

Old Hate

A *WitchCraft* Scenario

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Chronicler's Introduction

This scenario is intended to introduce new characters to the world of *C. J. Carella's WitchCraft*, published by Eden Studios. Since this scenario is intended as an introduction to the supernatural, Bast, Spirits, Vampires, and characters already well versed in the mystical arts are inappropriate. Ideally, the characters should be humans who possess little real knowledge of the occult. Over the course of the adventure, the characters will discover they possess supernatural abilities and use them to destroy a lingering evil.

The Chronicler may enhance this theme of self-discovery by keeping the characters' supernatural abilities secret, from both players and characters, until cinematically appropriate moments. Most clues in this adventure take the form of visions, so at least one character should have supernatural perceptions. The Mindtime or Death Speech abilities would be ideal, but almost any character could experience waking visions or recurring, prophetic dreams.

Five sample beginning characters have been provided at the end of this material. They show Attributes, Qualities and Drawbacks, and Skills. They have no Metaphysical gifts as the scenario starts. These sheets may be passed out among the players and each should read his or her own background. Metaphysical powers, tailored for each sample character, are discussed on page 10. Chronicler's may dole out these powers over time, as events in the adventure unfold.

History

Edward Sims' life would have gone very differently if his father had not been one of the thousands killed breaking through German defenses in Meuse on November 1, 1918. Unfortunately, Fate is not always kind. After the death of her husband, Edward's mother tried to

support herself and her child but couldn't find employment because of her gender and lack of job skills. They were forced to live with a succession of distant relatives for most of his childhood, and his mother became increasingly abusive as the years passed. She had never really forgiven her husband for "abandoning" her, and blamed him for all the subsequent problems in her life. Viewing Edward as an extension of his father, she took out her feelings of anger and frustration on the young boy. The atrocities she committed were numerous and better left to the imagination. Needless to say, Edward was a terrified young boy who grew to become a very bitter young man.

Edward joined the United States Army on his eighteenth birthday and never looked back. The military was his first real home, and he flourished within the structured environment it provided. His mother died during his tour of duty, but he did not attend her funeral. She was a painful reminder of a life he desperately sought to escape. His army days were a brief oasis of happiness in the desert of Edward's otherwise tormented existence. He mustered out in 1936 at age twenty-four and moved to Promise, Mississippi to start a new life. He bought a small, dilapidated house on the edge of town and went to work as a mechanic at the town's only garage. The problems did not start until almost a year later, when a local woman, Diane Wise, openly and cruelly scorned Edward in favor of another man. Diane's rejection, combined with ample alcohol and memories of a horrific past, proved to be too much for the man. His sanity cracked, and he came to believe all women were inherently evil.

Edward's insane delusions grew to become full-blown paranoia over the next few weeks, and his boss fired him because of his increasingly antisocial behavior. Instead of confronting his problems, he blamed the loss of his job on a

female conspiracy and wasted the last of his money on a drinking binge. Drunk and filled with a terrible rage, he crept up to Diane's house long after midnight and slipped in through the unlocked back door. He stealthily entered Diane's bedroom and slit her throat with a cheap, black-handled skinning knife. He also murdered four of her friends before the night was through: Ruth Estey, Sarah Hancock, Elisabeth Jacobs, and Cathy Smith. Jonathan Smith, Cathy's father, caught Edward in the act, but grossly underestimated the enraged madman's strength. Edward viciously slashed Jonathan's belly open, and he fell to the ground. He never got back up.

When the murders were discovered the next morning, it did not take the victim's relatives long to puzzle out who had committed them. Jake Estey, Ruth's father, and Randall Jacobs, Elisabeth's older brother, called an impromptu meeting that lasted most of the morning. A posse, hungry for blood and justice, formed up to hunt down Edward Sims. They found him at his shack and, when he openly admitted to having committed the brutal murders, they beat him. When he was nearly unconscious, they ran a length of rope over the branch of a nearby oak tree and lynched him. They buried Edward Sims' battered body in an unmarked, shallow grave in the nearby woods. They covered the grave with heavy rocks to prevent animals from digging up the body, and lodged the blade of his knife between the stones to serve as a marker. Grim justice had been served.

David Smith, Jonathan's brother and local sheriff, was disinclined to bring charges against those involved. Lynchings were not unheard of in the southern states, especially in Georgia, Alabama, Louisiana, and Mississippi. Only a handful of years before, men had been lynched for crimes as minor as quarreling, swindling, and vagrancy. It was doubtful any higher authority would investigate the death of a cold-blooded murderer.

Edward Sims' grave and the events of that night were forgotten over the next several decades. No one in Promise is old enough to remember what happened. It is almost certainly not a

coincidence that Tracy Miller, a recent high school graduate, literally stumbled across Sims' cursed knife while wandering through the woods last week.

Overview

Tracy's discovery of Sims' murder weapon would not have been important, save that she dabbled in witchcraft and adopted the tainted knife as her Athame. Part of the ritual for consecrating Athame involved dipping the blade in a mixture of pure water, herbs, and several drops of the witch's own blood. This was a *very bad thing*. The young woman's blood empowered a mystical bridge through which Edward Sims' angry spirit returned from the Otherworlds. Edward, little more than an animate skeleton covered with sticky mud and bits of flesh, crawled out of his grave and instinctively hunted for his connection to this world—the knife. Meanwhile, Tracy and the other members of her impromptu coven, Danielle and Melissa, performed a few minor rituals to bring love and good fortune. The girls had just finished and were relaxing in the living room when Edward crept in through the back door. Moving with speed he never possessed in life, he grabbed the knife off the coffee table and stabbed Melissa before she had even risen up off the couch. Danielle and Tracy followed quickly, although Danielle managed to strike Edward in the neck with a fireplace poker before she died. She could not have known that she was up against one of the Relentless Dead (*CJ Carella's WitchCraft* 2nd ed., pp. 269-271), an awful nightmare given a strange form of unlife.

Gripped by an instinctual imperative, Edward retreated back into the woods to regenerate. He was disoriented from his violent death and long stay in the Beyond, and was still little more than an animate corpse. He does not consciously realize he's using the Essence of the three innocent girls to rebuild his body. This is where the Cast Member's enter the picture.

Player Involvement

All the Cast Members should arrive in the isolated farming community of Promise,

Mississippi before sundown. Most of the characters should be lead there by symbolic dreams or visions suggesting that the small town is somehow important. The visions should be vague and tailored to each character. Optionally, the Chronicler may have all the Cast experience the same dreams to help foster teamwork and cooperation. Strongly moral or religious characters should receive portents hinting that they must travel to Promise to thwart a growing evil. Other Cast Members may arrive in the town through what seems to be coincidence. They may have had car problems or simply thought Promise looked like a good place to stop for the night. Finally, some may be the friends, acquaintances, or loved ones of the supernaturally motivated characters. Since there's only one restaurant (the QuarterHorse Bar & Family Restaurant, Location #4) and one motel (the LampPost Inn, Location #3), the Chronicler should have little problem introducing the Cast to one another. The Flex gas station (Location #2), to which any Cast Member's nonfunctional car will be towed, is right across the street from the LampPost Inn and a brief walk from the QuarterHorse.

Promise, Mississippi

Promise has a permanent population of 179 and all of its public facilities are neat the main road leading into and out of town. Most of the townspeople live in the neat, painfully middle-class neighborhood that runs parallel to the main road. Public locations the Cast are likely to visit:

Flex Gas'N'Go (Location #2)—A typical, slightly rundown gas station with gasoline, snacks, and an attached repair garage.

QuarterHorse Bar & Family Restaurant (Location #4)—A large structure made from brick and heavy timber, with a broad covered porch and several neon beer signs in the windows. The floors are raw timber planks, turned dark gray with age, and the large circular beams are exposed a couple feet above head height. The first floor is mostly open, with a long bar along one side. The second story is reached from a set of broad, shallow stairs

between the kitchen and the end of the bar. The second story is completely open and not available without prior arrangement; it is usually rented for private parties and other small social functions.

LampPost Inn (Location #3)—A large U-shaped motel, with the main office near the center of the “U.” Several wrought-iron carriage lamps with natural gas flames light the Inn's sign, driveway, and parking area inside the lot—hence the Inn's name. Room prices here are very inexpensive, largely because the rooms have few amenities: no televisions, blow dryers, refrigerators, microwaves, or coffee makers. The LampPost Inn does, however, have a communal recreation room and kitchen behind the main office that all guests are free to use. Other than the distinct lack of modern amenities, the rooms are surprisingly clean and comfortable; there is even plenty of large, fluffy towels and hot water to go around.

Don's Supermarket (Location #12)—An old-fashioned general store that sells a little bit of everything, including farming supplies and a small assortment of hunting rifles and shotguns in the sporting goods section. The store feels distinctly old, with the occasional flickering fluorescent bulb and chipped green floor tile, but at least the stock is very well organized and the prices are inexpensive.

Sheriff's Office (Location #9)—A small, tan cinderblock building with a tin roof. The central room, which contains the sheriff's cluttered desk and a handful of mismatched chairs clustered around a battered portable television, has fake mahogany wall panels and short industrial carpet. Two cells line the left-hand side of the building and a heavy reinforced security door is set into the back wall. This door, which is usually locked, leads to the evidence and weapons storage lockers. There is a good assortment of firearms, including handguns, and ammo in the weapons storage locker. There are also cans of mace, a couple of tranquilizer rifles, a powerful taser, and a good collection of equipment useful in emergencies.

Doctor's Office (Location #15)—Characters would probably mistake Doctor Jefferson's office for a private residence, if not for the wooden sign out front. The reception area has a small desk for a nurse to sit at, about a dozen comfortable chairs, a large color television, and an assortment of magazines. The rest of the building contains the doctor's private office and two examination rooms. With a little searching, characters with knowledge of medicine can find most common medical supplies here.

Elementary School and Library (Locations #5 & #6)—This group of whitewashed buildings lies on the west side of town. The school has a football field with aluminum bleachers, a soccer field, a small playground for the younger children, and classrooms geared for teaching kindergarteners through sixth graders. The classrooms are small but lovingly maintained. The building nearest the road is the town library, which doubles as the school library and the town's hall of records. General information concerning births, deaths, and ownership of land can be researched here. A small room in the back of the library, barely more than a closet, holds an exhibit on local history, including several old maps, journals, and antique household items.

Scene I

The Cast Members arrive in Promise and realize they have to spend the night there. Characters with car problems are told that they will have to wait until morning before their vehicle can be fixed. There may be other people already waiting for repairs, or they may have to wait for a part to be shipped in from the next town over. The Chronicler should urge the Cast to stay in Promise without being too blatant or heavy-handed. Encourage the Cast Members to socialize and get to know one another; if they seem reluctant to do so, remind them they are the only strangers in town and that there is nowhere else to go for food or entertainment. For better or worse, they are stuck with one another. This would also be an excellent opportunity for the Chronicler to slip in a vision. Perhaps a character recognizes another Cast Member from

a dream, or just feels inexplicably drawn to that person. A powerful thunderstorm rolls into town while the characters fraternize.

Scene II

Eventually, the Cast Members have to brave the howling wind and pouring rain to return to their rooms. Characters who listen to the radio or watch television in the motel's common room learn that this massive storm is coming down from the plains, and is not expected to leave the region for another two or three days. Meteorologists predict widespread flash flooding and service interruptions if the storm does not abate within the next few hours. When the Cast sleep one or all of them should experience an incredibly powerful dream.

You creep silently toward the back of the house, certain that what you seek is within. You catch glimpses of motion, people moving, through the large bay window, as you approach. You use the edge of the small concrete patio to clean the thick, dark mud off your rotting feet before nearing the back door. You hear strains of Celtic music come from inside as your weathered, calloused hand touches the doorknob. You will have the pleasure of removing more evil from the face of the Earth before the night is through. An incredible, unspeakable joy washes through you. You yank the heavy hardwood door open, sending splinters of wood flying away from where the lock had been set into the frame, and walk boldly into the house. The three women, all dressed in simple tan shifts, are engaged in animated conversation around the coffee table. They don't even notice you until you walk into the living room. You instinctively know what you need is mixed in with the strange occult items on the coffee table—baggies full of powders and herbs, candles, knives, a gold cup, a handful of books, and a large brazier. Your dark eyes scan the table for only an instant before falling on the familiar black handle of your skinning knife. The girls see you now, but there's nothing they can do to stop you. You walk quickly, carelessly, over the geometric patterns chalked on the floor and pick up your knife. Like a living thing, it radiates

intense pleasure as you pick it up. You stab one of the girls, a pretty brunette with blue eyes, before she can lever herself up off of the overstuffed sofa. She lets out a muffled scream and falls back, a dark crimson stain spreading quickly across the front of her dress. She twitches, and you know she will not be long for this world. Now, just two more to go ...

Scene III

The storm relents around 5am, but the stars are still blotted out by menacing gray clouds. The Cast Members wake the next morning with miserable, pounding headaches. The pain fades quickly and is completely gone by the time they have finished their morning routines. When they leave their rooms, casually mention how eerily quiet the town has become after the storm. If they go to the LampPost Inn's office in search of breakfast, they find the motel clerk asleep behind the desk. Nothing they can do wakes her and basic medical tests reveal that she is in a deep sleep, almost a coma. Her pulse is thready and her breathing is shallow but regular. Breakfast is, of course, not ready. The television and the radio seem to work, but they do not pick up any stations. Disturbing whispers and muttering can be heard faintly through the static. Perceptive Cast Members might remember that the QuarterHorse Bar & Family Restaurant has a sign advertising that it opens for breakfast at 6am but it, too, is still closed. If the players decide to visit the Sheriff's Office, they find the Sheriff, Scott Lipsey, asleep behind his desk. He displays the same symptoms as the receptionist at the LampPost Inn. In fact, the Cast quickly discover that everyone else in town is asleep! Fortunately, almost all of them were safely in bed when this supernatural malady struck. If the Cast Members try to phone any location outside of Promise, the phone rings but is never answered. The phones function normally within the town, but only Edward and the Cast are awake to answer them. This scene may be extended by having the Cast Members wake up at different times and spend an hour or two wandering through the desolate town alone before realizing anyone else is still awake.

Edward Sims is subconsciously siphoning Essence from the townspeople to regenerate his body in the physical world. They will not awaken until Edward is laid to rest. The Cast are also being drained, but their increased Essence pools allow them to remain conscious and functional. Their headaches were the result of the initial supernatural attack. If the characters try to leave Promise, they discover all the roads are flooded and the single modern bridge has been washed away during the storm. Fortunately, the founders of Promise were wise enough to build their city on elevated ground. The floodwaters are frigid, waist-deep, and move swiftly enough to make travel through them impossible over any distance. Cast Members who trip on unseen debris while wading through the filthy water should quickly become discouraged from traveling on foot, and the waterline is high enough to flood the engine of any vehicle. Heavy rains could resume at any time, making the floodwaters particularly treacherous. Even if the Cast find a way to leave, remind them that they will be abandoning the townspeople.

Scene IV

Sooner or later, the CM's are going to search for the house from the dream. The neighborhood is small, so this is not difficult. It is a large, three-bedroom house with an attached garage and two cars in the driveway (Location #20). The car closest to the house, a fairly new Honda Acura, has a small pewter pentagram hanging by a black cord from the rearview mirror. The car closest to the street, a new VW Bug, has a bumper sticker reading, "Blessed Be!" These items stand out in a town that is predominantly Christian. The front door is securely locked, but the back door has already been forced open. Celtic music can be heard playing inside from the front porch. Especially perceptive characters, or those with tracking skills, notice deep footprints leading from the nearby forest to the patio. The back and inside of the house are disturbingly familiar to the Cast Members who experienced the dream listed above. The pungent scent of partially dried blood hangs thick inside the house. The

music emanates from a small stereo system; a Celtic Twilight CD is playing on repeat mode.

If the Cast Members are brave enough to venture into the living room, they find the bodies of three dead women. They wear only tan shifts made of natural, unbleached cotton and a single piece of copper or silver jewelry each. All were obviously killed by a large slashing/stabbing weapon. The character(s) who experienced the dream listed above recognize the living room and the bodies; feel free to require a Fear check (*CJ Carella's WitchCraft* 2nd ed., p. 131). Melissa, the brunette who figured most prominently in the dream, sprawls brokenly across the bloodstained couch. Danielle, the sandy blonde, lies on the hardwood floor surrounded by a tacky pool of her own blood. A wrought iron poker from the fireplace lies near her right hand, suggesting she fought back. Tracy, who had long black hair, dragged herself halfway into the kitchen before collapsing from blood loss. Characters who thoroughly search the room or go looking for the women's purses learn that the brunette is Melissa Grey (19 years old), the blonde is Danielle Hicks (17 years old), and the raven-haired woman is Tracy Miller (18 years old). Tracy's driver's license lists this house as her address, while Melissa and Danielle live a few streets over.

The living room furniture has been pushed to the edges of the room and a chalk pentagram, now heavily smudged, dominates the center of the room. Magical paraphernalia clutters the coffee table. There are a handful of books, a spiral bound notebook, a white-handled knife, a thurible (brazier), a gold gilt chalice, several baggies full of herbs and powders, and many partially burned candles. The notebook, white-handled knife, thurible, chalice, and candles are marked with symbols similar to the ones inside the pentagram. Knowledgeable characters might recognize these symbols as being similar to Greek, or the markings used by ancient alchemists. The books, which could be purchased at any store with a sizable New Age section, detail Wiccan theology and practices. Pages describing minor rituals for finding love and bringing good fortune are dog-eared. Study of these pages, or the notes in the spiral-bound

notebook, reveals that these were the rituals performed the night they died. These women did not intend any harm, and certainly did not deserve to die.

Searching the house, especially Tracy's bedroom, proves fruitful. They find several more books describing New Age beliefs and her diary. Reading through recent entries in her diary takes at least an hour and reveals much useful information. Tracy had recently graduated from high school and planned to attend Mississippi State next fall. Her parents, both devout Baptists, did not understand her beliefs but were at least willing to be tolerant of them. The most important entry, however, is dated a little over a week ago. It describes how she literally stumbled across a black-handled knife while wandering through the woods behind her house. The blade had obviously been outside for a long time, but the handle had not cracked, and the steel blade was still sharp and devoid of rust. She was studying the dark red berries of a large bush with spiked leaves when she tripped over the knife's black handle. She took this fortuitous discovery as a sign, and decided to adopt the blade as her Athame. This is the same knife the Cast Member(s) saw in the dream. The last entry was penned two days ago. Tracy's parents are visiting her grandmother in Virginia for two weeks, while the elderly woman recovers from hip replacement surgery. Tracy naturally decided to invite her friends over while they are away.

Scene V

The characters can easily find several trails leading deep into the woods around Tracy's house. It could, however, take several hours of searching for the Cast Members to find the large holly-like bush described in Tracy's diary. This time can be vastly reduced if one of the CM's has the ability to track Edward Sims' footprints back to his grave (Location #21). When they arrive at the site Tracy described, they find half of the dark bush has been ripped away to reveal an oblong heap of large stones. The earth around the caern has been disturbed, and many of the stones have obviously been moved. If the characters do not think to dig up the caern on

their own, the Chronicler should have one of them experience a premonition indicating that an important part of the solution to this supernatural horror lies beneath the heavy stones. If the Chronicler wishes to add an element of combat to the game, this would be an excellent opportunity for a partially healed Edward Sims, or dark spirits under his subconscious control, to appear. A small horde of Wildlings (*CJ Carella's WitchCraft* 2nd ed., pp. 264-265), taking the form of decaying and mud-spattered woodland animals, would be ideal. These horrifying beasts can haunt and torment the Cast throughout the rest of the adventure, as necessary. This would be a good time for characters to manifest supernatural combat abilities; the use of raw Soulfire would be especially cinematic.

Excavating the burial caern is backbreaking work, made even more difficult by the recent rains. Since the Cast Members probably did not think to bring shovels, it is likely that they will have to break into Don's Supermarket (Location #12) or someone's tool shed to acquire some. This is fine, but the Chronicler should be careful to keep track of time. It is late fall, and there are only a few hours of useful sunlight a day. If the Chronicler wishes to extend the scenario, he can make them hole up in the LampPost Inn or the QuarterHorse Bar & Family Restaurant for the night. This would be another good opportunity to have Edward Sims, Wildlings, or other nasty creatures make an appearance. When the characters have dug down about three feet, which is made a little easier by the fact that Edward broke up the soil thoroughly when he climbed out, they find a human skeleton. Inside the ribcage, glowing with a faint violet light, is the black-handled knife. When one of the characters disturbs the knife, even if they do not touch it, a vision washes over them.

You lay crumpled on the ground, with the coppery taste of blood thick in your mouth. Your head aches, you can't see out of your left eye anymore, and your chest burns with fiery agony every time you breathe. All you can see is a field of emerald green grass and, beyond that, the

dark safety of the forest. You'd give anything to escape into the woodland shadows, but know with gut-wrenching certainty that you can't. They won't let you. As if summoned by magic, a pair of dusty, battered work boots appears in your field of vision. "What ya done ain't right, Edward Sims. An' now yer gonna pay fer it, ya filthy bastard. Ah hope ya rot in Hell." One of the work boots slams into your stomach, sending jolts of jagged pain through your abdomen. Then he kicks you in the head. You feel several of your front teeth cave in, and the world goes dark.

Scene VI (Optional)

Now armed with a name, the Cast Members may wish to take a trip to the town library. Carefully sifting through stacks of old newspapers eventually reveal what transpired on November 17, 1953. The yellowed Promise Picayune, turned brittle by age, describes how a local man, Edward Sims, slaughtered five young women in cold blood in a single night. Appointed sheriff's deputies killed him when he resisted arrest the next day. His victims were: Diane Wise (20 years old), Ruth Estey (19 years old), Sarah Hancock (17 years old), Elisabeth Jacobs (21 years old), and Cathy Smith (16 years old). The obituaries for all six women can be found in the same newspaper.

Searching through the dusty books in the history room at the back of the library will yield another interesting clue—William Hancock's journals. He is listed as one of half a dozen deputies in the Picayune article. Three thick cloth-bound books describe William's life in Promise, Mississippi from the spring of 1923 until 1972. The entry detailing the events the Cast Members are most likely to be interested in may be found on page 12.

Scene VII (Conclusion)

Once the Cast Members have Sims' knife, they need to move fast. Sims knows the knife is critical to his existence and has finished the slow, painful task of regenerating his body. This is a good opportunity for Sims or another wave of Wildlings, more ferocious and repugnant than

the last, to harry the Cast Members while they figure out how to break the dark enchantment over Promise.

Edward Sims and his cursed blade are supernaturally resilient, but they are not impossible to destroy. Heavy firepower augmented with magic, Necromancy, or Miracles might destroy the Restless Dead. Sims is also vulnerable to lynching, since it ended his first life, and blows from his own knife. Dark, poetic justice would be served if a female CM slew Sims with the same knife he used to kill other women. The knife, a potent magical artifact, is difficult—but not impossible—to break. Any sufficiently powerful or clever supernatural attack on the blade should succeed.

Alternately, the Chronicler can give a Cast Member one last vision to push them toward a final confrontation with Sims. While the Cast battle Sims and/or his Wildlings, have one of the characters experience a brief, vivid vision.

An attractive, semi-transparent young woman beckons for you to follow with a slender hand. She turns and walks up the stone path, long overgrown with tall grasses and weeds. She opens a wrought iron gate, its aged hinges squealing loudly in complaint, and walks into what is obviously a cemetery. She glances back at you, smiles reassuringly, and leads you deeper inside. She finally stops at a nondescript tombstone that reads, "Diane Wise, Loving Daughter, May She Rest In Peace, April 3, 1917—November 17, 1937" The woman runs a hand along the polished stone as she turns to face you. "Bring him to me," she whispers as she fades from existence.

The abandoned cemetery (Location #22) is no more than a few minutes travel from anywhere in the small town. The gate leading into the cemetery is already ajar when the Cast Members arrive, and they feel a powerful emotion, expectation or waiting, hanging on the air as they pass through. A faint bluish-white fog clings low to the ground, making it hard to read the writing on the weathered slabs. Even if Sims'

Wildlings have been hounding the Cast, they refuse to cross into the cemetery. They stop at the fence and stare at the characters with blank, dead eyes. The characters hear the gate squeal plaintively just as they reach Diane Wise's tombstone. Sims stands there, head bowed, and rasps in his gravelly voice, "You've got somethin' of mine. Ah want it back." He is completely regenerated at this point, and radiates menace. He starts walking determinedly toward the Cast Members, but falters when he begins to glow a faint violet. This purple aura hisses and sparks violently when it comes into contact with the powder blue tendrils of fog. The Chronicler has two options at this point. He can rule that this enchanted fog, generated by the restless spirits of Sims' victims, makes the Restless Dead vulnerable to the Casts' attacks. He can also rule that Sims must be slain with his own blade, or that the blade must shatter against Diane's tombstone.

Conclusion

As soon as Sims or his cursed knife is destroyed, the enchantment surrounding Promise shatters. Sims and his blade fade from existence, but the fog remains. The tendrils of mist reverse direction to coalesce into a brightly glowing central mass. This mass resolves itself into nine bright, dancing nimbuses of bluish-white light. A feeling of intense gratitude washes over the characters moments before the lights swirl up into the evening sky and disappear. A generous Chronicler may allow these lights to heal the worst of the Cast's wounds before leaving. Because the townsfolk have had much of their Essence drained, they do not wake for several hours. This should give the Cast Members time to put back whatever equipment they "borrowed," come up with a reasonable cover story to explain any evidence they left, or get out of town. Characters who killed helpless folk or ransacked houses for profit eventually have a lot of explaining to do to the mortal authorities, and may have drawn the attention of whatever dark force Edward Sims was attuned to. Use the Experience Point Awards chart to assign awards (*CJ Carella's WitchCraft* 2nd ed., p. 135)

Edward Sims

Recently recalled from the Beyond, Sims begins the scenario as little more than a disgusting animate corpse Hell-bent on retrieving his enchanted knife. His thoughts turn to revenge as he regenerates in the woods; he plans to kill every townspeople, especially the women, for what was done to him. He prefers to attack the Cast because he perceives female Cast Members as the women who tormented him while he was alive, and male characters as members of the lynch mob that killed him. He may address Cast Members by these dead people's names, and refer to events from his mortal life.

When completely regenerated, Sims is a tall (5'11") Caucasian man with short, curly brown hair and dark brown eyes. Although he appears to be in his mid to late twenties, his face and hands are already covered in a web work of tiny wrinkles from long exposure to the elements. He is dressed in a blue mechanic's jumpsuit or faded jeans, t-shirt, and mud-spattered boots

Primary Attributes

Strength: 4-8*
Dexterity: 4
Constitution: 3-7*
Intelligence: 2
Perception: 3
Willpower: 3

Secondary Attributes

Life Points: 75-91*
Endurance Points: N/A
Speed: 10-14*
Essence: 70-74*

Qualities

Relentless Dead (15)
Increased Essence (9)
Hard to Kill - 3 levels (3)

Drawbacks

Delusion: All Women are Evil (2)
Obsession: Killing Women (2)

Power/Vulnerability

Wrath 3
Common Relentless Powers
Common Relentless Vulnerabilities
Regeneration*

* = Increase slowly but steadily during the scenario, to reflect Sims' regeneration. Sims should be difficult but not impossible for the Cast Members to defeat.

Characters – Chronicler's Notes

The easiest way to determine what supernatural abilities each character should have is by determining which Covenant they would belong to. Characters who have a strong interest in ancient history and religion might join the Brotherhood of the Rose Cross, while those with strong religious beliefs might become Sentinels. Characters from Covenants that require mystical knowledge or ritual to access their powers should probably possess at least one level of Old Soul. This allows them to remember whatever magics the Chronicler deems appropriate. Characters with psychic abilities should be able to tap into their powers without formal training, and the Divinely Inspired require only their faith. Descriptions of the Covenants may be found at *CJ Carella's WitchCraft* 2nd ed., pp. 56-66, and in Chapter Five: Associations.

Suggested Powers for Each Covenant

Wicca

(Sample CM – Helen Fennick)
Insight (page 218)
Blessing (page 210)
Warding (page 224)
Shielding (page 220)

Brotherhood of the Rose Cross

(Sample CM – Marcus "Marc" Evans)
Spirit Mastery (page 222)
Soulfire (page 222)
Elemental Fire (page 215)
Shielding (page 220)

Society of Sentinels

(Sample CM – Anthony "Tony" Clements)
Visions (page 246)
Strength of Ten (page 245)
The Binding (page 244)
Prayer and Holy Symbols (pages 246 – 247)

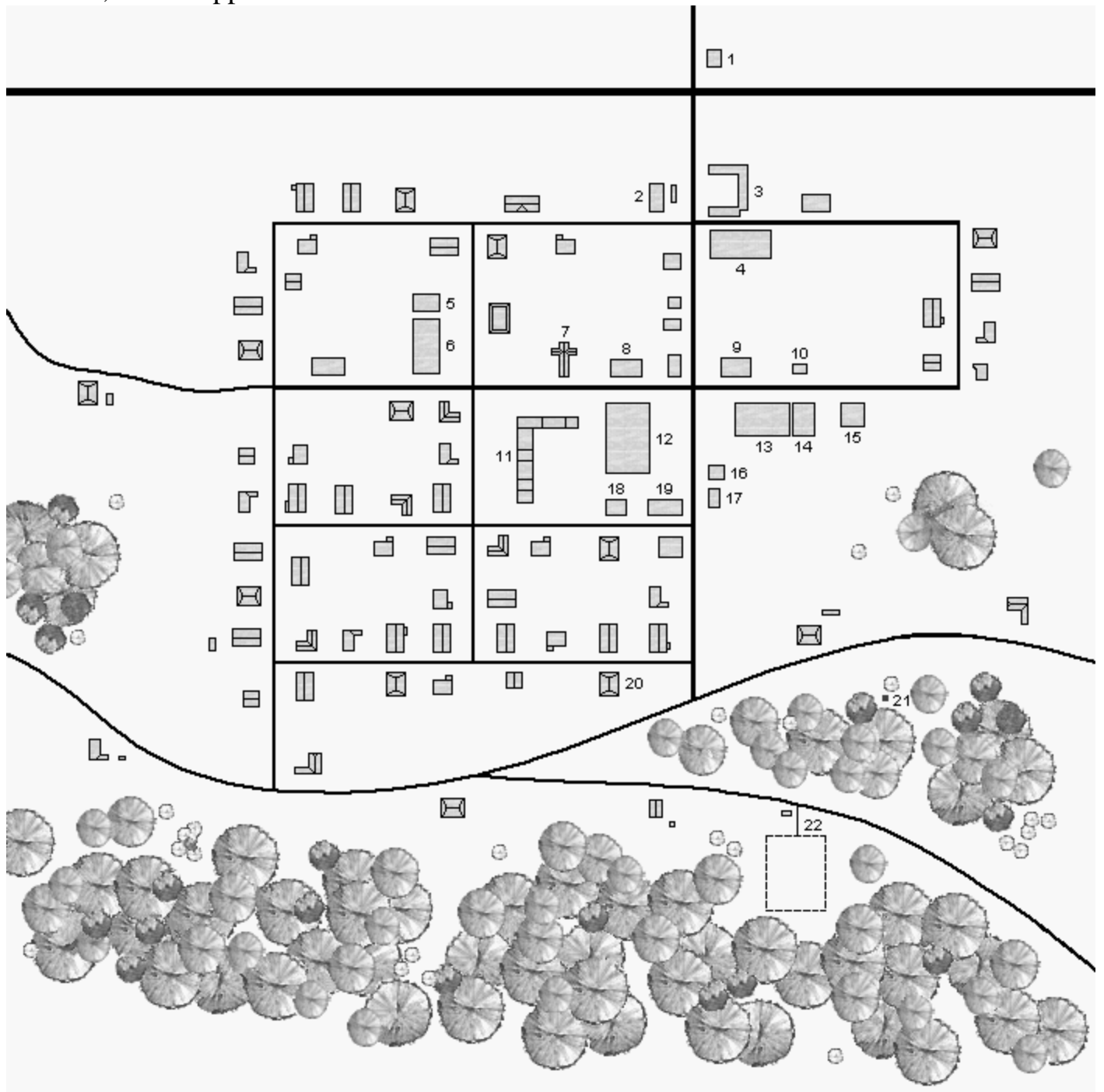
Twilight Order

(Sample CM – Theresa Collins)
Necromancy (page 237)
Death Lordship (page 238)
Death Mastery (page 238)
Death Vessel (page 240)
Death Speech (page 239)

Cabal of Psyche

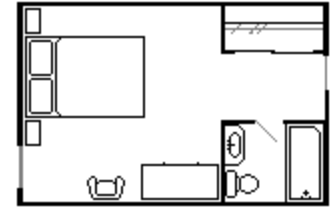
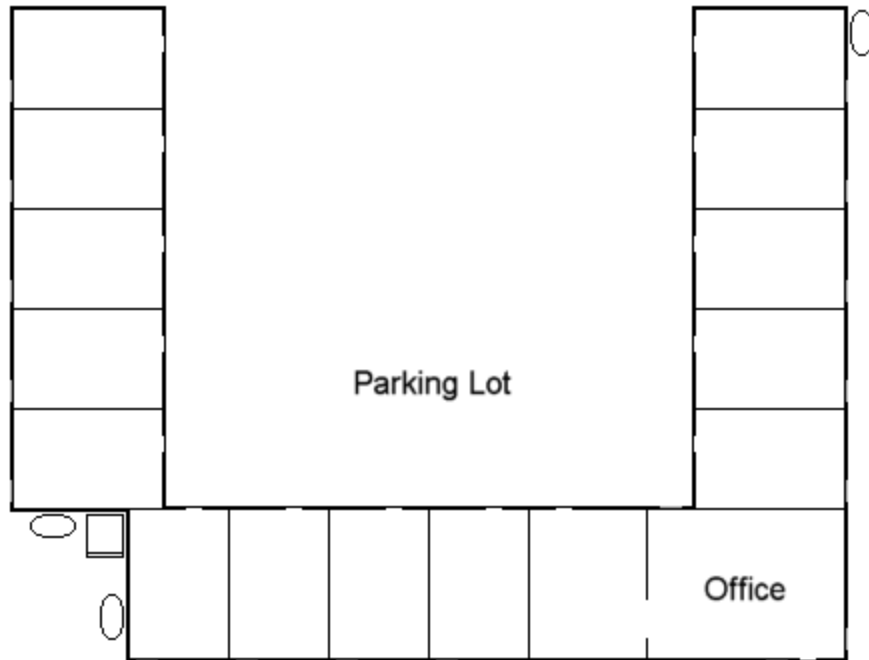
(Sample CM – Lindsey Sandalin)
Mindtime Strength & Art (page 234)
Mindview Strength & Art (page 235)
Mindfire Strength & Art (page 227)

Promise, Mississippi



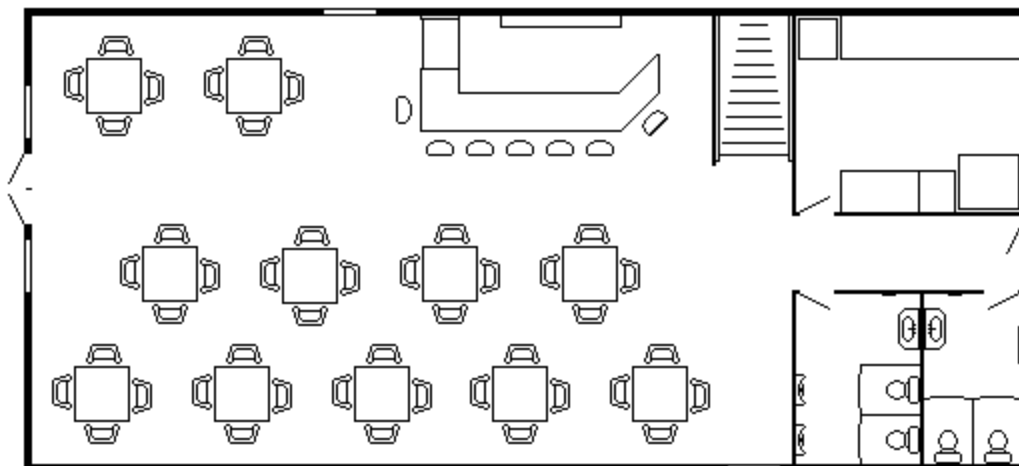
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|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1) Power & telephone junction | 9) Sheriff's office | 17) Farm equipment store |
| 2) Flex Gas'N'Go | 10) Post office | 18) Furniture store |
| 3) LampPost Inn | 11) Mini-mall | 19) Seed & feed store |
| 4) QuarterHorse Bar & Family Restaurant | 12) Don's Supermarket | 20) Tracy Miller's home |
| 5) Library | 13) Hardware store | 21) Grave of Edward Sims |
| 6) Elementary school | 14) Veterinary clinic | 22) Graveyard |
| 7) Baptist church | 15) Doctor's office | |
| 8) Garden store | 16) Joey's Engine Repair | |

The LampPost Inn



Room Layout

The Quarterhorse Bar & Family Restaurant



November 18, 1937

Terrible justice was served today. Six local girls, none of them older than twenty-one, were murdered in their beds last night. Elisabeth Jacobs, Diane Wise, Ruth Estey, Sarah Hancock, and Cathy Smith are dead. Their necks were slit, like animals'. Jonathan Smith, Cathy's father, died fighting the man. Ronald said he'd been gutted open, and probably took a long time to die. I felt like I'd been hit in the stomach when I heard the news. Promise is a good place where everybody knows everybody else. Things like that don't happen here. Hell, I knew John and the girls—my own girls went to school with most of them.

It didn't take us long to figure out who was responsible. Everybody in town knew Edward Sims hadn't been right in the head since Diane rejected his advances, but we never dreamed he'd do something like this. Reggie remembered the boy buying a hunting knife last week at the store but didn't think anything about it at the time. Hunting season's almost here, and a lot of boys are stocking up. Bad news travels fast in a small town, and a handful of townsfolk were gathered at the Sheriff's Office by noon. Jake Estey, Ruth's father, and Randall Jacobs, Elisabeth's older brother, called for brave men to do what needed be done. I'm not as young as I used to be, but I volunteered. I played cards with Jonathan, and I used to tell stories to little Sarah when she was younger.

Nine of us climbed into Jake's and Randall's trucks to go out to Sims' shack on the edge of town. We were surprised he was there—we thought he'd be in Tennessee or Alabama by then. Randall bellowed for him to come out, and Sims walked out onto his front porch, bold as brass! Jake couldn't keep the shakes out of his voice when he asked Sims if he'd killed his daughter. All Hell broke loose when Sims nodded and said he had. Six or seven boys, all of them friends or brothers of the girls, dragged him off the porch and beat him within an inch of his life. When they finished, Sims was barely conscious. Randall hauled him to his feet while Sam and I fetched a rope from the back of Jake's truck. We tossed the rope over a high tree limb, made a noose, and hanged Sims. He gurgled and took a long time dying. I will never forget how he twitched and swayed.

Once the deed was done, we cut the body down and dug a grave way up in the woods. We buried him there, on unhallowed ground, and covered the grave with heavy creek stones to keep wild animals from digging him back up. We stuck Sims' damned knife between two of the heaviest stones, as a reminder of the terrible things he'd done.

Helen Fennick

Concept: Employee at a New Age bookstore

You have sought enlightenment in the books you sell for years, but always known deep down that something crucial was lacking from them. There was some fundamental truth missing. You recently started dreaming of a small rural town isolated by an endless sea of soybean and cotton fields. Night after night, you watch in horror as a monstrous shadow rises from the ground to stalk the citizens of this sleepy little village. You wake bathed in cold sweat with the memory of spilled blood so strong in your mind that you can almost smell it. You instinctively know that confronting this terror will be dangerous, but may lead to a fundamental change in your perceptions and beliefs. You may finally come to know some of the mysteries you once sought between the pages of books, but at what price? Still, you must investigate it.

Primary Attributes:

Strength 2 Intelligence 3
Dexterity 3 Perception 2
Constitution 2 Willpower 3

Secondary Attributes:

Life Points 26
Endurance Points 26
Speed 10
Essence 25

Qualities/Drawbacks:

The Gift
Increased Essence Pool 2
Essence Channeling 3
Contacts 5
Charisma +1 (+1 on Social Tasks)
Emotional Dependency (Clingy)
Bad Luck 2 (-2 to one action or -1 to two actions, per game session)

Skills:

Humanities (Wiccan Theology) 3
Rituals (Wiccan) 3
Unconventional Medicine (Herbs) 3
First Aid 2
Haggling 2
Science (Psychology) 3
Swimming 2
Survival (Forest) 1
Singing 2
Fine Arts (Drawing) 2
Driving (Car) 2

Anthony “Tony” Clements

Concept: Worldly Jesuit Priest

You followed in your brother’s footsteps and joined a gang at an early age. You lived fast and hard, and watched most of your friends die. You probably wouldn’t have lived to see twenty-one if you hadn’t become involved in one of the Jesuit outreach programs. The Jesuits gave you an honest job and helped you earn your GED. Deeply grateful for the second chance they had given you, and eager to give something back to the community, you joined the Society of Jesus. After your training was complete, you returned to New Orleans and volunteered for a program much like the one that had helped you. A few days ago, you were summoned to a higher calling and given a vision during evening prayers. You saw what appeared to be a burly man walking down a narrow residential street with a black-handled knife in his right hand. You intuitively understood this was no man, however, but a creature of manifest evil. This vision repeated the next evening, and ended with a strong urge to travel north. When you told your superior about these visions, he looked decidedly grim but gave you traveling money and the loan of a small car. You don’t know what you will find, but you cannot ignore the summons you’ve been given.

Primary Attributes:

Strength 3 Intelligence 3
Dexterity 3 Perception 3
Constitution 4 Willpower 4

Secondary Attributes:

Life Points 47
Endurance Points 38
Speed 14
Essence Pool 20

Qualities/Drawbacks:

The Gift
Divine Inspiration
Nerves of Steel (+4 bonus to Fright Checks)
Situational Awareness (+2 on Perception Tests to sense trouble)
Hard to Kill 3 (+3 on Survival Tests)
Status 2
Honorable 2
Minority (Experiences prejudice in most areas of the country)
Resources (Hurting)

Skills:

Humanities (Catholic Theology) 3
Ritual (Catholic) 3
Language (Latin) 2
Streetwise 3
Notice 3
Intimidation 2
Stealth 1
Brawling 3
Guns (Handgun) 2
Hand Weapon (Knife) 1
Dodge 2
First Aid 2
Driving (Car) 3

Lindsey Sandalin

Concept: Computer Science Student

You viewed yourself only as an average, if somewhat talented, Computer Science major until a few weeks ago. Your primary concerns were grades, money, and having a good time. That all changed when the visions started. You have seen an unfamiliar small town, isolated and far away. You have also seen a pool of ravenous, living shadow resting in a shallow grave on the outskirts of town. Your most recent and final vision was of this malignant entity rising up to devour the entire town. A weatherworn green and white sign identifies the town as Promise, Mississippi. These powerful visions are far too real to ignore, and the doctor insists there's nothing physically wrong with you. The best way to bring an end to these visions, you reason, is to see the town for yourself.

Primary Attributes:

Strength 2 Intelligence 3
Dexterity 2 Perception 3
Constitution 2 Willpower 3

Secondary Attributes:

Life Points 26
Endurance Points 26
Speed 8
Essence 35

Qualities/Drawbacks:

The Gift
Increased Essence Pool 4
Essence Channeling 2
Resources (Below Average)

Skills:

Computers 3
Computer Programming 3
Computer Hacking 2
Engineer (Electrical) 2
Sciences (Physics) 2
Research 2
Writing (Technical) 3
Language (French) 1
Humanities (History) 1
Sport (Basketball) 1
First Aid 2
Riding 1
Driving (Car) 2

Marcus “Marc” Evans

Concept: Ancient History Student

Through natural intelligence and hard work, you won a full scholarship to a state university. It was your only ticket out of the dying farming town you were born in. College vastly expanded your horizons and forced you to challenge many of your beliefs, but it also gave you a deep appreciation for where you came from. Since you're doing well in your classes and have an extended weekend, you're going home for a visit. You just hope your battered pickup truck is up to the trip. The alternator's twitchy and it goes through a quart of oil a week, but it's the best you and your parents could afford.

Primary Attributes:

Strength 2 Intelligence 4
Dexterity 2 Perception 3
Constitution 2 Willpower 3

Secondary Attributes:

Life Points 26
Endurance Points 29
Speed 8
Essence Pool 42

Qualities/Drawbacks:

The Gift
Increased Essence Pool 4
Essence Channeling 4
Old Soul 1
Resources (Below Average)
Honorable 1
Covetous (Ambitious) 1

Skills:

Humanity (Ancient History) 3
Myth and Legend (Middle-Eastern) 3
Humanities (Abrahamic Theology) 3
Language (Latin) 2
Language (Arabic) 2
Computers 1
Research 2
Writing (Academic) 2
Sport (Baseball) 2
Brawling 1
Riding 1
Survival (Forest) 1
Driving (Car) 2

Theresa Collins

Concept: Runaway Teenager

You ran away from home shortly after you caught your first glimpse of the dead. Your friends ostracized you when you told them of your experiences, and your parents treated you with infuriating delicacy. You weren't insane, you just saw things you'd sometimes rather not. You were determined to escape when you overheard your parents talking about sending you to a hospital for psychiatric evaluation. Anything was better than that. You stuffed your most treasured personal possessions and some clothes into a backpack and left that night. Life has seldom been easy since then, but you haven't looked back. Through a series of strange events, you've recently found yourself wandering the back roads of the rural South.

Primary Attributes:

Strength 2 Intelligence 2
Dexterity 2 Perception 4
Constitution 3 Willpower 3

Secondary Attributes:

Life Points 30
Endurance Points 26
Speed 10
Essence 31

Qualities/Drawbacks:

The Gift
Increased Essence Pool 2
Essence Channeling 3
Old Soul 1
Recurring Nightmares
Resources (Miserable)

Skills:

Writing (Creative) 3
Computers 3
Language (Spanish) 3
Acting 1
Dancing (Modern) 2
Notice 3
Streetwise 2
Smooth Talking 2
Stealth 2
Brawling 1
Hand Weapon (Knife) 1
Driving (Car) 2