.

The Dubois grandson, fourteen-year-old Jean, has served as an altar boy there for years, and is more than happy to show the Investigators around. In the graveyard, they find Mr. Dubois' open gravesite. Jean won't approach it, but crosses himself and remains at a distance. He hopes the priest will return his grandfather to consecrated ground as soon as possible. Human boots and animal-like paw-prints blend in the dirt outside the grave.

- (core) **Outdoorsman or Evidence Collection:** The animal footprints in the fresh dirt match the feet of the hideous creature found in the morgue. Claw marks at the grave's edge look as though the creature was working from the surface to help Dubois dig out.

Investigations at the Methodist church yield similar results. The Methodist minister, Armand Sperry, can be found in the graveyard attempting to tidy up.

### Color Lines

**Scene Type:** Core

**Lead-Ins:** Sheriff Barnes's Office, Makeshift Morgue, Graveyard Inspection

**Lead-Outs:** Makeshift Morgue, Graveyard Inspection, The Company Entire, Scouring the Lodging House, Exploring Rosa

In Rosa, as elsewhere in Alabama, residents follow myriad racial restrictions, from prejudice, habit, or, for some, a desire for safety. The few black residents—six families—live to the west of the town, toward Cleveland. Most descend from post-Civil War sharecroppers, although the woods have reclaimed the historic fields. Before the Depression, some of the men did odd jobs at the mill, or in Rosa; others worked for farmers near Cleveland. The women cared for children, and worked smaller garden plots remaining from the fields. They occasionally found jobs in Rosa, sometimes helping Mrs. Dawes wash her sheets after a large party, or took positions as cleaners and farm workers in Cleveland.

The community made do with little even before the Depression hit, but it's dried up what opportunities they had, or forced them to cede work to unemployed white men. Three families moved north to live with relations who found them a little work; another moved to Ensley in Birmingham, but the rest are trying to weather the Depression in Rosa. Their dwellings reflect the poverty apparent on the white side of Rosa, only more so. When they can, they shop at the back of the Dubois general store. As long as they abide by the conventions of the region, they are tolerated passing through, or even stopping in, Rosa.

As Rosa's black citizens did not encounter anything out of the ordinary the previous night, most of the men have gone to Cleveland again today, hoping for work. Marsha Clark, a middle-aged woman, cautiously approaches the Investigators when they arrive.

- **Reassurance:** Neither she nor the others knew what happened in Rosa.

Everyone heard the shots and yelling last night, but nobody dared visit the town. It's unwise to go there after dark, even without all the commotion. Some of the men made a fire and stayed out all night with weapons, just in case trouble came here. They bury their dead in a cemetery at the black church outside Cleveland, not here in Rosa. Jim Caldwell, one of the men, is its preacher—only he's off looking for work today.

- (core) **Evidence Collection:** If the Investigators ask her about anything out the ordinary, she'll mention that she's heard barking out in the woods since the winter. It makes her dog howl, but there's never a howl in return, just barking. At first, they wondered if someone over in Rosa would organize a wolf hunt, but nobody's lost livestock, so they simply live and let live.
- **Oral History:** She's aware of the basics of the town's history, about as much as anyone in Rosa. Her concerns are more immediate, although Klan activity has died down in the region. Still, when the coroner held an inquest about Bill Mathers, she and others worried that one of their men would be charged.

### The Company Entire

**Scene Type:** Core

**Lead-Ins:** Arrival, Sheriff Barnes's Office, Makeshift Morgue, Graveyard Inspection, Color Lines

**Lead-Outs:** Graveyard Inspection, Room by Room, Scouring the Lodging House, In the Blood

The party of scholars and guests await the Investigators at the Derby house. Although the house has seen some wear, it's a respectable Southern abode, likely dating from the early 1800s. Unlike other houses in town, its wraparound porch has not been screened in, likely

## Out of the Woods

because it had not been regularly occupied since the death of Mrs. Derby's parents in the 1890s.

Stepping into the Derby house, like Mrs. Dawes's boarding house, moves the Investigators out of the world of the Depression and into a shabby gentility, where food and goods aren't scarce, even if they're not abundant. Underneath it all, most of this more prestigious company struggle as well—if not with current financial difficulties, then with the fear of academic funding cuts, or other capital catastrophes.

One core clue is the details of the theft (see sidebar, p. 18). This may be obtained from anyone present using a relevant skill. The Keeper can divide up facts among characters, if she chooses. Each character has additional clues and information which they think relevant, but which is actually a red herring (labeled). If the Keeper prefers to space things out, conversations with Starling, de la Poer, and Bryant may occur at the lodging house (p. 24).

Each party member also has a secret, which the Keeper may use in combination with the red herring to keep Investigators off balance at first. To obtain the secret, Investigators must combine an Interpersonal Ability with another piece of information, such as a red herring thrown out by another character. Though the secrets are listed here, they will likely come up in later interactions with the characters, after the Investigators have had a chance to talk with everyone.

### The Frantic Librarian

Scott Bryant, the librarian from Alabama, is responsible for shepherding the book on its unprecedented departure from the rare books department. Always a high-strung and fastidious man, he verges on the brink of hysteria as he reinforces to the Investigators the need to recover the book. His concern vacillates between the department's reputation, and his job security. Though, like everyone else in the group, he's heard about last night, he wouldn't care if the world were ending, as long as he recovers the book.

**Two things:** frequently wipes spectacles. Talks rapidly when excited or upset.

#### • **Reassurance or Intimidation:**

He can reveal as many of the details of the theft (sidebar, p. 18) as the Keeper needs. He remembers hearing a floorboard creak in the night at the boarding house. He took his Luminal to sleep better (**Pharmacy** knows this is phenobarbital, a barbiturate), and doesn't remember anything else.

– (1-point spend of either): He recalls Irma insisted, on her father's behalf, that he bring the book itself. Her father, she said, was too unwell to make the trip to Tuscaloosa. She read him a lecture on the loyalty owed to her father for so many years of service to the University.

• (red herring) **Library Use:** He saw Professor Katz in the reading room at Alabama, just a couple of months ago. She spent several days taking notes from old journals, including this one.

## Details of the Theft

Here are the facts:

- The company has had the book out each night. When not in use, Irma locks it in the drawer of Professor Derby's desk in the library.
- The night of the theft, discussion concluded around 10:30 p.m., and Irma locked the book in the study, supervised by the scrupulous Bryant.
- Bryant, Starling, and de la Poer walked back to the lodging house together. They arrived around 11pm. Starling and de la Poer smoked a pipe on the porch, Bryant went straight to bed.
- Irma, Professor Katz, and Professor Derby slept in the Derby house. Professor Derby retired

shortly after the gentlemen left. Professor Katz helped Irma with final kitchen clean-up before bed. Nobody locks their doors in Rosa.

- The group reconvened for breakfast around 8 a.m.
- Around 10 a.m., Irma went to retrieve the book from the study. She returned with the news they'd been robbed.
- The lock on the drawer was broken. One window in the library was open. Bryant called the sheriff, but once neither footprints nor fingerprints of a thief could be identified, he insisted that the Alabama library would take responsibility for the situation.

- For the two days it took the Investigators to get to Rosa, the door to the library has been locked. Sheriff Barnes had the key. When Bryant expressed concern about the windows, the sheriff placed several large rocks beside the sash lock, where they would cause a loud noise if knocked off.
- The last two days have been extraordinarily uncomfortable for everyone. The day the theft was discovered, they tried resuming academic discussion in the evening. Yesterday, everyone entertained themselves with reading, walking, or small discussions.



## Midnight Sub Rosa

- (red herring) **Intimidation:** Bryant, as will be drawn out in red herrings and side clues, had secretly hoped to use this trip as an opportunity to assess Derby's library for items which could be sold to the American Antiquarian Society. Though they'd rejected him for a position, he hopes to prove his worth by referring Derby. He's now afraid of someone discovering his intention, or that he'd written to the Society's librarian to obtain a list of titles which the library wished to obtain.

### The Old Man With the Watery Eyes

Inside the house, Professor Derby attempts to greet Investigators. He may stand to meet them, but he does so while leaning heavily on a cane. His watery blue eyes peer at the Investigators from behind thick spectacles. He appears mildly disturbed by the goings on in town, but mostly sad.

**Two things:** often drifts off to sleep as conversations happen around him. His voice creaks like an old rocking chair.

- **Oral History:** He gives a shaky account of Details of the Theft (p. 18). He can only recall things he was directly present for.
- (core) **Anthropology, History, or Occult:** The Investigator persuades him to slowly recount the full story of Ezekiel de la Poer, as he knows it (the de la Poer biography includes additional clues with appropriate skills). He asks Irma to draw the Investigators a map into the woods where they can visit the remains of de la Poer's house. On it, he draws a shaky X to mark the ash tree's location. He notes there isn't much left beyond the foundations. They'll find a large stone marking the grave. He does not mention de la Poer's daughter.
- **Reassurance:** Derby confides he's been heavily dependent on Irma since his vision started declining about a decade ago.

- (red herring) **Photography:** Yesterday, when everyone was on their own, he saw de la Poer walking down the path toward the grave. He was carrying a hand-held camera, probably a Kodak.

- **Reassurance** after learning Katz's secret: Only a few years into his marriage, he pieced together that his wife descended from de la Poer. She could keep a secret, but not from someone who'd studied the man. When his daughter revealed she also knew and her plans for her mother's body, he assisted her in bringing it to Rosa but has been utterly terrified of her ever since. He does his best to hide it behind general frailty. He knows she'd trade his life for her mother's without thinking twice.

### The Dutiful Daughter

Once Bryant releases the Investigators, Irma welcomes them with lemonade. Her clothes are exceptionally cared-for, but not a single one of them appears to have been made after 1918 and she gives off an Edwardian sense. It could be due to the Depression — their only money is her father's pension, and whatever savings they'd amassed. She maintains the warm veneer of a Southern hostess, though the events seem to have left her slightly **shaken**. Investigators who've experienced it and those with **Psychoanalysis** notice the signs.

**Two things:** a compulsive hostess, she's determined to make sure her guests are having a good time. Frequently wipes her hands on her apron or skirt, whether or not they're wet.

- **Anthropology:** She's coordinated meetings like this for years. The company is a bit different this time, normally they invite more students and have a larger gathering. But without her mother to help, she's overwhelmed by the thought and

decided to make their final salon a small affair.

- **Flattery:** Why yes, her attention to detail gives her excellent recall of Details of the Theft. She recounts them punctiliously.
- (red herring) **Occult:** She hadn't originally planned to invite Jack Starling, but he wrote and requested an invitation. She discovered he already knew Roger de la Poer. It's possible the two of them are involved in something.

No skill uncovers Irma's secret—she dunnit. See *The Horrible Truth* (p. 8).

### The Folklorist

Seeing her graying hair pulled back in a bun, spectacles, and sensible clothes, new faculty and staff often mistake Roberta Katz for a librarian. She precludes Investigator confusion by confidently identifying herself as a professor of folklore and American anthropology at the University of Georgia. Professor Katz is a longtime friend of the Professor, and has known Irma since the latter's birth. Professor Derby mentored her during her undergraduate years at Alabama, and encouraged her to pursue her career.

The goings-on in the town have deeply concerned her. She pushes off the Stability-jarring effects by running through her academic opinions. If the conversation tends that way, she gives the players some of the information from **Ghouls** (see p. 13), though phrased in terms of myth and folklore.

**Two things:** puts even more sugar in her tea than the average Southerner. Often lapses into teaching voice.

- **Evidence Collection:** Anticipating she'd be asked about the Details of the Theft (p. 18), Katz made a careful, bulleted list of everything she knows.

## Out of the Woods

- **Cop Talk:** Professor Katz has her own quandary. She'd like to help the party understand more about her work regarding de la Poer's time in this region, but her notes went missing the day before the book's theft. She suspects Jack Starling and had intended to ask the sheriff to quietly search his room, but opted to wait for the Investigators once the journal went missing. She thinks he may have taken that as well. These notes are vital for her career, and she expects Starling could do quite a bit with them as well, if he were to publish her research.

- (red herring) **Library Use:** She's surprised to see Bryant here. Last time she was researching at Alabama, she heard a rumor that he was leaving the university to work managing acquisitions for the American Antiquarian Society.

- (red herring) **Intimidation:** Professor Katz has known the Derbys for decades. As a folklorist, she collects and correlates stories much better than most. From seemingly-offhand remarks made by Mrs. Derby and then Irma, she's begun putting together a theory that de la Poer had one or more children, whose descendants live in the area today, and include Mrs., and Miss, Derby. Her research on de la Poer and the migration of indigenous groups covers a second purpose—reading primary source materials to find support for the theory. If she's lucky, she'll end up with two papers to publish. She won't use real names in her finished paper, of course, just references to "D" and so forth.

- **Oral History:** Gets her talking about Mrs. Derby. While they weren't close, she remembers Mrs. Derby as a clear-headed, intelligent woman, although not educated beyond high school. Irma was dotingly fond of her mother and she's been a bit worried about the girl since her death.

- 1-point spend: Irma is still a spinster because her young man, a student of Derby's, was killed in the Great War.
- 2-point spend: Few people know that Irma spent a year in Tuscaloosa's Bryce Hospital, a formerly progressive but now infamous sanitarium, after news of his death caused her to have a complete mental collapse.

### The Khol-Eyed Occultist

With his long black Chinese jacket, ank necklace, be-ringèd fingers, and hint of khol around the eyes, Jack Starling stands out from the others. If he were being played by an actor, it would surely be James McAvoy in a smarmier version of his Professor Xavier. At only 30, Jack Starling has risen abnormally quickly to popular and academic prominence. Though technically an anthropologist, he's bragged of spending time in Crowley's circles, holds open séances at his local Theosophical society, and was recently hired by the German government to assist on one of their occult projects. He is, of course, the reincarnation of an Egyptian Pharaoh.

Players with an "in" in true academic circles, particularly **Anthropology**, know of rumors of academic dishonesty too nebulous, so far, to stop his career. Most prominent scholars refuse to work with him, which he dismisses as professional jealousy of his success. He's a popular lecturer, but has not published any original research. Starling shows immediate disdain for any Investigator without an academic occupation. Under his veneer, he is deeply **shaken**, though it may be hard for Investigators to detect, as he lies so often.

**Two things:** looks into mirrors every chance he gets. Sounds so patronizing as to make some Investigators' fists itch.

- **Interrogation:** He gives a minimal account of Details of the Theft (p. 18).

- **Occult:** He attended because he's currently researching European families and their connections to lost knowledge. He believes that humanity once knew the secrets of resurrection and immortality. He's a bit disappointed none of de la Poer's writings mention where he learned his arts.

- (red herring) **Anthropology:** If asked who would gain from the theft, he'll immediately point a finger at Katz. He considers her attitudes "practically antediluvian" and suggests an "old fossil" like her must be desperate for something to maintain her relevance in the field.

- **Interrogation** and investigating his room: Starling's secret is multifold—he doesn't know the whole of it. Irma invited Jack Starling to serve as a patsy for her planned theft. She offered to filch valuable research notes from Professor Katz for him, promising him her assistance in using them for publication. He does not tell Investigators that he left the boarding house to meet Irma, who gave him Katz's papers. Had things gone to plan, he would have been killed by ghouls the same night the journal went missing. Investigators would have found Katz's papers, and with his famous love of séances, everyone would have assumed his guilt — perhaps he couldn't help himself with a dead necromancer so close.

### The Ill-Starred Genealogist

Like the 18<sup>th</sup> century necromancer, the unlucky Roger de la Poer descends from a cousin of the de la Poers of Exham Priory (see "The Rats in the Walls"). After his American cousin's tragic attempt at restoring it piqued his interest in family history, he's been on an increasingly-depressing quest to discover the secrets of his ancestors. He has already visited the old Virginia estate ruins, and he's here at the kind invitation of Miss Derby.



## Midnight Sub Rosa

A quiet, middle-aged man, Roger wears an air of resignation, born of his experience in the Great War and his genealogical project. Yet he fatalistically continues his research. He wears a signet ring inscribed with a “D,” which he purchased from an antiques dealer in London. He is willing to fill in any bit of information about Ezekiel de la Poer (p. 10) which Investigators didn’t already get from Derby. Additionally, if the Keeper wishes to add in details about de la Poer taken from “The Rats in the Walls,” he would be the best NPC to do so.

**Two things:** Often fiddles with his signet ring. Stops and restarts sentences.

- **Reassurance:** The Investigators’ reassurance backfires as he finally feels able to unburden what he’d stolidly kept quiet. He recounts Details of the Theft (p. 18), then quickly spirals into blaming himself and his interest in digging up what should be buried. He compares it to his cousin attempting to rebuild the Priory. Look how that ended—cannibalism, insanity, and destruction.
- **Photography:** He’s used his camera to document his genealogical journey. He left his photographs at the boarding house and he would be happy to show them to the Investigator (see *In the Blood*, p. 28). He hasn’t had the opportunity to develop any photographs taken in Rosa, of course. When viewing the photographs later, the Investigator will have an opportunity to pursue developing the film from Rosa.
- (red herring) **Occult:** Jack Starling has offered to conduct a séance for him before he leaves America. Roger is unsure whether he wants to hear what his ancestors have to say.
- (red herring) **Reassurance:** Roger says hearing of his cousin’s failed attempt to rebuild the family property started him on this quest.

But he started having dreams from the moment his cousin’s renovation began; strange dreams, ancestral dreams which leave him simultaneously repulsed and thrilling with nervous excitement. In his dreams, he restores the manor to its ancient glory, ancient priestesses whisper secrets in his ears, and strange creatures bend awkwardly at his feet. Beyond adding a bit of a red herring and color, Roger’s dreams leave him open to occult influences in the final confrontation. Players will have the opportunity to address this in *In the Blood*.

### Room by Room

**Scene Type:** Core

**Lead-Ins:** The Company Entire, Scouring the Lodging House

**Lead-Outs:** Graveyard Inspection, Scouring the Lodging House, When Ghouls Attack, Exploring Rosa, The Secret Under the Ash Tree

The Derby house has two floors and an attic. The 12’-14’ ceilings on the ground floor give the place an airier quality than homes in the North. It is the only house in town whose electric wire meets up with the line that runs along the telephone poles. The Derbys’ supply of oil and tallow indicates that they don’t use electricity much, except when hosting gatherings—they have few modern appliances and likely don’t have the money for pre-Depression electricity bills.

The front and back (kitchen) door are never locked. The main floor contains the entrance hall, a drawing room on the left, a library on the right, a dining room toward the rear with the kitchen and a coat closet (converted into a water closet) behind it. Investigators meet with the entire group in the drawing room.

They may accompany Miss Derby into the kitchen, where she prepares

refreshments and supper for the group. On the second floor, the house has four bedrooms, a small bathroom, and a staircase into the attic. The attic covers the whole house, but its slanted roof reduces the amount of truly usable space. The yard behind the house has a colonial-style brick oven used for outdoor cooking in the hotter months. It also contains a neglected outhouse and a root cellar.

The Derbys invite the Investigators to search the library, where the librarian insisted they store the book before it was stolen. The Investigators may observe anything else on the ground floor or outside, but getting upstairs requires at least some effort on their parts. Encourage players to exercise their creativity. Do they use **Cop Talk** or **Intimidation** to insist they need to search upstairs? Do they choose a General skill like **Stealth** to sneak up the stairs or **Athletics** to climb onto the porch roof and go in from there? Do they role-play or spend to create a distraction, ensuring the NPCs don’t have the chance to notice? No matter what choice they make, they’ll cause less suspicion when attempting subtlety if only a couple of players search the second floor.

### In the Library

The library’s most important feature is the desk which contained the stolen journal. The desk, in itself, is rather ordinary. Its middle drawer should have a lock, but something broke in the mechanism and the drawer slides freely.

- **Cryptography:** Recognizes *Polygraphia* and *Steganographia*. Both books teach cryptography while masquerading as books of magic.
- **Locksmith:** Investigators can tell from examining the marks on the lock and wood that an amateur forced it using a large knife.

# TRAIL OF CTHULHU

## Out of the Woods

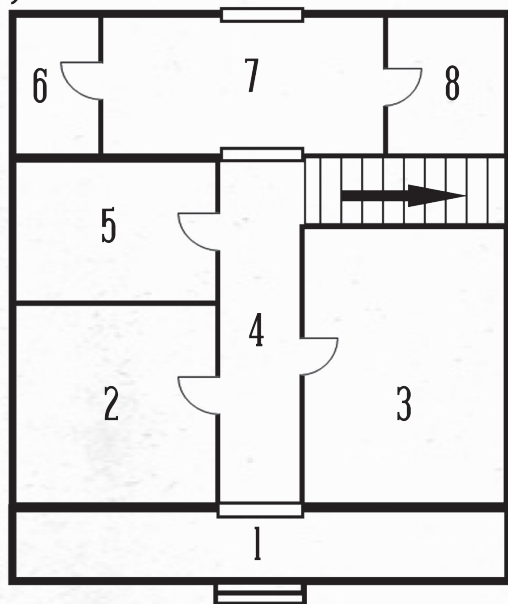
- **Occult:** Investigators identify books of interest in the library. These are: *Unaussprechlichen Kulten* in the original German, a typed reproduction of *Cultes des Goules*, *Commentaries on Witchcraft* by one mysterious Mycroft, *Magnalia Christi Americana* by Cotton Mather, *Polygraphia* and *Steganographia* by

Johannes Trithemius, a typed copy of *The Statement of Randolph Carter*, and Margaret Murray's *The Witch-Cult in Western Europe*.

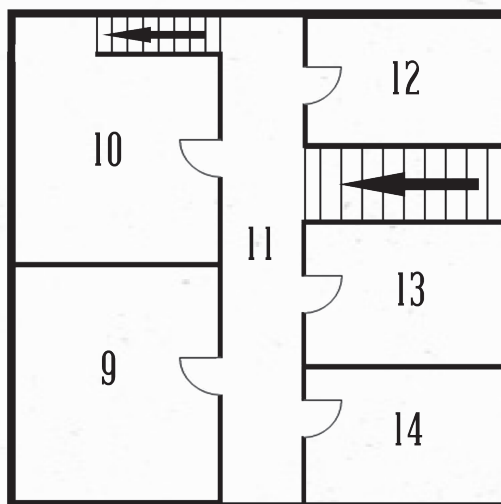
- (core) **Library Use:** *Magnalia* easily opens to a page where Investigators read the following, which Mather ascribes to Borellus:

*The essential Saltes of Animals may be so prepared and preserved, that an ingenious Man may have the whole Ark of Noah in his own Studie, and raise the fine Shape of an Animal out of its Ashes at his Pleasure; and by the lyke Method from the essential Saltes of humane Dust, a Philosopher may, without any criminal Necromancy, call up the Shape of any dead Ancestour from*

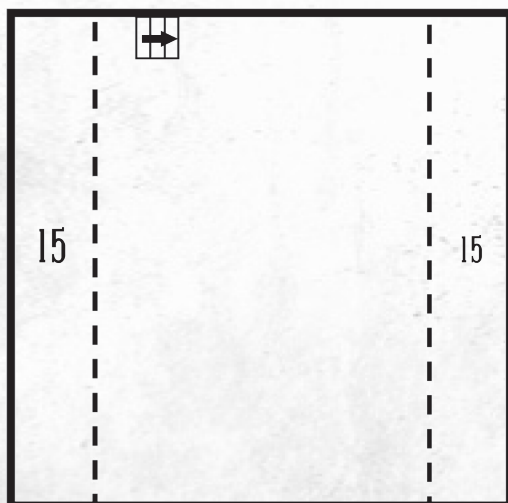
*Ground Floor*



*First Floor*



*Attic*



## Irma Derby's House

- |                 |                       |
|-----------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Porch        | 9. Irma's Room        |
| 2. Drawing Room | 10. Derby's Room      |
| 3. Library      | 11. Hallway           |
| 4. Hallway      | 12. Bathroom          |
| 5. Dining Room  | 13. Small Bedroom     |
| 6. Bathroom     | 14. Small Bedroom     |
| 7. Kitchen      | 15. Attic Crawl Space |
| 8. Pantry       |                       |



## Midnight Sub Rosa

*the Dust whereinto his Bodie has been incinerated. (Book 2, Page 37)*

- 1-point spend: Whoever uses this library has most recently read from *Cultes des Goules* and *Magnalia Christi Americana*. *Cultes* opens most naturally to an unsettling illustration of creatures which resemble the burned specimen Investigators saw at the sheriff's office. One creature perches on its haunches on a gravestone while another peers cunningly from behind a gravedigger's hat, a shovel over his shoulder. Three pages about ghouls in Prussia have been cleanly cut out.
- 2-point spend: Besides books, the library contains years of research notes, carefully organized into folders. Looking through the folder for 1929, the Investigator quickly identifies two pages of interest in Miss Derby's precise hand. See Handouts 2 & 3, pp. 36 and 37.

### Kitchen

Among other ordinary kitchen implements, a simple search reveals the knife used to break the library desk lock. Its blade bears scratch marks from the force of opening the drawer. Whoever used it replaced it among the others. Miss Derby, if she accompanies you, puts it aside for sharpening later. If Investigators choose to search the kitchen in greater depth, they find nothing which stands out at this point, although the meat grinder has been used so heavily it's practically worthless.

### Bathroom

No clues here. This had been a smaller bedroom until recently. Heavier

curtains on the window keep out prying eyes. A new flush toilet looks out of place against the old wood. An ancient claw tub, likely used in the back yard for generations, has been placed under a wall faucet and drains through pipes laid into the floor.

### Irma Derby's Room

Irma's room contains a basic bed, wardrobe, and desk. The tidy dresses in the wardrobe date primarily from the 1910s, nothing made since the end of WWI. On her neatly-organized writing desk sit a pile of folded letters, tied with a ribbon; an inkwell and pen; a copy of the 1936 *Ford Farm Almanac and Facts Book*; a candle burned to the stub; and a typewriter. The letters, addressed to Irma at school, all bear her mother's signature and dates from the mid-1910s.

- (core) **Evidence Collection:** Investigators open the almanac to April. They find the entries for sunset and moon set on April 30th circled. Next to it in the margin is some basic arithmetic in pen. "1:57 – midnight = 1:57 & 1:57 – 6:53 pm = about 7 hours." See below for the line for April 30th in its entirety.
- (core) **Occult:** April 30th is Walpurgis Eve, a Sabbat when witches and sorcerers commune with their spirits or deities. This would be a logical time for someone who had not previously had success with a ritual to re-attempt it.

Investigators find both typewriter and letter paper in the desk drawer, and half-a-dozen sheets discarded in the waste bin. These have been written over several times in what appears

to be Latin in a cryptographic hand. Wax drippings completely obscure the writing on a few. Likely, after the writer rejected these, they repurposed them to protect a desk from a long-burning candle. Though Investigators will not realize it without seeing the journal, this is how it was damaged, when a sleep-deprived Irma set the candle on it instead of another paper as she worked in the wee hours.

- 1-point **Cryptography** spend: After several hours' work, you decipher the notes. This is best done back at the lodging house or in a secure location.

The notes yield 6 versions of what a player may piece together as:

Per Adonai Eloim, Adonai Jehova, Adonai Sabaoth, Metraton On Agla Mathon, verbum pythonicum, mysterium salamandrae, conventus sylvorum, antra gnomorum, daemonia Coeli God, Almonsin, Gibor, Jehosua, Evam, Zariatnatmik, veni, veni, veni.

Once it is translated, players with **Occult** or **Languages (Latin)** recognize this as a summoning incantation which uses the names of more than one deity. See p. 30 for how this may be used in the final confrontation.

### Professor Derby's room

As the professor has noted, he needs his daughter's help to read, so his own room contains no books or writing desk. Investigators notice he has only slept on one side of the bed – unsurprising, considering how recently his wife died. Several of the late Mrs. Derby's dresses hang in his closet.

Day of Yr.	Day of Mon.	Day of Wk.	Hist. Events in Apr.	Sunrise	Sunset	Moon rise/set
121	30	Thu	1812, Louisiana admitted to Union	5 02	6 53	(set) 1 57

1 57 - midnight = 1 57  
 & 1 57 - 6 53 pm =  
 about 7 hours.

## Out of the Woods

### Professor Katz's Room

Professor Katz's waste-bin contains used blotting paper. Investigators find fresh ink in the well. **Evidence Collection** leads them to a stash of papers under Katz's mattress. These appear to be her attempt to recreate the notes she alleges Starling stole. Notable highlights:

- *Father Joseph Maria something? If priest comes Sunday, ask him for regional history. Or wait until visit to Jesuit archives.*
- *Diary of Christine Laurent in Loyola library had note about Mrs. Derby grandmother.*
- *Heard barking when we arrived. Must find Un. Kult passage again. Borrow Theodore's once library is reopened?*

### Attic

Investigators find neatly-packed trunks of what appear to be the late Mrs. Derby's clothes. The odor of mothballs initially chokes Investigators who open a trunk. It's possible Irma is saving them for when hers wear out, as they're in a similar size and style. The attic contains wooden boxes and empty trunks used to transport the Derby's possessions from Tuscaloosa to Rosa.

- **Forensics:** Marks and dust on the floor indicate one very long box arrived with the rest but was not unpacked until much later.
- **Outdoorsman:** The temperature up here isn't much different than the outdoors. It looks like whatever insulation was built into the house has been torn out. This winter, the attic must have gotten very cold.

### The Grounds

The house sits close to the woods. A path in the back leads into the woods, and the path from the front door leads to the town.

The back yard contains a colonial-style outdoor oven for summer cooking,

an outhouse, and the trap door of a root cellar. A very new electric pump attaches to the well and sends water into the house. Vines cover a semi-collapsed wooden structure—likely the remains of slave quarters. The Derbys' Ford Model A sits in a run-down stable. The stable's roof probably leaks, but the car handles it better than a horse.

Opening the root cellar's hatch reveals a square yard of opening about four feet deep. On hands and knees, one may see into the cellar itself. The cellar has a two-foot dirt ceiling, extends five feet back and two feet deep. In it sit bushel baskets of apples and carrots, jars of other fruits and vegetables, and, in the front, two large jars of coarse salt, one with a ribbon tied around its neck. If a player attempts to taste the salt in either jar, they'll have to make a 4-point **Stability** test later on.

- **Outdoorsman** confirms that these are all normal things to find in a root cellar. Moreover, Alabama's root cellars are not likely to be as deep as those farther north, owing to the water tables.
- **Craft:** An amateur hand attempted to re-plaster the oven's bricks in place, likely in an effort to prevent heat leaking. The repaired bricks are less than a decade old. It would have been a better decision to use bricks of a similar age, or rebuild it entirely.

### Scouring the Lodging House

**Scene Type:** Pipe/Red Herring  
**Lead-Ins:** Graveyard Inspection, Color Lines, The Company Entire, Room by Room, When Ghouls Attack, The Secret Under the Ash Tree  
**Lead-Outs:** Graveyard Inspection, Room by Room, When Ghouls Attack, Exploring Rosa, The Secret Under the Ash Tree

For more details on the lodging house, see *Dawes' Lodging House* p. 26. To enter other guests' rooms, Investigators must either use **Lockpicking** when they're sure no one else is nearby or make a basic **Filch** test to steal Mrs. Dawes' spare set from the private sitting room in her annex. If they fail, they'll have to find a way to keep her from getting the sheriff, or explain the situation to him. If Starling has died by this point, Mrs. Dawes simply unlocks his door for them, but not the other men's. Investigators may also use **Cop Talk** to convince Sheriff Barnes to ask Mrs. Dawes to let them into all three men's rooms.

### Jack Starling's Room

Jack Starling has unpacked his clothes neatly into the wardrobe, and left a few uninteresting papers on the writing table. Under his bed, Investigators find a briefcase which requires **Lockpicking** to open. In this briefcase, they find more academic papers. Unless they've talked to Katz, it takes a player with **Law**, or a Criminal, Police Detective, or Private Investigator, to notice signs of a false bottom. Here, they discover Professor Katz's missing papers, as well as a few pages cleanly cut out of *Cultes des Goules* (the title heads several pages). **Library Use** lets players recognize these pages as those missing from the Derby copy (p. 23).

- **History:** The papers include a list of journals with dates and an unfinished genealogical tree. The bottom name on the tree? Sophie Derby. It works backward several generations, but the beginning is incomplete. The list of journals includes several names, but noted next to Father Joseph Maria Berthieu's name is "Jesuit missionary to Louisiana territory. Said to be present at de la Poer hanging. Jesuit archives St. Louis. Reference required."

Katz's notes include passages which anyone with **Languages (German)** can read and those with **Occult**



## Midnight Sub Rosa

recognize specifically as a passage from *Unaussprechlichen Kulten*.

### • Languages (German):

*von Junzt: After reading Balfour's Cultes des Goules, which only hinted at the facts, I traveled into the heart of les Massif des Vosges, where the necromancer de la Poer lived with two pupils before his move to the Americas. There I found the superstitious town of St. Lazare, a collection of huts nestled in a valley just off the Ruisseau du Seucy. I spent a week at the feet of a Greisin (German: "old lady") and listened to stories of her childhood when the pupils of de la Poer held sway over her village. De la Poer demanded the bodies of the dead, which several braver boys witnessed him feeding to dog-like ghouls. If too few villagers died of a winter, a child or old man might disappear, though that could be the starving wolves. The woman hinted that these men were, perhaps, living still. The hair rose on my neck as I lay awake that night, listening to the barking wolves, surely it was wolves.*

### Roger De La Poer's Room

Roger de la Poer's room contains his traveling clothes, a camera bag with photographs, a pistol, and a small journal.

- **Evidence Collection:** The journal briefly documents his travels researching family history in the country around Exham Priory (the destruction of which spurred his genealogical endeavors), his trip to America, and his visit to a historical society near the remains of the Virginia de la Poer estate. Players taking the time to read it notice its tone gradually growing more fatalistic as he reflects on his own place in the family. Multiple pages have been torn out. The final entry:

*I hold myself responsible. If I had not written to Miss Derby, she would never have obligingly arranged this event. Surely it is the curse of my family that the journal would go missing at such a time.*

*I only hope that the hand which took it is human and not that of my abhorred antecedent. I lie awake each night, pistol in hand, listening for either ghostly voices whispering the name of Magna Mater or the scuttling of rats, for I would rather put a bullet in my own head than become such an abomination.*

See *In the Blood* (p. 28) for more information the photographs, which de la Poer also willingly shares with Investigators.

### Scott Bryant's Room

- **Evidence Collection:** The Investigator finds letter from the American Antiquarian Society and a 5-page typed list folded in with one of Bryant's shirts. Underneath the signature is the title "Secretary to the Librarian."

*Mr. Bryant,*

*In response to yours of February 16<sup>th</sup>, please find enclosed this list of titles which the American Antiquarian Society seeks to augment its collection. The society's funds are limited and we gratefully accept donations whenever possible.*

- **Library Use:** If Investigators have inspected the library, they recognize multiple titles from the list, including *Magnalia Christi Americana*. The list does not mention the de la Poer diary specifically, although the final item reads "The society accepts donations of manuscripts and diaries completed before 1870."

(See *The Frantic Librarian*, p. 18 for this letter's context. It may be resolved through use of Interpersonal abilities to get the truth from Bryant.)

### When Ghouls Attack

**Scene Type:** Antagonist Reaction  
**Lead-Ins:** Room by Room, Scouring

the Lodging House, The Secret Under the Ash Tree

**Lead-Outs:** Scouring the Lodging House, Exploring Rosa, In the Blood, The Secret under the Ash Tree

"When" is the operative word here. This attack should occur at night, and at some point after the Investigators have had a chance to meet and initially question Starling. If Investigators choose to walk back from the Derby house to the lodging house along with Starling and others, this would be an opportune time. If they visit the graveyard after the Derby house, the attack may occur as they're returning to the lodging house. You may trigger a **Sense Trouble** test, but it only protects the Investigators, not Starling.

1.5 ghouls per player (for ghoul statistics, see p. 26) attack Starling and the party. Ideally this begins with a dramatic moment. For example: "Starling steps out on the porch to light a clove cigarette when a clawed hand reaches out of the shadows and tears open his jugular."

Investigators not already tipped off by the Sheriff's description of the townspeople's fight, or who didn't secure blades or creative alternatives, discover in combat that ghouls only take half damage from firearms and projectile weapons. If the Investigators are badly damaged in this fight and seem on the verge of dying, it may be a good time for the ghouls to lope off, satisfied that they've achieved their mission of killing Starling.

The fight triggers a 3-point **Stability** test. Success negates the need for a later test during the *Resurrection Under the Moon* (p. 30). Failure not only causes **Stability** loss, it increases the test's difficulty on future occasions by 1.

After the sheriff and others have examined Starling's corpse, several local men carry it to the same makeshift

## Out of the Woods

morgue (p. 16) as the other bodies, while the sheriff makes arrangements with Starling's next of kin.

### Ghoul

**Abilities:** Athletics 9, Health 7, Scuffling 9

**Hit Threshold:** 4 (5 underground)

**Alertness Modifier:** +2 (+0 in daylight)

**Stealth Modifier:** +1

**Weapon:** +1 (claw), +0 (bite); if two bite attacks in a row succeed against the same target, the ghoul is worrying the poor devil with his mighty canine jaws, and the second attack thus does double damage. The ghoul need not roll to hit that target thereafter, but will continue to do normal damage to it each round until killed or driven off.

**Armor:** firearms and projectiles do only half damage (round up)

**Stability Loss:** +0; +1 if the ghoul was known to the witness when alive

### Exploring Rosa

**Scene Type:** Alternate

**Lead-Ins:** Makeshift Morgue, Graveyard Inspection, Color Lines, Room by Room, Scouring the Lodging House, When Ghouls Attack, Laid to Rest, In the Blood, The Secret Under The Ash Tree

**Lead-Outs:** Graveyard Inspection, Scouring the Lodging House, Laid to Rest, In the Blood, The Secret Under the Ash Tree, Resurrection Under the Moon

In 1936, Rosa, Alabama lies along State Route 38, between the cities Oneonta and Cleveland. The 1930 census list two cities with a combined population of less than 4,000 souls, with far fewer scattered in the wooded farmland between. As the Investigators walk along the main street, they may notice the telephone line which runs down it, connecting Rosa to the outside world. Only three locations have access to the party line, Dawes' Boarding House, Dubois general store, and the sheriff's office.

The Depression hit Rosa hard. In the early years, boll weevils and a local mill closure caused more trouble than irrelevant stock crashes. Many men left to try their hand at industry in Birmingham. They sent money home and returned only occasionally. But by the mid-30s, decline in industry drove most back to attempt subsistence farming and share-cropping on their own land. Clothes are patched and mended. Some women have definitely sewn their dresses and their children's clothes from feed sacks, although the floral patterns make them quite charming.

The Keeper may use setting details below as color or for full scenes. Few clues are necessary for the core adventure—core clues should be considered floating core clues. Instead, they build a fuller picture of Rosa, add small plot threads and clues, and include assistance and supplies Investigators may need.

### Dubois General Store

Caroline Dubois can't offer Investigators anything fancy, but she carries general store staples and basic farming tools. In the warmer months, residents acquire ice for their iceboxes from the small ice house out back. The store was her late husband's family legacy, but she carries it on with pride. Six days a week, dressed in the same gray smock, she opens the shutters and unlocks the door at 7am and remains behind the counter, knitting, until supper. Her grandchildren help her manage the stock and heavy lifting, not that there's much nowadays. Some townspeople purchase on credit or barter. There's a fine layer of dust on most of the non-perishable items.

After recent events, Mrs. Dubois has moved in with her sister, Mrs. Dawes, and can be found there when not in the store.

• **Credit Rating 2+:** Investigators keen on shopping find ammunition,

firearms if the Keeper feels kind (though they're of less use against ghouls, so perhaps it's full of firearms if the Keeper feels wily), gasoline, and various bludgeoning farm tools.

• (core) **Flattery:** She's proud of her stock and happily tells Investigators that she almost never has to order anything special for her customers, and they never have to drive out to Oneonta or Birmingham. Only time she can recall any special orders in the last year was when Miss Derby ordered several bags of new-fangled hot-burning coal despite her suggestion to pay a local boy a few pennies for enough cords to last the winter. She dismisses this as "city folk ways."

### Dawes' Lodging House

Mrs. Dawes keeps the town's lodging house, an irregular place with several generations' worth of additions, and a screened wraparound porch populated by wicker chairs and scuffed rockers. She hardly does robust business, but what else is she going to do with the architectural monstrosity? Her eight children have dispersed to various cities or died in the war, and her husband is dead, so she rents the rooms and lives in the house's annex, built by her husband's parents. The Derbys have given her good business over the last dozen or more years, paying to house students there for a month or two in the summer. Her children each send a little money, and she doesn't need much.

When not hosting guests, she opens her house up to local folks in the evenings. It's one of the few cheerful places in town—young folks pick out songs on the parlor piano while families shoot the breeze on her front porch. As the three men visiting the Derby house occupy rooms already, Investigators must make do with three rooms between them, although some have two beds. There's a patch of dirt out front which looks like a suitable place for parking a car.



## Midnight Sub Rosa

After the terror of her husband's return, Mrs. Dubois has temporarily moved in with her sister, Mrs. Dawes. Unlike Louisa Mathers, she wants her husband back in the ground as soon as possible.

- **Assess Honesty:** You get the impression that, while she wouldn't wish to speak ill of the dead, she doesn't miss him very much.
- **Oral History:** The sisters' ancestors settled Rosa immediately after de la Poer's death. They grew up hearing stories from their grandmother about things *her* grandmother had seen as a little girl, but always assumed they were tall tales. About a week after their grandmother's funeral, Mrs. Dubois saw her at their bedroom window, looking in and grinning horribly, like her husband did when she saw him that horrible night. Mrs. Dawes insists her sister was dreaming the first and imagined the second.

### Catholic Church

Jesuit missionaries present at de la Poer's death decided to cleanse the area by building a church for the farmers who parceled out his land. They dedicated Saint Cyprian's Catholic Church in September 1736. Methodist tent revivals caused religious fractures in Rosa about a century later and, two hundred years on, the church has only a few families in regular attendance. Father Martel comes up from Oneonta one Sunday afternoon a month. On the other Sundays, early risers see a couple of trucks loaded up with the town's last Cajun-Catholics heading out for Oneonta.

- **Theology:** An inscription in the church reads "Saint Cyprian defend us." Saint Cyprian of Antioch was supposedly a magician with great power over demonic forces, who was converted by the holy virgin Saint Justina. After his conversion, Cyprian

used his powers to assist Christians battling occult forces. Does this make the church a sanctuary from dark forces? Keeper's judgment rules.

### Methodist Church

Pastor Armand Sperry is the only resident of Rosa, other than the Derbys, to have obtained a college degree. As a man of faith, but also reason, he quietly fights an internal battle between what he's seen and his belief in the existence of a rational explanation. His quiet, firm nature calms Investigators' nerves if they lose too much Stability. Sperry has 4 points of **Psychoanalysis**.

### Baptist Preacher

If Investigators go looking for Baptist preacher Jim Caldwell (ordained in the National Baptist Convention, a historically-black denomination founded in Alabama, but spread far beyond by this point), they find him on a second visit to the black part of Rosa, or a visit to the Baptist church. The church stands between Rosa and Cleveland, just under three miles down the road from Rosa's center, and just over a mile from where the black community lives. Like most small-town preachers, Caldwell spends more time working fields or doing odd jobs than composing sermons or providing pastoral care. He walks with a stick and works sitting down, as he came back from the war with shrapnel in his left leg. His two teenaged sons do the heavy lifting for him as he barks out orders.

Caldwell is a useful ally, provided Investigators use **Cop Talk** or **Reassurance** to overcome any resistance from the sheriff. When WWI broke out, the Army drafted Caldwell into one of its segregated labor brigades, and shipped him to France. He ended up as close to the action as anyone, and specialized in preparing explosives for Army Engineers. He's got **Explosives** 6 and **Mechanical Repair** 4. He can

help Investigators set up explosives at the ghoul warren or craft a flame thrower (Point-Blank: +4; Close: +2; Near: 0; Long: X; even against ghouls) with a Difficulty 7 **Mechanical Repair** test (Investigators may cooperate to help him). An Investigator in the Military, or someone who served in the Great War, may use **Oral History** or **Reassurance** to bond with him over shared experiences. Should Investigators not encounter him but need the assistance, someone in the town remembers that contraption Jim built when they hired him to burn out an area, or blow up old stumps.

- **Theology:** What they tell him sounds like the book of Revelation, when the dead will rise and God will come to judge. He hadn't been much interested in that book before the war, but the carnage he saw in France convinced him that it must be God's judgment on humanity for their sins. He's not seminary-trained, but he's studied with other pastors at meetings in Birmingham. And this? This looks like the End Times to him.

### Mathers Farm

When young Bill Mathers died in what was ruled a hunting accident back in January, people weren't sure whether Louisa would stay or go back to her folks in Liberty. Each week, she silently comes into Dubois' store, preceded by her growing belly and followed by her two children. Nobody knows her plans for the summer, but both the Catholic and Methodist churches scraped together the money to help her get by for now. The fields lie unplowed, but nobody's getting much return from their fields to begin with.

Investigators find her in an argument with the Methodist minister, Armand Sperry. Her husband's return clearly shows that his spirit cannot rest easy while his death remains a mystery. She refuses to let anyone reinter her

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husband until someone brings the person responsible to justice.

- **Outdoorsman:** Her husband was a seasoned hunter. He would build blinds in the woods and stay out for a day or two at a time. She only became worried when he wasn't home on the fourth day. It took them another day to find him.
- **Oral History:** While the coroner ruled her husband's death an accidental shooting by another hunter, no one would admit responsibility. The sheriff suggested a hobo or other traveler was most likely to blame, but she remains convinced someone in the town killed him.
- **Law:** Louisa appeals to any character with a law enforcement background. They found Bill in the old ash grove. He'd often told her about a childhood nightmare after going to the ruins on a dare, and took great pains to avoid it when they were courting.
- (core) **Forensics:** Investigators had the chance to conduct an autopsy in the *Makeshift Morgue*. If they chose not to do so then, they may do so now, or request the coroner's report on his original cause of death. He has a gunshot wound to the face and deep claw marks on his neck and across his belly. The coroner's report notes most of his internal organs had been "consumed by wild animals."
  - 1-point spend: You find a photograph from the scene of his death which someone clearly tried to hide. A dark stain spreads on the snow around his body. It seems unlikely a gunshot wound to the face would cause that kind of exsanguination.

Unless players wish to spend points of Interpersonal Abilities when encountering Louisa now, her desire to stop her husband's burial won't be settled until later.

### The Woods

For country folk, the inhabitants of Rosa have an unusual dislike of the woods. They can't, or won't, explain why. Only children play in the woods, against their parents' express orders, and many of them begin to avoid it after strange feelings of being watched, or uncanny sounds which seem to come from under the trees. Unfortunately, their poverty and hunger force them to set traps for small game, and hunt larger game, which only reinforces the deep discomfort they experience there.

- **Outdoorsman:** The woods are lovely, dark, and deep. And unnaturally quiet. By 1920, hunters and farmers had eradicated the population of wolves. Something else must be disturbing the local wildlife.

### Laid to Rest

**Scene Type:** Alternate

**Lead-Ins:** Graveyard Inspection, Exploring Rosa, The Secret Under the Ash Tree

**Lead-Outs:** Exploring Rosa, In the Blood, The Secret Under the Ash Tree

Now that both the Investigators and the sheriff have examined the returned, it's time to put them back in the earth. A little girl deputized by Pastor Sperry brings the Investigators a note, inviting them to attend a communal evening service at the Methodist church. The two pastors have invited the entire population of Rosa to attend, although the note suggests that, while the Investigators are welcome, those at the Derby house should remain at home.

When the Investigators arrive, they find Louisa Mathers, Mrs. Dubois, and Armand Sperry in the midst of a heated discussion. If the Investigators have not yet talked to her (*Mathers Farm*, p. 27), they may get that scene's information out of her now or after the service.

- **Cop Talk or Forensics:** You are able to convince her that no further information can be gathered from her husband's body. Investigators who have not autopsied him on either opportunity may promise to ask the sheriff for the coroner's report (see *Mathers Farm*).

- **Anthropology or Oral History:** Mrs. Dubois remembers her grandmother talking about pyres in the town back when she was a little girl. Said it kept a body safe, and asked for her body to be burned. Some kind of superstition. Of course, they buried her like a proper Christian.

### In the Blood

**Scene Type:** Alternate

**Lead-Ins:** The Company Entire, When Ghouls Attack, Exploring Rosa, Laid to Rest

**Lead-Outs:** Exploring Rosa, The Secret Under the Ash Tree

Roger de la Poer invites a player with **Photography** back to his room to see his photographs from the trip. He welcomes tag-alongs who express curiosity.

- **Photography:** De la Poer eagerly shows the Investigator his photographs from the Virginia estate. It's mostly a ruined plantation. Macabre carvings decorate the family's mausoleum—grinning gravediggers and enlarged rats playing around skulls.
  - 1 pt. spend: De la Poer gives you his negatives and remarks that he saw photograph processing chemicals in the general store. The process requires a minimum of one hour, and approximately eight more hours for the film to dry somewhere fairly safe, and entirely dark. The Investigator's skill allows them to develop film more professionally than de la Poer ever would. In the enhanced image, from a hole beneath the gnarled roots of the largest ash tree, a pair of pinpoints reflect the sunlight.



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– 2 pt. spend: De la Poer recalls he still has negatives of photographs taken at the Virginia estate. He eagerly proffers them, and asks you to see what you can do. Over-exposing one taken inside the mausoleum reveals a dark space behind the vines at the base of the far wall. It is definitely big enough for a human to crawl through.

- **Pharmacy:** You notice several loose pills on the night stand. De la Poer explains that ever since he's been here, he's had difficulty sleeping (**Assess Honesty** gets the feeling it may have been longer). His vivid dreams frighten him awake. He spoke to Mr. Bryant, who sold him a few Luminal pills (if you ask the price, you know it's double what they're worth – de la Poer doesn't have a solid understanding of American currency). They help him sleep, but his dreams have become much more intense. He's not sure which is worse.
- **Art History:** You spot several half-completed pencil drawings in de la Poer's luggage. These depict the original de la Poer abbey in England. Roger admits to doing these himself. He's not much of an artist, but the impressions of his dreams were so vivid. He's begun adding details from things he saw at the Virginia estate.

Players may choose to spend points to mitigate the effects of Roger's family curse. These have minor effects on his outlook now, but affect *Resurrection Under the Moon*.

- 1-point **Pharmacy** spend: The Luminal makes him vulnerable to influences from his dreams. You advise against it, and remove the pills. Effect: If Roger de la Poer becomes possessed, take 2 points off his health. The spirit may be strong, but the vessel is weaker.
- 1-point **CopTalk** spend: You convince de la Poer that things are different here in America. Effect: When brought to the final confrontation, you may now

make a Difficulty 4 **Scuffling** test to punch some sense back into Roger, in a fashion he's come to expect from American westerns.

In a pulp game, Investigators with **Hypnosis** may make a Difficulty 4 **Hypnosis** test to recover ancestral memories he's absorbed through the Dreamlands. If they succeed, de la Poer, whose Stability is currently at 4, must then make a Difficulty 3 **Stability** test to handle the effects of unleashing such a flood of horrors.

The first three memories add color; the last two function as minor clues.

- A coming-of-age ritual. The whole family welcomes him. He takes the stone knife to the altar. Something struggles in the darkness.
- Rats, everywhere rats. But he only feels half-disgusted. He struggles against elation.
- Hunched, bestial creatures range among an army's tents. The standards appear Roman. A Druidic figure, silhouetted against the moon, raises his hands. The ghouls fall on sleeping soldiers and devour them.
- A line of prisoners shuffles toward a bronze cauldron. A priestess clad in white stands ready to cut their throats. The blood rises. The priestess resembles his grandmother and... someone else... Miss Derby?
- Inevitability. Nothing can keep the ghouls out forever. The grave and the tree call him. Firearms hardly make a dent. But explosives, fire, and acid kill more quickly and destroy their bodies.

### The Secret Under the Ash Tree

**Scene Type:** Core

**Lead-Ins:** Room by Room, Scouring the Lodging House, When Ghouls Attack, Exploring Rosa, Laid to Rest, In the Blood

**Lead-Outs:** Scouring the Lodging House, When Ghouls Attack,

Exploring Rosa, Laid to Rest, Resurrection Under the Moon, A Sabbat Foiled, The Warren is Dead

Investigators may start on the path behind the Derby house to go back to the old de la Poer place, or they may ask Mrs. Dawes about any possible short-cuts. She'll discourage them from going back to that wicked place, but draws her own house on the map, and shows a stream they can follow back toward the ruins.

If they follow the path from the Derby house, they'll have to turn right off a wider path that continues on to a river. While the fork toward the de la Poer ruins is narrower than the main path, it clearly still gets enough use to keep it from growing over. Investigators may have to hop a fallen tree or two and pull back a few thorns, but in daylight, they should find it an easy trip. The walk takes about 15 minutes. If the Investigators come from Mrs. Dawes's house instead, the trip takes a good half hour. While they're not twice the distance as the crow flies, following the stream leads them on a curving and disused path.

Whichever path they take, the Investigators arrive at a slightly more open space in the woods, populated entirely by white ash trees, where nothing but worn stones and a large hole betray the de la Poer house ever existed. The only other human structure nearby is a large brick oven, similar to the one at the Derbys'.

- **Craft:** This oven shows the same signs as that in the Derbys' yard, but someone has used it since the repair. Unlike the oven in the Derbys' yard, these bricks are close in age to the originals. It's possible they were even taken from the Derbys' oven.

- (core) **Evidence Collection:** In the oven's fire pit, the Investigators find heaps of coal, more than would produce a safe fire. In the oven's

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maw, Investigators find remains of a mixture of ash, rock salt, and small bits of bone. **Biology** or **Medicine** confirms the ash is also human.

– 1-point **Biology** or **Medicine** spend: In a well-sealed oven, a hot coal fire burning for half a day or more would greatly burn down the human body, to the point where its bones could be ground up with the right effort and tools. If Investigators noted the well-used meat grinder, the player who spent the point puts the two together. Otherwise they may search the house for appropriate implements, and find said meat grinder (see p. 23).

At this point, anyone who tasted the saltes in the Derby root cellar on *The Grounds* must make a 4-point **Stability** test. To avoid making things *too* easy for Investigators who respond by setting off to destroy the saltes, the Keeper may decide that Irma has moved them as an Antagonist Reaction to noticing their snooping in the root cellar, and either challenge Investigators to determine the location, or keep them out of play for now.

About fifteen feet from the old foundation, in the direction indicated by Professor Derby's shaky X, Investigators find the white ash tree from which de la Poer was hung. Several smaller ashes entwine or conjoin with the ash, enhancing its twisted, gnarled appearance. The tree stands around seventy feet tall, with a diameter approaching five feet in places.

A small boulder sits at the head of a far-too-recently disturbed grave. The soil is not fresh, but **Outdoorsman** can tell it's been dug up within the past year. If Investigators choose to dig it up, the process takes them about half an hour, with two people working at a time. Once they've emptied the grave, they'll find it's missing a body.

On the tree's far side, in the tangle of roots, gapes a dark hole, big enough to swallow a person. Assuming the Investigators have visited the graveyard, it doesn't take any special skill for them to recognize tracks around the hole as matching those in the graveyard, and resembling the feet of ghouls they may have already killed. If the Investigators are unwise enough to do more than poke a limb, flashlight in hand, into this hole, feel free to inflict a Difficulty 4 **Stability** test on them when they realize the warren's extent. If they decide to go in, use the details in *The Warren is Dead*.

## Resurrection Under the Moon

**Scene Type:** Resolution

**Lead-Ins:** The Secret Under the Ash Tree, Exploring Rosa, Laid to Rest

**Lead-Outs:** A Sabbat Foiled, The Warren is Dead, Aftermath

Unless the Investigators find a way to stop her (in which case, see *A Sabbat Foiled*), Irma Derby attempts the ritual after dark on April 30<sup>th</sup>, as the power of Walpurgis Eve grows. Investigators may tail her to de la Poer's grave with a Difficulty 4 **Shadowing** test. She brings the two jars of salt (which the Investigators may have been seen earlier in her root cellar) and de la Poer's journal, hidden in her underpetticoat. She has long since worn off her **shaken** condition and moves with confidence.

Roger de la Poer stumbles into the clearing along the path from the lodging house, evidently in a trance. If not interrupted, he walks to the grave. If interrupted, he attempts to use **Scuffling** (5) and **Athletics** (5) to reach the grave. (Actions taken during *In the Blood* may modify this). Attempting to interrupt him alerts Irma to the Investigators' presence, triggering a ghoul attack.

If uninterrupted, Irma begins a chant:

*Magna Mater, Magna Mater, O friend  
and companion of night, thou who  
rejoicest in the baying of dogs and spilt  
blood, who wanderest in the midst of  
shades among the tombs, who longest  
for blood and bringest terror to mortals,  
Gorgo, Mormo, thousand-faced moon, look  
favourably on my sacrifices!*

She pours the salt from the plain jar over de la Poer's grave, chanting ever faster and louder:

*Per Adonai Eloim, Adonai Jehova,  
Adonai Sabaoth, Metraton On Agla  
Mathon, verbum pythonicum, mysterium  
salamandrae, conventus sylvorum,  
antra gnomorum, daemonia Coeli  
God, Almonsin, Gibor, Jehosua, Evam,  
Zariatnatmik, veni, veni, veni.*

When she completes the summoning, Roger de la Poer begins to change. He snaps out of the trance, and stands upright. Where the man the Investigators met jumped at his own shadow, the man beneath the tree might confidently walk into hell and back, and perhaps he has. Ghouls emerge from under the tree until about 1.5 per Investigator form a half-circle around Irma, de la Poer, and the grave. They lower their heads before the pair and meep. Hundreds of rats (for statistics, see p. 31) swarm from beneath the tree and run in all directions, though only ten or twenty come in contact with the Investigators.

If the Investigators have only watched up till this point, the ghouls attack them (for ghoul statistics, see p. 26). Meanwhile, Irma attempts to conduct the same ritual for her mother's saltes, this time with de la Poer's aid. Should the ghouls kill an Investigator, and the numbers become more than 2 ghouls per Investigator, one or more stops and begin eating the corpse, while the others continue the fight. This triggers a 4-point **Stability** test for any remaining Investigators.



## Midnight Sub Rosa

If Roger de la Poer has been killed or killed himself before this final scene, Irma herself transforms, and acquires the second set of stats. She maintains her original weapons.

### Irma Derby

**Abilities:** Athletics 7, Firearms 3, Fleeing 4, Health 9, Sanity 3, Scuffling 8, Stability 6, Weapons 5.

**Alertness modifier:** +1

**Weapon:** +0 (Remington .41 Short double Derringer, 2 shots, only point-blank range, +1 to Difficulty to find on carrier), -1 (kitchen knife), ghouls servitors.

### Roger de la Poer (possessed)

**Abilities:** Athletics 10, Firearms 8, Health 12, Scuffling 8, Weapons 8

**Alertness modifier:** +1

**Weapon:** +0 (Colt .32)

### Rat Swarm

Increase Health and Scuffling by 2 for every 10 rats, and damage by +1 for every 30 rats. Every hit against a swarm kills 1 rat and disperses 9 others.

**Abilities:** Athletics 5, Health 3, Scuffling 3

**Hit Threshold:** 3 (small and nimble, but target-rich)

**Weapon:** -2 (bite); may be infected

**Armor:** none

**Stability Loss:** +0 unless phobic

### Resolution

The Investigators must bring Irma's and de la Poer's (if possessed) Health to 0 in order to stop the ghouls from spawning (the Keeper may decide if bringing their health to 0 kills them or merely renders them unconscious). If the Investigators kill Irma or Roger, they must then convince the Sheriff and the party at the house not to arrest them.

Shooting either jar of saltes requires a Called Shot with a +3 to the Difficulty in addition to any distance penalties. If the Investigators destroy or remove

de la Poer's saltes before Irma can summon him, she fights to protect her mother's, but does not attempt a further ritual. Instead, she joins the ghouls, using her knife and derringer. Destroying or removing the journal has the same effect.

If the Investigators have deciphered the notes from Irma's wastepaper bin (see *Irma Derby's Room*, p. 23), an Investigator with **Occult** may make a 2-point spend to create a counter-spell to block the summoning. Using this formula requires a Difficulty 5 **Stability** test. If the Investigator succeeds, they obtain 1 point of **Cthulhu Mythos**. If they fail, they take a 5-point **Stability** loss, acquire 2 points of **Cthulhu Mythos**, and, just before briefly fainting (they can be revived, but the shock will temporarily make them swoon and leave them vulnerable), they have a vision of a vast ghouls warren under the American continent, in sewers and subways and subterranean caves.

If the Investigators have had the forethought to bring either Professor Derby or Professor Katz to the spot, both can be persuaded to plead with Irma that her mother would not have wished this kind of un-life. This may allow the Investigators to make **Stealth** tests to surprise Irma. They can succeed on a 5, as her **Sense Trouble** is lowered by her loved ones.

If the Investigators bring Sheriff Barnes to witness the event, they have an easier time explaining any deaths—assuming he survives. If he comes, add another 1.5 ghouls.

### A Sabbat Foiled

**Scene Type:** Alternate Conclusion/Antagonist Reaction

**Lead-Ins:** The Secret Under the Ash Tree, Resurrection Under the Moon

**Lead-Outs:** The Warren is Dead, Aftermath

Should the Investigators attempt to prevent Irma from entering the woods by confronting her earlier, she will undertake two attacks. Firstly, she will summon ghouls to attack the Investigators, and perhaps even the group gathered at her home. If this fails, she still has the derringer her father gave her for protection years ago when she began traveling alone on research expeditions (see p. 31 for her stats). She will draw this from her skirt pocket, and attempt to shoot whichever Investigator initiated the confrontation. If not stopped (Difficulty 5 **Scuffling** test), she will use the second bullet on herself, triggering a 2-point **Stability** test for Investigators. Like the fight in the woods, no more ghouls will spawn if she dies.

Should the Investigators choose to wait until the morning of May 1st to confront Irma, they wake up in the middle of the night, surrounded by Irma, de la Poer, and the ghouls. The Keeper may decide to force **Sense Trouble** rolls, and kill or wound any Investigator who fails.

### The Warren is Dead

**Scene Type:** Alternate/Conclusion

**Lead-Ins:** The Secret Under the Ash Tree, Resurrection Under the Moon, A Sabbat Foiled

**Lead-Outs:** Aftermath

For an additional challenge after defeating Irma, some Investigators may wish to clear out the warren permanently. This is a great time for anyone with points in **Explosives** to have their moment.

Investigators can access the warren by making a Difficulty 4 **Athletics** test to crawl between the tree roots, and safely wiggle into its main cavern. If they fail, the fall gives them a -1 to all tests until a teammate applies a point of **First Aid**.

## Out of the Woods

Down in the warren, dark, dank branches lead in three directions off the central space (South-South-West, North, South-East). The tunnel branch leading North comes out in the woods just outside town. If Investigators do not choose the Northern tunnel, they must walk several hours before coming to a place where they can reach the surface. (A kinder alternative has the South-South-Western tunnel coming out near the Mathers farm, and the South-Eastern surfacing in the woods not far from where Sam'll McGrath first met them.)

If the Keeper wishes, the tunnel contains 1.5 ghouls for every Investigator, who immediately attack when Investigators invade their sanctuary (for ghoul statistics, see p. 26). Ghouls have excellent night vision. With flashlights, torches, or another light source, the ghouls' Hit Threshold increases by 1. Without a light source, the warren is barely lit by the hole above, raising the ghouls' Hit Threshold by 2, and the disorientation triggers a Difficulty 4 **Stability** test.

### Pest Control

- **Occult:** Nothing they can do permanently keeps out ghouls. The best the town can do is destroy the bodies of its dead through cremation, cutting off their food supply.

Investigators with **Explosives** find a small supply of dynamite in General Store, kept safely in the back. A bundle of dynamite in the cavern's approximate center causes an implosion, bringing down the tree and temporarily closing the tunnels. Ghouls can easily dig a new passage, but this much attention makes them disinclined to do so any time soon.

Successfully dropping the dynamite bundle into a cavern (possibly full of ghouls!) and having it explode once everyone has reached a safe distance requires a Difficulty 6 **Explosives** test.

On a failure, the ground may collapse under Investigators or a ghoul below may hurl it back. Investigators may set off the bundle from inside the cavern at a Difficulty 3 **Explosives** test, but must make a Difficulty 6 **Athletics** test to run a safe distance down the tunnels.

### Aftermath

**Scene Type:** Conclusion

**Lead-Ins:** Resurrection Under the Moon, A Sabbat Foiled, The Warren is Dead

Assuming de la Poer's journal survives the scenario, give Investigators the choice in its disposition. They could return it to Scott Bryant, however it has proved more dangerous than anticipated and might be safer at Miskatonic. Wax from Irma's candle glues several thin pages together, but a careful conservator might return the book to nearly its former state.

Should Irma, if she survives be imprisoned or committed? Sheriff Barnes has never had to deal with a problem like this before, especially from such a nice young lady. He'll ask the Investigators for input.

If, by a series of spectacular failures, the Investigators do not thwart Irma and de la Poer, the population of Rosa simple disappears overnight. The first person to notice is the Catholic priest from Oneonta, who calls the Dubois store to see why none of his parishioners from Rosa made the trip for Sunday services. After a few days without a response, he borrows a car and investigates. Some of the houses show signs of violent disturbance and some blood, but he finds no bodies. The ghouls have returned to their comfortable warren, taking the townspeople with them. As for Irma and de la Poer... who knows where they will show up next?

## APPENDIX A: GHOUL CHANGELINGS

*The price of a changeling, I suppose—you know the old myth about how the weird people leave their spawn in cradles in exchange for the human babes they steal. — Pickman's Model*

What's more horrifying than ghouls haunting your woods and cemeteries? Ghouls at the breakfast table. In a darker version of this scenario, de la Poer's ghouls remained below Rosa, stealing human children and leaving their own behind. Soon after settling, townspeople began to notice small traits that just weren't right. Strange gaits, disappearances, inadvertent meepings, awkward incidents at funerals—those who remembered Old World stories of changelings knew something was afoot.

How did they respond? The Keeper may choose from two options. The first fits a Purist play style better, the second is more compatible with a Pulp ending.

### Ghouls in the Cradle

After two hundred years, the townspeople have grown accustomed to this strange way of life. It affects black residents as well as white, although in lesser numbers—possibly because of their distance from the town. Their churches, even Baptist and Methodist, practice a kind of syncretism with a focus on the communion wafer's transformation into Jesus's physical body. Women may cry softly in the night when their baby undergoes an uncanny change, but the town is fiercely protective of its strange children. Some have gone on to marry and have their own hybrid children. A conservative estimate puts Rosa around 30% changeling/hybrid, or about 30-odd people.

Suggested changelings and hybrids: Mrs. Dawes, Jean Dubois, a Mathers child, Armand Sperry (non-local, came to



## Midnight Sub Rosa

Rosa as an adult), and even Irma Derby as a hybrid of necromantic and ghoulish blood. The Keeper may wish to approach a player about discovering their secret heritage by accidental exposure. See *Hideous Creatures: Ghouls* for more about hybrid awakening.

A ghoulish changeling or hybrid acts like a normal NPC but has a high **Scuffling** score, a bonus to **Conceal** at night, a +1 Alertness Modifier, and no penalties for darkness. As they age past normal human years, or give in to their heritage, these changelings and hybrids acquire fuller ghoulish attributes, and often depart to be with their other kin. They may be described as abnormally pale, squinting in the sunlight, putting off a sweet odor of decaying leaves, smiling unnervingly, or being young to have so many teeth.

Irma's disruption of the status quo angered the townsfolk, as did the threat of strangers discovering their secret. Her resurrection method brought their human loved ones back in a ghoulish form—unnatural even for their definitions of nature. Her attempts to dominate those with ghoulish blood upsets years of what they consider peaceful coexistence. The ghouls she summons come from other colonies—rivals, not kin—and they have few qualms killing these additional outsiders.

Only the house party and Investigators as potential witnesses, and too much trouble to take on en masse, keep the townsfolk from going after Irma themselves. They may nudge Investigators in her direction, hoping these outsiders will take the problem off their hands.

### Additional or Alternate Clues

#### Sheriff Barnes's Office:

- (core) **Oral History:** Mrs. Dubois was roused, not by the sounds of her husband in the ice chest, but by

the sounds of him digging up their recently-deceased cat. When the sheriff arrived, he was trying to eat it. The other two remain the same.

#### Makeshift Morgue:

- **Forensics:** The sheriff attempts to keep Investigators from paying too much attention to the human corpses. However, an Investigator notices they all have abnormally-sharp teeth, and a strange, slight splay to the feet.

#### Color Lines:

- **Oral History:** Instead of mentioning the Mathers case, Marsha describes a kinship it created in the early town and a kind of mutual respect they share with the White people. To anyone familiar with the South—this could be an outlier, but it mostly sounds very strange.

#### Graveyard Inspection:

- **Anthropology** notices far fewer graves than might be expected for a town of this size, even supposing some of the dead were buried in Oneonta.
- **1 pt. spend.** The Investigator finds more than a few cases where an old gravestone designates “wife of” or “husband of” but no stone exists for the spouse.

#### Scouring the Lodging House:

- **History:** In Jack Starling's room, Investigators find an additional note from Katz's research: “1845, priest run out of town after delivering a homily on ‘demons living among us’ and hinting at ‘changelings.’ No priest for 8 years until local boy graduated seminary.”

#### Dawes' Lodging House:

Mrs. Dawes keeps a framed photograph of her family on the mantle in the sitting room.

- **Photography** notices something unusual in 1930s portraiture—this photograph was taken indoors, at night.

- **1 pt. spend.** The infant's smile raises hairs on the back of your neck. It's hard to say why, but it might be the full set of teeth.

#### Mathers Farm:

The argument the Investigators overhear between Louisa Mathers and Armand Sperry does not suggest Bill's return has anything to do with solving his murder. Instead, she is furious that he wasn't allowed to come home, and was murdered all over again. “We could have been a family!” She goes mum on this score before the Investigators. Sperry, meanwhile, argues that “He wasn't right. He was raised by dark forces.”

#### Baptist Church:

- **Theology:** Jim Caldwell worries less about the end of days. He philosophically remarks that, as they're told, all earthly life shall go back at last through the great circle of time to Ubbo-Sathla.

#### Methodist Church:

If the Keeper uses Sperry as one of the ghouls, his **Psychoanalysis** gradually loses effectiveness as the scenario progresses.

### Resolution

Once Investigators realize the truth, they may handle the situation in a variety of ways including:

- Solving the issue at hand and leaving Rosa to its traditional practices—at least they're not the ones who crashed the stock market in '29.
- Taking advantage of the situation. With a 2 pt. **Bargain** spend, Investigators convince Reverend Sperry and Mrs. Dawes to yield to their darker ghoulish natures (use ghoulish stats, p. 26) and fight on their side against the invaders in the final scene. In return, the Investigators promise to spare others in the town from any outside retribution. Witnessing the transformation requires a Difficulty 3

## Out of the Woods

### Stability test.

- Solving the issue, and then reporting the situation to outside authorities for an Innsmouth-style purge.

As always, remain open to players' creativity in handling the situation. Committing any kind of purge themselves, however, would require a hefty **Stability** test and would involve killing at least one changeling child.

### The Purge

Nobody talks about it now, but in 1782 about a dozen persons of various ages disappeared from Rosa overnight. A passerby that August evening might have heard the sounds of rabid dogs being put down. The community guards its secret, knowing city folk would never believe them. Parents teach their children the signs of a changeling and, every few years, an infant dies of a "mysterious illness." Nobody mentions the subsequent immolation of the tiny corpse.

To its people, Rosa is a town under perpetual siege. They fear involving external authorities, but no amount of prayer has saved them this far. Some parents refused to believe their children had been replaced, leading to ugly scenes. A few changelings may even have escaped detection.

### Additional or Alternate Clues

#### Sheriff Barnes's Office:

- **Bureaucracy** or **Evidence Collection** used on church registers also notices a rate of infant mortality far higher than normal.

#### Graveyard Inspection:

- **Biology:** Investigators notice an average number of tombstones for a town of this size.

### Color Lines

- (alternate) **Evidence Collection:** If Investigators ask Marsha about

anything out the ordinary, she'll mention she's heard barking out in the woods since the winter. It makes her dog howl but there's never a howl in return, just barking. Sheriff Barnes asked several of the older men to join him and his deputies for a hunt "like the olden days." She deflects further questioning by suddenly talking about old wolf problems.

#### Makeshift Morgue:

- **Assess Honesty:** The sheriff may say he doesn't know what it is, but he seems awfully unshaken for a man with a monster in his town. He seems more—angry.

#### Mathers Farm:

As Investigators arrive, they overhear Louisa Mathers saying "I already lost one child to this blight and now it's taken my husband?"

### Resolution

Investigators get answers from Sheriff Barnes or either minister with a **1pt. Intimidation** (or any other Interpersonal) spend as a threat to get authorities involved. The Keeper may simply use this as additional setting color, but it also offers the opportunity to enlist townspeople in fighting ghouls. Investigators may either recruit the sheriff and Jim Caldwell for the final fight, or pull in an entire posse.

Since rolling for each ghoul vs. the posse would take too much time, set aside 6 points for both posse and ghouls. Each round, roll to see how the fight around the Investigators is going. Following GUMSHOE standards, a success by the posse occurs on a 4 or higher. Subtract a point from the losing side.

When the Investigators' fight concludes, whichever side in the other fight has the most remaining points wins. If either side has lost all their points before the Investigators finish, the background fight concludes, but unless the Keeper

wishes to pull strings, the posse is too damaged from the fight to provide more assistance. Therefore, the Investigators may succeed, but with a great loss of townspeople. Or, the townspeople may succeed against the ghouls, only to have the Investigators let them down by not stopping Irma.

## APPENDIX B: THE ROSA ONE-SHOT

While a full play-through of the adventure takes multiple sessions, or a very long day, it was conceived as a convention game, and can be played in about 4 hours.

Jump right into the action with the Investigators' arrival in Rosa. The locals are at least a degree friendlier. They visit Sheriff Barnes, who still takes them to the morgue. The graveyard inspection can be brief. Focus on goings on at the Derby house and investigation of the boarding house. Ghouls should kill Jack Starling on the Investigators' first night in Rosa, pressing the action forward. The next day, Investigators still need to uncover the secret under the ash, search the house if necessary, meet with Roger de la Poer, and foil Irma's plans at resurrection.

The Keeper will want to curtail interviews with the townspeople, and drop the Bill Mathers subplot, or just use it as hints that something's been wrong in this town for a while. Dish out red herrings sparingly. Visit the other side of town, but fold in meeting Jim Caldwell, in case they need a hand at the end.





### Handout 1: Salon Invitation

*Dr. Theodore Derby, emeritus University of Alabama, and his daughter request the honor of your presence at a salon discussing the diary of French colonist and occultist, Ezekiel de la Poer.*



*This salon commemorates the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of de la Poer's hanging for suspected child kidnapping and murder. Dr. Derby thanks the rare books department of the University of Alabama for the gracious loan of the diary.*

*Location: Derby residence, Rosa, AL*

*Dates: April 26<sup>th</sup> through May 1<sup>st</sup>, 1936*

# TRAIL OF CTHULHU

## Out of the Woods

### Handout 2: Page from Irma's Diary

*(Translated from the French)*

*5 September, 1726*

*Visit to Fort Condé as they are calling it now more fruitful than anticipated. Dined yesterday eve at home of Indies trader. Englishman, another guest, recognized family's name and gave the sign of Magna Mater. Discussed matters concerning my special researches and by what means a man's life may be prolonged. Mssr. Orne, whom I would not have thought had seen more than thirty summers, described such successes as required him to quit his home of Salem in the colonies and venture abroad lest he be persecuted. He hints that some of the town fathers are not so disinterested in his work as they seem — cf. Mather, whose treatise he insisted I acquire — but the common folk feared his perennially youthful countenance.*



# TRAIL OF CTHULHU

Midnight Sub Rosa

## Handout 3: Page from Irma's Diary

*(Translated from the French)*

*12 September, 1726*

*Further difficulties with Louise.*

*Discovered her beyond the pines  
in secret conference with one of  
the traders. How she left the house  
without my being alerted, I must  
discover. Regrettable, as I had to  
ask my men to handle him. How  
fortunate that he did not have  
companions. Now that she is  
weaned, perhaps Hélène no longer  
needs a mother. Surely it were not  
well for Louise to begin poisoning  
the child against me.*

*odd  
choice of  
word here  
but must  
mean  
men*

# TRAIL OF CTHULHU

Player Name:

## Sanity<sup>1</sup>

0	1	2	3
4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15

Hit Threshold<sup>3</sup>

## Stability

-12	-11	-10	-9
-8	-7	-6	-5
-4	-3	-2	-1
0	1	2	3
4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15

## Health

-12	-11	-10	-9
-8	-7	-6	-5
-4	-3	-2	-1
0	1	2	3
4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15

Investigator Name: Cecily Harlow

Drive: Sudden Shock

Occupation:<sup>2</sup> Antiquarian

Occupational benefits:

Pillars of Sanity:

Build Points:

## Academic Abilities

Accounting	0
Anthropology	2
Archaeology	1
Architecture	0
Art History	0
Biology	0
Cthulhu Mythos <sup>4</sup>	0
Cryptography	2
Geology	0
History	2
Languages <sup>6</sup>	0

## Interpersonal Abilities

Assess Honesty	0
Bargain	2
Bureaucracy	1
Cop Talk	0
Credit Rating	2
Flattery	1
Interrogation	0
Intimidation	0
Oral History	2
Reassurance	0
Streetwise	0

## General Abilities

Athletics	4
Conceal	0
Disguise <sup>(1)</sup>	0
Driving	0
Electrical Repair <sup>(1)</sup>	0
Explosives <sup>(1)</sup>	0
Filch	4
Firearms <sup>5</sup>	4
First Aid	0
Fleeing <sup>7</sup>	4
Health <sup>9</sup>	12
Hypnosis <sup>8</sup>	0
Magic <sup>(10)</sup>	0
Mechanical Repair <sup>(1)</sup>	0

## Law

Library Use	4
Medicine	0
Occult	1
Physics	0
Theology	0

## Technical Abilities

Art	0
Astronomy	0
Chemistry	0
Craft	0
Evidence Collection	1
Forensics	0
Locksmith	0
Outdoorsman	0
Pharmacy	0
Photography	2

Piloting	0
Preparedness	6
Psychoanalysis	0
Riding	0
Sanity <sup>9</sup>	8
Stability <sup>9</sup>	6
Scuffling	4
Sense Trouble	4
Shadowing	3
Stealth	4
Weapons	8

## SOURCES OF STABILITY:

## CONTACTS AND NOTES

<sup>1</sup> In a Pulp game where Sanity can be recovered, mark Sanity pool loss with a line, Sanity rating loss with a cross.

<sup>2</sup> Occupational abilities are half price. Mark them with a \* before assigning points.

<sup>3</sup> Hit Threshold is 3, 4 if your Athletics is 8 or higher

<sup>(1)</sup> These General abilities double up as Investigative abilities

<sup>4</sup> Usually, you can't start with Cthulhu Mythos. Sanity is limited to 10-Cthulhu Mythos.

<sup>5</sup> In a Pulp game If your Firearms rating is 5 you can fire two pistols at once (see p. 42)

<sup>6</sup> Assign one language per point, during play. Record them here.

<sup>7</sup> Any Fleeing rating above twice your Athletics rating costs one point for two.

<sup>8</sup> Only Alienists and Parapsychologists can buy Hypnosis, and only in a Pulp game

<sup>9</sup> You start with 4 free Sanity points, 1 Health and 1 Stability point.

<sup>10</sup> Optional ability for use with Rough Magicks - can only be acquired in play.



# TRAIL OF CTHULHU

Player Name:

## Sanity<sup>1</sup>

0	1	2	3
4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15

Hit Threshold<sup>3</sup>

## Stability

-12	-11	-10	-9
-8	-7	-6	-5
-4	-3	-2	-1
0	1	2	3
4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15

## Health

-12	-11	-10	-9
-8	-7	-6	-5
-4	-3	-2	-1
0	1	2	3
4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15

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<sup>9</sup> You start with 4 free Sanity points, 1 Health and 1 Stability point.

<sup>10</sup> Optional ability for use with Rough Magicks – can only be acquired in play.

Investigator Name: Dr. Porter

Drive: Arrogance

Occupation:<sup>2</sup> Scientist

Occupational benefits:

Pillars of Sanity:

Build Points:

## Academic Abilities

Accounting	0
Anthropology	1
Archaeology	0
Architecture	0
Art History	0
Biology	2
Cthulhu Mythos <sup>4</sup>	0
Cryptography	1
Geology	0
History	0
Languages <sup>6</sup>	2

## Interpersonal Abilities

Assess Honesty	1
Bargain	1
Bureaucracy	1
Cop Talk	0
Credit Rating	3
Flattery	0
Interrogation	1
Intimidation	2
Oral History	0
Reassurance	0
Streetwise	0

## General Abilities

Athletics	6
Conceal	0
Disguise <sup>(1)</sup>	0
Driving	0
Electrical Repair <sup>(1)</sup>	4
Explosives <sup>(1)</sup>	0
Filch	0
Firearms <sup>5</sup>	0
First Aid	6
Fleeing <sup>7</sup>	2
Health <sup>9</sup>	9
Hypnosis <sup>8</sup>	0
Magic <sup>10</sup>	0
Mechanical Repair <sup>(1)</sup>	0

## Law

Library Use	2
Medicine	1
Occult	0
Physics	0
Theology	0

## Technical Abilities

Art	0
Astronomy	0
Chemistry	2
Craft	0
Evidence Collection	1
Forensics	0
Locksmith	0
Outdoorsman	1
Pharmacy	1
Photography	0

Piloting	0
Preparedness	6
Psychoanalysis	0
Riding	0
Sanity <sup>9</sup>	8
Stability <sup>9</sup>	8
Scuffling	6
Sense Trouble	6
Shadowing	4
Stealth	2
Weapons	6

## SOURCES OF STABILITY:

## CONTACTS AND NOTES

# TRAIL OF CTHULHU

Player Name:

Sanity <sup>1</sup>			
0	1	2	3
4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15
Hit Threshold <sup>3</sup> 4			

Stability			
-12	-11	-10	-9
-8	-7	-6	-5
-4	-3	-2	-1
0	1	2	3
4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15

Health			
-12	-11	-10	-9
-8	-7	-6	-5
-4	-3	-2	-1
0	1	2	3
4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15

Investigator Name: Herman Brown

Drive: Bad Luck

Occupation:<sup>2</sup> Private Investigator

Occupational benefits:

Pillars of Sanity:

Build Points:

Academic Abilities		Interpersonal Abilities		General Abilities	
Accounting	0	Assess Honesty	2	Athletics	10
Anthropology	0	Bargain	0	Conceal	0
Archaeology	0	Bureaucracy	1	Disguise <sup>(1)</sup>	0
Architecture	0	Cop Talk	2	Driving	6
Art History	0	Credit Rating	2	Electrical Repair <sup>(1)</sup>	0
Biology	0	Flattery	1	Explosives <sup>(1)</sup>	0
Cthulhu Mythos <sup>4</sup>	0	Interrogation	0	Filch	5
Cryptography	1	Intimidation	1	Firearms <sup>5</sup>	10
Geology	0	Oral History	0	First Aid	2
History	0	Reassurance	2	Fleeing <sup>7</sup>	3
Languages <sup>6</sup>	0	Streetwise	1	Health <sup>9</sup>	7
				Hypnosis <sup>8</sup>	0
				Magic <sup>10</sup>	0
				Mechanical Repair <sup>(1)</sup>	0
				Piloting	0
Law	2	Technical Abilities		Preparedness	2
Library Use	0	Art	0	Psychoanalysis	0
Medicine	0	Astronomy	0	Riding	0
Occult	0	Chemistry	0	Sanity <sup>9</sup>	5
Physics	0	Craft	0	Stability <sup>9</sup>	5
Theology	0	Evidence Collection	2	Scuffling	10
		Forensics	1	Sense Trouble	6
		Locksmith	2	Shadowing	4
		Outdoorsman	1	Stealth	6
		Pharmacy	1	Weapons	0
		Photography	1		

<sup>1</sup> In a Pulp game where Sanity can be recovered, mark Sanity pool loss with a line, Sanity rating loss with a cross.

<sup>2</sup> Occupational abilities are half price. Mark them with a \* before assigning points.

<sup>3</sup> Hit Threshold is 3, 4 if your Athletics is 8 or higher

<sup>(1)</sup> These General abilities double up as Investigative abilities

<sup>4</sup> Usually, you can't start with Cthulhu Mythos. Sanity is limited to 10-Cthulhu Mythos.

<sup>5</sup> In a Pulp game If your Firearms rating is 5 you can fire two pistols at once (see p. 42)

<sup>6</sup> Assign one language per point, during play. Record them here.

<sup>7</sup> Any Fleeing rating above twice your Athletics rating costs one point for two.

<sup>8</sup> Only Alienists and Parapsychologists can buy Hypnosis, and only in a Pulp game

<sup>9</sup> You start with 4 free Sanity points, 1 Health and 1 Stability point.

<sup>10</sup> Optional ability for use with Rough Magicks – can only be acquired in play.

SOURCES OF STABILITY:

CONTACTS AND NOTES





# TRAIL OF CTHULHU

Player Name:

Sanity <sup>1</sup>			
0	1	2	3
4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15
Hit Threshold <sup>3</sup>			

Stability			
-12	-11	-10	-9
-8	-7	-6	-5
-4	-3	-2	-1
0	1	2	3
4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15

Health			
-12	-11	-10	-9
-8	-7	-6	-5
-4	-3	-2	-1
0	1	2	3
4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15

Investigator Name: L. A. LaFleur

Drive: Adventure  
Occupation:<sup>2</sup> Criminal  
Occupational benefits:

Pillars of Sanity:

Build Points:

Academic Abilities		Interpersonal Abilities		General Abilities	
Accounting	0	Assess Honesty	0	Athletics	6
Anthropology	0	Bargain	2	Conceal	0
Archaeology	1	Bureaucracy	0	Disguise <sup>(1)</sup>	0
Architecture	0	Cop Talk	0	Driving	0
Art History	1	Credit Rating	2	Electrical Repair <sup>(1)</sup>	0
Biology	0	Flattery	0	Explosives <sup>(1)</sup>	0
Cthulhu Mythos <sup>4</sup>	0	Interrogation	2	Filch	4
Cryptography	0	Intimidation	2	Firearms <sup>5</sup>	4
Geology	0	Oral History	2	First Aid	6
History	0	Reassurance	0	Fleeing <sup>7</sup>	4
Languages <sup>6</sup>	0	Streetwise	2	Health <sup>9</sup>	9
				Hypnosis <sup>8</sup>	4
				Magic <sup>(10)</sup>	0
				Mechanical Repair <sup>(1)</sup>	0
				Piloting	0
Law	0	Technical Abilities		Preparedness	4
Library Use	0			Psychoanalysis	0
Medicine	0			Riding	0
Occult	0			Sanity <sup>9</sup>	5
Physics	0			Stability <sup>9</sup>	6
Theology	0			Scuffling	6
				Sense Trouble	6
				Shadowing	4
				Stealth	6
				Weapons	8

<sup>1</sup> In a Pulp game where Sanity can be recovered, mark Sanity pool loss with a line, Sanity rating loss with a cross.

<sup>2</sup> Occupational abilities are half price. Mark them with a \* before assigning points.

<sup>3</sup> Hit Threshold is 3, 4 if your Athletics is 8 or higher

<sup>(1)</sup> These General abilities double up as Investigative abilities

<sup>4</sup> Usually, you can't start with Cthulhu Mythos. Sanity is limited to 10-Cthulhu Mythos.

<sup>5</sup> In a Pulp game If your Firearms rating is 5 you can fire two pistols at once (see p. 42)

<sup>6</sup> Assign one language per point, during play. Record them here.

<sup>7</sup> Any Fleeing rating above twice your Athletics rating costs one point for two.

<sup>8</sup> Only Alienists and Parapsychologists can buy Hypnosis, and only in a Pulp game

<sup>9</sup> You start with 4 free Sanity points, 1 Health and 1 Stability point.

<sup>(10)</sup> Optional ability for use with Rough Magicks - can only be acquired in play.

SOURCES OF STABILITY:

CONTACTS AND NOTES



Player Name:

Sanity <sup>1</sup>			
0	1	2	3
4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15
Hit Threshold <sup>3</sup>			

Stability			
-12	-11	-10	-9
-8	-7	-6	-5
-4	-3	-2	-1
0	1	2	3
4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15

Health			
-12	-11	-10	-9
-8	-7	-6	-5
-4	-3	-2	-1
0	1	2	3
4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15

Investigator Name: Lucia Escobar

Drive: Scholarship

Occupation:<sup>2</sup> Professor

Occupational benefits:

## Pillars of Sanity:

Build Points:

Academic Abilities		Interpersonal Abilities		General Abilities	
Accounting	0	Assess Honesty	0	Athletics	6
Anthropology	1	Bargain	1	Conceal	0
Archaeology	1	Bureaucracy	2	Disguise <sup>(1)</sup>	0
Architecture	0	Cop Talk	1	Driving	0
Art History	0	Credit Rating	0	Electrical Repair <sup>(1)</sup>	0
Biology	0	Flattery	0	Explosives <sup>(1)</sup>	0
Cthulhu Mythos <sup>4</sup>	0	Interrogation	0	Filch	0
Cryptography	0	Intimidation	0	Firearms <sup>5</sup>	0
Geology	2	Oral History	2	First Aid	8
History	1	Reassurance	0	Fleeing <sup>7</sup>	4
Languages <sup>6</sup>	2	Streetwise	0	Health <sup>9</sup>	8
Latin, German				Hypnosis <sup>8</sup>	4
				Magic <sup>(1)</sup>	0
				Mechanical Repair <sup>(1)</sup>	0
		Technical Abilities		Piloting	0
Law	0			Preparedness	4
Library Use	2	Art	0	Psychoanalysis	0
Medicine	0	Astronomy	1	Riding	0
Occult	1	Chemistry	0	Sanity <sup>9</sup>	9
Physics	0	Craft	0	Stability <sup>9</sup>	10
Theology	0	Evidence Collection	1	Scuffling	2
		Forensics	0	Sense Trouble	4
		Locksmith	0	Shadowing	2
		Outdoorsman	1	Stealth	4
		Pharmacy	0	Weapons	6
		Photography	0		

<sup>1</sup> In a Pulp game where Sanity can be recovered, mark Sanity pool loss with a line, Sanity rating loss with a cross.

<sup>2</sup> Occupational abilities are half price. Mark them with a \* before assigning points.

<sup>3</sup> Hit Threshold is 3, 4 if your Athletics is 8 or higher

① These General abilities double up as Investigative abilities

<sup>4</sup> Usually, you can't start with Cthulhu Mythos. Sanity is limited to 10-Cthulhu Mythos.

<sup>5</sup> In a Pulp game If your Firearms rating is 5 you can fire two pistols at once (see p. 42)

<sup>6</sup> Assign one language per point, during play. Record them here.

<sup>7</sup> Any Fleeing rating above twice your Athletics rating costs one point for two.

<sup>8</sup> Only Alienists and Parapsychologists can buy Hypnosis, and only in a Pulp game

<sup>9</sup> You start with 4 free Sanity points, 1 Health and 1 Stability point.

<sup>10</sup> Optional ability for use with Rough Magicks – can only be acquired in play.

SOURCES OF STABILITY:

CONTACTS AND NOTES