

Safe House, Dark

CASE OFFICER Notes

This scenario is designed to ideally be played with the Case Officer running only one or two agents. If three or more agents participate in this scenario, it can quickly become less frightening as it skews more into a pulp action scenario.

It is assumed that the agent participating in the scenario is a junior Delta Green member, or, (if need be), this scenario could be the catalyst that prompts Delta Green to recruit a new agent into their fold. It is also assumed that the agent in this scenario is an Intelligence Case Officer, Federal Agent, Intelligence Analyst, or Foreign Service Officer, but with a few adjustments this scenario would be appropriate for any agent's profession. Throughout this scenario, the author references the CIA, but Case Officers may substitute each of those references for the intelligence or defense agency that best suits their use of this scenario.

This scenario is set within an old three-story apartment building that has had very few modifications. The building itself was built anywhere between the 1900s and 1920s, and other than satellite television access; the most modern amenities in any of the apartments were installed in the 1970s. The aged building is more than a setting, it is another character in the scenario; the Case Officer is encouraged to make the building as spooky as possible with faulty knob and tube wiring that frequently burns out light bulbs, or unreliable radiators that knock, whistle, or otherwise fail to work. If played right, in conjunction with the shadow creature, (the tsalmaveth), in the building, the agents may be questioning every sound or shadow around them before the scenario is over. The apartments in this building are labeled with a number-alpha format, and there are four apartments per floor. So, for example, the first floor apartments are labeled 1A, 1B, 1C, and 1D.

The author of this scenario imagined that the building in this scenario would be best located in an old city in Western Europe, (maybe Antwerp, Dusseldorf, or Amsterdam), because of the centuries of history inherit to European cities. But, the building in this scenario could also be set in any city along the eastern seaboard of the United States of America.

SITREP BRIEFING

Apartment 3C in the building is a secret safe house used by the CIA. To preserve the ruse that the safe house is an average apartment, 65 year old Charlotte Lemaire lives in the apartment. As far as her neighbors are concerned, Lemaire is a widow that earns money by renting out space in her apartment as a hostel to people who are passing through town. This has proven to be a successful cover, and has served the CIA well.

Three days ago, the local CIA field office has learned that Charlotte Lemaire has gone missing; not only that, but several tenants in the building have gone missing. Fear is running rampant through the building as family members plead for help to find the missing people. Local police investigators have begun an investigation in the apartment building, and there is a significant risk that the safe house could be compromised.

The Mission

The agents are tasked with clearing out any materials or documentation within the apartment that could compromise its usage as a safe house. The apartment's true usage must be kept secret; ideally, once Charlotte Lemaire has been recovered, she can be reinstated as the safe house's custodian.

Additional Information

Other than apartment's tenant, the agents local case officer has minimal information on the safe house. The case officer is not aware of who may have recently passed through the safe house. The SOP (Standard Operating Procedure) for a safe house custodian, (in this case, Charlotte Lemaire), is to keep detailed records on who utilizes the safe house. At the bare minimum, the agents need to retrieve Lemaire's safe house record book. Ideally, the case officer would like the agents to discover what happened to Charlotte Lemaire.

The agents are provided with credentials that should allow them entry to the safe house. Lemaire was trained to mention her favorite nieces and nephews whenever her neighbors asked about her family. What few "family" photos Lemaire has displayed in her apartment are slightly out of focus or of a poor enough quality so that just about anyone can make a credible claim to be the subject in the picture with Lemaire. The agents are also provided with a key to the safe house apartment.

ACTIVE POLICE INVESTIGATION

Prior to the agent's involvement, eight people have gone missing from the building. All of the residents in the building are in a heightened state of panic and despair because of the disappearances. Local police investigators and regular uniformed officers are patrolling the building around the clock to try and solve the mystery. A successful Persuade roll is required before the police will allow the agents entry to the building. If the skill roll is failed, then the policemen offer to allow the agents entry to apartment 3C but only if they will allow them to search the apartment first, since the police have not yet had time to search that apartment for clues. A bribe of at least \$50 grants the agents entry and will also allow the agents to postpone the police inspection of the apartment. Or, the agents may attempt a Stealth roll to sneak past the police, but note that the building does not have a fire escape. There are usually two cops on-site at any hour of the day, and one inspector during daylight hours.

Average Cop

STR 9 DEX 10 CON 10

INT 8 POW 9 CHA 10

HP 10 WP 9 SAN 45

Skills: Alertness 35%, Firearms 35%, Law 30%, Unarmed Combat 45%

Armor: Kevlar Vest -3 HP

Weapons: 9mm Beretta (semi-auto), 1d10 damage, 15 rnds/clip

Police Inspector

STR 11 DEX 13 CON 11

INT 13 POW 11 CHA 10

HP 11 WP 11 SAN 55

Skills: Firearms 40%, Forensics 45%, Law 50%, Persuade 35%, Psychology 40%

Armor: Kevlar Vest -3 HP

Weapons: 9mm Beretta (semi-auto), 1d10 damage, 15 rnds/clip

THE SAFE HOUSE - APARTMENT 3C

The furniture in this apartment dates back to the 1940s, and the whole apartment smells of antiquity. The few "family" photos in the apartment are of very poor quality in order make clear identification of Charlotte Lemaire's family members difficult and vague. Most of the decorations in this apartment are antique chotchies and knick-knacks. Sitting prominently on the top shelf of a curio cabinet is an urn that contains the ashes of Charlotte's late husband, Hugo.

Note: If the agents successfully solve the mystery of how to trap the tsalmaveth, Hugo's urn is the ideal vessel to contain the creature.

Charlotte's bedroom is Bedroom 1, (see the map below); the top drawer of Charlotte's dresser has a false bottom where she hides her safe house log book. The drawer's false bottom can be discovered through a general search of the bedroom with a successful Alertness skill roll, or a successful Craft: Carpentry skill roll. But, if an agent specifically states that he is searching the dresser drawers for a hidden compartment, then that agent may find it without the need for a skill roll.

Clue 1 – Safe House Log Book: The second-to-last entry in the log book, dated thirteen days ago, indicates that a Professor Yosef Eshel has checked-in to the safe house. Prof. Eshel's departure date is blank. The last entry in the log book, dated ten days ago, states that Prof. Eshel has vanished in the night without a trace. Lemaire notes that she heard some shouting that woke her up at approximately 0400 hours, and when she entered his room Prof. Eshel was gone. He left without taking any of his belongings, so she moved everything down to her storage locker in the basement of the building. Lemaire also notes that she also checked the door to her apartment, and that the deadbolt was still securely fastened. And that, unless Prof. Eshel had somehow acquired a copy of her key, there is no way he could have locked the door after he left.

Bedroom 2 is used by the people who transition through the safe house. The last person to stay in this room was Yosef Eshel, a professor of archeology, specializing in Israeli history and archeology. Prof. Eshel recently made a discovery while excavating Masada. He discovered a strange clay jar shaped in the image of a man, suggesting that it may be related to the mythology of the golem, but an inscription in Biblical Hebrew warns that the vessel is actually a prison for a tsalmaveth, a death shadow. A successful Alertness skill roll reveals to the agent Clue 2 – Crumbs of Clay on the floor under the bed.

Clue 2 – Crumbs of Clay: The crumbs of clay are from the broken golem-shaped clay jar Prof. Eshel discovered. Prof. Eshel accidentally damaged the jar when he arrived at the safe house, and was plagued by strange nightmares that evening. Paranoia about the tsalmaveth warning on the jar prompted Prof. Eshel to pry up a floorboard under the bed to hide the clay jar. The agent that discovers the Crumbs of Clay may attempt another Alertness skill roll with a +20% bonus; a successful roll identifies the loose floorboard that hides the golem-shaped clay jar. If an agent explicitly states that he is inspecting the floorboards under the bed, then he may find the loose board without a skill roll. The damage on the jar has not disturbed the inscription on the jar. Agents with Foreign Language – Hebrew may read the inscription, (noted above). Agents with a successful Occult skill roll know that a tsalmaveth translates as "death shadow," and according to myth, the creature kidnaps victims to transport them to the underworld.

STORAGE LOCKER 3C

Lemaire moved all of Prof. Eshel's personal belongings, (that she could find), down to this storage locker after his mysterious disappearance. Other than a small suitcase of clothing, the professor also had a leather messenger bag. Inside the bag is his cell phone, wallet, watch, glasses, a journal, maps of Israel and Masada, Israel history books, a book on Jewish mythology, and a 24" long shipping tube. Inside the tube is a delicate scroll.

Clue 3 – Prof. Eshel's Cell Phone, Wallet, Watch, and Glasses: A successful Psychology skill roll informs the agent that it is highly unlikely that Prof. Eshel would have left the safe house without grabbing a few, (if not all), of these personal items. Therefore, it is unlikely that Prof. Eshel left the safe house voluntarily. The cell phone is a disposable pay-as-you-go phone.

Clue 4 – Prof. Eshel’s Journal: The most recent entries in the journal describe the professor’s surprise and joy at finding the golem-shaped clay jar. The professor also notes that the inscription on the jar concerns him, and that after speaking to his supervisor, he is planning on smuggling the clay jar out of Israel. This final entry in the journal is annotated in the margin with a small triangle. Unbeknownst to the agents, Prof. Eshel was an agent of Delta Green.

Clue 5 – The Maps: The Masada map has a red circle on it less than a mile northwest of the city of Masada. This is where Prof. Eshel discovered the golem-shaped clay jar.

Clue 6 – The Scroll: The shipping tube is labeled as “Property of Tel Aviv University.” The scroll itself is thousands of years old, and is written in Biblical Hebrew. The scroll contains a spell designed to trap the tsalmaveth shadow creature. The scroll also describes that a container that has been blessed for the dead is required to store the creature. The scroll can only be read by someone skilled in Foreign Language – Hebrew.

INVESTIGATING THE SAFE HOUSE

This scenario is primarily a thorough search of the apartment to clear it of any evidence that could link it to the CIA and its use as a safe house. The scenario can take part at any time of day, but for dramatic setting, it should be an overcast and rainy day; the sun is completely obscured, and shadows loom everywhere. The agents will notice that tension and fear is high in the building. Everyone is afraid of who is kidnapping the people. Several families have left the building for their own safety, but other families either have nowhere to go, or refuse to leave.

If the agents talk to any of the neighbors, including Lemaire’s neighbor, 68 year old Abraham Reissman who lives in apartment 3D, they notice that all of the people living in the building have been having nightmares of a shadowy figure of a man that watches over them as they sleep. Several neighbors even swear that they have seen the figure standing in their room with them when the lights are out.

While the agents are conducting their mission in the building, the Case Officer should describe lights being turned off all by themselves. The agents may also hear floorboards squeak for unknown reasons. Whenever something strange happens near an agent, and if that agent looks around to try and discover the source of the strangeness, then the Case Officer should describe a shadowy figure that is mostly human in shape, but something feels “off” to the agent. This figure will always be standing in the deepest and darkest shadow of the room, (see the Tsalmaveth entry below).

The Case Officer should elevate the tension with more sightings of the creature as the agents discover clues and learn more about the tsalmaveth creature. If none of the agents speak Hebrew, then Abraham Reissman can help the agents by reading the spell on the scroll to trap the creature. To trap the creature, the agents only need to have the vessel that will contain the creature in the same room with it as the spell is cast. The tsalmaveth is then drawn into the vessel and trapped.

Abraham Reissman

STR 7 DEX 9 CON 10

INT 14 POW 15 CHA 12

HP 9 WP 15 SAN 75

Skills: Foreign Language - Hebrew 85%

Tsalmaveth – Death Shadow

STR nil DEX 20 CON nil

INT nil POW 40 CHA nil

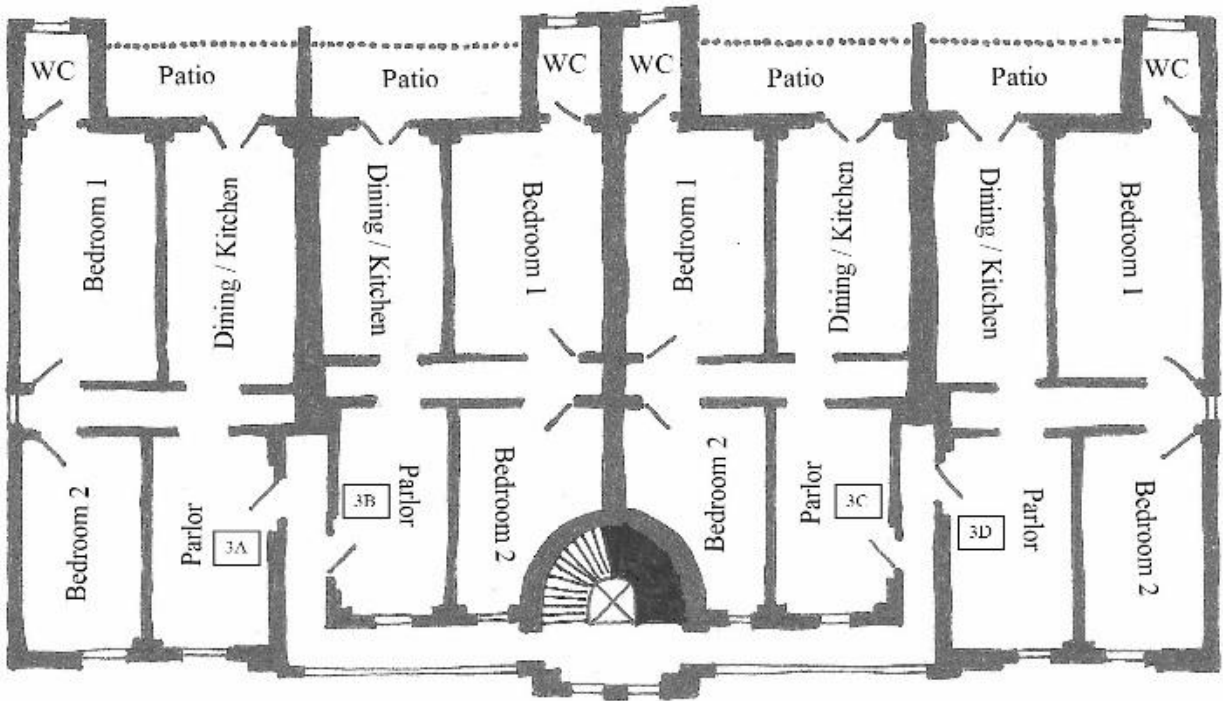
HP nil WP 40

Skills: Shadow Embrace 40% (victims may attempt to dodge this attack)

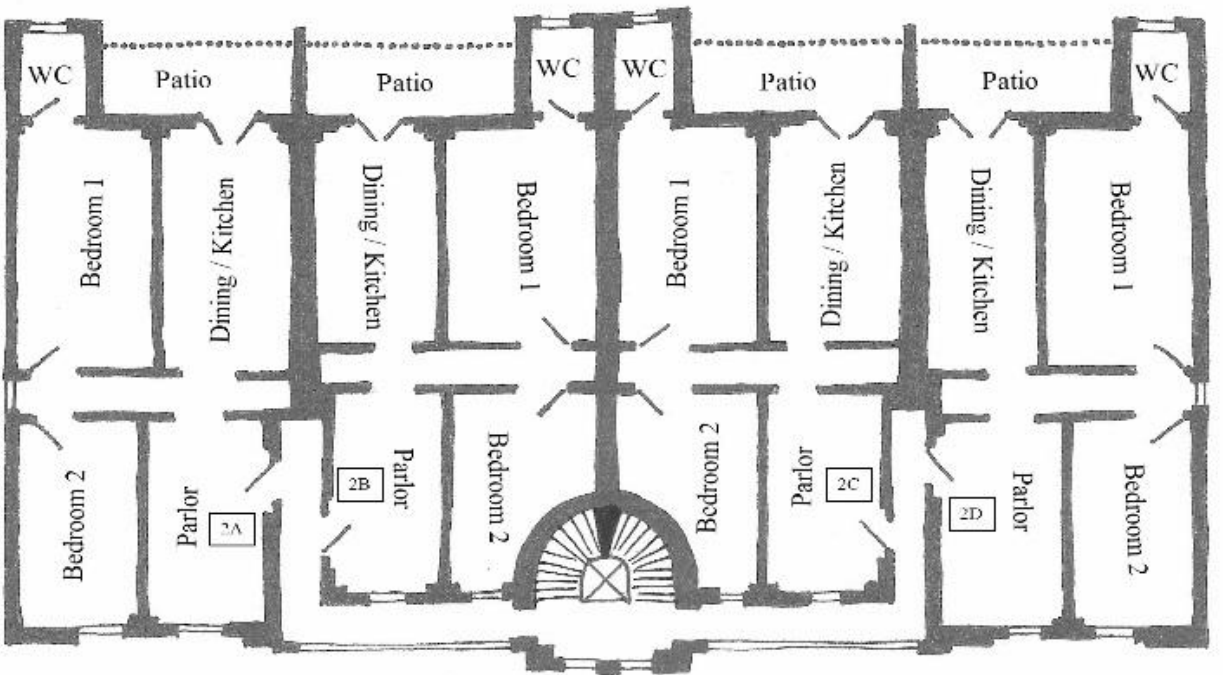
Armor: The tsalmaveth is impervious to all forms of damage. Direct sunlight, or any source of light of at least 150 watts, forces the tsalmaveth to retreat back to its originating realm for 2d8 rounds.

Description: The tsalmaveth is a creature that originates from a universe consisting only of shadow. The universe is cold and exists in only two dimensions. The creature is drawn to the warm three dimensional inhabitants of our universe; the creature is filled with joy and warmth with every inhabitant that it embraces and transitions back to its home realm. Unfortunately, none of the warm inhabitants survive the transition to the shadow realm, so the creature is compelled to steal more inhabitants in order to reclaim those fleeting moments of warmth and joy. A side effect of the tsalmaveth's presence in our universe is that people in the immediate vicinity suffer from nightmares about the death shadow.

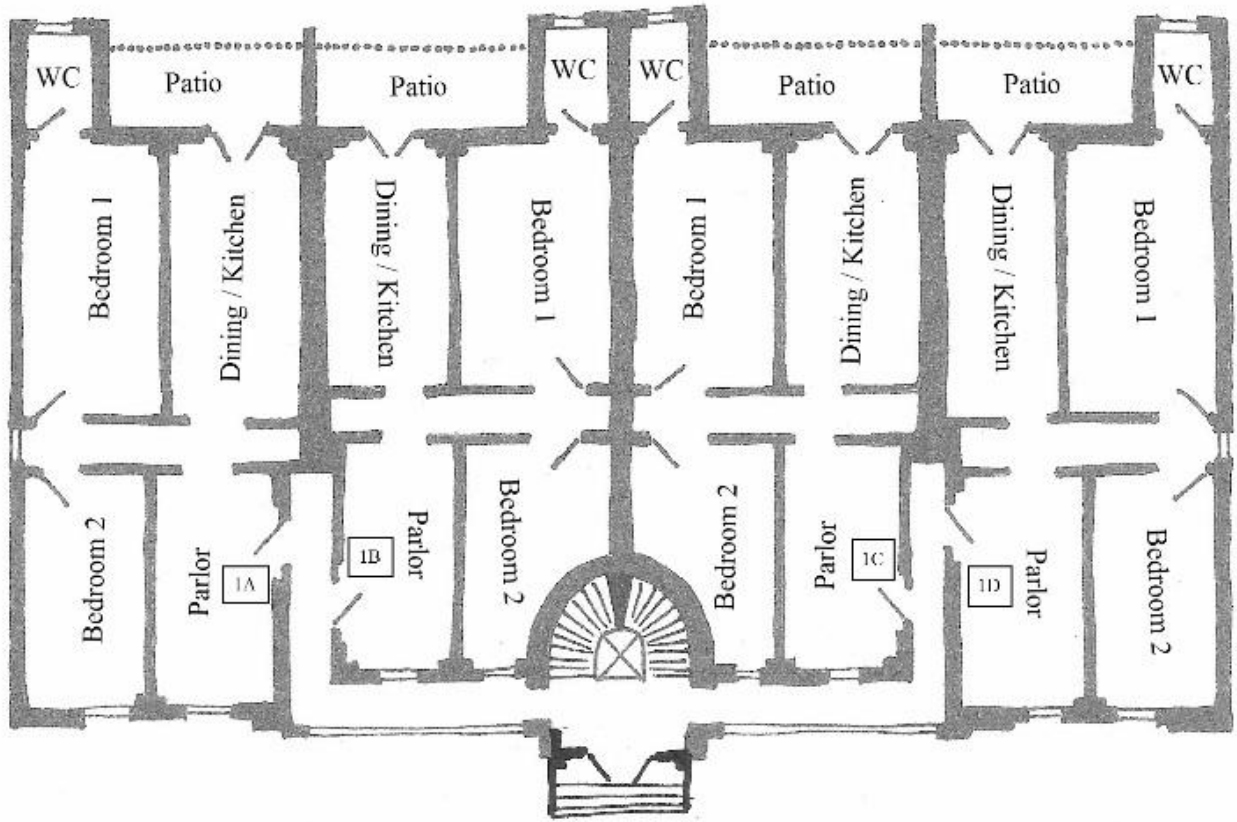
Sanity Loss: 1/1d10 sanity points lost when viewing a tsalmaveth. 3/1d12+2 sanity points lost when viewing a tsalmaveth vanishing to the shadow realm with a captive.



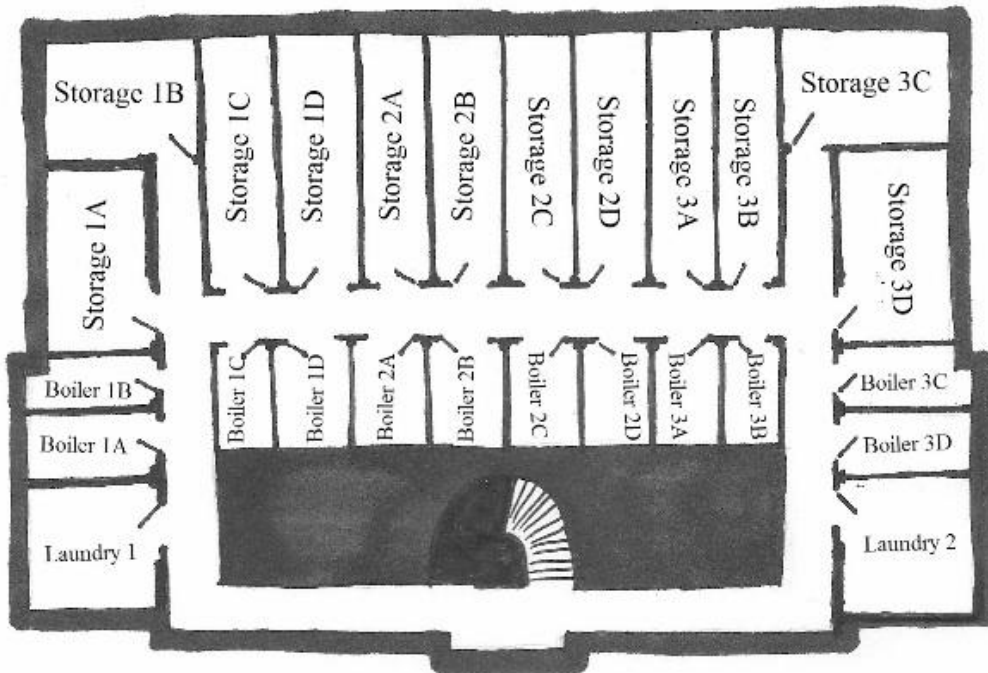
Safe House, Dark - 3rd Floor Map



Safe House, Dark - 2nd Floor Map



Safe House, Dark - 1st Floor Map



Safe House, Dark - Basement Map