

A NICE NIGHT FOR SCREAMING



by Marcus
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This adventure is designed to be played with any Twenties- or Thirties-based role-playing game, principally the **Call of Cthulhu**, **Daredevils** or **GANGBUSTERS™** games. Statistics for the specific systems are given in a separate appendix at the end of the module; the text of the module is as 'systemless' as is practical. The various statistics follow applicable conventions in formatting. An appendix is also provided so that the scenario can be used with the **ADVENTURES OF INDIANA JONES™** role-playing game.

The scenario is designed for 3-6 moderately experienced player characters, based anywhere in continental North America except the south-eastern United States (Florida and adjoining States). The action of the module takes place during May 1926.

STOP! Read no further if you intend playing a character in this scenario. The remaining information is for referees only.

INTRODUCTION

This scenario 'accidentally' involves the adventurers with a cunning murderer, who is attempting to disguise his activities behind a supernatural veneer. The referee must should maintain a tense atmosphere of fear and suspicion, giving the impression that the adventurers may be scratching the surface of some age-old evil.

The player characters have three main objectives: first, survival; second, keep Agnes Barnes alive and get her to Miami in time to save Lucarotti; third, solve the mystery at the Pellew house. The importance of keeping her alive during this adventure cannot be over-emphasised, as her presence is the sole reason for the characters' involvement. She should not agree to any serious illegality, and should be the 'conscience' of the party as well as a potential victim who must be protected at all times.

Ideally, this adventure should be inserted into the campaign at a convenient point. As the major Non-Player Character involved in the adventure, Agnes Barnes should be a useful acquaintance of the player characters before the adventure starts: a researcher, ex-secretary or stenographer with whom they have had some dealings in the past. Thus it will be best if the GM introduce her to the players some time in advance of the playing of this module.

Agnes has a problem. Shortly before she came to work in the town where the adventurers are based, she was working in Miami, a secretary for Frank Lucarotti, now known as the Fort Lauderdale Axe Murderer. Agnes believed Lucarotti was an ordinary businessman when she went to work for him, and resigned when she found he was a bootlegger. She left Miami, and wasn't surprised to hear that he had been arrested a few weeks later.

Two days ago a weekly news magazine carried a feature article about Lucarotti and the Fort Lauderdale murders. Agnes realised that it could not have happened in the manner that the article described. The murders took place at the time she was handing her notice to Lucarotti. For some reason she was never called as a witness, and Lucarotti has been sentenced to be executed in Miami in six days time. When Agnes realised this she went to the local police, but they refused to listen to her story. She sent telegrams to the Miami and Fort Lauderdale Police Departments, but there were no replies. She suspects — quite rightly — that someone has bought the police officials involved in the case.

When she returned to her apartment on the following evening she was attacked by an intruder who had jimmied the lock. He tried to stab her, but she broke free and escaped. She is sure she is being followed. With no other choice open, she has gone to the adventurers for help.

As Agnes explains, the referee should make it clear that she is very tense, and that as she gazes out of the window she sees a black limousine parked across the street. Two men are leaning on it, watching....

Agnes feels that the mystery must be solved in Miami, and asks for help in evading whoever is following her. It should be made obvious that the hoodlums are making serious attempts to kill her.

Preliminary Events

Once Agnes has contacted the adventurers further attempts will be made on her life. The referee should vary the methods to suit the campaign circumstances, but these might include an assault on the adventurers and Agnes, an attempted hit and run 'car accident', a car bomb or tommy gun attack. These attacks must not actually kill or seriously wound Agnes. Innocent bystanders might be killed, increasing the adventurers' feelings of being targets-by-association. Thugs (with suspicious bulges under their left arms) are waiting at ports, railroad stations and bus depots, watching all departures.

A NICE NIGHT FOR SCREAMING

Should the adventurers own an aircraft, they should be encouraged to use it. If they do not, Agnes will remember that there is an air charter service based at a small airfield outside the city. The process of evading any watchers and getting to the airfield provides a good excuse to run a car chase or a gun battle.

Once at the airfield, an aircraft (an ex-army transport) and pilot are available, though chartering it to fly to Miami (with or without a pilot) costs \$400. As the adventurers and Agnes board the aeroplane (or after refuelling, if the journey to Miami is longer than 500 miles) two cars will drive onto the airfield where the aeroplane is parked. As the aeroplane trundles down the runway and takes off a few bullet holes will appear in the wings, but no obvious damage will be done....

An hour out from Miami the plane will run into a violent storm. An NPC pilot will try to climb above the clouds, a player character pilot may attempt any other evasive action. The storm will blow the plane off course, and the pilot will be unable to recognise any landmarks.

Shortly after, the fuel gauges will be reading close to 'empty' and the pilot will have to switch to the reserve fuel tank. Unfortunately, the pipe to this tank has been clipped by a bullet, and as soon as the reserve fuel valve is opened the pressure change will cause the pipe to rupture. The fuel in the reserve tank will spray out and be lost.

The pilot may attempt a descent through the storm for a soft landing at this point, the engines coughing as the last drops of fuel are used. The referee should allow the use of any relevant piloting skills or abilities. However, no matter how good the pilot, any dice roll called for by the rules will result in the plane crash-landing into a swamp. Any and all NPCs (except Agnes) are killed in this crash, and the survivors are knocked unconscious by the impact.

Although the plane is fated to crash, successful piloting skill rolls should still be noted for possible skill increases.

IN THE SWAMP

When the adventurers recover consciousness it is about 1am. Everyone is bruised and sore, but nobody is seriously injured. The aeroplane is sinking into the swamp as muddy water fills the fuselage through broken portholes and tears in the aeroplane's skin. Outside it is a pitch black night and heavy rain is falling.

The adventurers' luggage has been thrown forward and burst open, lying in a jumbled heap with the contents sodden and half submerged. Any radio equipment (the aeroplane did not carry a set) is wrecked beyond repair, the valves have been smashed. The aeroplane carries an inflatable life raft and footpump, both of which are undamaged, and the adventurers can inflate it before the aircraft finally sinks. Personal effects may be gathered, but only up to 4 items per person from the confusion of the fuselage's interior wreckage. Unless the adventurers immediately think of cleaning and drying them once they are out of the aeroplane, such firearms as they have salvaged will be corroded and jammed beyond use after 1d6 hours.

The plane will sink in 6+1d6 minutes, lurching violently a minute before it finally sinks beneath the surface. In addition to the adventurers and any of their equipment, the raft holds the following supplies:

- Flare pistol and six flares (see specific game statistics)
- First Aid kit
- Compass
- Half-gallon drum of drinking water, and some ship's biscuits
- 4 paddles, a sail, and a shelter canopy
- Puncture outfit and air pump.

The flares are visible for 2 miles on a clear night, and give daylight illumination in a 50yd radius for 2d10 seconds. Firing flares during the storm will not attract anybody's attention; nobody is looking for the adventurers and the flashes will be lost amid the lightning.

Once safely in the life raft the adventurers will probably start to make plans and attempt to determine their location. There is nothing they can do except wait for morning, and hope that they will eventually reach firm ground. During the night the referee should roll for one encounter per hour until dawn (at about 4.45am), using the following table:



- 01-08 no encounter
- 09-10 1-4 (harmless) swimming snakes
- 11-12 strange noises in the distance (actually toads)
- 13-16 1-4 bullfrogs (harmless, edible at a pinch)
- 17-18 1 indeterminately large, mysterious swimming animal, which dives underwater as it approaches the raft
- 19 loud squelching noise and smell of rotten eggs — a pocket of marsh gas has been disturbed by the life raft
- 20 1 alligator (see specific game statistics)

All encounters except the alligator are harmless, and the alligator will not attack unless it is disturbed.

The storm ends around two hours after dawn. As the sky clears (at about 7am) the adventurers will see the bleak surface of a treacherous swamp, interrupted by occasional stunted trees and plants. Roughly a mile to the northwest is a hummock of higher ground, covered by a thick growth of trees. A wisp of smoke rises above the trees.

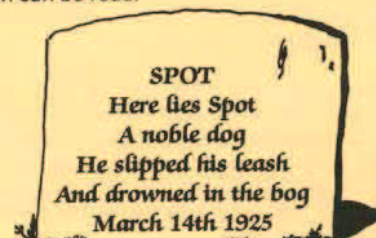
THE ISLAND OF DOCTOR PELLEW

(Map 1)

It will take the adventures 30 minutes to reach the nearest point of the island, assuming all four paddles are used. The only practical and obvious landing site is at the point marked X on Map 1.

There are some signs of man on the island: cut tree stumps, a pile of logs, and empty beer bottles. A muddy path leads into the trees in a north-easterly direction. If the adventurers do not use this path they will run into boggy ground, poison ivy (which should not be recognised without appropriate botanical knowledge) and impenetrably tangled bushes.

At point (i) anyone making a successful Observation roll (CoC — Spot Hidden; DD — Hidden Thing) will notice a crude wooden grave marker to the left of the path, almost covered in (poison) ivy. If the ivy is removed a carved inscription can be read:



Anyone digging on this site will find the skeleton of a small dog buried in an old sack. A careful examination will reveal that it has two crushed neck vertebrae, and was apparently strangled, rather than drowned.

At point (ii) there is a small clearing with a child's swing, a wooden climbing frame and a slide. All these show signs of neglect, termite damage; rot and weeds festoon the lower rungs of the slide's ladder.

At point (iii) the path forks. Both ways are clearer than the path the adventurers have followed up to now, as though these are in more regular use. A successful Observation roll will reveal that footprints go in both directions, with those going right occasionally covering those going left. The paths have clearly been used since the storm ended.

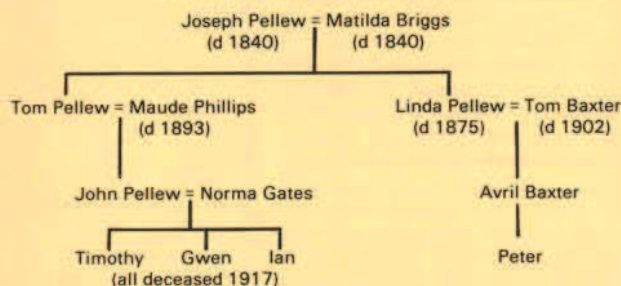
The left path leads to a smelly garbage heap, buzzing with flies. The right path continues for approximately sixty yards, ending in a clearing with an imposing old house, a shed (containing a small steam-powered generator) and a small jetty. A small steam launch is moored to the jetty.

There is an old man sitting in a rocking chair on the porch of the house, reading a book. As the adventurers leave the trees he will close the book, pick up a shotgun (previously concealed by a wooden pillar) and demand an explanation of the adventurer's presence.

The Pellew Family

The family living in the house are John and Norma Pellew, John's father Tom (the old man on the porch), and Avril Baxter (John's cousin). John Pellew is a noted biologist, and any of the adventurers will have heard his name in connection with the science (the referee should tell any biologist player characters that they have come across the name in learned journals), but no specific details of his work.

Although none of the family know it, Avril Baxter's illegitimate son Peter is also in the house, under the assumed identity of Alex Phillips, the handyman. The family tree following may clarify these relationships:



In 1890 sixteen-year-old Avril Baxter was seduced by a sailor. When it became clear that she was pregnant he deserted her. The subsequent child (Peter) was sent to an orphanage, and all record of him disappears after this. Peter set the orphanage on fire after stealing his own documentation and effectively disappeared. He had been told that John and Norma Pellew's children had died in a fire in 1917, and had discovered that if Tom, John and Norma died without heir, Avril inherits the income from a trust fund worth approximately \$250,000. And, of course, once his true identity is revealed, Peter is the heir to Avril Baxter and any fortune she might have inherited....

In 1922 Peter Baxter murdered the Pellews' handyman in a logging 'accident' and applied for the job. After growing a moustache and adopting a stooped and slow demeanour he now uses the name 'Alex Phillips'. 'Alex' learned that Norma Pellew was a spiritualist, intent on contacting her dead children. He also discovered that the house was once a way station in the Abolitionist 'underground railroad' before the Civil War; with several secret passages and rooms, which the Pellews and the other servants knew nothing about.

In 1924 'Alex' began to cause fake psychic phenomena in the house, making Norma think she had made contact with the 'other side'. Norma now holds seances every night at 9pm. The male Pellews regard the seances as superstitious nonsense; John goes to his laboratory and Tom to his bed rather than take part.

Peter's plan is relatively simple. Norma always visits the old nursery after one of her seances, before sleeping. Peter intends to attack her there, strangle her, hang her body from one of the ceiling beams in the nursery where her children died and escape through the secret passages. The door will be bolted from the inside to produce a classic 'locked room' situation and an apparent suicide. He has even forged a suicide note for Norma.

The presence of the adventurers will not stop this plan. In fact, Peter would prefer there to be as many confused witnesses as possible. Once Norma is dead he intends to wait six months, then eliminate John and fake his own disappearance in a 'boating accident'. He is quite content for time to kill Tom Pellew, and after the old man is dead he will reappear as Avril's long lost son. Eventually Avril will have to die as well, but only after Peter is sure that he is the only heir.

Peter has already killed several people and will not hesitate to murder anyone who gets in his way. He also killed Spot the dog, who was showing far too much interest in the secret passages. If it seems likely that he will be caught, he will simply try to kill all the Pellews and escape. He may attempt to commit additional murders to add to the confusion.

There are three other employees in the house: Alice Sugden, the cook, Sylvester Potter, the butler and Barbara Norris, John Pellew's secretary.

THE SCENE OF THE CRIME

The Pellew house is a two storey brick building with a slate roof, modernised in 1915 by the installation of running water and electricity. The family use a steam launch to travel to the nearest town, August, some 28 miles upstream. Last night's storm blew the boat against the jetty, bending the propellor shaft. It is not repairable with the tools on the island, and the boat is too heavy to be rowed or sailed upstream. A trader, Levi Custer, from August visits twice a week in his own boat, and is due to arrive around noon the day after the adventurers turn up.

The referee should give players descriptions of rooms, but should be vague about sizes. Unless the characters measure the rooms carefully (which is hardly the sort of act casual guests indulge in), the existence of the secret passages described below will not be apparent. All the rooms have wood panelling on the walls.

Ground Floor

The porch is sheltered by an extension of the roof, supported by six wooden pillars. All the lower floor windows, except those of the lobby, are barred, and all windows have external insect screens.

1. Lobby

The house is entered through a small lobby equipped as a conservatory. The plants are all rare swamp specimens of particular interest to naturalists and botanists. There are two cupboards holding wet weather clothing and fishing equipment.

2. Hall

The central hall is two storeys high, panelled in dark oak with a tiled floor. The upper gallery is carpeted. The hall is illuminated by a skylight, windows above the stairs at the east end and an electric chandelier. The overall effect is gloomy but impressive. There are two doors under the stairs. One is a broom cupboard, while the other leads down to the cellar. Over the south western corner is a trapdoor to the attic.

There are two well-concealed secret doors in the lower hall. Neither can be found unless the adventurers are actively searching in the right area and make a successful Observation roll. The northern secret door has claw marks (from Spot), and is obstructed by chairs. The southern secret door is well concealed; Peter has repaired it and restrained the areas that Spot scratched, and it matches the rest of the panelling precisely. The third secret door in the hall (on the upper gallery) is equally well hidden. All the secret doors in this room are opened by depressing two false knots simultaneously, releasing a catch.

3. Dining room

Deserted except at meal times and during the evening seances, the dining room is furnished with a large table which will seat ten, a sideboard, with serving dishes and utensils, an upright pianola (mechanical piano) and a cylinder phonograph. Items which Norma and Avril use during seances (lettered cards, a toy trumpet, a Bible, a tambourine, candles and incense sticks) are stored in the sideboard.

The secret door in the east wall is equipped with a peephole, which is normally plugged by a fake knot of wood when not in use.

The pianola can be played like a normal piano, or wound up and set to play from specially punched paper rolls of music; at present it has a Brahms' Lullaby roll in place. Peter has rigged the pianola to play during seances. A thin wire runs under the secret door and when it is pulled the pianola starts playing, apparently of its own accord. Peter then reels the wire in, leaving no trace. The wire will only be found by someone making a successful Observation roll while actively searching.

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The other mechanisms Peter can use during seances are detailed in the description of the secret passage (5) below. The referee should also see the notes on seances.

4. Lounge

This room contains a pool table, a bar holding several bottles of legal 0.5% beer and hidden bottles of bootleg wine and whisky, two comfortable armchairs and a card table. The west wall is covered by several tall cupboards, which make accurate measurement of the room extremely difficult.

Two of the cupboards are empty. One holds pool cues, balls and cards, a second contains old magazines and newspapers (dating back six years, and thus including a report of the death of the previous handyman), and a number of books and magazines dealing with psychic research and supernatural phenomena. The third cupboard holds a sewing basket, knitting a tapestry frame and part of a quilt, while the last is a locked gun cabinet (John, Tom, and Sylvester Potter have keys) containing two well-oiled 12-gauge shotguns, a .22 Remington rifle and several boxes of the relevant types of ammunition.

5. Secret Passage

This is part of the original Abolitionist modifications to the house, and is narrow (2 or 2 1/2 feet wide at most) with a low ceiling (4 or 5 feet high). Bricks and sharp stones protrude from the walls, making movement difficult and slow (characters must move at half speed). Peter is familiar with these passages and can move at normal speeds. The passage ends in a vertical shaft and ladder to the cellar, the upper floor and the attic.

A box on the floor holds the equipment that Peter uses during seances — a toy trumpet, a tambourine, chimes and the 'mama' mechanism from a doll. Peter has removed bricks at two points to expose the wooden panelling, which readily transmits sound into the dining room.

6. Study

This is an office and library used by John Pellew and Barbara Norris, his secretary. John's desk holds nothing but records of his work, while the second desk has an Imperial typewriter and is covered in typed and collated reports. The bookcases around the walls contain files, records and books (in several languages) related to John's work, but only characters with biology or medical skill will be able to understand any of the titles. The secret door to this room is concealed behind one of these bookcases, but the hinges on the door are badly rusted, making moving the bookcase extremely difficult. A small wall safe behind an indifferent Hopper print holds \$745 and some bonds. John has the only key.

7. Kitchen

The kitchen is the province of Alice Sugden and Sylvester Potter, who are joined at mealtimes by 'Alex' (Barbara Norris eats with the family).

The room has modern equipment (1920s), including a steel sink, a new wood-burning stove, a heated wash tub, a mangle and a recently installed electric refrigerator! There are also a rubbish bin, a butcher's table, three storage cupboards full of utensils, a table and a dresser with china. The outside kitchen door is locked at night, but open during the day.

8. Pantry

A straightforward food store, full of hanging joints of meat, sacks of flour, potatoes, coffee, beans and canned and bottled produce. Strips of fly-paper control the insect population.

Upper Floor

9. Laboratory

The main site of John Pellew's work, this room contains tanks of (harmless) reptiles and amphibians, a powerful Zeiss microscope and a huge central tank holding a baby alligator. This baby can bite for 1-3 points of damage (all rule systems). Cupboards and drawers under the workbench holds chemicals, a large plate camera, dissecting instruments and other biology equipment. The equipment is adequate for routine forensic and chemical work.

10. Store Room

This is basically a continuation of the laboratory, holding preserved and dissected specimens, chemicals, spare equipment, books and junk. The secret door is covered by a bookcase which moves easily if a concealed catch is depressed. The north end of the room is a photographic darkroom, equipped with an enlarger, sink, and developing dishes. If using the Call of Cthulhu rules, the referee should note that the chemicals in these rooms can be used to treat photographic plates to reveal invisible objects, as described in the Cthulhu Companion. Since no invisible objects are present this is a futile exercise.

11. Secret Passage

This passage is physically almost identical to the one on the floor below (5). A box on the floor holds a noose made from an old clothes-line, a strangling cord, a pair of leather gloves and a forged suicide note which reads:

*Dear John,
I can no longer bear the separation
from our children, when I know
that they are waiting for us on the
Other Side.*

Please forgive me for deserting you.

*Pray God will have mercy on my
soul and permit me to enter His
Immortal Kingdom.*

Your Loving Wife

Norma

The note is a good forgery, and characters will need to compare it with a genuine sample of Norma's writing and make a detailed analysis to prove that it is a forgery. A Graphology roll (CoC — Spot Hidden and Read English or Forensic rolls; DD — Forensic Science) are required.

12-13. Nursery and Bedroom

The outer of the two rooms originally occupied by the three Pellew children is the nursery, the scene of their deaths. Norma insisted on restoring this room to its original condition. Many toys and books are present, including a rocking horse, dolls' house, wooden railway set, and a huge teddy bear. Peter often moves these toys around the room, and sometimes sets the rocking horse in motion during seances. Norma has the only key to these rooms and therefore thinks that they are haunted by her children.

The ceiling is beamed, with sufficient room for Peter to fix his rope to one of the rafters when the time comes for Norma's 'suicide'.

The bedroom has three children's beds. Peter occasionally crumples the bedding, to give the impression that children have been sleeping in them.

14. Spare Room

This room is currently unoccupied. Agnes and any other female characters will be allocated this room at night. Male adventurers will be expected to bed down in the lounge or dining room.

15. Servants' Quarters

These rooms are occupied by the family employees. All the rooms have plastered walls and are comfortably furnished.

15a is occupied by the butler, Sylvester Potter. A bottle of brandy is stored under the bed.

15b is the room used by 'Alex Phillips' (Peter Baxter). The other bed in here is unused. There is nothing obviously incriminating in this room, but there are a number of books, some which might seem too advanced for 'Alex's' level of intelligence.

Alice Sugden and Barbara Norris sleep in **15c**. Hidden at the back of Barbara's bedside cabinet is a diary. In it she confesses to loving John Pellew. Peter has read this document and may attempt to use Barbara's love for John to frame her with Norma's murder if an investigation seems to be coming close to the truth.

KEY:



Swamp



Open Water



Woods



Building



Stairs



MAP 1:
PELLEW'S ISLAND

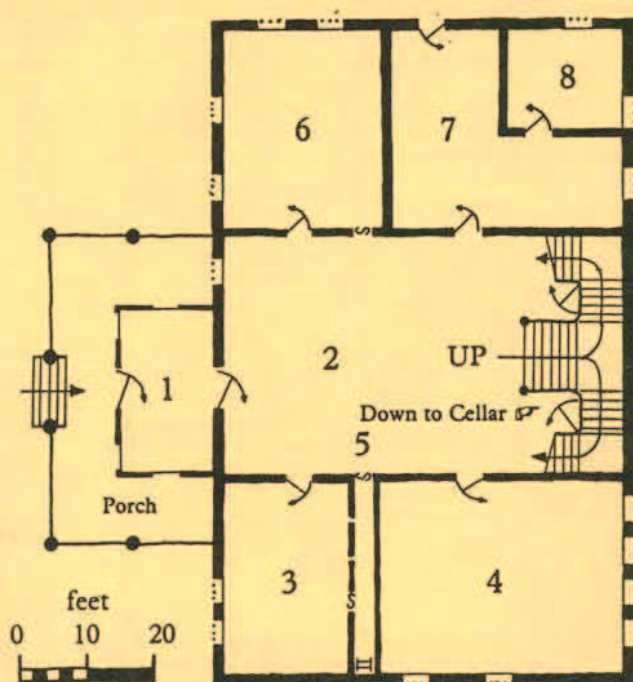
Door

Secret Door

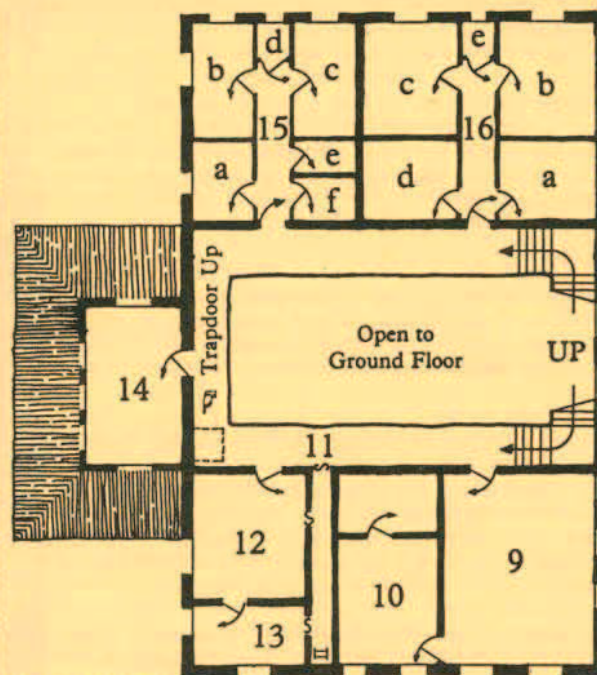
Window

Barred Window

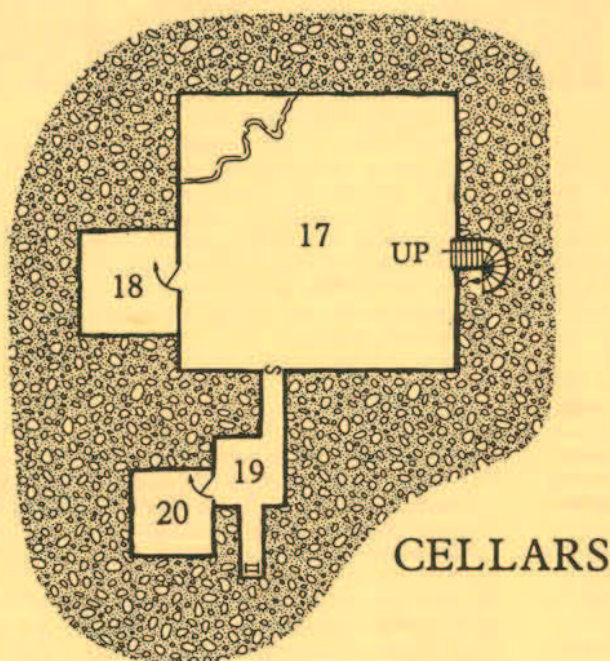
Ladder



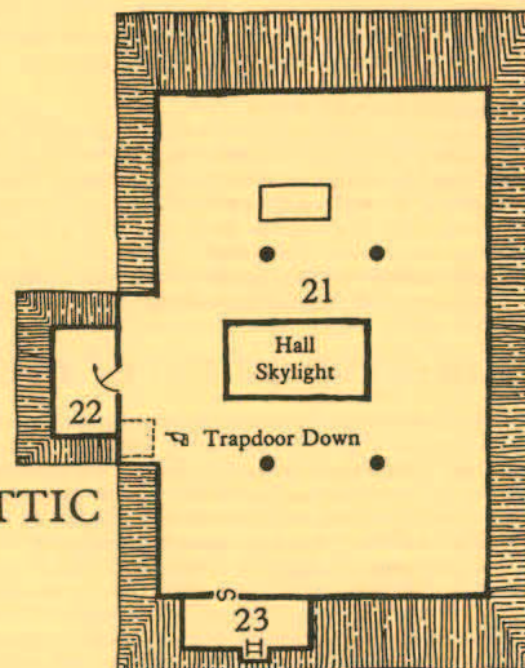
GROUND FLOOR



UPPER FLOOR



CELLARS



ATTIC

15d is a lavatory. John has concealed a .45 revolver in an oilskin pouch in the cistern, and will shoot his way out if he sees no other way of escaping. The gun is clean of fingerprints, but there are some partial prints on the bullets. **15e** is the linen closet, while **15f** is a bathroom.

16. Family Bedrooms

These three bedrooms are used by the Pellew family.

16a is used by John and Norma. Boxes on the wardrobe contain children's clothes, a wedding dress and many family photographs.

16b belongs to Avril Baxter. The wardrobe has a false back, which hides a huge collection of pulp romance novels.

16c is Tom Pellew's room. The walls are lined with pictures of him with Hill, Sherman, 'Teddy' Roosevelt and other notables. A showcase holds Confederate medals from the Civil War and US Army decorations from the Spanish-American War of 1898.

16d is a bathroom and **16e** the lavatory.

Cellars

The cellars are built of stone blocks.

IMAGINE magazine, July 1985

17. Main Cellar

This room holds old furniture and junk, a workbench and tools, a well and an electric pump supplying a water tank in the attic, a wood pile and a heap of planks and timber half hiding the (normally locked) door to the Wine Cellar (18). A leak has allowed water into the cellar and it is flooded to a depth of two inches in the north eastern corner.

The secret door in the south wall is a stone slab on a steel pivot.

18. Wine Cellar

This room holds a cask of legal 0.5% beer and 5 cases of bootleg whisky.

19. Secret Room

This is Peter's base of operations. An old roll-top desk holds skeleton keys, a torch, writing paper, a variety of pens and inks, cotton gloves and samples of the family members' handwriting. There are also several crumpled early drafts of Norma's 'suicide note'. A barrel holds the coil of rope from which the noose was cut. A long wooden box holds a selection of tools. A crate supports an oil lantern, a can of paraffin, a pair of thick socks (used to muffle footsteps) and a box of matches. The south passage from this room leads to a vertical shaft and ladder.

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20. Tomb

This room holds rough three wooden coffins containing the skeletal remains of three escaped slaves who died in the house during the 'underground railroad' days.

Peter has bored a hole through the floor of the dining room (3) above and can use a long pole to shake the table during Norma's seances.

Attic

The attic is stiflingly hot by day and cold at night. The ceiling is 12 feet high at the roof peak, falling to a 4 foot high wall around the perimeter of the main attic. The floor is made of wooden boards supported on rafters.

21. Main Attic

This is a large gloomy compartment with no illumination except that from a naked light bulb above the entry trap door. A closed brick shaft linking the hall to the skylight and a water tank dominate the room. Lighting cables for the upper storey pass through holes in the floor, and Peter has enlarged these to spy on the rooms below. He uses a feather duster to hide any marks in the dust.

The secret panel in the south wall is made of bricks cemented in a wooden frame. It is adequately disguised in poor light, but can be seen if a torch is used within 5 feet of it.

22. Store Room

A dusty hole full of old trunks, hat boxes and cases. Nothing relevant to the adventure is stored here.

23. Secret Room

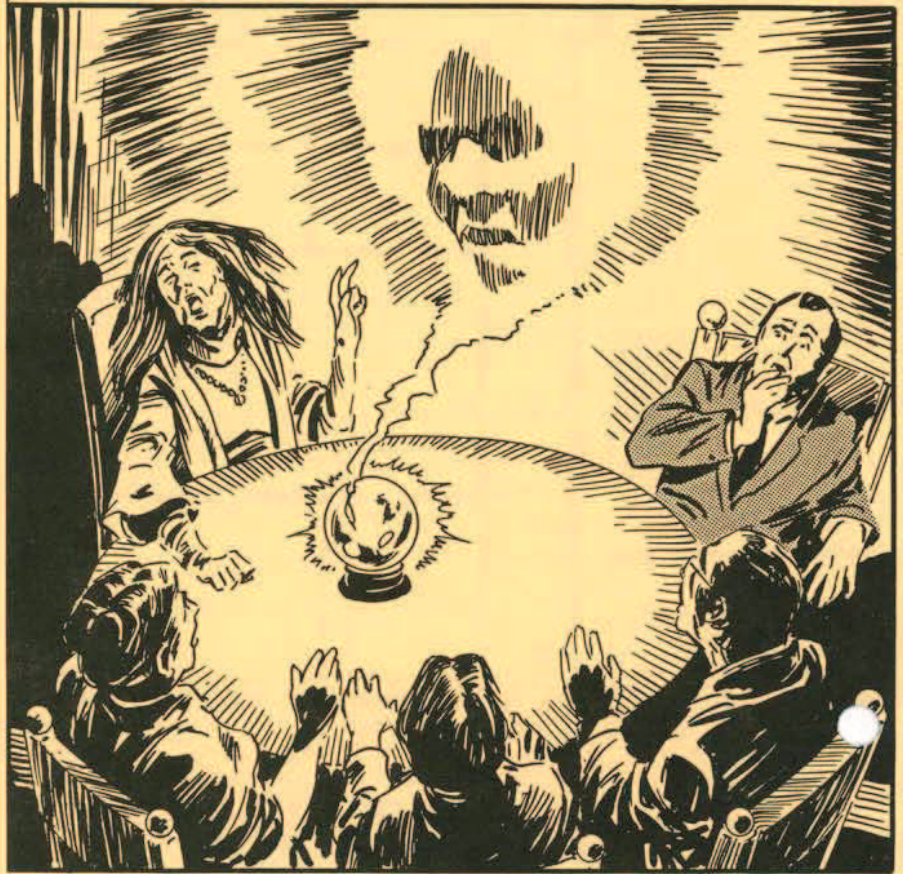
This is a small compartment with a 4 foot high ceiling along the north side, reducing to less than 3 feet to the south. The room is empty, except for three feather dusters stacked in a corner. The top of the vertical shaft is accessible, but entry and exit from it requires difficult contortions. Peter is used to this manoeuvre and has no problems. Any other characters must make a successful Agility roll at -25% (CoC/DD — Climbing roll at half the normal probability) to pass. Anyone failing this will be stuck for 3d10 seconds and will be unable to use any weapons.

SUGGESTED ORDER OF EVENTS

Once the adventurers reach the house they should be able to make friendly contact with Tom Pellew. When he is sure that they are innocuous, he will invite them in for a meal and a change of clothing. After the meal it will be discovered that the boat is damaged and that the adventurers must wait until morning for transport off the island. The adventurers will meet the other residents during the next few hours — the servants while arranging to get clothing dried, and the family and Barbara at breakfast — and get a rough idea of the family history (though no mention will be made of Peter). As the Pellews' launch is out of commission, John will invite the adventurers to stay overnight. Norma will invite them to attend a seance, especially if any of the adventurers have shown an interest in or have a public reputation for the occult.

Peter will be unable to resist one or two 'supernatural' interventions, such as moving the table, a ghostly cry of 'mama' from the doll mechanism or activation of the pianola. After the seance Peter will murder Norma and leave her body hanging in the locked nursery. The death will be discovered one hour later when John Pellew realises that his wife has not come to bed. Subsequent events are left to the referee, depending upon the nature and abilities of the adventurers. John may accept the 'suicide' note at face value, leaving the adventurers to guess that something is wrong, or may suspect one of the player characters. After all, they are strangers, and he does not know much about them. The adventurers may well suspect John, or other members of the household (Avril Baxter might wish to be sole heir, or Barbara Norris might wish that John was free to marry her). Some characters may suspect genuine supernatural involvement.

Meanwhile, Peter will do his best to fog the issue and leave everyone confused, if the suicide story is not accepted. He may kill the other heirs to the estate, preferably in circumstances which leave him with a good alibi or implicate others on the island. He has a preference for macabre murder methods. For example, he might stifle Tom Pellew on the porch and leave him in his rocking chair as though the old man were asleep, or drown John Pellew in the alligator tank in his laboratory.



The referee should play Peter Baxter as an intelligent, completely ruthless, killer. He will not take foolish risks, but he will not shy away from acts of appalling violence if he thinks these are required. The referee should also remind the players of their duty to protect Agnes Barnes, and the potential awkwardness of being strangers on an island with several local corpses when someone turns up, misjudges the situation and returns with the County Sheriff (the referee should invent statistics for this group, making them tough enough to make a confrontation too risky for the adventurers to be attempted by all except the most foolhardy).

SEANCES

The seance is a crucial element of this scenario. Its exact conduct is left to the referee, but the seance should be an eerie experience, played for its full duration. Characters will believe that genuine psychic forces are at work, and the referee should maintain a tight, tense mood. Peter is adept at faking phenomena, and will not make mistakes.

Norma sincerely believes that she has made contact with the afterlife. Her seances are conducted in the candlelit dining room, with a quiet dignity, aided and abetted by Avril. She always asks the characters present to hold hands, and then remains quiet for several minutes.

Norma puts herself into a trance (due to self-hypnosis), and then speaks in the voice of one of her children. In this state she is quite capable of answering questions, although her responses are child-like and somewhat vague about 'the afterlife'. She never answers questions about the future, or about things that a child would be not be expected to know. She generally remains in this state for 2d4x10 minutes. If using the Call of Cthulhu rules, this trance state expends 1-3 points of temporary POW. Peter tends to synchronise his tricks with the ends of the trance, to give them extra impact on Norma's none too stable mind.

THE FINAL CURTAIN

Whatever happens, the adventurers must still get to Miami. When the trading boat arrives there are 84 hours left. The remaining journey of 120 miles is possible by hired car (\$35), or by boat along the coast (\$25). Either route allows the team to reach Miami 2d6 hours before the time of the execution. Since the plane has been reported missing, the thugs will assume that Agnes is dead, and they will reach Miami without further trouble. However, on arrival they will learn that the Governor reprieved Lucarotti on the previous afternoon. Lucarotti was found stabbed in his cell and died in the prison hospital 3 hours later....

GAME STATISTICS

Agnes Barnes was Lucarotti's secretary, but resigned on realising he was a gangster. She later heard he had been convicted of murder, but never bothered to learn the details. Agnes is intelligent and has a strong sense of justice. While she despises everything Lucarotti stands for, she does not believe he should be executed for crimes he did not commit.

She is 25, a brunette, height 5' 9", weight 125lb. Agnes was a student gymnastics champion. She carries \$120, but no weapons or equipment.

Tom Pellow was conscripted into the Confederate army during the Civil War, but served with distinction, rising to the rank of Captain and receiving several decorations. He later joined the US Army, becoming a General under Theodore Roosevelt. He retired in 1900, on medical advice, but is still a relatively spry and alert old soldier.

Tom is 94 years old, height 5' 5", weight 130lb. He normally carries a shotgun, \$15.23, a flask of bootleg whisky and a large tin of snuff.

Doctor John Pellow is a dedicated biologist, investigating the mysteries of regeneration. His work relates to amphibians and lizards, but he wants to develop a treatment to regenerate human limbs and organs. His work is funded by the family trust and grants from several universities (notably MIT, the Miskatonic University and the Sorbonne).

John Pellow is 52, height 6' 2", weight 170lb, and balding. He usually carries a hand lens, a pen knife and a pocket dissecting kit.

Norma Pellow is a quiet, religious person, unbalanced by the death of her children. She usually gives the impression that they are still alive, and talks of little else apart from spiritualism. She was always interested in spiritualism, but this has become an obsession thanks to Peter Baxter's cruel deception.

Norma is 45 years old, height 4' 11", weight 105lb. She wears a ruby necklace (value \$1100), wedding ring (\$230) and earrings (\$125).

Avril Baxter is a quiet and slow woman. Her mother, Linda Baxter, died when she was born. Her father, Tom Baxter, blamed her for this and placed her in a succession of convent schools until she found a job as a governess. With her seduction, pregnancy and the birth of Peter, her father again arranged matters, having the child admitted to an orphanage, and then he disowned Avril. She continued as a governess for 20 more years, then moved to Florida to help bring up John and Norma Pellow's children. After the children's deaths she stayed to look after Norma, and became her inseparable companion.

She is 51, height 5' 7", weight 175lb. Avril is a plump woman with varicose veins and a disapproving manner. She carries nothing of interest.

'Alex Phillips' (Peter Baxter) was raised in a harsh Florida orphanage, but he ran away and joined a theatrical company, where he learned the art of disguise. He then moved on to a life of crime, as a burglar and later a hit man for a New York mob, developing into a dangerous sociopathic killer who hated his family most of all. Peter also evaded military service during the Great War.

As Alex Phillips he pretends to be slow and somewhat stupid. His disguise is more a matter of posture and behaviour than make-up — he has a drooping moustache, walks slowly with stooped shoulders, keeps his hair untidy and chews tobacco. He has forged papers showing undistinguished service in the US Army.

He is 35, height 5' 11", weight 135lb. He is thin and wiry, but pretends to be slow and clumsy. Peter carries a sheath knife, a length of electrical cable (usable as strangling noose), two packets of tobacco and \$120 (for use if a quick getaway is required).

If the party are very strong, Peter may have stolen one of the doctor's experimental serums, giving him a flawed power of regeneration. For all games this serum should restore 1-6 hit points per round, providing a wound has not reduced him to zero hit points, but have the side effect of ageing him six months per point restored. This rapid ageing could be one of the more horrific aspects of the adventure. In one playtest, for example, Peter, escaping in a police launch, was shot repeatedly, fell into the swamp, and was last seen as an old man, screaming 'Why can't I die?' as alligators dragged him under water.

Alice Sugden has worked as cook and housekeeper for for the Pellowes for 14 years. She is a quiet woman with no unusual skills. She is 45, height 4' 11", weight 120lb.

Sylvester Potter is the butler, an alcoholic who occasionally steals whisky from the cellar. He tends to be silent and stay in the background (mainly to hide the smell of alcohol on his breath), and the adventurers should not be dissuaded from thinking there is something sinister about his behaviour. He is 44 years old, height 6' 4", weight 135lb, and quite bald. He carries \$24.

Barbara Norris is John Pellow's striking secretary and lab technician. She is secretly in love with him, and keeps a diary which might make investigators think she has a motive for the murder of Norma Pellow. She is 27 years old, blonde, height 5' 6", weight 121lb. She doesn't carry any weapons. She has \$35 in her handbag.

CALL OF CTHULHU

Alligator: Treat as a crocodile from Sourcebook, but divide STR, CON, INT and POW by 3, damage add +1D6

Agnes Barnes: STR 13; CON 13; APP 14; SIZ 9; INT 13; POW 11; DEX 12; EDU 15; SAN 65; Hit Points 13.

Read/Write English 95%, Read/Write German 70%, Read/Write French 60%, Speak German 55%, Speak French 40%, Library Use 45%, Linguist 30%, Listen 65%, Spot Hidden 55%, Type 85%, Dodge 85%, Jump 75%, Climb 55%, Swim 65%, Throw 60%

Tom Pellow: STR 7; CON 9; APP 9; SIZ 9; INT 17; POW 8; DEX 7; EDU 9; SAN 55; Hit points 9.

Speak Spanish 75%, Speak Mayan 25%, Linguist 10%, Listen 35%, Spot Hidden 45%, Weather Forecasting 85%, Bargain 35%, Credit Rating 35%, Debate 50%, Fast Talk 55%. All stealth and agility skills at half minimum due to poor health (heart condition). Shotgun 55%, Rifle 35%

John Pellow: STR 12; CON 14; APP 11; SIZ 14; INT 18; POW 13; DEX 13; EDU 19; SAN 35; Hit points 14.

Read/Write Russian 35%, Read/Write German 40%, Read/Write French 35%, Botany 80%, Chemistry 55%, Geology 25%, Library Use 65%, Linguist 20%, Pharmacy 25%, Pathology 35%, Treat Disease 20%, Listen 35%, Spot Hidden 50%, Photography 30%, Credit Rating 25%, Rifle 35%, Shotgun 45%

Norma Pellow: STR 6; CON 8; APP 12; SIZ 7; INT 11; POW 13; DEX 7; EDU 9; SAN 23; Hit points 7.

Cooking 45%, First Aid 45%, Occult 50%, Southern Baptist Religion 45%, Spiritualism 70%, Listen 50%, Needlework 75%, Singing 85%

Flare pistol (handgun): 1 shot/2 rounds, damage 2D6, Base chance 5%, Range 5yds, breakage 6, cost \$12

Avril Baxter: STR 10; CON 13; APP 13; SIZ 12; INT 9; POW 8; DEX 9; EDU 11; SAN 40; Hit points 11.

Read/Write French 75%, Speak French 65%, Cooking 35%, Geography 55%, Occult 25%, Catholicism 45%, Spiritualism 40%, Listen 65%, Knitting 55%

Peter Baxter: STR 15; CON 17; APP 8; SIZ 8; INT 17; POW 14; DEX 16; EDU 12; SAN 32; Hit points 14.

Library Use 45%, Linguist 30%, Listen 85%, Psychology 45%, Spot Hidden 60%, Track 20%, Drive Automobile 35%, Electrical Repair 35%, Mechanical Repair 45%, Camouflage 25%, Hide 90%, Move Quietly 85%, Pick Pocket 30%, Pick Locks 35%, Acting 85%, Fast Talk 40%, Climb 85%, Dodge 85%, Throw 60%, Revolver 55%, Shotgun 50%, Machine Gun 35%, Punch 75%, Kick 45%, Butt 65%

Alice Sugden: STR 9; CON 12; APP 7; SIZ 14; INT 11; POW 7; DEX 11; EDU 6; SAN 53; Hit points 13.

Cooking 85%, Embroidery 90%, First Aid 45%, Listen 35%, Spot Hidden 30%, Singing 45%

Sylvester Potter: STR 12; CON 8; APP 8; SIZ 11; INT 12; POW 10; DEX 11; EDU 12; SAN 50; Hit points 9.

Accounting 25%, Spot Hidden 20%, Shotgun 55%

Barbara Norris: STR 11; CON 11; APP 17; SIZ 10; INT 14; POW 11; DEX 15; EDU 16; SAN 55; Hit points 10.

SKILLS: Read/Write Russian 15%, Read/Write German 20%, Read/Write French 25%, Accountancy 45%, Botany 20%, Chemistry 25%, Geology 5%, Library Use 75%, Zoology 15%, Listen 35%, Spot Hidden 30%, Photography 25%

The GANGBUSTERS rpg

Flare pistol (found in the aircraft): Range 75', damage 6, rate 1/2, Ammo 1

Characters without Drive skill have never bothered to learn to drive.

Name	Mu	Ag	Ob	Pr	Dr	Lu	HP	Lv	Re	Mn	Mx
Alligator	95	45	20	—	—	25	19	—	—	—	—
Attacks as though Fighting Dirty with a small knife (6 points of damage + 3 points of wounds).											
Agnes Barnes	34	85	77	7	81	35	19	4	+2	—	—
Stealth 77%, Honest.											
Tom Pellew	26	55	66	6	—	40	19	6	—	—	11
Public speaking 55%, Public relations 37%											
John Pellew	36	93	88	8	90	35	18	7	—	—	—
Chemical analysis 55%											
Norma Pellew	33	37	35	6	—	14	12	1	—	—	—
Avril Baxter	48	52	65	2	—	22	15	1	-3	—	11
Peter Baxter	95	88	86	7	87	44	24	9	-5	—	8
Forgery 48%, Martial Arts 39%, Disguise 93%, Stealth 85%, Pick Pockets 30%, Pick Locks 35%											
Alice Sugden	33	57	32	2	—	21	15	1	—	—	—
Sylvester Potter	44	32	28	2	30	19	13	1	-2	—	—
Barbara Norris	28	43	82	5	63	34	13	1	—	—	—

INDIANA JONES

The opening scene of this adventure may have to be amended slightly to give characters the right incentive to go to Florida; some Indian relic, for example. The date should also be moved to sometime during the middle '30s — 1926 is a bit early for Indy to be running about.

No stats have been provided for this scenario. Tailor the individual encounters to the ability of your players, and be flexible. Feel free to introduce the usual car chases, plane crashes and strange houses; by the way, the judge should point out that jumping from the crashing plane on a raft with a foot pump is a sure way to end up dead — no escapes à la Temple of Doom.

Some specific rules changes are required. Treat Observations Rolls as Instinct Checks, halved or quartered as appropriate. Treat the named NPCs, with one exception, as non-violent Goons. The thugs chasing Agnes are Goons likewise, but not so quiet.

Alex Phillips / Peter Baxter is a villain, and a nasty one at that. His exact statistics depend on the player characters' attributes, armaments and attitudes, but he should be very stiff opposition for any two PCs on their own.

Lastly, there is one monster in IJAC1 which should prove very useful to the running of this adventure:

Alligator: ST 80; MV 56; PR 48; ATK Wnd+2 and Bash; BK 60; IN 36; Surv G; A bash is an extra attack (requiring an additional Prowess check) every other round that causes a Light Injury.

Alligators. Why did it have to be alligators.



CREDITS

Written by Marcus Rowland
Artwork by Kevin Hopgood
Cartography by Mark Burroughs

DAREDEVILS

Flare pistol: BBL short, Action SA, Break - 1 shot, Calibre 1.5", BDG 10 (but ammo \$0.50/round), Weight 2lb

Alligator: Treat as a crocodile from rulebook, but Hlh 12, Dft 14, DRT 2 (2D10+5), CDA 1, Size 1, 1/2 damage from both attacks

All NPCs wear clothing appropriate to their station and profession (Peter wears dungarees, Sylvester Potter wears a morning suit, John Pellew wears a laboratory coat etc). Men's clothing is AV/2, women's is AV/1.

Agnes Barnes: WT 15; WL 10; STR 15; DFT 10; SPD 12; HLH 10; CDA 2; DRT 22.

German, French (14), All athletic skills (11), Criminal Subculture (4), Business Subculture (12)

Tom Pellew: WT 15; WL 10; STR 7; DFT 7; SPD 8; HLH 6; CDA 2; DRT 14.

Spanish (15), Mayan (5), Military Subculture (20), Shotgun (12), Rifle (8)

John Pellew: WT 15; WL 12; STR 9; DFT 17; SPD 9; HLH 14; CDA 2; DRT 24.

Russian, German, French (9), all Biological Sciences (15), Advanced Medical (7), Pathology (9), Chemistry (10), Academic Subculture (11), Shotgun (7), Rifle (9)

Norma Pellew: Treat as Poor Quality Extra with special knowledge of Cooking, the Occult, the Southern Baptist Religion Spiritualism, and Needlework

Avril Baxter: Treat as an Average Quality Extra with special knowledge of French, Cooking, Geography, the Occult, Catholicism, Spiritualism and Knitting

Peter Baxter: WT 19; WL 17; STR 14; DFT 17; SPD 16; HLH 14; CDA 3; DRT 31.

Pistol (11), Shotgun (10), Autofire (6), Brawling (15/4), Criminal Subculture (16), Drive (7), Mechanic (9), Electrician (9), Stealth (17), Lockpicking (7).

This character should be presented as though he is a Poor Quality Extra.

Alice Sugden and **Sylvester Potter** are Average and Poor Quality Extras.

Barbara Norris: Treat as an Average Quality Extra with special knowledge of Russian, German, French, Accountancy, Botany, Chemistry, Geology, Zoology and Photography

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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