



THE MAN DOWNSTAIRS

BY

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CREDITS PAGE

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THE HOOK

The tenants of 224 Lenox Avenue, between W 121st and W 122nd, New York City, have a neighbor they have never met, and never knew existed until a few weeks ago, yet he was always there. He lives on the second floor. Until recently, nobody in 224 Lenox knew there was a second floor; they walked past it each day, but never saw it. That was the way the man on the second floor liked it – he valued his privacy.

Now his protections are failing. The people living at 224 Lenox realize the second floor exists, even if they can't always find it. The landlord is particularly concerned, since he isn't getting rent for that apartment, so he brings the investigators in to find out who the man is, and how long he's been there.

The problem is, the investigators aren't the only people looking for the man downstairs.

Keeper's Note: this scenario contains references to drug use, alcohol use, and dark themes. It does not include extreme content, such as excessively violent or pornographic imagery.

THE AWFUL TRUTH

The man downstairs is Josef Voorzanger, and he took up occupancy in 1881, the year the tenement was first built. There was a fire in the tenement in 1882, and seven people died, among them Josef – at least, officially. The fire was a necessary evil, and the dead were sacrificed to provide Josef with some security. Their deaths gave Josef the power he needed to disguise the second floor, so nobody could find it. Josef needed that level of protection because he was on the run, and still is.

Josef is a clever man, and a diligent student of the occult. Years ago he sold himself to dark powers in exchange for his heart's desire, the ability to win the complete obedience, (he would call it love), of a woman. For a time he enjoyed his life with his beloved Renata, but problems soon arose. Obedience is not love, and he grew bored, then angry, with his bride. He killed her in a fit of rage, only to discover that obedience survives after death.

Josef panicked. He originally conceived of the fire as a means of covering up the murder, but quickly realized it could be further turned to his advantage. The servant of dark powers Josef had sold himself to would eventually collect on the debt. What if, when that servant came, Josef wasn't there?

Once the ritual was complete, and workers arrived to repair the tenement, Josef used his magic to compel them to wipe their minds, removing all recollection of the second floor, or anything peculiar they might have seen during the repair work. When it looked as if one of them was about to have an inconvenient recovery of memory, he sent his wife to deal with the problem. After that, Josef lived the life of a hermit, in an apartment nobody but he could find. He never left the apartment, using magic to compel one of his neighbors to shop for him, and using his cat as a spy, keeping watch on the outside world.

Every so often he would fall in love with a neighbor, and that poor unfortunate would vanish. In time he grew tired of her, and then the old story repeated itself. To date, including Renata, he has had four 'wives.'

Time marches on. Josef does not know how to prolong his life, and his clever mind is failing him. The power he gained from all those sacrifices is wearing off. He knows what that means, and is terrified.

The man with lightning flowers is coming for Josef Voorzanger.

HARLEM UNBOUND

This scenario does not use any material from Harlem Unbound, published by Darker Hue Studios and written by Chris Spivey. All such material is copyright Darker Hue Studios.

However, the author encourages anyone interested in the setting to seek out Harlem Unbound, as it is a splendid supplement, and includes rules conversions for GUMSHOE as well as Call of Cthulhu.

RACE AND RACISM

Racism is not a topic lightly trifled with.

When playing in any historical setting, the players and Keeper must decide for themselves to what extent they intend to mirror the historical mores and attitudes prevalent at that time. Americans have perpetrated and suffered under endemic racism since the nation's earliest days. Harlem, and the people who lived, loved and died there, was not exempt.

For some groups, confronting the historical climate of the time is part of the attraction of roleplaying. For others, it is something best avoided.

Harlem is a big place. In period, whites own most of the businesses and the tenements, and rent to blacks. Many of the most famous Harlem speakeasies, like the Cotton Club, are run by white gangsters for white customers; blacks can serve, but they don't get to play. Marcus Garvey preaches black nationalism from Liberty Hall on W 138th. The National Negro Committee meets in New York and creates the N.A.A.C.P.; W.E.B. DuBois, one of its founders and the preeminent sociological scholar of his day, lives in Harlem. Professionals, well-to-do middle class, the working class, the working poor, sports giants and singers, dancers and accountants, clerks and train workers, tens of thousands, and hundreds more arriving each year, all call Harlem home.

Its heartbeat is Lenox Avenue.

MISTER SHAPIRA

The owner of 224 Lenox is Leonid Shapira, but he is well advanced in years. His son Zeno runs the family business these days, and it is at his invitation that the investigators gather at his business address in East Harlem.

It is a modest brownstone. The Shapiras own it, and rent most of the offices to other businesses – lawyers, accountants and other professionals. One or two of them are slightly shady; one of the architects does a lot of work with speakeasies, and the lawyer on the third floor is, frankly, a crook. However he is a respectable crook; the Shapiras would never rent to anyone less than respectable, not for any amount of money.

The Shapiras have the best office, up on the top floor. Traffic noise is dimmed, and sunlight filters through cloudy skies.

Zeno Shapira is in his 30s, and does all of the talking. His father sits in the corner and nods, occasionally adjusting the spectacles on his withered nose.

“We have a problem,” says Zeno, “With one of our tenants. Well, strictly speaking, he isn’t a tenant. He certainly never signed a lease, but he’s there, and I want to know what he thinks he’s doing.

“We first became aware of the problem about two weeks ago, when one of our other tenants complained. At the time we didn’t take the complaint that seriously, because, well, the man didn’t make much sense, and I thought he might be drunk. We had some problems at the time which made me think that might be the cause of it all.”

Zeno’s clearly uncomfortable talking about this, and investigators who make a **Law or Know** check realize this is because of a recent embarrassing news story. The Prohibition Bureau raided a speakeasy operating out of one of 224 Lenox’s shop fronts, and there were allegations that prostitutes were doing business there. “This is an ordinary speakeasy catering to men and women at which prostitutes are permitted to solicit,” said the Prohibition Bureau’s report, which appeared almost verbatim in the papers. “At the time of the investigation one prostitute was seen who was known to the investigator.” The story hit the *Graphic* newspaper, complete with photos of the alleged whores being dragged out of 224 Lenox by police. Zeno would rather have all his teeth pulled by a drunk mortician than talk about it.

“Anyway, we’ve changed our minds. It’s pretty clear that someone’s living there, and we didn’t know about it till now. We want to know who, and for how long. You don’t have to worry about getting rid of the *schlemiel*.”

His father pipes up for the first, and only, time.

“We have people who take care of that for us.”

“What makes me mad,” Zeno continues, “Is somehow this guy’s been getting away with it for who knows how long, and we never had a clue. Our superintendent never said a thing, nor did any of the other tenants. It’s uncanny, but that’s not important right now; what I need you to do is confirm the guy exists, and how long he’s been there, in case we decide to sue for back rent.”

The investigators may ask the Shapiras some questions, or go through the office records for more information about 224 Lenox. They discover:

- **Accounting (no dice roll):** 224 Lenox is a five story tenement, with three shop fronts at street level. One of the shop fronts is currently unoccupied. A shoemaker and a clothing repair shop are in the two occupied shop fronts, and all the other apartments are tenanted by families. The superintendent, Mister Early, has been in the building for eleven years, and by all reports is a conscientious worker. See **Psychology**, below.
- **Persuade or Charm (no dice roll):** the man who complained is Charles Jones, one of the fifth floor tenants. He said he followed a dead black cat to an apartment that didn’t exist before, and was thrown out by a naked white man. However Charles doesn’t know where the apartment is, exactly, nor can he find it again.
- **Psychology:** neither Leonid nor Zeno know the second floor exists. As far as they’re concerned, 224 Lenox is a four story tenement. They are perfectly sincere in this belief, and will not deviate from it without some kind of objective proof. Plans of the original building taken from City records, or the architect who designed it, will do. Even when they look at their own records, they see only four stories.
- **Library Use or History:** 224 Lenox was built in 1881, and suffered a catastrophic fire in 1882 that resulted in several deaths and extensive damage. Fortunately the building was saved, and restored. This is all before the Shapiras bought the building in 1900, and neither of them know much about it beyond what little is in the property file. Apart from that, the building has had an uneventful career. There’s enough information in the property file to track down the original architect, and his drawings, should the investigators feel the need.
- **Persuade or Charm (hard):** Leonid remembers that several women went missing at 224 Lenox over the years. He’s pushed it to the back of his mind; after all, people get lost all the time in the big city. So a daughter gets itchy feet, or a wife runs out on her husband. So what else is new? But all this talk of tenants who weren’t there before, and are there now, makes him nervous, and a little guilty. Perhaps he should have looked harder, when people said women had gone without explanation or a trace. To his knowledge, three women went missing, the first in 1901, another in 1915, and one last year.

THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX

Most of the scenario takes place at 224 Lenox. However the investigators may choose to follow up leads elsewhere, and the sources most likely to yield useful information are:

- Local tradespeople, like shop delivery workers, ice vendors, or the milkman.
- City employees who work in the neighborhood, like the beat cop, or the mailman.
- The Prohibition Bureau, if the investigators know that the speakeasy at 224 was recently raided.
- Gamblers, criminals and other folk from the shady side of the street, who might know about the speakeasy.
- Newspaper archives, say from the *New York Age* or the *Graphic*.
- Public archives, like the New York Public Library Harlem Branch, which is just up the road from 224, on Lenox W 124th.

Local Tradespeople

The most useful skill tests here are **Charm**, **Fast Talk** and **Listen** (to overhear gossip):

- 224 has a peculiar reputation. People say it's haunted, but when pressed, nobody's seen a ghost, or has a ghost story to tell.
- Everyone's still talking about the speakeasy at 224 that was padlocked. It was a sight to see; one of the prostitutes punched a cop right in the eye!
- Miss Loobey used to buy double the amount of household goods and food as everyone else, but she went missing last year. Now that poor fool Roman Jones buys exactly the same things she used to, and nobody can work out where Roman gets the money. It's not as if his uncle Charles will give Roman cash.
- Miss Loobey was a pretty young thing who shared an apartment with four other girls, and she went missing last winter, just before the cold snap kicked in. She didn't have any family in Harlem, and nobody really tried to look for her. She just left. People do that.

City Employees

The most useful skill tests here are **Persuade**, **Psychology** and **Law** (to impress, and possibly bluff, bureaucracy-ridden cogs in the machine):

- It was a shame about that speakeasy. You could get good beer there, and it wasn't needled [*poisoned with a shot of industrial alcohol, for extra kick*]. **Keeper's Note:** the beat cop was getting \$200 a week bribe money to keep his eyes shut, so his opinion is biased.

- When Miss Loobey went missing, the girls sharing her flat reported it to the police. The cops went looking in all the usual places, but found nothing. There was a similar case years ago, in the same building, but the girl was never found.
- Roman Jones is a mental case, one step away from institutionalization. He's a big fellow; fortunately he's good-natured, or he could do a lot of damage.
- If the investigators know about the man with the lightning flowers, and they speak to a cop, preferably with the picture from the *Graphic* (see below), they discover that the man is a John Doe [*unidentified deceased*] who was struck by lightning and died almost instantly, about a week before the speakeasy raid. The cop was the one who found the body; he doesn't know the John Doe went missing from the morgue. The whole thing happened no more than a block from 224.

Prohibition Bureau

The most useful skill tests here are **Persuade** and **Law**, but unless the investigators have some kind of law enforcement credentials or **Credit Rating more than 50%**, any tests made are **Hard**:

- Acting on information received, the Bureau put an agent on the case, who spent two weeks gathering evidence before arranging the raid. The case goes to court in a week, and the Bureau is confident of several convictions.
- The agent is on leave, having worked very hard, almost to the point of exhaustion. The investigators are not encouraged to seek him out.
- **Hard Test, regardless of credentials or Credit Rating:** the investigators find Bureau agent Bobby Reacher, at his East Harlem apartment. Bobby saw some peculiar things at that speakeasy, like a black cat that was ice cold to the touch, but nothing beats the man he saw the last time he was there: he was marked with lightning burns, and when he spoke, the metal in his teeth flashed blue. He said he was looking for Josef Voorzanger, and when he resisted arrest during the raid, the cop who tried to arrest him was hit by an electrical charge. **Psychology (regular):** Reacher's telling the truth, and has suffered a great blow to his Sanity. His superiors are keeping him under wraps, because they're afraid he might talk out of turn and jeopardize the upcoming court case.

The Shady Side of the Street

The most useful skill tests here are **Charm**, **Fast Talk**, and **Intimidate**:

- The speakeasy was protected by Jacob Morrissey, an alumnus of the old Lenox Avenue Gang led by Gyp the Blood, which broke up when the gang's leadership went to the electric chair in 1914 for murdering gambler Herman Rosenthal. Jacob Morrissey was one of the few survivors of the Gang still free and doing business, but he got his throat cut several weeks before the Prohis raided 224. Smart money says, when Morrissey died, the cops stopped getting their bribes, which is why the Prohis got involved.
- Miss Loobey used to buy muggles [*marijuana*] and homebrew hooch at the speakeasy, but after she went missing, Roman Jones started buying the same stuff, in the same amounts. Now the speakeasy's padlocked, Roman doesn't know where to get his stuff, and nobody's in a hurry to sell to that kook.
- A pawnshop near 224 is a regular customer of Roman Jones, and before him, Miss Loobey. Both of them go there every few weeks with some new gold trinket to sell. For a while, before she went missing, Miss Loobey used to show up with pieces from a gold chess set; a few pawns one day, a queen and a couple knights the next. The pawnshop owner still has the full set; he's a little spooked by it.

Newspaper Archives

The most useful skill tests here are **Credit Rating** and **Fast Talk**. The *New York Age* is a black newspaper, the most influential of its type; the *Graphic* is an exploitative yellow sheet, also known as the porno*Graphic*, and is best known for its salacious photographs.

- The *Graphic* has the best shots of the speakeasy raid, but one of the photographs it didn't use has a clear picture of the man with lightning flowers. If the investigators want it, **Charm**, **Sleight of Hand** or **Fast Talk** is the best way to get it. The *Graphic* got its start in 1924, so it doesn't cover the previous disappearances at 224.
- The *Age* goes back to 1887, and covered both incidents. With the information in those articles, the investigators will be able to identify Josef's wives. However the fire at 224 took place in 1881, several years before the *Age* became a regular weekly, and it doesn't have any information about the fire.

Public Archives

The most useful skill test here is **Library Use**:

- From the collected letters, photographs and diaries of people who used to live on Lenox and donated their papers to the Library, the investigators can get a clear idea of what happened when 224 burned. The fire started in one of the second floor apartments, probably thanks to a neglected, lit stove. The second floor was the most badly affected, and seven people died.
- Among the dead were Josef Voorzanger, and his wife Renata. They burned alive; the others who died at 224 succumbed to smoke inhalation.
- There is one curious incident that happened after the fire. A workman who helped restore the building was strangled, and a witness to the incident, a child, claimed the one who killed him was "a nasty lady, all burned up and dead!" This sparked a very brief public scare, which died away when nobody else was hurt, and the so-called burnt lady never made another appearance. The child was orphaned by the attack, and suffered mental trauma; she died in an institution five years later.



THE MAN WITH LIGHTNING FLOWERS

Many years ago, Josef Voorzanger sold his soul to dark powers. For this scenario, it's not important precisely which powers. In theory, if you want to play a more mundane horror game, it could be Satan. However in a Cthulhu setting the more likely prospects are Nyarlathotep, Hastur the Unspeakable, Tulscha the Green Flame, or Yibb-Tstill, the Patient One.

The entity uses an avatar to carry out its bidding. That avatar is created by a lightning strike, which kills a person, allowing the husk to be inhabited by a very small portion of the entity. This avatar is what this text refers to as the man with lightning flowers: the victim was struck by lightning, and died instantly, leaving the marks of lightning burns on the victim's head and upper body. There is almost nothing left of the small-time gambler and hustler he once was.

This avatar is temporarily prevented from finding Josef thanks to the wards Josef has placed on the second floor. These wards will not hold forever; however it would be much easier for the avatar if it were let through Josef's defenses – say, by the investigators.

The avatar has very limited intelligence; its human personality has been thoroughly scrambled by the lightning strike, and the controlling entity is unfathomably inhuman and malign. It can talk, but bargaining with it does not work. It doesn't understand promises, and cannot make a deal. Its one function is to carry out the terms of Josef's contract, and that means Josef has to die.

Once the investigators know about the man with lightning flowers, they may try to find out more about him. The ordinary Harlemites on Lenox don't know anything, but the cop on the beat was there when the victim was hit by lightning (see **City Employees**, above), and the Office of the Chief Medical Officer of the City of New York has an embarrassing story about him, that it would rather keep quiet.

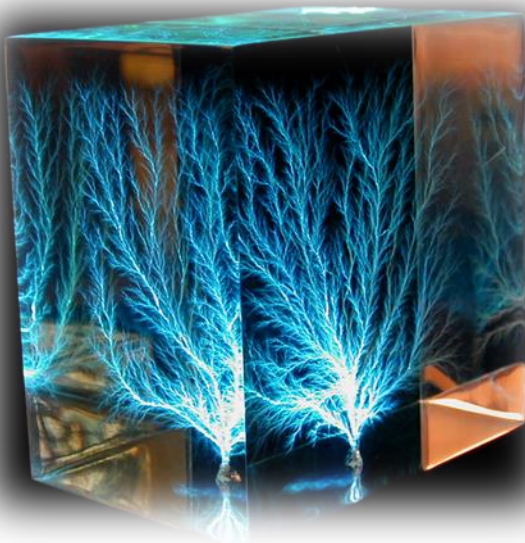
Finding out this story is a **Hard** test of an interpersonal ability, though if the investigator has legal credentials of any kind the test is **Regular**. The body was transferred to the Chief Medical Examiner's office for autopsy; one of the lab technicians was particularly keen to see what happens when someone dies by lightning strike. However, although the body was received and signed for, it went missing, along with its clothes and personal belongings. A thorough search of the morgue turned up nothing. Best guess is that someone turned the body over to a funeral home after the Chief Medical Examiner's office received it, possibly thanks to faulty paperwork. Losing bodies isn't something the forensic technicians would prefer they were known for, so the story's being hushed up.

The avatar has been seen several times. The *Graphic* has a photograph of him (**Newspaper Archives**, page 7), and the Prohibition Bureau agent who conducted the speakeasy raid at 224 Lenox saw him in action (**Prohibition Bureau**, page 6). If the investigators have a photograph, one of their contacts on **The Shady Side of the Street** will recognize him as 'Horse' Baron, a gambler with bad, metal-filled teeth and an unlucky streak as wide as the Hudson River. However, to the best of the contact's knowledge, Horse left town weeks ago. At least, nobody's seen Horse at his usual haunts.

The Keeper should use the man with lightning flowers as a floating adversary, who can appear whenever convenient. He can act as a spur to action; whenever the investigators seem at a loss, or the players seem bored, have him appear, much like Raymond Chandler's man with a gun in his hand.

If the investigators manage to defeat the avatar, and it's a little too soon in the plot for that to happen, don't worry: one lightning strike later, and another avatar appears, and another, and another, if necessary. It's not as if the dark powers are ever going to run out of lightning bolts. Try not to electrocute a player character, but otherwise, zap away.

Lightning flowers, also known as Lichtenberg figures, are caused by the rupture of capillaries under the skin due to the shock wave of lightning discharge. They were first described by the German physicist Georg Christoph Lichtenberg, in the 18th Century. They resemble branching, fernlike formations, not unlike a lightning strike itself. When a victim survives a hit, the scarring dissipates in a matter of hours; in this instance, the scars are permanent red blemishes (possibly green, if Tulscha is the dark power), which glow in the dark – or when the avatar gets angry.



224 LENOX AVENUE

This brownstone, built 1881 when Harlem was in the early throes of a building boom, is where the majority of the scenario takes place. It is a fairly grandiose five story building, constructed in neoclassic style with Palladian touches. The Shapiras have updated it with modern central heating, electricity and plumbing, but otherwise haven't put a lot of money into it. Their superintendent, Richard Earley, is a minor miracle worker when it comes to home repair, and the tenants at 224 all like him.

Few of the tenants are aware there is a second floor. Only Charles Jones and his nephew Roman have seen it for themselves, and Roman is under Josef Voorzanger's control. Many of the tenants think there is something spooky about the building but, when pressed, none of them have experienced anything eerie. They just don't like the way it feels, and sometimes smells.

There's an odd miasma that sweeps through the building every so often, a heavy chemical odor with sulfuric overtones. A **hard Chemistry** test, reduced to **regular** difficulty if the investigator making the test has **any points in Occult above base**, recognizes the stink as the aftereffect of an alchemical working. This is what happens when Josef uses his alchemical lab to produce gold, which Roman then sells so he can buy Josef's food and supplies. Josef can prevent people from finding his apartment, but he can't do anything about the stink, which comes up through the service elevator shaft. It is much easier to find the second floor if the investigators track it by smell, when Josef is working his alchemical magic. See **Finding the Second Floor**, page 12. The Shapiras, and Mister Earley, know about the smell but can't do anything about it. The Shapiras think it's someone making bathtub gin. Mister Earley doesn't know what it is, but is confident it isn't bathtub gin. Or, if it is, he never wants to drink a pint of gin that smells like that.

The Keeper should refer to the tenement plans for further information about the building layout. Each floor above the storefronts is exactly the same as the others. The apartments each have at least one chamber(s) (bedrooms), one kitchen, and usually one living room, or parlor. The apartments at the front of the building overlooking the street have parlors rather than living rooms, because there isn't enough space for a full-fledged living room. Toilets and baths are right next to the kitchen in every apartment; it keeps the plumbing and waste water lines clustered together in the same spot.

Mister Early lives in the apartment colored orange on the building plan, on the first floor. All the other apartments are occupied by tenants.

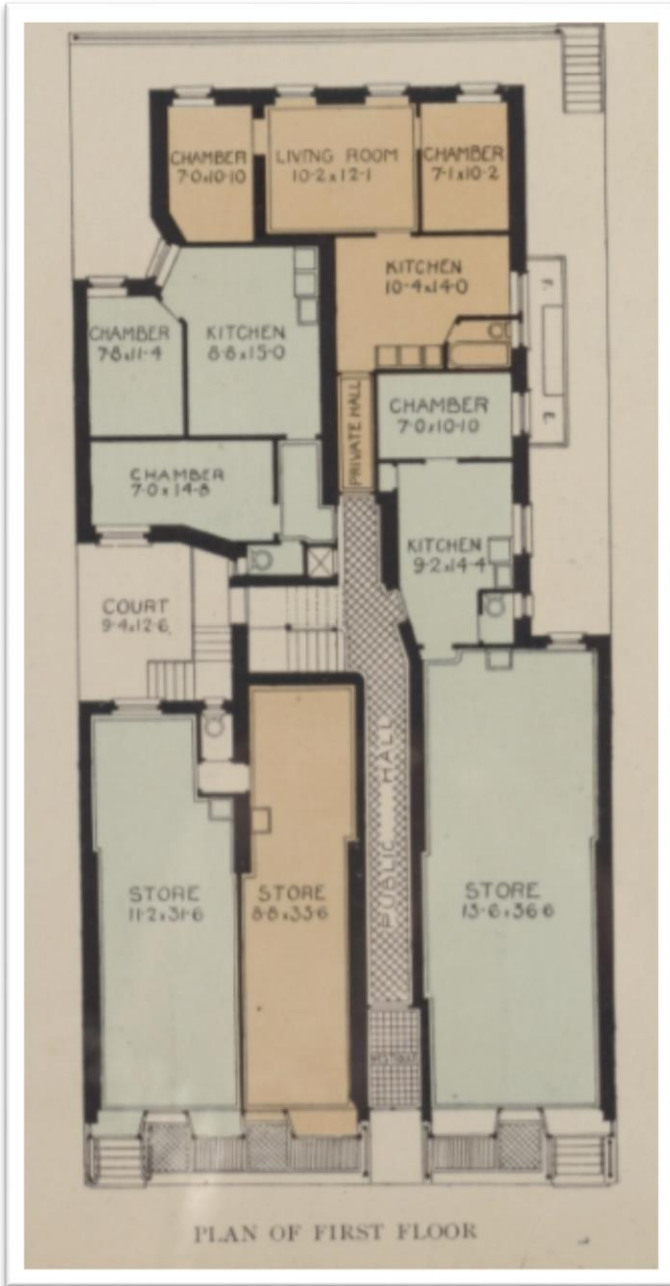
The Fire Escapes are marked F E on the building plan.

The Court is open air. On the first floor, there are steps up to the side door of the building, which enters into the public hall under the stair that leads up to the other floors. The other access point, for the first floor public hall is via the street, between the store fronts, as indicated on the building plan.

The Court is accessed by an alley running between this tenement and the tenement next door. Some apartments are less desirable than others, and while this is in part a size issue, it's also a light problem. Not all of the rooms have good access to natural light, and some of those that do look out on less interesting vistas, like the Court. The store fronts only get natural light from their front windows, making them feel dim and gloomy without electric lights.

There is a very small service elevator marked with a cross on each floor, which opens into the public hallway. It was only ever intended to move groceries and small goods. It's not big enough to fit anyone larger than a child, and in any case hasn't worked properly in years. An investigator would have to be SIZ 50 or less to have a hope of fitting down the elevator shaft, and a fall is **potential major injury**. Josef's cat sometimes uses it as a means of getting from floor to floor.





FIRST FLOOR

Storefronts

There are three storefronts at street level, two small, one large.

The two smaller storefronts are occupied by legitimate businesses. One is a shoe shop, operated by Joseph Haywood, who lives with his family on the fourth floor. The other is a hairdressers, operated by Adelaide White, who doesn't live in the building. The third, and largest, is the former speakeasy, which is padlocked with a notice tacked to the door by the Prohibition Bureau.

Joseph Hayward has two employees, Michael Stuart and Bob Packer, neither of whom live in the building. The two employees are middle aged skilled craftsmen who mind their own business, and won't say anything about the building without Joseph's say-so; in any case, they know nothing about the second floor, though they have colorful stories about the goings-on at the speakeasy. The shoe store is well appointed, and there's a sharp smell of leather and polish. The store specializes in men's shoes, but there is a small stock of women's as well. It's Hayward's boast that he can repair any shoe within twenty four hours, no matter what the damage. **Charm** or **Persuade** works best here, but neither Hayward nor his employees know anything useful. Joseph complains about the chemical stink (the alchemical smell, see page 13), and they've all seen the black cat hanging around, which they think is bad luck, but they've no lurid stories to tell.

Adelaide White and her three employees, Ellie Potter, Alberta Jefferson and Sessie Dunn, do not live at 224 and have nothing useful to impart. They all knew about the speakeasy, which they didn't like – it made the neighborhood less respectable, and some of their clients were scandalized by it. However they knew better to complain, bearing in mind who was supposed to be protecting it. As with the shoe shop, all of them have seen the black cat. They think one of the tenants owns it, but don't know who. The hairdressers is smartly turned-out, and can handle almost any request; their specialty is the bob *a la* Ethel Moses.

The speakeasy is padlocked and the curtains are drawn. There is a notice on the door announcing that the business has been closed for multiple violations of the Volstead Act. Technically it's a crime to go in, but it's not one the police or anyone else is going to go out of their way to punish. The only reason nobody's tried yet is nobody has a reason; the Shapiras aren't going anywhere near it till the scandal dies down, and the gangsters who used to run the place are dead or in jail. **Locksmith** or a good pair of bolt cutters will get past the padlock.

Inside, the place is a mess. The police took an ax to every piece of furniture and bottle; there's nothing left but splinters and a strong smell of bootleg beer. An unknown artist drew dancing figures all over the walls, and there are some smashed musical instruments on the floor where the band used to play.

The kitchen attached to the store is a dump. Nobody bothered to clean it while the speakeasy was in business; there are some old pots on the stove with what was rice and boiled pigs feet, once upon a time, but the passing weeks have turned it into green, maggot-crusting sludge that even a desperate rat, (and there are some of those wandering the kitchen), would think twice about eating.

The back room was where the prostitutes did business, and when that wasn't going on, where small time gamblers played cards. This, too, has been cut to pieces.

The speakeasy has been picked clean, first by the Prohibition Bureau, then by the cops. There's nothing here worth having, nor are there any useful clues.

The first time the investigators come here, they find Roman Jones picking through the rubble, looking for anything he can take up to Josef. Maybe someone overlooked some muggles, or there's a bottle of beer that escaped the ax. On all subsequent visits, Roman isn't here, though the black cat may be. Roman got in by forcing the window that leads into the kitchen. See page 21 for further information about Roman.

Superintendent's Apartment

Mister Earley lives in the apartment colored orange on the map, on the first floor, with kitchen, living room and two bedrooms.

Richard Earley, his wife and two children live here. Richard's brother Wilton is here, temporarily, on the living room couch; his wife threw him out. The apartment is as spotless as it can be; Josephine Earley is compulsively tidy, but Wilton's not making it easy for her. Most of the furniture is Josephine's, from her aunt and mother's apartments, and some of it is pre-Civil War, which she takes great pride in polishing almost daily.

Charm or **Persuade** works best here, and there's a **bonus die** if Earley has any reason to believe the investigators are working for the Shapiras. They know:

- The chemical stink has been a problem from the beginning. There's no predicting when it will happen, but not a month goes by without at least one breakout. Mister Earley can't understand it; despite years of trying to track it down, he's got no clue what causes it.
- The black cat has been a regular visitor ever since they moved in. They don't know who owns it; they don't think it belongs to anyone in the building, and besides, just how long do cats live, anyway? This one never seems to age, and Mister Earley knows, from talking to the man who looked after the building before he did, that the cat's been around for twenty years or more. He's forbid his children from playing with it, not that they need telling; it frightens them.

- The speakeasy was a problem from day one, but the gangsters who operated it threatened Mister Earley's children, and shut the Shapiras up with a combination of bribery and, when that didn't altogether work, threats. Mister Earley isn't sorry to see it go. Eventually he'll have to clear the place out and get it ready for a new tenant, but he's waiting for the Shapira's say-so before he does that.
- Roman Jones is, in Mister Earley's opinion, a dangerous man. He's fine and docile most of the time, but when he gets mad, Katy bar the door. He used to follow Miss Loobey around like a puppy; when she left, Mister Earley thought Roman would break down, but he acts as though nothing happened.

Charlie Rose's Apartment

Charlie Rose and his wife Emma Lou live in the other apartment on the first floor.

Charlie is a motorman who works for the Elevated Railway, on the Ninth Avenue El with its infamous 'suicide curve.' He's got plenty of stories to tell about people who fling themselves to their doom on the 90 degree junction from Ninth Avenue to 110th Street. However he has nothing useful to say about 224 Lenox; like the other tenants, he's seen the black cat, and thinks the building is spooky, but has no real complaints.

Emma Lou gets bored sitting around all day with little to do. She's too young to enjoy the staid life of a stay-at-home wife, and far too pretty for safety. More than one wife at 224 has cause to clip their husbands' ears, for letting their gaze linger too long on Emma Lou's shapely form. She's carrying on with Davey Salt, the trumpet player up on the fourth floor, but that won't last long; Emma Lou's flings never do. **Charm**, or possibly **Intimidate** if the investigator knows about her trifling with the trumpet player, gets her to admit that Miss Loobey was, to her certain knowledge, having some kind of affair with someone in the building.

To hear Emma Lou tell it, Miss Loobey was in love. At least, she always had a faraway look in her eyes when she talked about him. It was the strangest thing, though; Miss Loobey insisted her paramour was white, and there are no white tenants at 224. She also said that her lover had been married three times before, "but this would be for keeps."

SECOND FLOOR

Finding the Second Floor

This is blocked off by Josef's wards, and cannot be perceived. The other tenants at 224 walk past each day, never noticing it. Because he never has to clean up after himself, and because he doesn't maintain it, Josef has allowed the second floor to fall into a semi-decrepit ruin. There's a stink of stale air and sulfur throughout, and fearless rats skitter across the floor.

In order to bypass the wards, the investigators need to make a **Hard Luck check, or a Regular Occult check, with a penalty die**. Josef has put a great deal of effort into his wards, and his Mythos magic, backed by human sacrifice, is why the investigators have a penalty die.

However it is not always this difficult. If the investigators are following right on the heels of someone who is allowed to come and go, like the black cat or Roman Jones, or if the alchemical stink is active, then they still need to make a **Hard Luck check, or Regular Occult check, but without the penalty die**. Also, if an investigator has **Cthulhu Mythos above base, then that investigator does not suffer a penalty die under any circumstances**, and does not need to be trailing after Roman or the cat, or wait for the stink, to avoid the penalty die. Their Mythos score is enough.

If an investigator gets through, but other investigators do not, then from the point of view of those who failed the check, the successful investigator disappears into thin air. However if that successful investigator returns to the group, she can lead the others through. As long as they maintain physical contact – holding hands works – no further dice rolls are required.

The black cat and Roman Jones come and go, and are not necessarily on this floor when the investigators arrive. However Josef never leaves, and neither do his wives.

Once the investigators get through, they can see the wards for themselves. These magical symbols are scratched into the stairs, doors, and windows of the second floor, covering every possible entrance, except for the service elevator. This means someone could, in theory, get up through the service elevator, if they were small and agile enough. **Occult** or **Cthulhu Mythos** recognizes the wards as powerful magic, the work of someone very experienced in ritual workings.

Each room is described in order, starting with the apartment at the upper left hand corner, next to the stairs, colored light blue, and then running clockwise from apartment to apartment.

Renata's Apartment

Renata has been Josef's slave the longest, and has been ignored for most of that time. Though she's devoted to him, and is almost in a zombie state, there's a small part of her original personality left, just enough that she's aware of what she's become, and how powerless she is. She can't even die, and her burnt, flaking flesh is a constant agony. She can't talk, as her vocal cords and tongue were destroyed in the fire, but she can make wordless hissing noises. She spends most of her time enraged, and if she could get her hands on Miss Loobey she'd tear her apart. This is why Josef took the precaution of nailing

boards across the front door of her apartment, though if she needed to she could **break through in two rounds**.

The wallpaper here has been almost scratched off by Renata, over the years, and the carpets are worn through. This is the best furnished of the apartments; most of the furnishings are Renata's, inherited from her family or bought when she and Josef married. There's a silver framed photograph of Renata and Josef on their wedding day, on a table in Renata's bedroom. There's a trail of flaked-off flesh in each room.

This is the only apartment the cat never enters.

Cecilia's Apartment

Cecilia Gebel became Josef's slave in 1901. At that time she was the sixteen-year-old bride of one of the other tenants in the building, and the neighborhood was still Jewish, though it wouldn't be for much longer. Cecilia is also the one Josef remained happiest with for the longest time, and she managed to survive for five years before Josef finally tired of her. She died when he punched her, so hard that she stumbled and hit her head. She still has a visible dent, but as it's in the back of her head and part covered by hair, it's not easy to spot.

This apartment is sparsely furnished. The living room is well appointed, with old-fashioned, heavy wooden furniture, but the bedrooms and kitchen are almost empty. Josef dragged out the luxurious bed after he and Cecilia stopped sleeping together, and Cecilia had no other bedroom furniture. Her clothes closet has also been raided over the years, and there's little but scraps left.

Cecilia spends most of her time sitting in her rocking chair, humming to herself. She always hums the same tune: *The Faithful Hussar (Der Treue Husar)*, about a brave young soldier separated from his dying lady love. Every so often, she sings it aloud, which can be heard by the apartment above; see page 14.

The cat often comes in here and sits on Cecilia's lap.

Kate's Apartment

Kate Cooper was the fifteen-year-old daughter of a drunk who used to regularly beat her, and her siblings. Josef pictured himself as her rescuer, when he abducted her in 1915. Her soldier boyfriend came looking for Kate, but never could find her; see further page 14.

However Josef tired of her very quickly. As a slave, she couldn't show the proper gratitude to her rescuer; Josef wanted adoration and praise, but she was no more expressive than any of those who had come before her. Consequently he broke her neck less than a year after taking her, and her head always lolls to one side.

However, because she's an excellent cook, Josef has her preparing all his meals. Her kitchen is the best appointed of all the apartments, and the cupboards are well stocked. The apartment has very little other furniture, and when not cooking or cleaning all the apartments, she spends most of her time sitting on the floor, waiting for instructions.

Because she cleans all the other apartments, Kate is the only one of Josef's wives who might be found outside her apartment. She only cleans those rooms she's been instructed to clean, by Josef.

The cat very occasionally comes in here, always when Kate is cooking.

Josef's Apartment

This is the largest of the apartments, and one of two facing the street; the other has been given to Miss Loobey.

The kitchen is devoted to Josef's alchemical experiments. When a younger man, he loved to try new ideas and considered the quest for alchemical gold to be his lifetime achievement. Now he couldn't care less, and churns out gold every so often when he needs more money, otherwise ignoring his life's work. He had a very extensive alchemical library, once upon a time, and his collection of original documents may have been unique, in the Western world at least. However in the years since he's torn pages out of priceless tomes and used it to roll muggles cigarettes, or for a similarly less-than-dignified purpose. He's stopped caring, and the shoddy, stained condition of the texts in his alchemical library reflect this. The Keeper should feel free to seed the alchemical library with such texts as the Keeper feels appropriate for the campaign, but the collection definitely includes:

- *The Secret Doctrine*, a translation of the *Book of Dzyan*; no spells, no Sanity loss, and no Mythos either, as the most relevant sections have been torn out.
- *Book of Eibon*, English language version, a 17th Century version of the 15th Century translation, Sanity Loss 1D3, no spells, no Mythos; a quarter of the book has been torn out, and what's left of it is currently next to the toilet.
- *Nameless Cults*, 1909, Golden Goblin Press edition, Sanity Loss 1D3, no spells, no Mythos. Pages from this have been used to make paper dolls which he pins on the kitchen wall, and throws darts at when he's bored.

If the alchemical equipment, which is always on low heat, is smashed or significantly disturbed, there's a risk (**Luck check**) the building will be set on fire. A fire starts as a **potential minor injury**, and if not put out, **grows within four rounds** to be a **potential moderate injury**. **Four rounds after that**, it becomes a **potential major injury**, and once it gets that bad there is no chance of putting out the fire without the help of the fire department. This causes severe damage to 224 Lenox, and the Shapiras will not be pleased.

Josef spends most of his time in the Parlor, or at Miss Loobey's apartment. The two bedrooms of his apartment are filled with a lifetime's worth of junk, and are so stuffed with useless garbage that it's impossible to go in. There's just enough space for the cat to fit through.

Josef keeps a makeshift bed in the Parlor, and rarely bothers with clothes. **Spot Hidden** finds enough information – old diaries, photographs, letters, love poetry, articles clipped out of newspapers about missing women – to identify all of Josef's wives. There are four jars up on the mantelpiece in the Parlor, each of which contains a glowing liquid. Each jar is labeled with a different name: Renata, Cecilia, Kate, Minnie. These jars contain the life essence of Josef's wives; **Sanity Loss 1/1D4+1** if the investigators realize this. If Miss Loobey's jar is smashed, she's free of him, and will run away. If Cecilia or Kate's jars are smashed, their bodies turn to dust, dead at last. If Renata's jar is smashed, she retains physical form and will last just long enough to attack and, if not prevented, kill Josef. If somehow she is prevented from doing so, perhaps because one of the other investigators already killed him, she will attack whoever slew him, out of rage and frustration at being denied a vengeance she's long craved. If this means she attacks the man with lightning flowers, then both of them vanish in a ball of lightning, utterly destroyed; the energy from this explosion might be enough to set the building on fire, as above.

Miss Minnie Loobey

This is the best kept of the apartments, and has the most modern furniture. Pride of place is given over to the record player in the Parlor, and most of the furniture in the Parlor has been moved to the side of the room so Miss Loobey can dance.

Josef did not realize that Miss Loobey is a female impersonator. As far as Josef was concerned, he was in love with a woman; now he doesn't know what to think. He hasn't tried to take Miss Loobey to bed since the first night, when he found out her secret. He still loves her, and when not in his apartment curled up with his memories, he spends all his waking hours with her.

Miss Loobey has no function within Josef's hierarchy. She's not the violent sociopath he can set loose on his enemies (Renata), the repository of treasured memories (Cecilia), or the dogsbody and cook (Kate). As a result, she has little to do during the day except eat the chocolates Josef has Roman bring her, and is running slightly to fat. Every so often she plays her favorite record, Freddy Keppard's version of *Willie the Weeper*, about a drug addict's dream. See page 15.

Unlike the other wives, Miss Loobey is still alive, as **Medicine** will show. If the investigators try to remove her from the apartment without smashing the glass jar in Josef's rooms, she doesn't struggle, but returns to the second floor as soon as she's able. She has no will of her own, and is tied inextricably to Josef so long as he keeps her soul in a jar.

THIRD FLOOR

Each room is described in order, starting with the apartment at the upper left hand corner, next to the stairs, colored light blue, and then running clockwise from apartment to apartment. This means, among other things, that Renata's apartment is directly below the first apartment described here in the Third Floor section, Cecelia's below the second apartment described, and so on. This becomes important because the people in the apartments above can hear what's going on below them, even if they can't perceive the Second Floor in any other way.

The Thomas' Apartment

Mister Gabriel Thomas, his wife Norah, and their two children live here. It's cramped, but cosy. Norah has a yen for the bright lights of Hollywood, and the walls are decorated with signed photographs of film stars, her only extravagance. She's especially proud of a signed letter from writer and film producer Oscar Deveraux Michaud, which she's had framed.

Husband Gabriel works for the city, as a postman, and keeps long hours. Norah worries about him; she'd worry even more if she knew how much money he lost at dice every Friday night.

None of them have seen or experienced anything unusual. Like the rest of the apartments, they complain about the chemical stink, and Norah doesn't like the black cat that keeps hanging around; she thinks it's bad luck. However they have no complaints about 224 Lenox.

They know all about the rent party that's going to be held up on the Fourth Floor next week, and Norah wants to go. If the investigators appear to the Thomases to be in any way official, the kind of people who would object to bathtub gin, the Thomases will be very nervous, which might set off the investigators' own paranoia.

The Glory's Apartment

Mister Henry Glory, his wife Thelma, and their daughter Dolores live here. Henry Glory works as an appliance repairman for a machine tool shop down the block, and is a highly skilled workaholic. He's up all hours God sends, and his only form of relaxation is Church on Sunday, where he's a deacon. His wife Thelma is slightly more frivolous, and makes her own Limoncello, (a lemon-based liqueur), in a jug under the sink. She sells the end result to other 224 Lenox tenants for mad money; Henry can be a little stingy. She learned how to make Limoncello from an Italian family she worked for, before she got married.

Like the other tenants, the Glories have noticed the smell and the cat, but haven't paid either any mind. Thelma quite likes the look of the cat, but has never been able to stroke it; the cat isn't friendly.

The Glory family definitely isn't the sort to go to rent parties, and disapprove of those who do. At least, Henry does; Thelma isn't such a stickler, but she'd never go without Henry's permission.

Listen notices that daughter Dolores occasionally sings a German folk tune, *Der Treue Husar*, which she says she learned from the lady downstairs. "She has such a beautiful voice," says Dolores. Anyone who waits patiently for several hours might hear Cecilia, in the apartment below, sing the tune.

Samuel Johnson, Pete Vance and Clarence Brooks

These three men share the apartment. Samuel Johnson, former corporal 369th Infantry Regiment, is considerably older than the other two, who are in their teens.

Pete Vance and Clarence Brooks slop out kitchens right now, but they have big dreams. They're going to be professional dancers someday, and to get there, they spend every free moment practicing their routines in the living room. Samuel Johnson doesn't mind, but it does get on his neighbors' nerves. Not that any of them would have the courage to confront him about it.

Samuel works as a bellhop at a hotel downtown. His rigid military bearing and no-nonsense attitude make him almost perfect for the role; guests have been known to salute him automatically, without thinking.

Samuel chooses to live in 224 because that's where he last saw his beloved, Kate Cooper. He never believed she'd run off without saying anything to him; if he hadn't been sent to France, he'd have carried out more of a search when she went missing. He bloodied the eye of her no-good father more than once, but that didn't stop old man Cooper. After the war, when Samuel came home, he and old man Cooper had a reckoning; what's left of Cooper is at the bottom of the Hudson.

Samuel is the only person in 224 who might come to the investigators' aid in a pinch, if need be. This is especially so if the investigators convince him that they know what happened to Kate.

Samuel and the two would-be dancers have not seen or experienced anything unusual. They know about the rent party, and are planning to go.

The Empty Apartment

This is the one apartment in the building that's untenanted.

It's clean – Mister Earley sees to that – but unfurnished, and the air is stale from being shut up most of the time. If asked, the other tenants in the building say little about it, and that's because they know why nobody lives here any more.

The Norton family used to live here, until about two weeks ago. Their son hung himself in his bedroom, and his heartbroken parents moved out. His death was only the most recent event in what the other tenants at 224 see as a string of bad luck, for those who live in this apartment. People who live here get murdered, arrested, lose their jobs, lose their families, fall into addiction, and much worse. Izzy and Sam, the Shapira's eviction specialists, return to this apartment again and again, after yet another deadbeat tenant loses out.

Josef's apartment is directly beneath this one.

Spot Hidden finds a loose floorboard in the Norton boy's bedroom, in which is hid a collection of childish drawings of a black cat, eating people. Four women in particular recur in these pictures again and again, and the boy names them as Renata, Cecilia, Kate, and Miss Loobey.

The Epps Sisters

Maudie, Louisa and Bee share these rooms. It's a little snug for three, but they manage. Maudie and Louisa have never left New York, but little Bee used to work on the White Star Line, travelling back and forth to Europe on some of the world's most luxurious ocean liners. Consequently she speaks a little of half a dozen languages, and is the most cosmopolitan of the three. However she's also a workaholic, and an outsider would be forgiven for thinking she's traded being a maid on an ocean liner to being a maid for her two, less active sisters. It's largely thanks to Bee's money, and a legacy from an aunt, that they can afford to stay at 224 when Maudie and Louisa don't work – though both are pillars of their Church, the same one that Henry Glory goes to. Bee finds time to take in laundry and mend clothes, which raises a little extra cash.

Maudie and Louisa occupy the rooms marked Chamber and Parlor, while Bee has a cot in the Living Room, which she puts away during the day so her sisters can use the room.

They know about the rent party. Maudie and Louisa, being pillars of the Church, would never dream of going, but Bee intends to sneak out and join in.

None of them have seen or experienced anything suspicious, beyond the alchemical smell and the cat. None of them like the cat, and wish they knew how to make it go away.

Anyone in the Epps Sisters' apartment for longer than an hour, (**Listen** not required – it's that loud), hears someone in the apartment below putting on a record, *Willie the Weeper*. The Epps sisters are well aware of this, and wish it would stop, but no amount of complaining to Mister Earley makes that happen. Mister Earley doesn't know which tenant is playing that song over, and over, and over again.

FOURTH FLOOR

Each room is described in order, starting with the apartment at the upper left hand corner, next to the stairs, colored light blue, and then running clockwise from apartment to apartment.

The Hayward's Apartment

Mister Joseph Hayward, his wife Laura, and their teenage son Gary live here. Mister Hayward owns the shoe shop on the first floor.

Joseph and Laura are very worried about their son, who spends far too much time in the apartment across the hall. They don't want Gary to grow up to be some kind of nightclub delinquent; they want him to be a respectable businessman, like his father. Gary, meanwhile, loves to dance and sing, and would like nothing better than to become a piano player in a honky-tonk ragtime bar.

When not working, Joseph and his wife love to go to Coney Island, particularly Steeplechase Amusement Park. There are several pictures on the wall, of the family enjoying themselves on one of the many rides or attractions at Steeplechase.

They know about the rent party and are planning to go.

None of them know about, or have experienced, anything unusual at 224 Lenox, beyond the chemical smell and cat. They don't like the cat; Laura thinks it's bad luck.

Miss Martin, Miss Watkins, Miss Groves

Three female impersonators live here. Miss Loobey also lived here, before she was taken by Josef.

The four of them shared the rooms, when Miss Loobey still lived here; Miss Loobey and Miss Groves were in the room marked Living Room. Now Miss Groves is all alone, and she's heartbroken. When not working, (all three dance at local nightspots), all she does all day is sit at the piano in the Living Room, dolefully plucking out *Willie the Weeper*; Miss Loobey's favorite song.

Gary Hayward from next door is a frequent visitor. Until Miss Loobey went missing, he was learning how to play the piano, but these days Miss Groves hasn't the heart to teach. Gary still practices each day, but it's not the same.

The bathtub next to the kitchen is full of bathtub gin. In order to make some extra money, the three intend to throw a Rent Party in about a week. A Rent Party is exactly what it sounds like, a party to raise enough cash – in this case through gin sales – to pay the rent. For that reason, if the investigators seem in any way official, or the type likely to object to bathtub gin, the three will be very nervous, which in turn may set off the investigators' own paranoia.

Charm and Persuade work best here:

- Miss Loobey behaved very strangely, in the months before she went missing. She stopped hanging around with her old friends; all her spare time was spent shopping, or on mysterious errands somewhere in the building, though she never said where or doing what.
- Roman Jones used to follow Miss Loobey all the time, like a big dog. She called him her protector. Funny; he doesn't seem at all upset that she's gone missing.
- Miss Groves once followed the black cat, after Charles Jones told everyone about what he saw. Miss Groves didn't find whatever it was he saw, but she knows the cat is dead. "It felt like ice, to touch! Then it scratched me, and I let it go."

Davey Salt, Lawrence Morton, Lorenzo Wiley

These three musicians share this apartment. Morton and Wiley sleep in the Living Room and next door Chamber, while Salt is in the bedroom next to the Kitchen.

Davey Salt, a trumpet player, is the best of the three, but all of them find plenty of work in Harlem's many nightclubs. When not out working, or relaxing in the early morning after a gig, they spend most of the day asleep, and will not be happy to be woken up, if the investigators come knocking on their door during the day.

Davey Salt is carrying on an off-again, on-again romance with Emma Lou Rose on the First Floor. It's a casual thing, for him; he has half a dozen girl friends, but Emma Lou is the only one with money. Sometimes he hits her up for a loan.

They know about the rent party; in fact, they're the entertainment. On the night, they'll be playing out in the hall for everyone to hear.

None of them have seen or experienced anything unusual, beyond the chemical stink and black cat.

The Williams' Apartment

Carl Williams, his wife Tressie, and her sister Eunice Duval live here. Carl and Tressie are trying for a baby, but nothing's come of that yet, leaving Tressie unhappy and Carl stressed.

Carl is a journalist at the *Age* newspaper, and a fund of local knowledge. He's been taking notes about the goings-on at 224, and while he doesn't know what's really behind it, he does know all about the three women who have gone missing, as well as the 1881 fire. Effectively, he has the same information as that held at the **Lenox Street Library** and **Newspaper Archives** (see page 7), but **Persuade** is necessary to get him to open up. He's thinking about writing a book of ghost stories one day, fictionalizing the lives and stories of the people who live, and lived, at 224 Lenox.

Eunice works as a secretary at a local business, and is being romanced by the owner of the firm. She doesn't mind him too much, but he'd not really her type – far too old, for one thing. However he does send her flowers every week, which brighten up her room.

All of them know about the rent party and are planning to go.

Eunice Duval once had a very odd experience, walking up to the Fourth Floor. She felt it took a lot longer than usual, for some reason, and she heard someone singing, in German. Then she saw a white man, wrapped up in a robe, who swore at her and frightened her so much that she ran the rest of the way up the stairs. She's never seen that man again, or had the same experience. **Persuade** or **Charm** is needed to get her to tell this story.

Apart from those experiences, none of them have seen or heard anything unusual, beyond the alchemical smells and black cat.

The Brooks' Apartment

Arthur Brooks and his wife Nora live here. They have no children; their only daughter, Agnes, died of a fever two years ago, when she was five. Photographs of the young girl are all over the apartment, in heavy black frames.

Arthur works as a clerk at a local bank, and dabbles on the side as an accountant for some of the local speakeasies, for extra cash. As such he carries a gun, though he's frightened to death about using it. Nora believes that Arthur's willingness to work with gangsters, which she sees as sinful, is the reason why God punished them by taking their Agnes away.

Arthur used to do the books for the speakeasy on the First Floor. He knows that it was protected by Jacob Morrissey, formerly of the Lenox Avenue Gang, and he also knows that

Jacob was murdered over a woman, a singer at the Cotton Club. That was why, when Jacob died, his little empire of speakeasies didn't have a patron, stopped paying bribe money, and was raided by the Prohibition Bureau. Arthur has enough information in his little black book to make many senior policemen and Prohibition Bureau agents very unhappy. If they knew it existed, Arthur's life wouldn't be worth ten cents. Arthur isn't sure what he should do, but at the moment keeping his mouth shut seems the safest policy. **Hard Persuade** is necessary to get him to talk about any of this, though searching his office desk in the Parlor (**Spot Hidden**) will uncover his accounting books, and notebooks with all the bribe money payments, who to, and how much.

If the investigators take Arthur's information and use it to make trouble, say by publishing the whole story in the papers, then any interaction with the police or the Prohibition Bureau, no matter what it is, is **Hard difficulty**. Unless the investigators do something to protect Arthur, he'll be dead in a few days. The investigators cannot rely on official protection, even from Federal agents; there's too much at stake for those concerned to let Arthur live. For that matter, if the investigators have any tangible proof, their lives aren't worth ten cents either. So long as they stay in New York, they're at risk.

The Brooks' know about the rent party and are planning to go.

Of all the people in the building, Arthur and Nora are the least cooperative, and any interpersonal ability test is **Hard difficulty**, but that isn't because they know anything about the Second Floor. Like everyone else in the building, they know about the chemical smell and the cat, but have no opinion on either.

FIFTH FLOOR

Each room is described in order, starting with the apartment at the upper left hand corner, next to the stairs, colored light blue, and then running clockwise from apartment to apartment.

The Jones' Apartment

Charles Jones, his wife Edith, their baby Carl and Charles' nephew Roman live in this apartment. Charles, his wife and the baby are in one Chamber, Roman in the other.

Charles isn't that close to Roman, but Roman is family, and to Charles that matters more than anything. Edith is slightly afraid of Roman, not because he's ever done anything, but because he's very large, and sometimes unpredictable.

Charles works in a garage near 224, and Edith, before Carl came along, was a secretary. These days she works part-time as a seamstress; not that her talents lie in that direction, but every penny helps, particularly with Roman at the dinner table.

Charles is willing to tell investigators who can prove they're working for the Shapiras everything he remembers about the experience he had on the Second Floor, **no dice roll required**, but if the investigators can't show they're working for the Shapiras, all interactions with him are at **Hard difficulty**, since he's worried he'll implicate Roman in something that might get him put in a mental institution.

His story is that he became worried about Roman's wanderings. Sometimes Roman would be gone for hours, and Charles didn't know where he was. One day, he saw Roman go downstairs, and the black cat was on Roman's heels. Charles decided to see what Roman was up to, and that's when he found himself in a strange part of the building he'd never seen

before. Then a naked white man showed up, and started screaming at Charles. At the same time, the cat fell over, and it looked to Charles as if it had died on the spot. Confused, frightened, and angry, Charles went to get Mister Earley, and together they went back to the mystery apartment – but they couldn't find it. Charles tried talking to Roman about it later, when Roman came back to the apartment, but his nephew had nothing to say for himself. Charles has seen the black cat wandering the building after this incident, apparently very much alive. He doesn't know what to make of it.

As he's been there before, for purposes of getting to the Second Floor, Charles can lead the way and **negate the penalty die**. However he's not willing to do it without some significant (**Hard difficulty**) motivation.

Roman will not talk to the investigators. He doesn't talk to anyone, really, except for Miss Loobey and his uncle Charles.

Sydney Gilpin's Apartment

Sidney Gilpin, aka Stuart Phagan, aka W.D. DuFresne, is a grifter of long standing. He's pushing eighty these days, but in his prime he's bottom-dealt full houses on Mississippi steam boats, dug for gold at mining camps from Deadwood to the Klondike, and, in his most recent incarnation before the War, reverted to type and fleeced card players on trains from here to California. However his glory days are behind him, and arthritis keeps him from dealing cards as cleverly as he would like. He still has a substantial nest egg left, and lives modestly on that, occasionally dabbling in stock investments just to keep him interested in getting up in the morning.

He lives alone. The other rooms in his apartment are filled with the mementoes of a gaudy life, including (but not limited to), his old Faro set that he took from mining camp to mining camp, a Buntline special, animal pelts carefully skinned and preserved, a North West Mounted Policeman's dress uniform jacket, a Bowie knife, many photographs, a collection of postcards and letters from many women, and a peculiar carved stone on a leather neck strap.

This last item is an **Elder Sign**, made by a Cree and won by Gilpin in a card game. **Anthropology** recognizes the item as Cree, while **Cthulhu Mythos (no die roll)** recognizes its significance. Gilpin will not part with this, or anything else from his collection, under any circumstances. It can be **Filched (Hard difficulty – Gilpin's no fool)**, or Gilpin can be **Persuaded** to come with the investigators, **Elder Sign** in hand.

If the investigators have the **Elder Sign** with them when attempting to find the Second Floor, it **negates the penalty die**.

When not walking the streets on a sunny day, playing cards, or scouring the newspaper for stock tips, he spends most of his time in his apartment, writing his memoirs.

He knows about the rent party and is planning to go.

He knows there's something peculiar about 224, and has the same complaints as everyone else about the smell and the cat, but has never experienced anything unusual himself.

The Bishop's Apartment

Andrew Bishop, his wife Blanche, and their two sons Arthur and Anthony all live in this apartment.

Arthur is a factory worker, and when not at work prefers to spend all of his time birdwatching or reading about birds. His wife Blanche volunteers for as many charitable causes as she has free hours in the day, possibly as an excuse to get out of the

apartment and away from Arthur. Their teenage sons, meanwhile, are outwardly as respectable and dull as it is possible to be, but whenever they get a chance to sneak away they hustle suckers at local pool halls. The two are so alike they might be twins, a fact they've relied on for years as a means of getting out of trouble.

Arthur and Blanche are possibly the only two people in the building who don't know about the rent party. Their boys do, and are planning to go.

None of the Bishops know anything about the Second Floor. Arthur, in fact, is so utterly oblivious that he hasn't even noticed the smell or the black cat.

The Moses' Apartment

Charles Moses, his wife Annie, and their two daughters Gloria and Laura all live in this apartment.

Charles is a clerk at a local office, and dreams of being a writer someday, though he lacks the stick-to-it he'd need to really get anywhere. However he does have notebooks filled with interminable poetry, which he'll happily show to anyone who's interested. His wife Annie is the practical one, and it's thanks to her that the apartment is spotless, the children well-groomed, and that the household money isn't frittered away on yet another of Charles' schemes. Her one indulgence is cards; she and Sidney Gilpin get together from time to time. Gilpin even lets her win, every once in a while, just to keep her spirits up.

The apartment is cheaply furnished, as the Moses family doesn't have a lot of money, and what little they do have is spent on their children. However teenage Gloria has a talent for sculpture, and her work is displayed proudly.

None of them are going to the rent party, though they all know about it. Annie thinks it will be a little racy for the children, and Charles will be too busy writing.

None of the Moses' know anything about the Second Floor. They think 224 Lenox is a little peculiar, but have never encountered anything unusual.

Zora and Martha Fuller

Zora Fuller looks after her mother, who's getting on in years. Really, Martha's too frail to be left on her own, but if Zora didn't go out to work, they'd have no roof over their heads. As it is, Zora's job and what little's left of daddy's life insurance money keeps them afloat.

Zora works two jobs. By day, she's a secretary, and by night, a cabaret dancer. As a result, she's dead tired most of the time. Meanwhile Martha is a little wandering in her mind, but can pull herself together and function for several hours at a stretch. However a few hours is her limit; when tired, she forgets what year it is, or whether she's left something cooking on the stove.

Persuade or **Charm** gets Zora to tell something Miss Loobey once said to her, a long time ago, before she went away. Miss Loobey said she was afraid of the man on the Second Floor, that he stared at her and made her uncomfortable. But, Miss Loobey said, he was rich, so rich. He could make gold in his kitchen and sell it, if he wanted to. Miss Loobey thought she could persuade him to tell her how he did it.

Other than that, Zora has never seen or experienced anything unusual, beyond the alchemical smell and black cat.

PEOPLE AND CREATURES

This section is not going to list statistics for every named NPC, since most of that information would be redundant. Instead, where applicable, statistics will be given for an NPC that might be in conflict, either with the investigators, or on the investigators' behalf.

For all NPCs not listed here, assume basic civilian status, with 10 Hit Points (adult) or 6 Hit Points (child), professional skills at 45%, other skills at 30%, no meaningful attack or defense abilities, and their default strategy in combat is to run away. Possibly to get a policeman, if the situation requires it.

THE SHAPIRAS

Izzy and Sam

These are the two heavies the Shapiras rely on to handle things, when they need a little muscle. Neither of them will do anything blatantly illegal, like murder, but a few thumps and bruises are fine. Evictions are their specialty.

STR 40 CON 50 SIZ 50 DEX 45 INT 30
 APP 30 POW 30 EDU 40 SAN 30 HP 10
 DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 7 MP: 6 Luck: N/A

Attacks per round: 1

Brawl 35%, (17/7) damage 1D3
 Shotgun 12-gauge 40%, (20/8) damage 4D6/2D6/1D6

Armor: none.

Skills: Intimidate 30%.

COPS

Patrolman

The cops will only get involved if something has gone badly wrong, or if someone carelessly starts shooting.

STR 45 CON 55 SIZ 50 DEX 45 INT 30
 APP 30 POW 30 EDU 40 SAN 30 HP 10
 DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 7 MP: 6 Luck: N/A

Attacks per round: 1

Brawl 35%, (17/7) damage 1D3+DB
 Nightstick 45%, (22/9) damage 1D6+DB
 .32 Revolver 40%, (20/8) damage 1D8
 Shotgun 12-gauge 40%, (20/8) damage 4D6/2D6/1D6

Armor: none.

Skills: Climb 30%, Dodge 30%, Intimidate 25%, Jump 30%, Law 10%, Spot Hidden 40%.

GANGSTERS

Typical Thug

In the unlikely event that the investigators manage somehow to really tick off the local crime syndicate, perhaps by investigating the speakeasy a little too thoroughly.

STR 40 CON 50 SIZ 50 DEX 45 INT 30
 APP 25 POW 40 EDU 40 SAN 30 HP 10
 DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 7 MP: 8 Luck: N/A

Attacks per round: 1

Brawl 35%, (17/7) damage 1D3+DB
 Switchblade 35%, (17/7) damage 1D4+DB
 .32 Revolver 45% (22/9) damage 1D8
 Shotgun 12-gauge 40%, (20/8) damage 4D6/2D6/1D6
 Thompson SMG 30%, (15/6) damage 1D10+2

Armor: none.

Skills: Dodge 35%, Fast Talk 15%, Intimidate 30%, Jump 30%, Stealth 35%.

THE MAN WITH LIGHTNING FLOWERS

Avatar of Dark Powers

An entity beyond human understanding, temporarily occupying a human corpse.

STR (30) CON 60 SIZ 55 DEX 45 INT (10)
 APP 15 POW 100 EDU N/A SAN N/A HP 18
 DB: (-1) Build: -1 Move: 7 MP: 20 Luck: N/A

Attacks per round: 1

Brawl 45%, (22/9) damage 1D3+DB
 Lightning Strike Special

STR Note: By spending 2 MP, the avatar can increase STR to 100 for 1 round. DB increases to +1D6. Build remains unchanged.

Lightning Strike: By spending 4 MP, the avatar can electrocute a target within Touch range. This does not require a roll to hit. The target gets a CON save for half damage; failure means the target takes 2D6 damage. If used against a flammable object, the object catches fire, and will suffer 1D4 damage/round until extinguished.

MP: This recharges in 24 hours; it can recharge instantly, if the avatar receives a dose of electrical energy, say by short-circuiting 224 Lenox's electrical supply, or by being struck by lightning.

Armor: all physical attacks do minimal damage, and can only destroy the avatar's physical form; the human corpse can be destroyed, but the entity survives. A new avatar can be created within 24 hours. Attacks from magical or Mythos weapons do full damage to the corpse and entity both; a kill from such a weapon disrupts the avatar, and it shall not return for at least a year.

Skills: Track Josef 35%

224 LENOX

Renata, Second Floor

Josef's long-dead, rage-filled first wife.

STR 80 CON 80 SIZ 55 DEX 35 INT (30)
 APP 10 POW 05 EDU N/A SAN 0 HP 14
 DB: 1D4 Build: 0 Move: 8 MP: 1 Luck: N/A

Attacks per round: 1

Brawl 30%, (15/6) damage 1D3

Armor: Major wounds might result in the loss of a limb, but otherwise she's immune to any physical damage, even attacks that target the head. Her soul is elsewhere (see Josef's apartment, page 13), and until her soul is freed, her body will continue to function.

Skills: none.

INT Note: though her natural intelligence is suppressed by Josef's mind control, Renata is not a brainless corpse; she can plan, use tools, and has limited tactical ability. She lacks free will.

Sanity Loss: 0/1D8

Cecilia, Second Floor

Josef's long-dead second wife, repository of his favorite memories.

STR 80 CON 80 SIZ 55 DEX 35 INT (30)
 APP 60 POW 05 EDU N/A SAN 0 HP 14
 DB: 1D4 Build: 0 Move: 8 MP: 1 Luck: N/A

Attacks per round: 1

Brawl 30%, (15/6) damage 1D3

Armor: Major wounds might result in the loss of a limb, but otherwise she's immune to any physical damage, even attacks that target the head. Her soul is elsewhere (see Josef's apartment, page 13), and until her soul is freed, her body will continue to function.

Skills: Art (Singing) 65%.

INT Note: though her natural intelligence is suppressed by Josef's mind control, Cecilia is not a brainless corpse; she can plan, use tools, and has limited tactical ability. She lacks free will. However she will not take any direct action unless ordered to by Josef. If attacked, and Josef has not told her to do anything, she does not resist.

Sanity Loss: 0/1D4. Cecilia is the most intact of Josef's dead wives, but, being dead, is still an uncanny thing to see.

Kate, Second Floor

Josef's long-dead third wife, dogsbody and cook.

STR 80 CON 80 SIZ 55 DEX 35 INT (30)
 APP 30 POW 05 EDU N/A SAN 0 HP 14
 DB: 1D4 Build: 0 Move: 8 MP: 1 Luck: N/A

Attacks per round: 1

Brawl 30%, (15/6) damage 1D3

Armor: Major wounds might result in the loss of a limb, but otherwise she's immune to any physical damage, even attacks that target the head. Her soul is elsewhere (see Josef's apartment, page 13), and until her soul is freed, her body will continue to function.

Skills: Art (Cooking) 75%.

INT Note: though her natural intelligence is suppressed by Josef's mind control, Kate is not a brainless corpse; she can plan, use tools, and has limited tactical ability. She lacks free will. However she will not take any direct action unless ordered to by Josef. If attacked, and Josef has not told her to do anything, she does not resist.

Sanity Loss: 0/1D6. Kate is relatively intact, but, being dead, with an obviously broken neck, is still an uncanny thing to see.

Miss Minnie Loobey, Second Floor

Josef's fourth wife, alive for now.

STR 60 CON 40 SIZ 60 DEX 45 INT 50
 APP 60 POW 40 EDU 40 SAN 30 HP 10
 DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 7 MP: 6 Luck: N/A

Attacks per round: 1

Brawl 35%, (17/7) damage 1D3

Armor: none.

Skills: Art (Dancing) 45%, Disguise 65%, Fast Talk (55%), Language (French) 25%, Sleight of Hand 35%.

Skills Note: when in (parentheses), the skill is suppressed by Josef's mind control magic.

Josef Voorzanger, Second Floor

The Mythos sorcerer who caused all this trouble.

STR 20 CON 60 SIZ 70 DEX 55 INT 70
APP 30 POW 80 EDU 65 SAN 0 HP 13
DB: -1 Build: -1 Move: 3 MP: 16 Luck: N/A

Attacks per round: 1

Brawl 25%, (12/5) damage 1D3

MP Note: Josef's base MP is 16. However due to those human sacrifices in 1881, his MP was boosted considerably, which is how he was able to create the wards that protect him from detection. However the MP he stole from the dead do not refresh, and over the years he's used them all to keep his wards powered. The wards cost a permanent sacrifice of 5 MP per year to continue functioning, which means if Josef wants to keep hidden, he'll need more sacrifices. He's not sure how best to do this, or even if he can remember how.

Armor: none. However if he has a chance to cast Flesh Ward, he typically invests 2 MP, gaining 2D6 armor.

Skills: Appraise 35%, Cthulhu Mythos 30%, Dodge 30%, Electrical Repair 15%, Intimidate 35%, Language (German) 45%, Language (Latin) 25%, Occult (Alchemy) 75%, Science 35%, Stealth 30%

Spells: Body Warping of Gorgoroth, Brew Dominance, Cloud Memory (only costs Josef 1D3 MP, due to his mastery of the form), Curse of the Putrid Husk, Dominate (targets receive a penalty die to resist, due to Josef's mastery of the form), Flesh Ward, Mental Suggestion, Summon Fire Vampire (Josef has forgotten how to Bind it).

Spells Josef no longer remembers how to cast: Create Zombie, Superior Warding (by which he keeps the Second Floor hidden).

Tactics: Flesh Ward, followed by Body Warping to camouflage self against the walls or the junk in his apartment, followed by attack spells, eg. Dominate, Mental Suggestion.

New Spells: Brew Dominance. This requires the caster know the Dominance spell, be at least 50% proficient in Occult (Alchemy), and have at least 10% Cthulhu Mythos. This special variant on the Dominate spell requires that the target be fed a magic, noxious substance. This causes the target to vomit out their spirit, or soul, which can then be kept and used to control the target. So long as the caster keeps this liquid soul essence, the caster has control over the victim. If the soul container is shattered, and the liquid spilled, the victim will recover; otherwise the victim is spiritless, without direction, unless the caster issues instructions. If the victim should die before this happens, then the victim becomes a walking corpse, and can never truly recover. The brewing process takes many days, and costs 15 MP.

The Black Cat, Second Floor (Roaming)

Josef's eyes and ears. The Black Cat can be encountered anywhere in the public areas of 224 Lenox, as the Keeper desires.

STR 20 CON 60 SIZ 20 DEX 55 INT N/A
APP N/A POW 01 EDU N/A SAN N/A HP 8
DB: -1 Build: 0 Move: 7 MP: 6 Luck: N/A

Attacks per round: 1

Brawl 25%, (12/5) damage 1D2

Armor: Major wounds might result in the loss of a limb, but otherwise the cat is immune to any physical damage, even attacks that target the head. It is Josef, and is controlled by him; so long as he is alive, it can never die. Given enough time, and all the missing pieces, the cat's body can repair itself, though even repaired it still looks like a very thin, sickly animal.

Skills: Climb 45%, Jump 65%.

Spells: Josef can cast Dominate and Cloud Memory through the cat's eyes.

Sanity Loss: 0/1D4

Samuel Johnson, Third Floor

Ex-soldier turned bellhop, who might come to the investigators' rescue.

STR 60 CON 60 SIZ 70 DEX 35 INT 40
APP 40 POW 50 EDU 40 SAN 50 HP 12
DB: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 8 MP: 10 Luck: N/A

Attacks per round: 1

Brawl 55%, (27/11) damage 1D3
.32 Revolver 50%, (25/10) damage 1D8

Armor: none.

Skills: Climb 45%, Dodge 25%, First Aid 45%, Survival 45%.

Arthur Brooks, Fourth Floor

Frightened accountant, who seems more sinister than he is.

STR 30 CON 40 SIZ 60 DEX 35 INT 60
APP 40 POW 40 EDU 40 SAN 40 HP 7
DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 7 MP: 8 Luck: N/A

Attacks per round: 1

Brawl 15%, (7/3) damage 1D3
.32 Revolver 10%, (5/2) damage 1D8

Armor: none.

Skills: Accounting 60% Credit Rating 40%, Dodge 18%, Law 25%

Sidney Gilpin, Fifth Floor

A clever old fellow who's seen a thing or two in his day.

STR 20 CON 60 SIZ 40 DEX 65 INT 50
 APP 60 POW 40 EDU 40 SAN 40 HP 10
 DB: -1 Build: -1 Move: 3 MP: 8 Luck: N/A

Attacks per round: 1

Brawl 55%, damage 1D3
 Bowie Knife 60%, damage 1D8+DB
 Buntline Special 40%, damage 1D10+2

Armor: none.

Skills: Appraise 45%, Charm 65%, Disguise 20%, Dodge 45%,
 Fast Talk 65%, History 30%, Natural World 20%, Psychology
 20%, Sleight of Hand 55%, Spot Hidden 40%, Stealth 40%,
 Survival 30%.

Roman Jones, Fifth Floor (roaming)

A quiet, simple man, who can be a holy terror when he gets
 angry. This is most likely to happen if Miss Loobey is
 threatened or harmed in any way.

STR 80 CON 60 SIZ 90 DEX 25 INT 10
 APP 30 POW 25 EDU 20 SAN 25 HP 15
 DB: +1D6 Build: 2 Move: 7 MP: 5 Luck: N/A

Attacks per round: 1

Brawl 65%, (32/13) damage 1D3+DB

Armor: none.

Skills: Climb 45%, Dodge 30%,
 Intimidate 20%, Listen 45%, Throw 40%.

SANITY REWARDS

If the investigators participate in the destruction of Josef, but
 Renata, The Man With Lightning Flowers or some other actor
 actually kills, him, they gain 1D4 SAN.

If the investigators deal with Josef themselves then the
 reward is 1D6 SAN.

Freeing Josef's wives from bondage is a 1D4 SAN reward.

If a named NPC, like Samuel Johnson, should die, whether
 saving the investigators from some hideous fate, or from some
 other investigator-inspired cause (if Arthur Brooks is killed
 because of something they did, say, or the building catches fire),
 then the investigators lose 1D6 SAN.



