

CHASING A DREAM

Investigation Brief

The investigators become entangled in Arkham's underworld drug problem in Rivertown. Their investigation gradually leads them to suspect a locally influential **botanist and garden curator**. Their suspicions are correct but the plant he cultivates is no ordinary narcotic, and he isn't cultivating it for himself anymore...

Sensitive Themes

This investigation has additional themes that some players may have sensitivities to (besides those described in Chapter 6 of the Core Rulebook). These themes include narcotics, addiction, adultery, and their consequences within society.

Before playing, ensure that these topics are acceptable to your group using your safety tool of choice (see Safety Toolkit on pages 152–153 of the Core Rulebook).

Gist of the Investigation

The adventure takes place over the course of nine to ten scenes, each at a different location. The first three, as well as seventh to ninth are always played in order, but the scenes through third to fifth can be played in whatever order your investigators choose, or even omitted from the story.

The optional tenth scene can take place in almost any part of the adventure, as it discusses a possible shift to the Dreamlands.

In the following section, each of the scenes are briefly described to give a general overview of the flow of the investigation.

Scene 1: The Drug Den

The investigators are hired by the Valone Outfit to look into a disturbing incident at a Rivertown drug den. They arrive at the scene to find a patron of the den sound asleep, one from which he cannot be woken. After initial investigation, they are informed that this isn't the first case.

Scene 2: Sleeping Beauties

The investigators are taken to a safe house, where they meet the infamous mob boss **Johnny Valone**. They are offered a deal that is not truly optional; they are to investigate this incident and its source.

Scene 3: Burned House

The first *known* case of this unnatural sleep occurred at a different drug den, which burned down two nights earlier. The investigators search the ruined building, encountering a bored police officer, and might interview locals.

Scene 4: Troubled Dreams

The investigators might follow a clue to the French Hill district and gain an audience with an upper sociality, Mrs Whitcombe. Hesitant at first to reveal she had mingled with the lower class, the investigators might learn from her more about this new drug and about who is selling it.

Scene 5: Visiting the Gangsters

Following the tip from the locals at the burned drug den, the investigators can contact one of the local gangs. From them they either learn the name Nicholas Raskovnik and his address, or that he is currently being held by the Sheldon Gang in a warehouse at the Rivertown.

Scene 6: Raskovnik House

Searching his house the investigators uncover Raskovnik's background as a Dreamer who lost his gift, and his subsequent obsession. Finding the Dream Flower the evidence points toward the nectar as the source of the drug now circulating in Arkham.

Scene 7: Warehouse Lab

Raskovnik is eventually traced to a warehouse laboratory. Reaching him requires negotiation, stealth, or force. Raskovnik himself is stalling for time, trying to figure a way out of his predicament.

Scene 8: Open a Gate And Spawn of Monster

After finding Raskovnik, a monster emerges from a Gate he has just opened.

The investigators have to deal with this monster, or flee from it.

Scene 9: Aftermath

The adventure concludes based on whether the investigators align with one of the criminal outfits, Raskovnik, or none of them.

Scene 10: Hlanith (Optional)

If one of the investigators is a Dreamer, they might try to find clues from the Dreamland. While the Dream Flower doesn't give anyone access to the Dreamlands, noticing this might be a hint by itself. The investigators might however find a relevant clue, maybe about Raskovniks whereabouts, or even the portal he is about to open from the warehouse to the Dreamlands.



Involving the Characters

The investigators may become part of this story in several different ways:

- ❖ **A Gang Contact:** The investigators meet **Vincent Luciano**, a representative of the **Valone Outfit**, in a speakeasy. He is looking to hire outsiders to investigate a matter discreetly. The adventure assumes this is the default entry point.
- ❖ **Clerical Concern:** A priest of the **East Church** has heard of strange deaths along the Riverfront and hires the investigators to look into it, knowing that the police are uninterested.
- ❖ **A Missing Spouse:** A worker from **South Side** approaches the investigators: their spouse vanished after visiting a drug den. Inquiries after them have been met with thinly veiled threats.

What's Really Going On?

Though rumors of talented individuals circulate quickly amongst Arkham's secret collectives, very few people have ever heard of **Nicholas Raskovnik**. This self-taught botanist and amateur chemist owns a large, aging house at the edge of Rivertown, close to the abandoned workshops and riverfront warehouses.

To the public, Raskovnik is a quiet, eccentric but respected supplier of dyes, rare plants, and perfumes to Arkham's wealthier citizens.

Privately, he was once a *Dreamer*¹; someone capable of entering the Dreamlands through sleep. That gift was lost when Raskovnik was trampled to death by an elephant in the *jungles of Hlanith*, and was barred from ever returning to the Dreamlands.

Since then Raskovnik suffered from chronic insomnia. When opium ceased to help and became an addiction, he sought alternatives. In his desperation, Raskovnik began scouring the occult archives of Miskatonic University, searching for a way to reopen the path to the Dreamlands. He found only fragments and warnings—enough to draw attention, but not enough to succeed.

That attention came from a **Caretaker of Magh'an Ark'at**.

Intrigued by his botanical skills, the Caretaker approached Raskovnik

¹ For more about Dreamers, see **Dreams of Kingsport** sourcebook.

indirectly and gifted him a strange seed, promising that it would allow him to dream again.

Raskovnik cultivated the seed in secret until it bloomed. This utterly alien flower produced a fragrant nectar. Curious, but cautious, Raskovnik began selling the nectar as a potent drug, to test if it was safe for him to use.

Seeing that the nectar did in fact cause the user to fall asleep, he was gathering his nerve to use it for himself, when a group of thugs came to his house and took him to work for their criminal outfit.

What Raskovnik does not understand is that the Dream Flower does not grant access to the Dreamlands. Instead, it floods the mind with alien visions drawn from **Magh'an Ark'at** itself.

Timeline

Six months ago: Raskovnik dies in the Dreamlands and wakes up. His insomnia begins.

Five months ago: Raskovnik begins scouring through the Miskatonic Library for a way to enter Dreamlands.

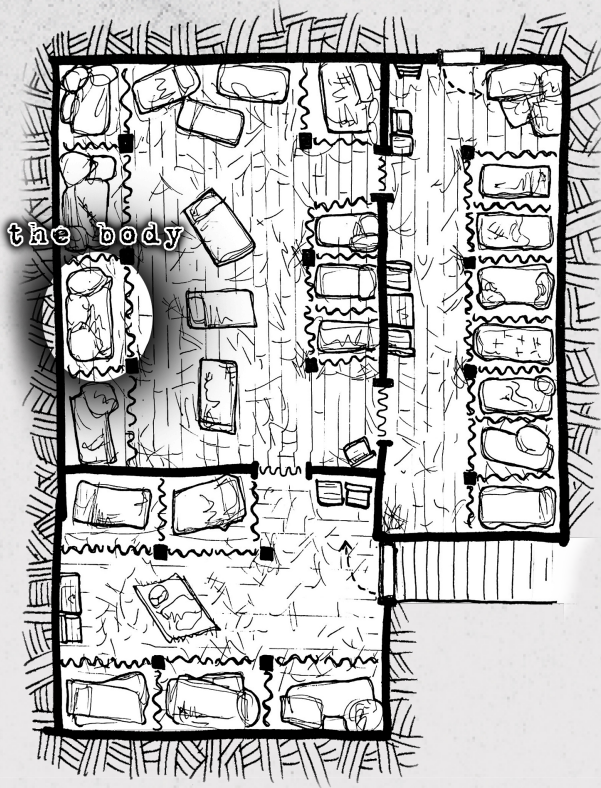
Four months ago: The Caretaker contacts Raskovnik, and presents him with the Seed. Eager to cultivate it, Raskovnik plants the seed.

Two weeks ago: The Dream Flower blooms, and Raskovnik manages to gather its nectar. He hesitates to try it by himself, but manages to acquire a willing test subject whom he takes to the drug den to try the nectar. Over the following two weeks his confidence grows, as the experiments seem fruitful. He asks for money and blood donations in exchange for the nectar.

Two days ago: First overdose at a Riverside drug den. A fire kills several patrons. Authorities ignore it. Raskovnik is taken by the criminals.

Day 0: Fourth overdose. The adventure begins.

Scene 1: The Drug Den



The investigators are to meet their contact at **Rivertown** after nightfall. Once there, they are approached by **Vincent Luciano**, while his two goons wait a bit further. Luciano asks the investigators to follow him, and leads them to a narrow street close to the river, where a reinforced cellar door sits half-hidden beneath a leaning tenement.

Inside, the drug den is warm, dim, and thick with smoke. Oil lamps and shaded bulbs cast yellow light over stained walls. Mattresses and threadbare cushions are scattered across the floor, some separated by hanging cloths. The air smells of sweat, cheap incense, and something faintly sweet beneath it all.

The den's usual activity has been halted. Several patrons sit or lie slumped where they were, watched closely by armed men who do not bother to hide their impatience. Behind a filthy curtain, one customer lies motionless on a mattress.

The den's overseer, **Sarah Doyle**, explains the problem plainly: the patron requested a curtained space, but never woke up, even when Sarah's husband, **Brogan**, tried to manhandle him.

What the Sleeper Can Tell

The victim is breathing slowly, eyes closed, and pupils occasionally twitch beneath closed lids. He appears to be asleep, but no amount of shaking, shouting, or pain will wake him.

Any investigator may study the sleeping patron by performing a complex actions using **Wits**. On a success, they'll notice sweet, *honey-like scent on the breath*.

A successful complex action using **Intuition** tells that the sleeper is well-dressed for Rivertown.

Who Is the Sleeper?

The sleeper's identity isn't important for this adventure. Persistent players might fixate on it though.

A complex action using **Knowledge** can reveal the victim as **Sherman Dorsey**, a struggling vaudeville actor of some fame. Anyone who knows of him, will also know that he hasn't been able to secure gigs after

he began to *chase the dragon*, and might have run into the drug anywhere.

What the Doyles Knows

Even with Luciano present, neither Brogan or Sarah is eager to discuss the events of the evening. They are terrified about the rumors of another den being burnt after a similar incident. They suspect that the Valones might be behind the arson.

The investigators can try to convince either of the Doyles to speak by intimidating them (a complex action using **Resolve**). Complex action using **Presence** is **difficult**, since the **Doyles** aren't going to respect anything but a show of force.

Another way to get this information is for one of the investigators to perform a successful complex action using **Intuition**, which lets them to deduct that the Doyles are likely skimming off the top from the money they should be handing to the Valone Outfit.

In any of these cases, the following information can be gained from them:

- ❖ The sleeper came here with someone and paid only for privacy, not drugs.
- ❖ They noticed the other guy leave, and went to check on his friend.
- ❖ If asked to describe the other man, they say they don't have a habit of recognising their customers. Sarah mentions a foreign accent, though.

If the action produced three or more successes, or if the investigators

threatened to expose their skimming, Sarah adds the following:

- ❖ Before the Valones showed up, she found a glass vial in the sleeper's hand. A few drops of *Dream Nectar* remain within it.

The Dream Nectar

The small vial contains a few drops of golden substance, that has a vaguely honey-like scent. Consuming or running scientific tests on it reveal nothing, but if an investigators performs a successful complex action using **Lore**, they can determine it is **not** *Golden Mead*.

If the action fails, the investigator has heard from a golden substance used to summon horrifying steeds from the aether. These implications make them shudder for the fate of these poor souls, and the investigator suffer one horror.

Questioning the Patrons

Discussing with other patrons, any investigator may make a complex action using **Presence**. Since they are all in various states of intoxication, this is done with a **disadvantage**.

If the action is successful, some of the patrons remember that the sleeper came with another man. A nervous-looking man in his forties. Some even recall seeing the man earlier in another den, as a regular opium smoker.

In addition to this they learn, even if the action wasn't successful, that sleeper looked extremely tired on arrival.

We Gotta Move On

The enforcers grow increasingly frustrated as time passes. The DoYLES hurry up the investigators, anxious to get their business running again. The patrons are sobering up, and Vincent Luciano is growing tired of the stench of the place.

Finally Luciano tells his goons to pick up the sleeper. He informs the investigators that they are taking the sleeper with them

to a safe house nearby, and that they should accompany them.

“Mr. Valone wants a word with you. You know, to know what you have learnt.”

Once the investigators leave the drug den, this scene ends.

Scene 2: Ready To Make a Deal

The Valone safe house lies only a few streets away, tucked into the ground floor of a narrow brick building that once housed a tailor's shop. The windows have been painted over from the inside, and the front door is reinforced far beyond what appearances would suggest. One of Luciano's goons unlocks the door while the other keeps watch on the street.

Inside, the building smells of old wood, and foreign cigarettes. Electric light hums softly overhead. The sleeper is carried into a back room while the investigators are led further inside.

The Other Sleepers

Passing by a halfway closed door, any investigator may try to sneak a peak by performing a complex action using **Wits**. If they want to take care that none of the Valones take notice, this action is **difficult**.

If successful, the investigator sees a rucked room with two beds. On each bed lies another sleeper. One is a young woman in a cheap dress, her hands folded neatly on her chest. The other is an older man, face lined and gray.

If the action fails, an gangster closes the door just before the investigators sees in. Whether the gangster notices the investigator peeking in, depends on if they made the action with increased difficulty or not.

The gangster is tense, jumpy, and clearly unused to standing over people who might never wake up.

Meeting Mr. Valone

Passing the room, the investigators are escorted into what used to be the shop's back office. Pacing impatiently, **Johnny Valone** looks up the investigators, and invites them to share their thoughts; he wants to know whether the incident at the den was an accident, a rival's scheme, or the beginning of something worse.

Valone makes his expectations clear a strained tone. The Valones run a business, not morgues. People falling into comas draws attention. And he doesn't need the heat. But he's prepared for it. Valone was just about to launch a counter offensive against the local gangs, but Luciano convinced him to try out something new—the investigators.

This is an **average** social scene. If the investigators mention or present the **vial** found at the den, the scene becomes easy.

If the investigators can convince him not to set the town on fire just yet, they are offered a deal. They will continue to look into this new drug: where it comes from, who is selling it, and what it does. They will do so quietly. In return, the Valones will provide protection, access, and information when it suits them. Refusal is not discussed as a serious option.

If asked about the two Sleepers, Valone admits that this is not the first time something like this has happened. Two nights ago, the old den suffered a similar incident. That building burned down before anyone could ask questions. Officially, it was an accident. Unofficially, no one believes that.

The implication hangs in the air. The Valones do not say they were responsible for the fire. They also do not deny it.

The Price of Failure

If the investigators fail to convince Valone out of retribution, he makes it clear, that this kind of action against him cannot go unpunished.

He will still “ask” the investigators to dig deeper, but he will also make a hit against the other gangs. First against the Sheldon Gang outside city limits, then against the O'Bannions.

This means that the gangs are at high alert during this adventure and has the following consequences:

- ♦ The investigators cannot meet with either gang, unless they have had previous allegiances with them. This means Scene 5 cannot be used.
- ♦ The guards at the **Warehouse Laboratory** are more vigilant. This is explained in Scene 7 in more detail.

Checking the Other Sleepers

If the investigators ask Valone a permission to examine the sleepers, he grudgingly admits this.

The investigator is taken to the room they passed while coming in, and there they find a faint, honey-sweet scent lingering around their mouths and clothes.

Any investigator studying the sleepers may perform a complex action using **Knowledge**. If an investigator has a **Knowledge** skill of 4+ or better or they have experience examining patients (such as a background in medicine or the field vet), they may perform this action with *advantage*.

If the action is successful, the investigator gathers that even after sleeping for a few days, neither shows signs of injury, illness, or withdrawal. Whatever holds them is neither poison nor ordinary intoxication.

If the action fails, the investigator comes to the same conclusion, but suffer one horror in addition for grasping that this indicates a supernatural force behind the unnatural sleep.

Familiar Face (Optional)

If the investigators are looking for the **Missing Spouse** (see *Involving Characters*), then they find the missing person here. The Malones exactly happy if the investigators bring this up, but **Johnny Valone** can use this to convince them to continue their investigations.

If pressed on why these two are here, Luciano admits that the Missing Spouse “works the streets” in their protection. He suspects that the other sleeper, who looks wealthy enough to live in the French Hill,

shared their dosage of whatever drug they are taking.

How Do We Proceed

Valone advises the investigators to look into the burned building and to speak with locals if they must. He also warns them not to approach other criminal groups openly.

If the **O'Bannions**, or the **Sheldons** learn that Valone has a problem, they will exploit it.

Before the meeting ends, Valone makes one thing clear. If the sleepers wake up, he

wants to know how and why. If they die, he wants to know what killed them. And if someone is responsible, he wants a name.

But if the drug can become another trick in his sleeve? That's what he's mostly interested about.

Even if the investigators ask, none of the gangsters will accompany them to the site of the house that burned. As Valone said it, they don't need the heat.

Once the investigators leave the safe house, this scene ends.

Scene 3: Cindering Remains

When the investigators arrive at the remains of the burned drug den in Rivertown, read or paraphrase the following aloud:

The entire building has burned to its shell. Only blackened walls and collapsed beams remain.

The neighboring houses bear the scars of the fire as well, and are still being doused with water every morning and evening, as some of the thickest timbers continue to smolder beneath the rubble.

Bored Patrol

A single city patrolman has been assigned to the site. Officially, his duty is to make sure the fire does not reignite or spread. In practice, because this is Rivertown and the danger has long since passed, he spends most of his time leaning against a lamppost, idly gambling with passersby or throwing dice on a crate to pass the hours.

Any of the investigators can make a complex action using **Wits** to take note of this before he notices them.

Seeing the investigators nosing around, he straightens up, adjusts his belt, and strides over with an air of practiced authority, telling them sharply to move along.

To convince him to ignore them, any investigator may make a complex action using **Presence**. They may also lie, or misdirect him using **Wits**, or simply tell *him* to take a hike with **Resolve**.

Should the investigators fail to direct his attention elsewhere, he will remain close, watching, and making sure that they don't cause any problems. His vigilance gives a **disadvantage** to all subsequent actions to gather clues in this scene.

What the Police Knows?

If the investigators get into a discussion with the patrolman, he is likely to tell a bit too much to ease his boredom.

He had just arrived to guard the scene when a fancy looking car pulled over and the driver called him. The driver inquired if "*any substance was recovered*".

He was just about to question the man further, when noticed the woman sitting in the back. "*French Hill type. Didn't belong down here. I think it was Mrs Whitcombe.*"

This allows the investigators to proceed to Scene 4: Troubled Dreams.

Among the Ashes

If the investigators gain access to the site, they can move through the burned structure carefully. Beneath collapsed timbers, signs of the den's former layout are still visible: the remains of mattresses, scorched curtains, shattered bottles fused to the floor by heat.

Taking a closer look at the charred remains requires a complex action using **Wits** (with an **advance**, if they have background working at or with police or fire department). This action will lead them to spot a small glass vial, next to a

badly burnt corpse. If the actions fails, the body is almost buried under a burned beam.

A complex action using **Athletics** is needed to move it. If *this* action fails, the investigator suffers 1 **damage** caused by the smouldering beam. The beam is still moved.

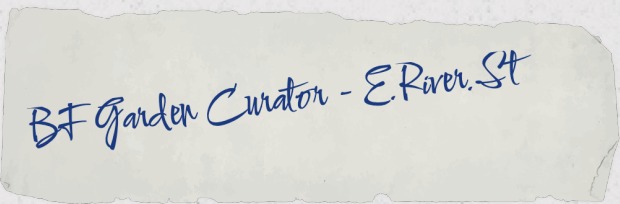
The First Victim

While severely charred, the remains seem to belong to someone more wealthier than the usual customers of a den like this.

Searching the body to find an unburnt small note in his pocket requires another complex action using **Wits**. If the action fails, the smell of the corpse suddenly reminds them of cooked pork. The investigator may perform a complex action using **Resolve**. If they choose not to or fail, they suffer one horror.

Any local will recognise "*BF Garden*" as **Bayfriar Garden** in the **French Hill** district. And finding a curator living near it on *East River Street* doesn't require further investigation (unless the GM wishes so).

This allows the investigators to proceed to Scene 6: Raskovnik's House.



BF Garden Curator - E. River. St

Handout 1 - Address note

Nosy Neighbors

The nearby residents have had two nights to talk among themselves, and their stories are eager to spill out now that the authorities have lost interest. Most are willing to speak if approached carefully, though a few glance nervously at the ruins before answering, as if afraid of being overheard.

Deducting the truth from the hearsay, rumors, and "educated guesses" can be achieved with complex **very difficult** action using **Intuition**.

If the action fails, the investigators aren't able to determine what is the truth. Some insist that the den's owners, set the fire themselves believing one of their customers carried a deadly disease. Others claim it was the work of a gang, either as punishment or as a warning. No one can agree on which one.

If the action is successful, the investigators learn that the fire was started by thugs who clearly worked for O'Bannions. If the investigators ask how can they be so sure, the neighbor scoffs and explains: "*because the said, 'O'Bannions want none of you poison in Arkham'*".

This allows the investigators to proceed to Scene 5: Visiting the Gangsters.

Scene 4: Troubled Dreams

THE EGYPTIAN STELA

The stela stands a little over four feet tall, with a pale surface of weathered limestone still bearing traces of ochre and lapis pigments.

Its face is dominated by a scene of a seated noblewoman receiving offerings of bread, beer, and lotus blossoms from a smaller, reverently posed attendant.

A successful **Knowledge** complex action can be used to study the stela. If the investigator has **Knowledge** 4+ or more, or they have background in **Egyptology** (or related subjects) they may make the action with an **advantage**. Each success reveals one of the following details:

- ♦ The woman is identified by a column of hieroglyphs as “Henut-maat, Singer of Amun”.
- ♦ The carving style suggests the late New Kingdom.
- ♦ The edges show the telltale abrasions of centuries spent half-buried in desert sands, and a faint fracture line runs across the lower third where the stone was once broken and expertly rejoined.

Mrs Whitcombe is one of the few users of the Nectar who did not fall into a extended sleep. And while she has taken steps to keep that fact of socializing with a curator quite, she has been seen on the site of the fire.

Late Arrival

If the investigators arrive at **Mrs Whitcombe**’s house after dark, they will notice an uniformed constable patrolling the street. He pays no special attention to Mrs Whitcombe’s house, unless the

investigators loiter, argue at the door, or raise their voices.

Lukewarm Welcome

At **Mrs Whitcombe**’s house in the French Hill district, they are met by her butler. He politely listen to what the investigators have to say, then excuses them while he goes to see if Mrs Whitcombe is well enough to receive visitors.

Waiting in the Lobby

Even the decor of the lobby hints at Mrs Whitcombe’s status, connections, and

tastes, with valuable trinkets, paintings, and a few rare artifacts on display. Amongst these items is a fragment of an Egyptian stela, inscribed with hieroglyphs.

Once the butler returns, it is apparent that Mrs Whitcombe is reluctant to meet the investigators. The implications that she has had dealings with a “janitor” (as she calls Raskovnik) could undermine her social standing.

Negotiating for an Audience

Securing an audience requires a complex action using **Presence** (polite respectability), or **Resolve** (implied exposure, though this risks closing doors later).

If any of the investigators is of **Prosperous** wealth, they may perform the action with an **advantage**. However if any of the investigators are either Poor or Criminal, the action is performed with a **disadvantage**.

If successful, the investigators are invited to meet Mrs Whitcombe—after nightfall.

If the investigators fail:

Using Presence: The butler cannot be persuaded, he informs the investigators, that while he might agree with them, Mrs Whitcombe doesn't. He politely asks them to leave.

Using Resolve: The butler strongly implies that the investigators should leave at once, before he summons a constable to remove them from the premises.

Meeting the Mrs Whitcombe

Mrs Whitcombe sees the investigators in her late husband's study in the second floor. The woman looks extremely exhausted beyond, but tolerates the visitors with a social elite dignity.

After some hesitation, Mrs Whitcombe admits that she has used a certain soporific she acquired from a certain individual.

What Mrs Whitcombe Knows

Mrs Whitcombe describes the drug as a *golden liquid in a small glass vial with an interestingly sweet scent*. She insists it was a mistake, and succeeding in a complex action using **Intuition** indicates that she seems ashamed by trying it; though she would never admit just a feeling.

Mrs Whitcombe is reluctant to reveal where he obtained the Nectar. She fears scandal, ridicule, and being associated with criminals.

She can be persuaded with a complex action using...

- ❖ **...Presence**, by emphasizing discretion and understanding.
- ❖ **...Intuition**, by recognizing her shame and reframing him as a victim.
- ❖ **...Resolve**, by suggesting others have suffered far worse.

If convinced, she reveals where and how she purchased it, revealing the address and the name of Raskovnik.

She does **not** reveal she donated blood in exchange for the the drug, but if any

investigator spots she isn't telling everything (complex action using **Intuition**), she admits this with a heavy heart. She has no idea what the man could have done with her blood, and does not want to know either.

This allows the investigators to proceed to Scene 6: Raskovnik's House.

Haunted Dreams

If pressed gently, Mrs Whitcombe explains that the Nectar did bring dreams. Just not blissful ones as she was promised.

She describes dreams of primordial jungles, immense unseen beasts watching and judging her, and a sense that something lost was struggling to be born again.

"And when I woke," she adds quietly, "it felt as though something followed me — not in body, but in memory"

Any investigator may make a complex action using **Lore** to interpret Mrs Whitcombe's dreams.

Making the roll means they have heard about similar dreams. If the action was successful, they know the name **Magh'an Ark'at**; if not, they suffer one horror as they wonder about seeing a dream just like Mrs Whitcombe a while back...

Of the Emerging Doom

Mrs Whitcombe doesn't recall the name of Magh'an Ark'at, but it does make her shiver. Any investigator may make a complex action using **Intuition** to notice a

certain spark lighting in her eyes, that doesn't promise anything good.

If confronted about this, she claims that she doesn't want anything to do with that awful nectar anymore, and certainly not with some esoteric knowledge.

She's lying, though. The mention of this name set her on a her own path to find Magh'an Ark'at, for Mrs Whitcombe (as well as her late husband, Wilford) is a member of the **Order of the Silver Twilight**.

Though her involvement is currently purely social, she know has the inspiration to seek acceptance to the Inner Circle. And once she'll be accepted, she'll learn about where she needs to go, and will eventually make the journey.

Red Herring Warning: Meta-players² might pursue this clue way more than is necessary.

If the Investigators Push Too Hard

If the investigators threaten exposure or behave crudely Mrs Whitcombe can become a thorn in their side.

At first she just shuts down, denying everything, but her social circles are grand, and she might inform the upper Arkham elite, that the investigators are not to be trusted.

And if the investigators let the name "Magh'an Ark'at" slip, she will soon be initiated to the Silver Twilight Lodge.

² Players using their off-game info to affect their in-game decisions. [Read more.](#)

In any case she demands that the investigators leave her premises at once.

What About the Stela?

Prying about the origin of the stela, Mrs. Whitcombe explains it comes from her late husband's uncle who served with the British Army during the Sudan campaigns in the late 19th century.

The Colonel prided himself on being a "gentleman antiquarian", and purchased the stela openly from a licensed dealer in Luxor. After his death, Margaret's husband inherited the stela.

Investigator succeeding in a complex action using **Intuition**, can get her to admit the truth; she bought the stela from a private antiquarian salons in Boston. The transaction was legal but faintly embarrassing, and she goes to great lengths to hide her involvement with a man who later became a cautionary tale in the museum world.

Scene 5: Visiting the Gangsters

It possible that the investigators have already had some dealings with the local gangs (for example by playing through the adventure of the core rulebook). In such case they might try to contact them to inquire about Raskovnik.

Mistrust in Valone

Neither criminal gang likes the idea of Valone pushing into Arkham. If the investigators bring their connection to Valones up, all actions after that are done with a **disadvantage**.

The GM may also use this as a narrative tool; if the investigators fail a check while dealing with the gangsters, they accidentally slip that they are in consensus with the Valones.

Neither gang will cause a scene, but it will increase the tension between the gangs of Arkham. Namely this affects the Scene 7.

Visiting the O'Bannions

If they deal with the O'Bannions, they do so at the **Clover Club**. **Danny O'Bannion** isn't here, but his daughter **Naomi** is willing to see the investigators.

Gaining entry to this speakeasy shouldn't be guaranteed (at least not if the investigators haven't already worked with the O'Bannions). Getting in could require bribes, disguise, or intimidation.

What Naomi Knows

O'Bannions do not deal with narcotics, but that doesn't mean they turn a blind eye to it. In fact it was Naomi, who ordered the burning of the drug den.

Through her connections, Naomi has learnt about the curator of the **Bayfriar Garden** whose name has been circulating amongst the towns well-to-dos. Apparently Raskovnik provides his customers a new kind of drug, said to produce very vivid dreams. She knows that this botanist lives somewhere close to the garden.

Visiting the Sheldon Gang

The investigators can try to contact Sheldons at **Hibb's Roadhouse**. **Sadie Sheldon** isn't there, but they can find someone who works for her (preferably someone they have encountered earlier).

This a **hard** social scene, since the Sheldon Gang is actually behind the Raskovnik's disappearance. If the investigators already suspect this (having discussed with Raskovnik's neighbors, for example), the action is **average**, but it comes with a price; either the Sheldons will try to manhandle the investigators later (if the action fails), or they direct their anger to the goons responsible for taking Raskovnik in a way that lead the investigators here.

If the investigators come through, their contact will admit that a certain botanist is in fact currently working for them. If convinced that the investigators aren't going to cause trouble, the contact gives them the address of the warehouse.

Once the investigators leave the chosen location for the meeting, this scene ends.

Scene 6: The Raskovnik's House

Raskovnik lives in a narrow row house a short walk from **Bayfriar Garden**, on the east of the *River Street*. The building is well kept but cramped.

As the investigators approach the house, any of them may take a complex action using **Wits**, to notice its small front garden strangely lush for the season. In fact the air near the house is warm and damp, carrying a faint, honey-sweet scent.

Entering the House

While closed, the front door isn't locked. In fact closer study could reveal that the lock has been pried open.

Should the investigators hesitate to try the door, entry can also be gained through a rear window opening into the kitchen.

Once inside, the humidity of the place is palpable. Almost tropical.

Searching the House

Raskovnik's house is cluttered but organized. There are plants and flowers everywhere. Most of them are recognisable, or at least they would be if not for weirdly swollen buds, translucent veins, and other subtle changes.

Hallway: When entering the house, the investigators immediately spot a apparatus used in hospitals for blood donations standing next to an armchair. Raskovnik had his customers donate blood here, and later used it to feed the Dream Flower.

Raskovnik's Journal

Unique

Alternative Names: None

Language: Bulgarian

Knowledge Bonus: Preparing the *Dream Nectar*

This leather-bound notebook contains an incomplete translation of the **Meine Schritte in Traumländern** (*Dreams in Kingsport*, p. 105), as well as later notes on his cultivation of the Seed that he gained from the "Caretaker". Notes describe the extraction of a **nectar from the flower**, that has tested on unsuspecting addicts. He is quite positive that it induces vivid dreams "as promised", and thinks he could use it to regain access to the Dreamlands. There are also notes of feeding the plant with blood to sustain its growth.

The Raskovnik's Journal contains the spells **Portal to the Dreamlands**, and **Imbue Dreams** from the original book. The later has been crossed out in frustration; this gives a **disadvantage** for anyone trying to cast the spell from this tome.

Study: A respectable personal library consists mostly of botanical texts, some of which are in Bulgarian. Any light-fingered investigator could pocket a **Botanical Textbook** (p. 92, Core Rulebook). On the desk lies the **Raskovnik's Journal**, and there is a modest case containing three vials of Dream Flower Nectar.

Signs of a Struggle: It is apparent that a confrontation took place in the dining room.

The Greenhouse

The source of the scent lies in a master bedroom converted into a greenhouse. The air here is heavy and oppressive.

In front of the large window, an exotic flower radiates heat and humidity. It almost seems like its petals pulse faintly. Its sweet scent is overwhelming at close range. The flower's thick, fibrous roots have overgrown from the flower bed is planted. They have cracked the floorboards, seeking more soil to pull sustenance from.

The Dream Flower

The Dream Flower is looks wilted, as if was starving. In fact since Raskovnik was taken, it hasn't been fed with blood, and thus it is withering.

The plant does not possess intelligence, but reacts to proximity. If any investigator enters the room, the Flower will initiate a **surprise round**.

Gathering the Nectar

Trying to gather nectar from the flower while it has not been fed requires a **very difficult** complex action using **Agility**. If the Flower has been fed with about a pint of blood, this action is a regular complex action.

If the investigators attacked the Flower and killed it, the nectar turn acidic immediately. Determining this change can be done by performing a complex action using **Knowledge**.

The Dream Flower Nectar

Consuming about a teaspoon of the nectar, that character must perform a complex action using **Athletics** or **Resolve** (player's choice). If they choose not to or fail that character falls asleep. If they roll one or

more results of 1, they will sleep for 1 week for each result of 1. (This is what happened to the NPCs.)

The dreams come with a sense of awe and bliss. They are filled with visions of sweltering, tropical realm, and glimpses of a creature so large its shadow enveloped entire mountains. These visions come from **Ark'at**, and aren't in any way linked to the Dreamlands.

Consuming the nectar after it has turned acidic, doesn't grant any dreams but the 1d6 damage and the **Burned** injury, that requires two successes to heal.

Golden Mead?

Investigators using **Lore** to study or trying to recall what the Dream Flower Nectar might be, might recall vague reference to Golden Mead in **Celaeno Fragments**, but while similar in almost every way (golden liquid that grants dreams), there's no way to know if these two substances are the same. (They aren't.)

If the action fails, the investigator suffers one horror.

Interviewing the Neighbors

If the investigators knock on the doors of Raskovnik's neighbors, they may take a complex action using **Presence**. If they succeed, one of the neighbors saw Raskovnik leave with "*two big men in dark coats. They were talking about taking him to the woods.*"

Other than that, the neighbors say that they have always liked Raskovnik. He is

polite, while a bit reserved “likely because that East European accent.

The neighbors can also confirm, that Raskovnik has had quite a few visitors lately. Much more than ever before. All of them upper class.

The Sheldons Are Here! (Optional)

It is possible that a number of Sheldon gangsters have been sent to retrieve the flower. In this case they might already be at the house when the investigators arrive, or they could turn up at any given moment.

Improvisations isn't the strongest suite of these mooks, so they'll try to enforce the investigators to stand down. They'll try to take the flower and leave, but if the investigators come between them and the flower? Well, that's their problem. The Sheldons will open fire, if necessary.

There are as many gangsters as there are investigators. They will fight until half of them are incapacitated.

Once the investigators leave the apartment, this scene ends.

During this encounter one of them will try to reach the flower. If the investigators haven't already dealt with the flower, he'll try just to rip it off with him. This ends badly, as the nectar turns acidic and splashes over the goon. He'll fall prone, shouting and squirming, until the roots of the Dream Flower get a hold of him.

After that he's a goner as the Flower rejuvenates itself by drinking his blood. Any investigator witnessing this may choose to perform a complex action using **Resolve**. If they choose not to, or fail, they will suffer one horror.

Following the Sheldon Gang

Should the Sheldon Gang goons escape the house, they will try to return to the **Warehouse Laboratory**.

This will allow the investigators to follow them there.

In this case the Sheldon Gang will be more alert during **Scene 7** (*see the Ongoing Turf War -sidebar*).

Scene 7: The Warehouse Laboratory

ONGOING TURF WAR?

It is possible that the gangs of Arkham have gone to war either during this adventure, or one of the adventures before this.

This means that the guards in this scene are in high alert, and every complex action dealing with them is **difficult**.

The same is true also if the Sheldon Gang attacked the Raskovik's house in **Scene 6**, and some of them managed to escape back here.

The investigators track Raskovnik to a secluded Rivertown warehouse. It squats at the edge of the river, isolated from its neighbors by collapsed docks and rotting pylons. Its windows are dark, its brick walls stained by decades of soot and tidewater.

The Sheldons chose this place because no one comes here unless they already know why.

Calling in the O'Bannions

The players might want to share the location of the Warehouse with the O'Bannions or Mr. Valone.

As each of the gangs still try to uphold the meagre chance of peace between them, either gang could send a couple of gangsters to back the investigators up, if any one of them makes a successful complex action using **Presence**.

Failing this roll means that the gang in question has been getting a bit too much

heat lately, and they blame it on the investigators.

They make a thinly veiled threat about the investigators needing to solve the situation as quickly as possible—and by themselves, to avoid getting to meet the business end of their shotguns.

Approaching the Warehouse

The building is guarded, but lightly. The Sheldons are confident no one knows what they have.

Two armed gangsters loiter outside, just waiting for some action. A third watches the river from inside, smoking and bored.

The main doors are locked; a side entrance near the water is partially rusted shut.

Investigators may choose their approach:

- ♦ **Sneak in** through the riverside entrance, or upper windows by performing a complex action using **Agility**.

♦ **Talk their way in** by any ruse they can come up with, using **Presence** or **Resolve**.

♦ **Force entry**, loud and decisive.

Any approach works but *noise*, *delay*, or *bloodshed* will affect what awaits inside.

Inside the Warehouse

A makeshift laboratory has been set up in the warehouse. Tables scavenged from workshops hold glassware, burners, stained notebooks, and potted plants in various kind.

At least one gangster is visibly uneasy. None of them understand what they are guarding.

What the Gangster Know

If confronted, the Sheldons' men know Raskovnik is being forced to work on some new drug. They have been told not to harm him, unless he makes a run for it.

Finding Raskovnik

Raskovnik isn't chained, but he is not free. He looks exhausted, feverish, and half-lost in his own thoughts. Dried sweat stains his shirt. He believes that the Sheldons will kill him once they realise he's not actually trying to produce the drug.

If the Sheldon's intruded his house during **Scene 6**, and some of them managed to escape, Raskovnik is currently being manhandled by a bulky gangsters for not sharing details about the cursed plant.

Unless the investigators cause a lot of commotion, or took their time to get to

Raskovnik, he hasn't opened the portal—yet.

Preparing the Gate

Any investigators can make a complex action using **Lore** or **Wits** to spot the arcane sigils hidden in amongst other scribblings on a nearby blackboard. Having read **Raskovnik's Journal** or knowing the spell *Portal to the Dreamlands* adds an advantage to the action.

Opening the Gate

If Raskovnik had time to perform the ritual (in hopes of escaping) he has just opened a gate to the Dreamlands.

Raskovnik doesn't intend to bring anyone with him. If stopped, he becomes desperate; pleading, bargaining, or attempting to finish the ritual even as chaos erupts around him.

Not having his journal with him means that he has had to perform the ritual from the notes written from memory. And he doesn't actually nail it.

Negotiating with Raskovnik

Raskovnik isn't aware that the Dream Flower withers. If this is brought up, any action dealing with him can be made with an **advantage**. If the investigators fed the Flower with blood and share with this him, no complex action is needed. He trust them.

Pressure Points

There are several possibilities to heighten the situation once the investigators are in.

♦ Surviving Sheldons might regroup or try to run for backup.

- ❖ Resorting to gunfire will most definitely bring in police attention.
- ❖ Raskovnik's ritual might destabilizing the reality even while he is performing it.

Using these options the GM can make this scene seem like the culmination point of the adventure.

Once the portal opens and the Shantak emerges, this scene ends.

Scene 8: Open a Gate and Spawn Monster

While the confrontation with the gangsters at the warehouse should seem like the pivotal point of the adventure, the events actually escalate from there.

Tired and drawn, Raskovnik has tried to remember the correct ritual to open the portal to the Dreamlands.

This scene can happen in one of two ways.

Either Raskovnik, desperate and cornered, completes a summoning ritual just as the investigators reach him, opening an unstable portal and unleashing a creature drawn from the Dreamlands into the warehouse.

Or the summoning occurs involuntarily, the creature pursuing Raskovnik as he flees with the investigators, turning their escape into a chase.

Monster Emerges

As the Gate opens, read or paraphrase the following:

The air ripples like heat over asphalt as the Gate opens, in swirling colors no human eye should see. And from those colors, a hybrid winged terror lurches forward. It shrieks, a sound that claws at the mind rather than the ears, and steps fully into the world.

A monster comes through the portal. The investigators shouldn't know it by name (unless someone makes a complex action using **Lore**). To them it is a horror from another world.

The monster is hunting Raskovnik, but will attack the investigators, if they attack it. Summoning this monster was not on Raskovnik's mind, and he's abhorred by its appearance. If the investigators did try to convince him to come with them, he will now fully be on that plan, and begs them to help him escape.

Shantak's profile can be found on the p. 136 of the Dreams of Kingsport.

If you don't have access to it, use the stats of Byakhee given on p. 217 of the Core Rulebook, but add Frightening knack to it (p. 220, for example).

Fighting

Fighting the monster in the closed space of the warehouse will certainly limit its flying capabilities, but can still be very dangerous.

Fleeing

Should the investigators flee the scene, the monster will only go after them, if Raskovnik comes with them. In this case the monster follows them, until it gets Raskovnik, or loses their trail.

Escaping Through the Gate

Should the investigators rush through the gate, they will end up in **Hlanith** jungles in Dreamlands. The monster will follow them there and is still after Raskovnik.

See Scene 9: The Hlanith Jungles.

Scene 9: Aftermath

Raskovnik's Fate

After dealing with the monster, the investigators are left with a moral dilemma. What are they going to do with Raskovnik?

Do We Hand Him Over?

The Sheldon Gang might want him back, depending on how the investigators handled the situation at the warehouse.

O'Bannions don't want this kind of drug in "their" city, so they are hoping that the problem goes away.

As newcomers in Arkham **Valone Outfit** don't want any loose ends. They see drug business as another way to take control of the city. Raskovnik might present a challenge to this, and they have a brutal way of dealing with challenges.

Raskovnik has no desire to deal with any of the criminal groups, and doesn't hesitate to present his case.

Whatever the investigators choose will shape Arkham's underworld.

Or Let Him Go?

Last Rites

If the investigators saved Raskovnik, he will return to his Dream Flower. His ordeal with the monster has deterred him from enter the Dreamlands through a portal, but if the Flower has already been destroyed he will perform the ritual immediately, fleeing from this world.

This means that the gate to Dreamlands will remain open for 4d6 hours, and there's no telling, of what comes through it to the waking world during this time.

Quest for Mont-Tremblant Park

If the Flower is still intact, he will ultimately fail in his dream quest. The Nectar doesn't take him to the Dreamlands but grants him visions of Ark'at. This vision will set him on another quest, to find **Magh'an Ark'at** (p. 172, core rulebook).

About a two weeks after this adventure ends Raskovnik wakes from Nectar-induced coma, and sets out to find Ark'at.

It takes him about two additional weeks to reach the national park in Canada. He is greeted by the Caretakers, who take him in as one of their own, and he might become an essential part of the cults goal of hatching Ark'at.

Waking the Dreamers

Eventually all of the dreamers wake up. They tell not of pleasant dreams, but echo the visions send by Ark'at.

Most of them of them are able to shake of this episode as an overdose, some even turning their whole life around. But some might heed the visions and follow Raskovnik's example, and try to reach the Magh'an Ark'at.

See p. 13 for more info about the Haunted Dreams they suffered.

Trying to Wake the Dreamers?

Even using strongest available stimulants, waking a dreamer is a **very difficult** complex action using **Knowledge**. The investigators could also try to brew a concoction derived from the Dream Flower, using **Lore**. Unless they have access to the RASKOVNIK'S JOURNAL, this action is also **very difficult**.

While a success will in fact wake the dreamer up, this forced return will be very traumatic to them—use the table on p. 187 of the **Core Rulebook** to narrate this, for example.

Should the action fail, the dreamer will never wake up, as their essence is consumed by Ark'at.

Open Questions

Raskovnik could be persuaded to reveal where he got the seed for the Dream Flower from. But if the flower perished while he was away, this might prove very difficult.

In any case he has no way of contacting the person who gave the seed to him, nor does he know where the seed came from in the first place. His best guess is that it came from the Dreamlands.

Play Next?: The Arkham Mysteries

Spoiler warning

The **Arkham Mysteries** adventure supplement published by the *Edge Studios*, has an adventure that deals with Sheldons, and their operation that ties in with the Mythos.

While writing this adventure, I hadn't even read that, but after reading it, I **wouldn't** recommend running it immediately after this.

Instead the adventure in **Dreams of Kingsport** could work, since it offers a distinctly different approach to the dreams in **Arkham Horror**.

The Imaginarium

One of the locals who took the drug was a local artist, **Pierre Moreau**. He has been struggling to find his inspiration since finishing his masterpiece in 1925, and has been trying out ever more esoteric means to tear down his artistic block.

Download the adventure **Imaginarium** [HERE](#) (if there's no link, you are viewing an older copy of this adventure, not yet updated with a working link).

Scene 10: Hlanith (Optional)

While ventures in the Dreamlands is beyond the scale of this adventure, it is possible, though somewhat unlikely, that the investigators end up in the Dreamlands. Maybe they try the ritual from **Raskovnik's Journal**, or follow him through the Gate he opens at the warehouse.

Investigators Performing the Ritual

As the ritual in the Journal was translated by Raskovnik, he imbued his own knowledge of the Dreamlands in it. If the investigators casting the spell does not specify where the portal should lead, or they haven't visited the Dreamlands before, the Gate opens to the City of **Hlanith** (p. 59, *Dreams of Kingsport*), as this was always Raskovnik's intention.

Raskovnik Performs the Ritual

Trying to remember the ritual correctly, Raskovnik has made a small, but crucial error in his sigils. His gate doesn't open to Hlanith, but the primordial jungle surrounding it.

It's a dangerous place for anyone, but if the investigators just suddenly stumble there, they should try to return through the gate as soon as possible.

If the monster followed them here, it might not be that easy.

NPCS

All pages given here refer to the **Core Rulebook**.

Nicholas Raskovnik

Self-taught botanist from Bulgaria, whose skills are way above most. But since he doesn't have a doctorate, they go mostly unnoticed. Nicholas was a Dreamer, but died in the Dreamlands and has since been looking a way to remedy this. Works as a curator at the Bayfriar Gardens.

He is brilliant, desperate, and *wrong* about what he's doing—but not stupid.

Uses *Professor* profile (p. 196).

Brogan & Sarah Doyle

Brogan and Sarah run a small drug den in the Rivertown. After their competitor burned two days ago, they have been on the edge. They have asked for protection from the Valones, but have quickly realised that this was a mistake.

Brogan uses *Gangster* profile (p. 192), but doesn't have the *Eat Lead!* knack, nor police revolver.

Sarah uses *Healer* profile (p. 193), but doesn't have the *Healer* knack, and her "Medical Supply Bag" is mostly just various drugs.

Vincent Luciano

Valone Outfit lieutenant. Ambitious, but practical. Has been running some minor drug deals in **Boston**, and because of this was chosen by Johnny Valone to handle this case in Arkham.

Uses *Gangster* profile (p. 192).

Johnny Valone

A notorious Boston-based mobster who has been pushing to assert his outfit's influence in Arkham.

*"...a criminal of French/Italian descent that went through the ranks quickly and now tries to take over Arkham's underworld, being particularly adept at the Syndicates' ability to intimidate whoever stands in the way"*³

Uses *Mafia leader* profile (p. 195).

Margaret Whitcombe

A woman in her late fifties, impeccably dressed and rigidly composed, even in private. Sleeplessness has left her pale and drawn. Her voice remains measured and cultured, but there is a brittleness beneath it, as if exhaustion has worn through layers of social polish. She clings fiercely to propriety and reputation.

Uses *Townsperson* profile (p. 196), but with **Presence** and **Resolve** at 4+.

³ https://www.fantasyflightgames.com/en/ffg_blog/20324/original_content

The Dream Flower

Dice Limit: 5

Agility: 3+

Athletics: 5+

Wits: -

Presence: -

Intuition: 5+

Knowledge: -

Resolve: 6+

Melee: 4+

Ranged: -

Lore: 6+

ABILITIES

Minor NPC: When this NPC is wounded, they are immediately killed or knocked unconscious at the GM's discretion.

Creeping Poison: When this NPC performs a successful attack and inflicts an injury, it always inflicts the **Sickened** injury (p. 35, core rulebook).

Filling the Room: Everyone in the same room with this NPC is considered to be engaged with it.

Prey Relocalization: When this NPC performs an attack targeting a character with an injury, add 1 to the result of all dice rolled.

Stealthy: Attempts to spot or locate this NPC are difficult. If it acts during a surprise round, it fully refills its dice pool.

WEAKNESSES

Hunger: When this NPC can see one or more corpses (of any type), it may not perform reactions to avoid attacks.

Flammable: Fire-based attacks deal 1 additional damage to this NPC.

Stationary: This NPC cannot move.

EQUIPMENT

Wines: Skill (Melee Combat), Damage 2, Injury Rating 3, Range Engaged; if the attack generates at least three successes, the target is knocked prone.

Sting: Skill (Melee Combat), Damage 1, Injury Rating 3, Range Engaged, the damage inflicted by this weapon cannot be reduced by mundane armor or protection.

Acidic Spill: When this NPC would suffer an injury, instead one of the bell-like blooms is cut. This spills the nectar over everyone within 5 feet of it. Any character targeted by this attack may perform a reaction using **Agility**. If they choose not to or fail, they suffer the **Burned** injury.

FINAL WORDS

This adventure was created in 2025-26 by **Lauri Maijala** for **Arkham Horror RPG**.

Maps and some of the art were created by **Lauri Maijala**.

Handout created [HERE](#).

About using AI

ChatGPT was used for brainstorming, and spell check.

Soundtrack

I tend to collaborate with my players to create playlists for our games. The soundtrack for this adventure can be found on Tidal: [LINK](#)

Playtesting Comments

Following ideas were introduced during playtesting, but I chose not to include them in the adventure. Feel free to incorporate them to your story if you feel that they would suit your play style:

- ❖ **Scene 1:** Speed the investigation up by letting the investigators to Raskovniks' address (Handout 1) on the first sleeper.
- ❖ **Scene 2:** If the investigators fail to notice the sleepers in the safe house, **Vincent Luciano** or **Mr. Valone** might inform them about the other sleepers in the apartment.

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Comments

Huge thanks go to **Cody Andrews**, **Damin Bloomfield**, and **Paul Jones** for commenting!

Playtesting

Paul Jones, **Roy Smallpage**, and **Jamie Cocker**

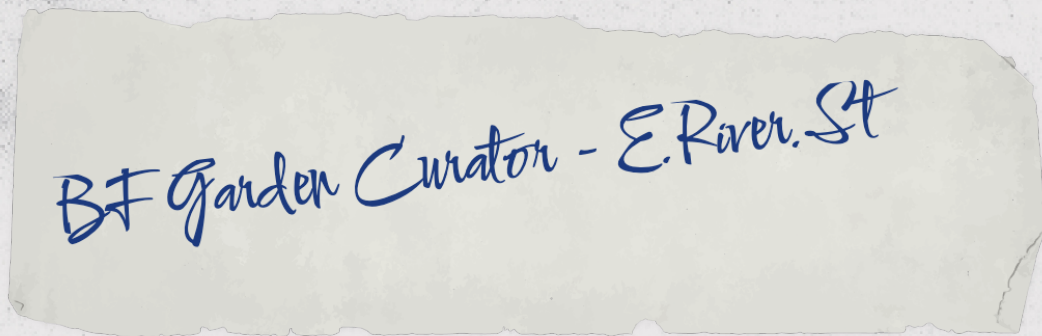
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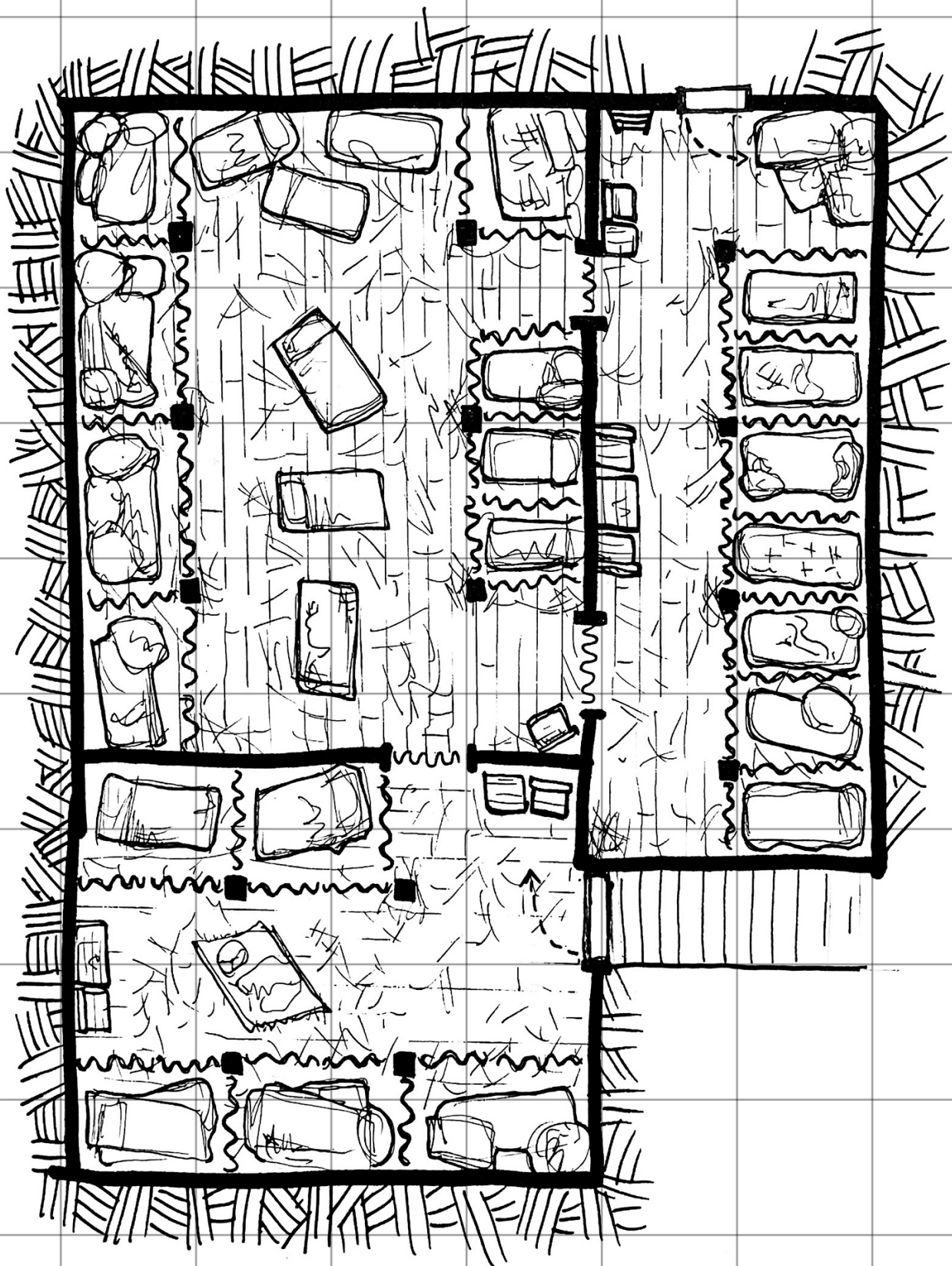
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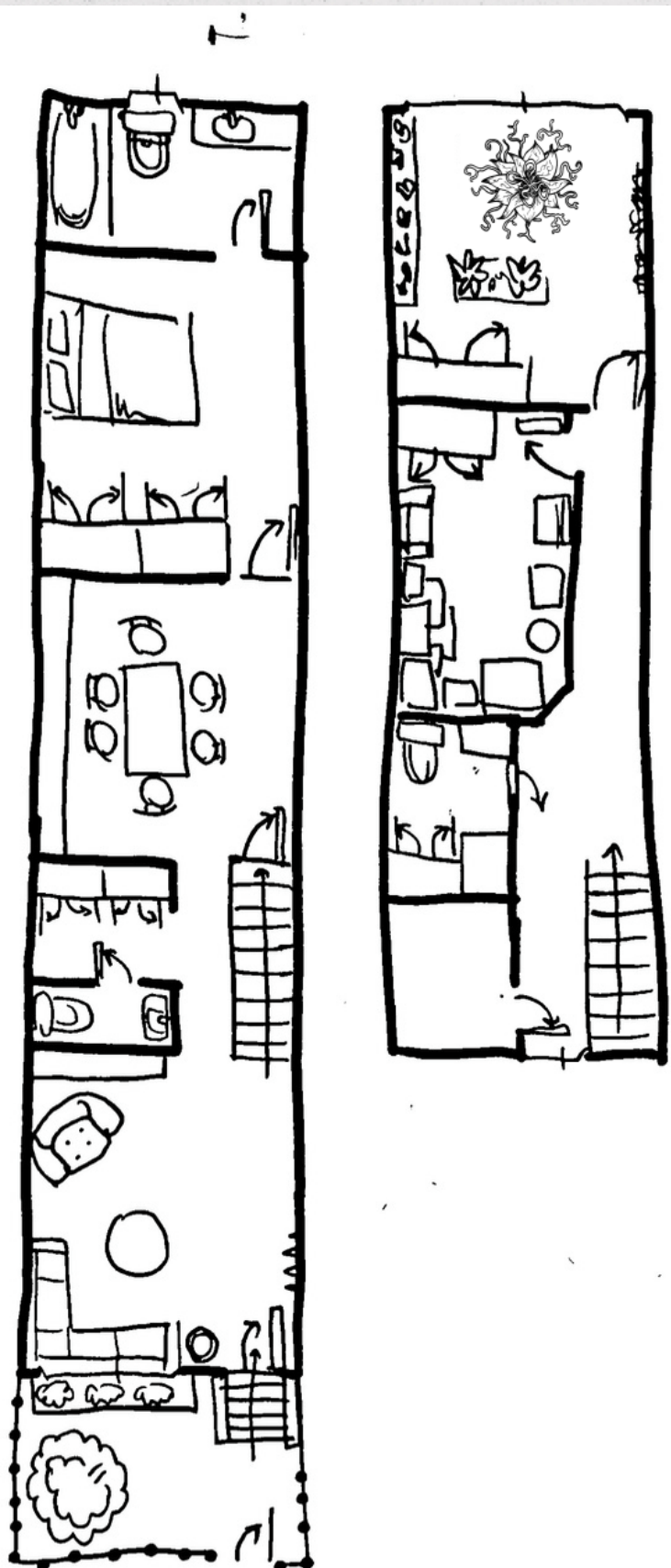
HANDOUTS



Handout 1 - Address note



THE DRUG DEN



RASKOVNIK'S HOUSE