

## The Edge of Darkness (A Fate Core Adaptation by Shedrick Pittman-Hassett)

At least four investigators are needed for this adventure. New investigators may not yet know one another; this adventure provides the opportunity to make one another's acquaintance and become friends and allies in an ongoing struggle against dark forces. The adventure begins in Arkham, Massachusetts, in the year 1928. The keeper should feel free to alter locations, dates, names, or anything else that pleases him. Little in the scenario makes it difficult to transfer the adventure to the 1890s or the present. It is assumed that the player-characters live close to Arkham.

They are called to the hospital bedside of a dying man, Rupert Merriweather, an elderly gentlemen fast succumbing to cancer. The investigators are all friends, relatives, past students, and former colleagues of the man. The exact relationship of each investigator must be decided ahead of time by the keeper and can involve some close personal bond and a reason for trust. Each investigator receives word of the man's plight either by telephone, telegraph, or personal courier. They learn he is confined to St. Mary's hospital in Arkham and that he wishes them to visit him tomorrow afternoon—a Thursday—at one o'clock.

### Rupert Merriweather

St. Mary's hospital is located in central Arkham adjacent to Miskatonic University. The information desk in the main lobby provides directions to Merriweather's private, third-floor room. The investigators find the door to his room open and the bed-ridden man engaged with two other visitors—his grieving 62-year-old wife, Agnes, and his sneering, weasel-like son, 33-year-old Bertrand.

In a rasping whisper Rupert introduces the investigators to his wife and son, and to one another. After pleasantries are exchanged Rupert asks his weeping wife and suspicious son to leave him alone for a moment with his friends. After making sure the door is shut, Rupert reveals why he has called them here.

### A Dark Secret

In the days of his youth, the old man says, he and some fellow students became involved in what they believed to be an innocent exploration of the occult. Led by a slightly older man named **Marion Allen**, the six men purchased an old farmhouse a few miles west of Arkham near the village of Ross's Corners. There they could conduct their seances and other psychic research in privacy. The unexpected result of their last experiment was the summoning of some evil force into this world. Instead of attempting to expel the thing, the young men abandoned the old house, confident that the magic which brought the evil to this world would keep it confined to the vacant house. However, the spell that binds the being to the house lasts only as long as the casters live. Rupert Merriweather is the last of the group and he fears that upon his death the thing will go free and wreak havoc on the countryside.

Rupert gestures weakly to an innocuous metal box on the night stand beside the bed. "Take the box," he croaks. *"All the aid I can offer you lies within. You must find a way to send that thing back to where it came from. You must see that this is done. Do this for me."*

***As soon as an investigator takes possession of the box but before he can open it, the ailing Rupert is choked by a sudden spasm. He doubles up, groans, then coughs forth a huge gout of blood and tissue—spattering any investigator standing near the night stand— then falls into a coma. All investigators present must make a Will check vs. 5, losing Mental Stress from the attack. Someone should call for a doctor.***

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The room quickly fills with interns, nurses, and Rupert's concerned wife and son. In the way, the investigators are asked to leave. Despite the hospital's best efforts, Rupert dies within the hour.

### The Contents of the Box

The investigators probably examine the contents of the box. Inside they find a yellowed envelope containing the deed to a house and the key to its lock, a small, sarcophagus-shaped gold box of ancient design, and a slim journal bound in leather. Deed and key are to the farm near Ross's Corners.

The ornate box opens easily but is empty. A Good (+3) Scholar roll identifies the hieroglyphs decorating the box as Egyptian, of the Middle Kingdom, although those carved on the inside of the lid are distinctly different and not Egyptian at all.

If an investigator makes an additional Good (+3) Scholar roll, he or she receives **Player Aid #4**, a translation of the carvings found on the outside of the box. In a week or so, translation can also be made using dictionaries and grammars found in the Miskatonic University library, or the investigators might find that a scholar at the university can help them, perhaps for free or for a small fee.

A Good (+3) Lore roll notices that the odd carvings on the inside of the box lid resemble writings attributed by certain occultists to the lost Pacific continent of Mu, but these inscriptions cannot be translated and remain a mystery in this adventure. Perhaps their meaning is learned in some later scenario.

The slim journal is a record of the Dark Brotherhood's activities at an old farmhouse on Boone Road. More about this is learned in a few paragraphs.

### What Next?

By late afternoon Rupert Merriweather is dead. Investigators may do as they wish but certainly one of them will want to read Rupert's journal. Others may take it upon themselves to conduct research. Miskatonic's library is open evenings during the week: for what can be done there, see the sub-section "**Research**," further below.

If investigators speak with Merriweather's widow or son at the hospital, they quickly discern that neither knows anything about Merriweather's long-ago experiments, nor even of the existence of the farm property.

Investigation into Merriweather's illness reveals that he suffered from cancer. Though deadly, nothing about the illness was unusual, as a successful Scholar roll can confirm.

Neither son nor widow serve further purpose in this scenario. However, they are available should the keeper need to introduce new evidence or motivation into the plot. **Agnes Merriweather**, while going through her deceased husband's papers, may come across a piece of evidence or vital clue that can put stymied investigators on track. Mrs. Merriweather may personally deliver it to the farmhouse. Keep in mind that she has a weak heart and exposure to a sudden shock or horror might cost her life.

**Bertrand**, Merriweather's grasping son and only child, may decide to demand the contents of the box given to the investigators by his father—or go even further and show up later at the farm property, lawyer in tow, demanding they vacate the premises. The investigators have no legal right to be on the property nor will they find it easy to prove that Rupert Merriweather gave them special instructions and

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possession of the box before he died. It is likely, however, that the climax of the adventure takes place before the younger Merriweather can enlist the aid of an armed sheriff to evict the squatters from his property. Charges of trespassing are not serious, but there could be repercussions if the investigators refuse to vacate or attack or threaten the rightful heir.

As suits the keeper's mood, a nurse or orderly also could pop up to help the investigators. This person witnessed a strange, recurring nightmare that plagued the dying Rupert. The actual dream may be obscure, but some element within it can provide a clue needed by the investigators.

### Reading the Journal

Bound in plain black leather, the journal entries date from June 1881 to March of 1882. Although the ink is faded, no roll is necessary to understand it, and reading it requires only four hours' time. Reading the volume costs the reader requires a Will check vs. 5 (Mental Stress cost) and grants the Aspect "Introduced to the Cthulhu Mythos."

- A group of friends, playfully calling themselves the Dark Brotherhood, held their first meeting in the early spring of 1881. Rupert Merriweather became the recording secretary. The members numbered six including Marion Allen, the founder and their nominal leader.
- In June of 1881 they purchased an old farmhouse outside Ross's Corners, a place where they could conduct their experiments in privacy. Representing themselves as a student literary fraternity, they cleaned and furnished the place while Marion Allen carved special warding (protective) signs over the wooden doors and windows. At the time, the others were amused at such precautions.
- A series of experiments, innocent and apparently ineffective attempts to contact the spirit world, are then detailed.
- An entry dated February of 1882 notes Marion Allen's acquisition of an artifact, purportedly Egyptian, described as a small sarcophagus of gold with a hinged lid. Inside was a large piece of amber entrapping a specimen of some unknown species of arthropod. Allen is excited. The box corresponds to a description he found in an ordinary reference volume in the Miskatonic University library.
- Allen says that in another book, a thick Latin tome titled *De Vermis Mysteriis*, is an explanation of some purported powers of the box. The small animal trapped in the amber is said to contain a friendly spirit and guide to the spirit world.
- A date is set to conduct a ceremony intended to summon this spirit creature—a Saturday night in the middle of March.
- The next entry is reproduced as **Player Aid #1**. Hand a photocopy to the player of the investigator reading the book.
- The next entries are the names of those belonging to the Dark Brotherhood, followed by the dates of their deaths, all by the same hand, but in various inks.
  - Robert Menkin, March 1882
  - Harold Copley, August 1882
  - Marion Allen, August 1883
  - Crawford Harris, January 1915
  - Cecil Jones, March 1924
  - Rupert Merriweather —

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- A small newspaper clipping, dated in August of 1883, is pasted next to the entry marking Marion Allen's death. Hand the player a copy of **Player Aid #2**.
- The last entry is reproduced as **Player Aid #3**. It is written in a noticeably weaker hand, and the ink is quite fresh.

### Research Topics

Although Arkham supports a small public library, the famed library at Miskatonic University is by far the better source. Only students and faculty are allowed to borrow books but the library is otherwise open and available to the public. Hours are: 8 am to 9 pm Monday through Friday, and 10 am to 6 pm Saturday. The reference room is open Sundays 1 pm to 6 pm, but the stacks are closed and books cannot be withdrawn on that day. The M.U. library is large, containing over 400,000 volumes, and investigators must be able to state the topics they wish to research.

### History or Egyptology

A four-hour search in these large section coupled with a Good (+3) Scholar roll turns up a copy of the book mentioned by Marion Allen in Merriweather's journal. It contains a drawing and short description of the small box now in the investigators' possession. It notes that little is known about the box but that scholars believe it to have been the possession of the little-known Nophru-Ka, a would-be usurper of the Egyptian throne who lived sometime during the XIVth Dynasty.

The sarcophagus was supposed to have been given to Nophru-Ka by the gods and was said to contain spirits that Nophru-Ka could call upon to serve him. The sarcophagus actually contains a piece of unpolished amber encasing a trapped insect.

For years the golden box was owned by a noble family in Britain. It was stolen in a burglary in 1876, and not seen since. The article offers a translation of the inscription carved on the box (see **Player Aid #4**). The summary briefly mentions the odd glyphs carved on the inside lid but makes no attempt to explain or decipher them.

### Occult

Four hours' research in this section along with a Superb (+5) Scholar roll turns up a book about the fabled civilization of Mu. A reproduction of sea-eroded carvings purported to be Muvian in origin closely resembles those found inside the lid of the sarcophagus. The book offers nothing in the way of translation. The glyphs remain indecipherable.

### De Vermis Mysteriis

The catalog shows that the library owns a copy of this book and that it is locked away in a rare book collection upstairs. The librarian says that the old volume is on a special restricted list compiled by the head of the library, the aging **Dr. Henry Armitage**. Armitage's personal permission is needed to gain access to this volume.

Further questioning can establish that Armitage is in his office on weekday mornings, and that Armitage is presently preoccupied with special studies of those restricted books.

Recently alerted to the threat of the Cthulhu Mythos, and having no clear understanding of it, Armitage actively discourages visitors from reading these books. Without solid credentials or proper letters of reference, investigators find Armitage impervious to bribes and skill rolls such as Rapport. Only at the *Edge of Darkness* is a Fate Core adaptation of the original scenario *Edge of Darkness* published in Call of Cthulhu 6<sup>th</sup> Edition, a Chaosium publication [*Call of Cthulhu* (6th edition) is copyright ©1981, 1983, 1992, 1993, 1995, 1998, 1999, 2001, 2004, 2005 by Chaosium Inc.; all rights reserved.]. This adaptation is published under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

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keeper's discretion can the investigators gain access to the library's Mythos holdings. As events prove, however, all that the investigators need to know is in the farm house.

### Newspapers

Investigators might wish to check the library's bound collection of newspaper back issues, kept in the basement. It takes one hour's time to skim through a year's editions of the *Arkham Gazette*, *Arkham Advertiser*, or any other paper collected by the library. A Superb (+5) Scholar roll uncovers stories in both the *Gazette* and *Advertiser* dated March, 1882, describing the carriage accident that took the life of one student and grievously injured another. Rupert Merriweather and the others are mentioned by name.

### Ross's Corners

Their research concluded, investigators probably visit the farmhouse. To get there, they must pass through Ross's Corners, a hamlet located a few miles west of Arkham. They can drive, or take the bus that passes through the village on a run from Arkham to Worcester and back each day. The fare is 80 cents each way. The bus stops at Ross's Corner shortly after 10 am on the way out and shortly before 2 pm on the way back.

Ross's Corners consists of a few tired buildings and homes. The prosperity of long farms has long been in decline. No more than forty people live here. A church and a combination general store, post office, gas station, and milk depot are the community's centers.

If the party stops to purchase supplies or gasoline, or to ask directions, they may try to open conversations with some of the locals. Residents are exceptionally dour, unsmiling, and suspicious. A Good (+3) Empathy roll tells an investigator that he is experiencing something besides proverbial Yankee reticence.

If the investigators are dressed well and act respectably, the people may warm up. Ask the players to choose one or more investigators as spokesmen. If they can tell good jokes, conduct their purchases in seemly manners, flatter the villagers with pious Rapport (Good +3), or receive successful Resources (Good +3) rolls, they can learn more.

If they ask about the old farmhouse, the investigators learn that the children say it is haunted. Ma Peters, who runs the general store, sniffs at those stories and states that the taxes are always paid on the place. A Mr. Merriweather in Arkham has owned it for years and done nothing with it, as nearly everybody knows. Country people make it their business to know who is responsible for local property.

If the keeper judges that any of the investigators have made a good impression on Ma Peters, she may confide that last night a local woman disappeared, a middle-aged farmer's wife who went out after dark to check on the barn and who hasn't been seen since.

"Any suspicious looks you mighta got today are on account of that. Folks are a little shy about strangers right now. Don't think nothin' of it."

Boone Road runs north out of town and is easy to find. The old farm lies to the north. If the investigators arrived by bus they can try to hire a local to give them a lift in a truck or wagon, who will be astonished to receive payment for saving someone a stroll of a mile and a half. Otherwise the investigators walk, carrying any equipment and supplies.

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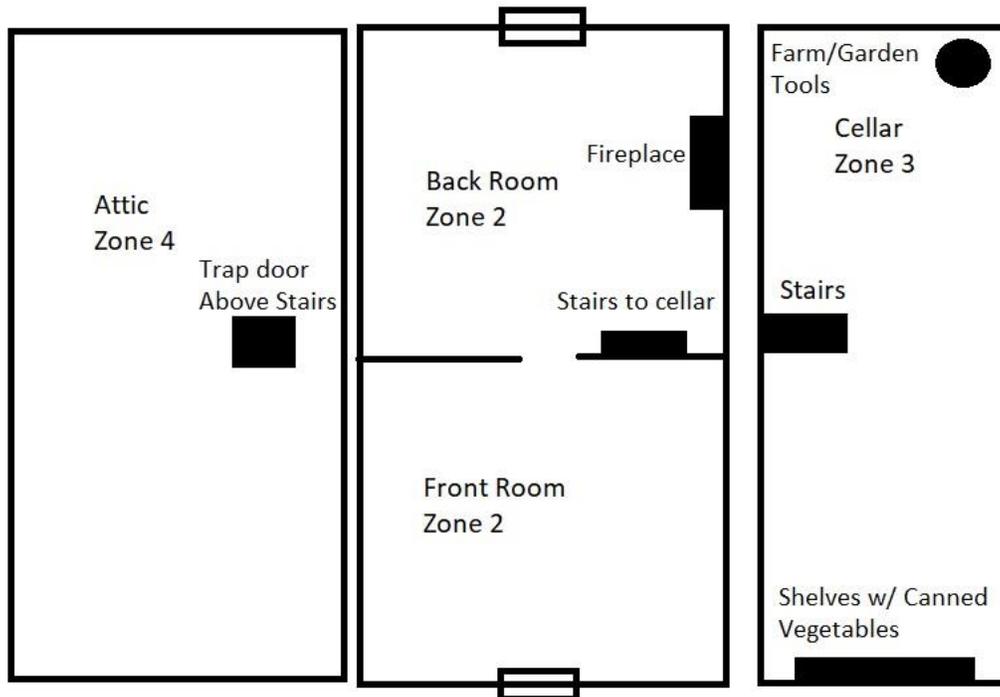
### The Farm House

The ancient house sits atop a hill, visible from the road and about a hundred yards east of it. It is of early 18th century saltbox design with a high peaked roof and windows sealed by sagging shutters. Its single story has two rooms, with a windowless attic overhead and a root cellar below. A huge brick fireplace stands at the end of the second room. The roof is bowed, but all the shingles are intact.

On lintels over all the doors and windows are carved symbols of a strange nature, identified with a successful Lore (Superb +5) roll as symbols of power used to ward against otherworldly spirits, a good defense if left in place. Cut away from the house, they are useless. Knowing how to ward was lost when Marion Allen died.

The locked front door opens easily with the key which accompanied the deed. The back door, if checked, is found unlatched, standing a half-inch open.

Inspecting the grass and bushes around the house, a successful Notice (Good +3) roll finds a recently-dead raccoon laying in the knee-high grass. If the thirty-pound carcass is turned over, the cause of death is easily determined. The animal's breast is stained with clotted blood, and a large hole has been chewed into its chest. A little poking around and a Good (+3) Scholar roll reveals that its ribs were gnawed apart and then its heart was neatly eaten out. A fox could have done it, but the investigator has an uneasy feeling after noticing the smooth edges of the wound.



The Farmhouse

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### The Front Room

Within, the front room of the house is dirty and long untouched. Dust lies thickly on the mantel and empty shelves, while dead leaves and detritus cover the floor. The wooden floor is badly warped and stained, the result of water leaking through the roof and ceiling. Rot has eaten away at an old couch and matching wing chairs. Perhaps they are the source of the faint foul odor in the room.

- ***At this point the keeper might call for Notice rolls for each investigator. A Great (+4) roll indicates an investigator hears a scuffling, scurrying, or bumping noise under the floor. Communicate that perception to the player.***

### The Back Room

Near the entrance to this room is a narrow opening in the floor revealing a steep flight of steps leading down to the cellar. A trap door set in the ceiling overhead leads to the attic, the wooden frame surrounding it decorated with the same occult carvings seen over the doors and windows of the house. The back door, slightly ajar, and the large fireplace are also important elements in the room.

Evidence points to recent occupation. The dust has been kicked up, and fresh footprints can be seen. The large fireplace contains the embers of a fire not long dead. Beside the fireplace a thick new wool blanket has been tossed, and nearby is an empty can of Campbell's pork-and-beans. Trace of the sauce are still liquid.

Nearby is a penny box of wooden matches, half empty, a can opener whose cutting edge approximates the sharp edges left on the pork-and-beans can, a dull jack knife, a dirty spoon, the stub of a candle, and wrinkled pictures of various attractive young ladies in advertisements. Depending upon the investigators' backgrounds, the keeper may or may not require an Investigate (Fair +2) roll to conclude that at least one hobo recently stayed here.

On a high shelf are materials mentioned in Merriweather's journal of the Dark Brotherhood: an old wooden cigar box and a thin sheaf of yellowed papers.

### The Cigar Box

The sheets of paper glued on it are peeling and yellowed, and an investigator must either smoke cigars or receive a successful Scholar roll (Good +3) to date the brand in the 1880s.

Inside is a small metal canister containing a coarse, brownish powder, and a small wooden box with a sliding lid holding a small amount of a silvery, talc-like substance. A successful Scholar (Good +3) roll identifies sulfur and aluminum as important constituents of the brown powder.

The silvery talc defies identification, even subject to lab analysis. Like graphite, it adheres to the skin, coating it and imparting a greasy feel. The talc washes off easily. A successful Lore roll (Superb +5) identifies it as Powder of Ibn-Ghazi. If shown the talc, Dr. Armitage (from the university) also could make that identification.

### The Sheaf of Yellowed Papers

The papers are hand-written notes. All the sheets are in a large, flourished hand (that of Marion Allen, though the investigators may never prove this), a hand unlike the neat, crabbed script of Rupert Merriweather. No sheet mentions the silvery Powder of Ibn-Ghazi.

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There are six copies of the same Latin chant—separate copies for each of the members (give the players **Latin Chants**).

Two other sheets identify the chant as having been copied from a book called *De Vermis Mysteriis* written c. 1542 by one Ludwig Prinn. They contain notes about the book and its history, and comment in passing that the chant “could be used to release the spirit trapped inside the ancient amber.” (hand the players **On De Vermis Mysteriis**).

The final sheet includes a description of the pentagram, the symbols to be drawn, and the combination of chemicals to be burned in the fire. It also indicates that to dispel the spirit, the chant should be reversed, but that everything should be done the same, whether invoking or dispelling. A two-hour ceremony, begun at midnight, will drive off the unwanted spirit (hand the players **Ritual Notes**).

Although the ceremony can be performed by one person, Prinn suggests the use of several chanters, allowing individuals to occasionally interrupt their chanting without disturbing the potency of the casting. If the chant is continuous for two hours, at least one person at all times maintaining the rhythm, the spirit must succumb. But even the slightest disruption of the chant results in failure; another ritual must commence on a following night.

Prinn suggests that during this time—as during any summoning—that a “watcher be posted, lest the sorcerers be disturbed by the nuisances and distractions of malevolent spirits.”

### The Cellar

During this time the keeper may again call for Notice rolls (Good +3) for the investigators. The source of the noise from beneath the floor is a man called **Red Jake**, a hobo by trade.

Red Jake, generally an amiable fellow, made the mistake of trying to bed down here last night, only to be driven off by the unseemly noises and smells coming from the attic above. Fleeing the house in a panic, leaving his meager belongings behind, he was set upon and almost killed by the monster spirit that inhabits the house.

His escape was narrow. Soon after, the ravening monster found, killed, and carried off the unfortunate farmer’s wife. Her torn, heartless corpse now lies in the woods. Jake spent the night shivering in the woods.

The hobo sneaked back to retrieve his belongings, only to be surprised by the arrival of the investigators. He now hides in the dark cellar, paranoid and fearful, temporarily insane from last night’s encounter with the horror. If left undisturbed Red Jake waits until the time is right and then bolts upstairs and out the back door, heading for the woods. Unless the investigators can run him down, he will not return.

If instead someone goes downstairs, perhaps investigating the strange noises, Jake jumps out of the shadows and makes a surprise attack with an old table leg. A successful Notice by the investigator spies the hiding hobo and nullifies any chance of being surprised. If Jake hits the investigator, the victim takes the damage for Weapon:1. A Consequence could be that they are stunned long enough for Jake to mount the stairs. He only wants to escape. He attacks those who stand in his way.

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### RED JAKE, Horrified Hobo

#### Aspects:

It's a Hard Luck Life

Scrapper

Friendly Face

#### Skills:

Athletics (Good +3), Crafts-Carpentry (Fair +2), Lore (Average +1), Stealth (Good +3), Notice (Good +3), Fight (Fair +2)

#### Stress:

**Mental** OO

**Physical** OO

If the investigators subdue the hobo, they find him rambling, almost incoherent. A successful Rapport (Good +3) roll might calm the man long enough to get a few scraps of information from him but these clues will be sketchy. What he says must be determined by the keeper.

If the investigators take their captive back to Ross's Corners and turn him over to Pa Peters, the Justice of the Peace, he is arrested by the state police and jailed in Salem, the county seat, as the prime suspect in the disappearance of the farmer's wife. Although he may be cleared of the charges, in the meantime the investigators will enjoy increased respect from the citizens of Ross's Corners.

If Red Jake escapes the investigators, he dies that night, the second victim of the terrible spirit creature in the attic. He may return after death to pay the investigators a surprise visit.

### The Lurker in the Attic

The thing in the attic waits soundlessly, listening to the intruders below, judging their intent and gauging their strength. Dwelling in this house for over forty years it has learned to eat well and is content, and it will use its intelligence and cunning to stay here.

Although the thing is careful to make no sound, some investigator may wish to explore the trap door in the ceiling. A ladder or shoulder-boost will be necessary. The door itself is stuck, requiring a Great (+4) Physique roll.

The Lurker waits until the intruder pokes his head up through the opening, then with a growling rush makes a grab for the target. It is so nearly invisible to the sight of this world that even a flashlight beam cannot much reveal it, but the investigator can hear the thing pummeling the floorboards toward him and, with a successful Athletics roll (Good +3), is able to fall back and down to the floor below—losing 1 Physical stress upon landing but avoiding the talons of the fiend.

The attack evaded or completed, the trap door then slams shut and a growling, panting sound is heard coming from the attic above. Witnesses to these events, including the target, must make a Good (+3) Will roll or lose 1 Mental stress.

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The Athletics roll failing, the investigator takes the rolled damage from the monster's attack, then falls and suffers the 1 point of additional stress. All present must make a Great (+4) Will roll or lose 2 Mental stress to witness this successful attack. The victim, if surviving, suffers injuries to the head and face that leave permanent scars. The investigator receives the permanent Aspect of "Scarred Appearance".

If the blow kills the investigator, indicate that the talons have caught in the target's skull. The Lurker can haul up the dangling corpse, chew out its heart, then throw the carcass back down through the opening. Witnesses to this must make a Superb (+5) Will roll or lose another 2 Mental stress. The rapidity of these psychic blows makes it likely that some investigators go indefinitely insane.

### About The Lurker

This creature is a nearly invisible and barely material manifestation from another dimension. Although not bound to the house, it regards the attic as its home and refuge. It is not physically harmed by light, but light causes the creature pain. It prefers darkened shelter.

The Lurker cannot be harmed by physical weapons. Spells do affect it. It suffers no damage from fire, electricity, or acid. It becomes visible and takes on a semi-solid form if dusted with the Powder of Ibn-Ghazi or when feeding. It finds sustenance and pleasure in devouring the hearts of warm-blooded animals. If the investigators ever enter the attic they find it littered with the rotting corpses and skeletons of raccoons, possums, birds, and other small animals that have mistakenly explored here.

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### THE LURKER IN THE ATTIC, Nearly Invisible

#### Aspects:

Beyond Human Understanding  
Cthulhu Mythos

#### Skills:

Athletics (Good +3); Fight (Great +4); Notice (Great +4); Physique (Great +4); Provoke (Superb +5); Stealth (Fantastic +6); Will (Good +3)

#### Stunts:

**Claws:** Weapon:2

**Inhuman Strength:** Weapon:1 hit, [+1 to Physique rolls, etc.]

**Terrifying Beyond Comprehension:** Encountering this creature forces all but the most inured characters to defend against a Superb (+5) Mental stress attack. If seen in its corporeal form, this becomes a Fantastic (+6) Mental stress attack.

**Raise the Dead:** Can animate and control a corpse from up to 3 zones away.

**Incorporeal:** Is able to pass through unwarded material obstructions without effort; impervious to physical attacks except when feeding.

**Ninja Vanish:** Can disappear while in plain sight.

**Light Sensitive:** Feels pain in light (Temporary Aspect: "Pained")

**Stinking Acid:** Blood is an ichorous stinking acid [Good +3 Will roll or -1 to all Physical skills due to stench (each round); 1 Stress upon touch and each subsequent round until removed]

#### Stress:

**Mental** OOO

**Physical** OOOO

### Dispelling The Lurker

The creature is impervious to most physical attacks. Unless the investigators have magic not in this scenario, dispelling the monster according to Marion Allen's notes is the only solution. Firing the house does not harm the creature, but encourages it to take residence nearer to Ross's Corners.

Dispelling the monster takes two hours of continual chanting, begun at midnight and coupled with a properly-drawn pentagram and a fire burning some of the brown chemical compound found with Allen's notes. These notes suggest that at least one person stand back from the ceremony in order to watch for malevolent spirits that may be drawn to the rites, but the investigators may do as they wish.

To dispel the Lurker, the words must be chanted in reverse. Individual chanters may stop now and then to catch their breaths, but at least one person must be chanting at any given moment. Each investigator

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participating in the chant makes a Good (+3) Will roll every half hour; a chanter failing their roll falls unconscious.

At sunset, long before the investigators can begin the ceremony, the creature leaves the house, whistling out of the attic and across the fields toward the nearby woods. No Notice rolls are necessary to hear it exit. Any investigators standing outside may see the thing leaving the house, each needing to make a Good (+3) Will roll or suffer 1 Mental stress at the sight of a faint, tangling vortex rolling through the air. An attack on watching investigators would probably succeed, but the Lurker intends to track down and kill the hobo who escaped its clutches the night before.

In this endeavor it is successful, if Red Jake has already escaped the house. The hobo dies a horrible death at around ten o'clock that night. Investigators making Good (+3) Notice rolls hear distant screams, ending too soon for them to take action.

### The Ceremony

The ceremony begun, the Lurker quickly returns to the house, aware of the intent of the investigators. Unable to enter the warded rooms, it plunges into the attic above and begins a campaign of terror calculated to disrupt the proceedings. During this time call for more Good (+3) Will rolls to ward off more Mental stress. The danger of temporary insanity exists, as well as the possibility of indefinite insanity due to quickly accumulating losses. Insane investigators are unable to chant properly. Any investigator, sane or not, who flees the safety of the house is probably set upon by the Lurker and slain.

The first twenty minutes of the ceremony go smoothly. Then the monster returns, drawn home by the chant, landing in the attic with a loud thump. Investigators hear it snuffling heavily above them. All must make a Good (+3) Will roll or lose 1 Mental stress.

Within moments the creature sets up an awful howling, interspersed by grunts and foul curses spoken in a harsh guttural voice. The old house sways and creaks, the sudden jolts shaking it to its foundations. Objects on shelves and the mantel fall and roll across the floor. All must make Good (+3) Will rolls or lose 1 Mental stress.

This violence and noise continues for a half hour, then a horrible smell begins to creep down from the attic above, followed by a thick stinking goo that oozes through the ceiling and drips down the walls. Call for Fair (+2) Athletics rolls. Those receiving failures at some point are splattered by this alien acid and suffer 2 Physical stress. This may leave scars, as the players wish.

Near the beginning of the second hour of chanting, the monster quiets and the investigators chant without distraction. A half hour later, anyone who makes a Good (+3) Notice roll hears, from outside, a faint call for help—a woman's voice. An investigator looking outside sees something fifty yards away, crawling slowly through the high grass towards the house. A Good (+3) Notice roll, or artificial light, reveals the object to be a woman, middle-aged, obviously hurt. She lifts her head and calls toward the house. Her face is streaked with blood.

This is the swollen corpse of the missing farm wife, Maggie McPhirter. She has been dead for 24 hours, her heart chewed out by the thing that dwells in the attic. The monster has animated the corpse and hopes to thereby disrupt the ceremony. Anyone going outside is attacked, either by Maggie's animated corpse or, if the keeper chooses cruelty, by the monster itself.

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It may be that the monster has or will likewise animate the corpse of Red Jake, and use it to attack an investigator attempting to help the woman. If the animated dead fail to lure the investigators out, the monster has them assault the house, pushing in the doors or windows, screaming, shouting, hollering, and biting. They are fearsome, but not very difficult to destroy, and they cannot enter the house because of the wards. In most ways they can be treated like zombies. The Mental stress they provoke may be their most dangerous aspect (Fair +2 Will rolls vs. 1 Mental Stress).

### M. McPHIRTER, Corpse, animated by the Lurker

*Aspects:*

Animated corpse

Relentless

Athletics (Fair +2); Fight (Fair +2); Notice (Fair +2); Physique (Great +4); Provoke (Good +3)

**Damage Bonus:** none.

**Sanity Loss:** Will vs. Fair (+2) or 1 Mental Stress upon sight

**Mental Stress:** N/A

**Physical Stress:** OOOO

### RED JAKE, Corpse, animated by the Lurker

*Aspects:*

Animated corpse

Relentless

Athletics (Fair +2); Fight (Good +3); Notice (Fair +2); Physique (Great +4); Provoke (Good +3)

**Damage Bonus:** none.

**Sanity Loss:** Will vs. Fair (+2) or 1 Mental Stress upon sight

**Mental Stress:** N/A

**Physical Stress:** OOOO

## The Thing Appears

Nearing the last five minutes of the ceremony a wisp of smoke curls down from the ceiling, twisting toward the center of the pentagram on the floor. The creature from the attic manifests itself before the investigators' eyes. Four more minutes of chanting is all that is required to drive it back to its place of origin. As it begins to condense in the pentagram, it becomes partially visible—a horrible twisting mass of talons and maws and long appendages. Roll Will vs. Fantastic (+6) or lose 2 Mental Stress.

Any investigator going insane sees not a horrible monster, but a compelling and attractive human figure. The insane investigator steps forward to embrace the creature. Unless stopped, he or she probably dies. The monster is confined to the pentagram but can attack anyone who crosses the symbol's perimeter.

*Edge of Darkness* is a Fate Core adaptation of the original scenario *Edge of Darkness* published in *Call of Cthulhu* 6<sup>th</sup> Edition, a Chaosium publication [*Call of Cthulhu* (6th edition) is copyright ©1981, 1983, 1992, 1993, 1995, 1998, 1999, 2001, 2004, 2005 by Chaosium Inc.; all rights reserved.]. This adaptation is published under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

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If the investigators can finish the last few minutes of the chant, the creature is driven wailing from this world, banished to wherever from which it first came, leaving only the lingering unearthly foulness behind.

### Conclusion

If the creature is banished, participating investigators each receive a Fate Point award, as well as a Significant Milestone.

If they fail to banish the creature each suffers an temporary Aspect of “Insane Remorse” during the next week, as the monster takes three more victims before leaving the area forever.

### Loose Ends?

The investigators’ connection with this adventure may not be finished. What about Bertrand Merriweather and any legal troubles the investigators may have incurred at the start of the adventure? Are the investigators able to satisfactorily explain to the sheriff concerning corpses, heartless or otherwise, littering the property after the adventure?

Do the investigators benefit from Rupert’s will? He considered them fine and trustworthy people, perhaps he rewarded them with a small, or even large gift from his estate.

What about the mysterious glyphs on the inside of the gold sarcophagus? It is possible that the *Zanthu Tablets*, purportedly a history of Mu, contains enough notes to effect a partial translation of this obviously important inscription.

Who murdered Marion Allen years ago in New Orleans? Were they cultists desperately searching for the sarcophagus of Nophru-Ka? Could they possibly learn that it is now in the investigators’ possession and come looking for it? Looking into the background of Marion Allen, the investigators may find that before turning up in New Orleans, Allen was briefly affiliated with the Chapel of Contemplation in Boston.

And what about the investigators’ jobs? They may have now missed several days of work and need a story for their bosses. Certainly they can’t tell the truth...