

Kult

Repentance

A Story for Warpcon VII.

Credits

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**With special thanks to my Playtesters
(the poor fools that they are):**

Elissa "Not fifteen *at-all-at-all*"
Moynihan

Catriona "Totally Punctual" I've-
forgotten-her-surname (Tobin)

Brian "Aladdin'll save us!!!" Caball

Bob "I Kill It, Goddammit"

Bryan "with a 'Y' and anyway I'm
Bryan!" O'Leary

Repentance is a work of fiction. Any
resemblance to real incidents,
organisations or persons living, dead or
undead is purely wishful thinking on
somebody's part.

[That is unless of course the character
really is based on you.]

And also to: Morgan, Bob, Brian and just about everybody else in WARPS for
pressurising me into writing this within a time constraint. And specialer thanks with
a cherry on top to that Git (JP) who actually rang me up in the middle of my exams
to finish this. He should at least get a platinum star for perserverance

*("If you had'nae got your wellies, what would you do? You'd have a nasty" I've forgotten the next bit
"or a case of the flu... Where would you be without your Wellies?"*

- Billy Connolly)

The "Grimorum Verum"

The True Grimore

with notes of Eliphas Levi.

Appearance: Bound in tattered, blackened leather, binding missing along with entire sections. Loose yellowed, pages, with the scrawls of generations, this book looks *old*.

Description: Apparently originally written in 1517, by "Ali Baiz the Egyptian" this book is little more in parts than a magicians handbook. This edition is a home translation of the 1880 Italian version. A lot of it is based on the Key of Solomon (or perhaps the other way around...). The book is written in a benign, conversational tone, and makes no assumptions as to the knowledge of the reader, i.e. it starts from scratch.

The copy the characters have in their possession is unfortunately incomplete, It's rough layout is:

1. Introduction.
2. Warning about deceitful nature of spirits.
3. Discusses the nature of pacts and spirits.
4. Discusses the appearance of spirits.
5. Gives the signs of many superior and inferior spirits, from Beelzibuth to Surgat.
6. Gives their powers and demesnes.
7. Details invocations, especially to Murmur.
8. Methods of divination through prayer
9. Specific spells (usually Minor, to procure love, etc.)

In the cover is a talisman wrapped in white silk, and made of pure silver: (Used for summonings under the auspices of the moon)

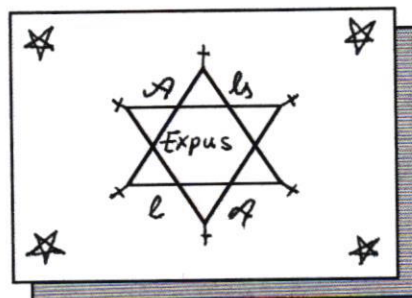


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Sigil on cover of Grimorius Verum:



An Introduction

Kult is a role-playing game set in a decaying world at the end of the twentieth century. A world where human wickedness is mingled with terrors from the other chapters of reality. The sensitive are crushed by the anonymity of the cities, becoming the psychotic damned. Under the surface primitive passions, still held at bay by the morality of past civilisation, grow and fester until they become sick perversions.

But human darkness is not all that threatens. The evil that humans commit corrodes the boundaries of reality and admits creatures from the other side. Our dreams assume physical form and hunt us. Creatures from the past are reborn into the present. Our own fear gives birth to monsters that threaten to consume our weak flesh and fragile souls. Misfits that are tolerated in normal society hide themselves in abandoned cities, dilapidated industrial complexes and condemned buildings. There they are slowly warped into something that is not quite human.

Occult philosophies can be used to establish openings into different worlds, and tap power from the unknown. But few if any humans know anything about the powers they conjure up. Sooner or later, they are all devoured by demons they cannot control...

The Cosmology

Nothing is as it seems to be... Only a handful of the many facets of reality are accessible to our senses. The world we see around us is an illusion, created by our imagination to stave off madness. Those who fancy themselves the masters of the invisible forces will be cruelly disappointed when their illusions crumble and the demons arrive to collect their worshippers.

In the borderland between darkness and madness, dreams and death, there is a reality beyond our senses. Dreams and illusion can shape matter. Horror can twist bodies and bring insanity out into physical reality. The barrier between the outer and the inner is an illusion.

Not long ago there was a creator God and a firm order of nature. But God has abandoned his children and disappeared into the darkness, perhaps dead, perhaps in exile. Lost angels and demons bear weak memories of the higher power, a force of order that once ruled their lives. But gradually they forget.

The boundaries of reality have been weakened. Increasing numbers of people are breaking through the barriers and encountering the chaos that lies on the other side. Heaven and Hell do not have the same meaning for every man. Each creates his own purgatory. Dreams and madness lead further and further out in the dark, away from what is sane and reasonable.

The Prince of Darkness wanders far, seeking God, the only being who can justify his existence and lend it meaning. Heavens and Hells have been broken open or been abandoned. Demons and angels roam homeless on Earth and look for the worshippers they need for survival in a world without a God. In the cities where all truths are equal, they forget the old boundaries between good and evil.

Old gods linger powerless and bewildered in the slums, remnants of the past. Perhaps they were left there by old beliefs, or perhaps they were created by human hopes of a better life in a distant and half-forgotten past.

But in the end all is torn apart and destroyed. Scientists put forward theories that chaos is the fundamental principle in the universe. Their findings are echoed by increasing disorder in the world around them, as if the very knowledge of reality's nothingness was devouring the ancient patterns.

Story Overview:

In the beginning, Johnny had a birthday party. It wasn't his birthday and it certainly wasn't much of a party, but his parents *were* away and, well, one out of three ain't bad... To this special event he invited a host of friends, acquaintances and people off the street - of which nine turned up. By midnight one had left, he did not know how lucky he was. But still it is only the cursed remainder that concerns us...

The year was 1996 and the date the 16th of October (a Monday) when an hour after midnight the Daemon Murrur (a Nepharite) was summoned (not so much by the ritual used, but by the presence of a Nexus, who broke down the barriers between our world and it's). The characters' efforts to bind it failed miserably, and after seven hours grace it killed them all *extremely* slowly as a reward. But the story does continue. Although they died, these fools felt guilty enough for what they had done that they forged themselves a personal purgatory, and the Nepharite they had summoned became their torturer. For them it shall repeat this story, over and over ad infinitum with the most minuscule changes, feeding off their guilt until it drives them insane, or they escape to be reborn.

And so the story begins. They act through the last stages of the summoning to where they believe they have escaped - to where nightmare starts again...

A note to the Game Master:-

This story is untypical of the Kult genre. It is on an extremely "small scale." No world shattering events or damsel saving here. The characters are already doomed, and are certainly no heroes. The best they can hope for is the safety of their prison, and this is only achieved by denying reality. They are purposefully vulnerable, incapable, and ultimately worthless, but don't let them know it!

This story is character driven rather than merely event (and certainly not combat) and relies on good role playing and players who sympathise with their characters to survive and succeed.

It also presents an intriguing possibility for the Game Master. How many times have we boasted of the cruel and interesting ways we've "Eliminated" our characters? Here, the whole object of the story is to achieve it as slowly and as painfully as we can. Remember - ultimately we are only playing one character, Mummur, a master torturer who survives on the pain the characters suffer in his "Game." An interesting parallel...

ROS I apologise if the plot seems linear, or depressing, (or even... God forbid... sick.)

Let the play commence...

(And a piece of advice: Let them think they can succeed, will succeed, have succeeded... and then smash 'em)

"Repentance always comes too late"

- Proverb

Timeline:

Friday 13th September 1996,

Johnny's Welsh Grand-Aunt dies.

Saturday 14th

Parents make plans to attend funeral and visit Johnny's sister.

Johnny makes plans to have a party.

Sunday 15th

8:00 pm The first of the characters arrive.

11:30 pm The idea for the summoning is hit upon.

Monday 16th

12:30 am The story commences.

6:37 am Sunrise.

Johnny's Room:

Sparsely furnished with in blue colour scheme.

Brian's Room:

Greens and browns. Walls covered in Disney film posters.

Parents Room:

Red. Large double bed at centre of room.

Utility:

Room holding washing machine, drier and freezer. Lino floor.

Bathroom:

Pete has locked himself in, and distinct retching sounds can be heard.

Garage:

Large and dark. Filled with junk and old units.

Shed:

Hardly ever used except for storing the lawnmower. Filled with cobwebs, old bikes, half-empty bags of cement, and a dead cat in the far corner.

Attic:

Pitch black except for a dim light above the trapdoor. Gnawed cardboard boxes and black refuse sacks, filled with old toys and books are stacked around in the light, while the rest is virtually empty and infested with rats.

Garden:

Large but muddy, a big clump of oversized willow trees is situated out the back, whipped by the gale.

Prelude: If it's a trip, why doesn't it end????

Time: about 12:30am

Crowley's atmospheric Black Metal drones in the background [If questioned by a smarmy player, it's Heart of the Ages, by "In the Woods" from Norway.]. Dry, grey, choking incense wreathes the house, masking cigarette smoke, but is caught by windows, tightly closed against the rain which crashes against them.

It's half twelve and the party's already fairly dead (no pun intended...).

Yet in the front room, around a crooked chalk pentagram stand four of the characters. In each corner are candles, whose light barely touches Liam's face, pale and shivering, yet shiny with sweat. His speech is hoarse yet high as his unbroken throat attempts to pronounce the alien Latin tongue... The others stand back, feeling scared through the mists of drink. What was once a joke is becoming much to real. Still they're glued to the ritual, Horrified yet fascinated, as Liam burns a twist of multicoloured strands containing locks of each of their hair. Sarah stands white at the doorway, her hands clutching vainly at the frame.

Liam feels this power, and his voice strengthens. At his beckoning the others follow, quieter, almost hypnotised. A page turns. The chanting ends.

The crash of cold, the candles shiver and perish, leaving Darkness, so, so black. Hard, heavy rapping cracks against the windows.

And then silence. Absolute silence and absolute dark.

A bell tolls. Once...

Chapter One: Things that that go bump in the night...

Time: 1 am onwards

Reality... or something like it returns. Hopefully the characters will be freaking, so stress the calm, and party atmosphere for awhile, still things start to get progressively weirder. Little, explainable things at first, but becoming much more strange, and evil. Play for optimum atmosphere.

At first the players will (Hopefully) suspect each other or one of the other partygoers. Encourage this. Paranoia is good. Divide and conquer.

If the players get really silly and try to run, stress how bad it is outside, dark, cold, and soaking. With no way of getting anywhere but walking (and nowhere within a mile to get to), and the only road being flooded, it should prove enough of an incentive to stay put. If they continue let whoever is trying do so, but totally ignore his character until he changes his mind and returns (he's caught in a time-trap and can continue for ever (it will only seem like a few seconds to him/her) without getting anywhere. Time will continue as usual for the others for whom he seems to be standing still). If you get a really persistent bugger, or if they all insist on going out together, fast forward a bit to our little circle of flames. Hopefully they won't want to commit suicide this quickly.

The telephone won't work properly, at first the mouthpiece won't work so that the characters can hear but can't talk. Then the people at the other end will mock, taunt or berate the characters.

Below are a few ideas as to some of the fun and interesting things you can do to the players. Let me stress that these are only suggestions, as we suggest that the GMs give their imaginations a bit of free rein.

Knowing the nature of players they are bound to find this scene rapidly boring. If this occurs, get it over with as quickly as you can. Be sure you have also given them all enough to do.
--

"Time is a great teacher, but unfortunately it kills all it's pupils"

- Hector Berlioz

Scene One: Normality (sanity and the American way of life)

Time: About 12:30

(Nah, blink)

The kids should be a bit shook, but for now sanity still seem to exist. However, things aren't completely rational. Inside there are strange drafts, smells (like sulphur or burning). The Telephone rings, but when answered all that is heard is the dial tone. The T.V., having only Bogger I and II (RTE) (Remember, Telifis na Gathering wasn't around then), should only be static by now.

II

(weird...)

- † Minor Time changes.
- † Strange card combinations (opening hands of 3 Dark Rituals, Demonic Tutor, Lords of the Pits, Torture etc.).
- † Mysterious stains (smoke, crimson etc.) on walls, books, tablecloths, carpets, etc.
- † Christ's Eyes moving on Crucifix.
- † Things don't stay put, are moved or disappear altogether.
- † Cat starts to get really freaked.
- † Johnny's parents ring to say that they will be back in an hour, as the father had to return to finish something for work. They are suitably shocked and irate to hear that their little angel had a party, and will not believe a word of any summoning rantings.

III

(This really shouldn't be happening)

- † Things half seen at or bashing against the windows.
- † Weird runic writing carved into walls, or tables (the scratching is heard) or written into the books.
- † Something's heard in the attic

IV

(I'll never, ever, ever drink again)

- † Drink turns into blood.
- † Fire can be seen in the distance surrounding the house and approaching.
- † Claws punching through ceiling.
- † Phone rings (or character is trying to ring someone). On answering, the earpiece is making a hissing sound which changes in intensity and volume, depending on how the receiver is held. There is no getting rid of the sound, but then over the static comes a hoarse whisper repeating the characters name until s/he answers, then the telephone cord begins to swing back and forth. "Come to us..." the voice drones on, the cable now twisting itself wilder and wilder, "...we're waiting for you..." a thick greenish-yellow smoke comes oozing from

the mouthpiece. "What took you so long?" the muffled voice asks, while at the same time the cable is twisting itself around the character's forearm, and the smoke is clouding up, stinging the character's eyes and throat. The whispering perseveres: "You know that you belong here. Come to us." The smoke is now almost impenetrable, and the cord is clutching tighter to the character's arm, cutting off his circulation. "Join us... Live with us... Become one with us..." The character begins to see faces in the smog, deformed by slimy tubes jutting in and out of their skin, grids of wire straining their features and gross metal projections penetrating their skulls. "Die with us... die with us ... die with us..." The character blacks out, screaming.

V

(...)

- † Pete is found comatose in the bathroom, he seems to be hyperventilating, his hair is falling out and there is a dreadful smell coming off him. If anyone tries to move him or even touches him, millions of maggots boil out from his eyes, nose, ears, mouth and skin. He is merely a shell of skin filled with countless numbers of squirming maggots, which, moving in his chest, gave him the appearance of breathing

VI

- † The fire completely surrounds the house now, but doesn't enter the garden. Outside it is roasting, and black sooty rain is falling. The paint is blackened and blistered, but the plants and trees still survive.

And then Scene seven is born, and with it enters our Daemon:

VII

(Fate arrives for the party)

Brian OD is lying on the couch (If unavailable, use another NPC). With a mere "Cool, Mon!" and a hysterical giggle he's gone. And now there's this grinning guy in a suit. "Good Evening, children," quoth he, suave as hell, "I *do* hope I'm not too late for the party. I must thank you for the invitation." With this he draws a filterless cigarette from an engraved silver case. It lights as he drags on it and he breathes out a thick writhing cloud of white smoke.

Chapter 2:

"There is no black and white, but too many shades of grey"

The rules of the game:

1. The daemon is only able to receive their soul if and only if they are alive at dawn.
2. The characters cannot leave. Only let them die trying if you feel extremely merciful.
3. At the same time Murmur is unable to harm them unless he is first attacked.
4. Last but certainly not least. There are no rules.

Play Murmur as cool, suave, sadistic and infuriatingly patronistic. *"I'm so sorry that binding rite failed, but look on the bright side. You're still alive. At least, until dawn. But don't despair, I've got thousands of ideas for interesting things we can do for the next few centuries, just like your Daddy, Sarah. Or don't you remember???"* And Sarah does remember. She remembers her dread of the dark and the night. For that was when Daddy would come and hurt her. And she remembers the guilt and the anger at him and at herself for not being able to speak of it or to get help. An anger that burned like a flame, burning her and consuming her until it was let out...

And later...

"I do love cats. Simply delicious. Puss, come here, cat." The cat walks stiffly towards him, bristles up, eyes wide, hissing and spitting. He picks it up by its neck and clucks, grinning, as it scratches his arm. Looking at the characters he says *"You know I can't really hurt you, for now, except... except in 'self-defence', come here Mr. Healy."* (looking towards John, or Brian if he isn't present - or the player is more vulnerable). *"Take Him."* As if in a dream, feet heavy, he walks towards Murmur and takes the cat. (If you feel generous let him take an Ego throw. He'll need a one to succeed). It buries its head, terrified into the crook of his arm and begins to purr. Murmur talks of the cats pure selfishness then "persuades" the character to take its head in his hand, put his fingers over its small, soft eyes, and squeeze. *"Doesn't it feel good, Master Healy. You know you've always wanted to do it, you wouldn't have done it unless you wanted to. And there's no blame. No-one here will tell anyone. Isn't it just fabulous!"*

And if anyone is stupid enough to try to harm him, he merely gestures with a hand and they are flung against a wall, arms outspread, hands, feet and side are pierced with unbearable agony, and they hang there bleeding and screaming until it becomes boring enough for Murmur that he lets them down.

"There is no sin except stupidity"

- Oscar Wilde.

At some point some poor fool is going to come up with the idea of trying to bind Murmur again or attempt to expel him. The Grimore does indeed cover such ceremonies, and Murmur will do absolutely nothing to stop them (he may indeed even hint at it if they prove particularly slow).

The binding Rites will fail as the same one can never succeed again on a demon as it has already been practised on, and will only serve to waste time they do not have (about half an hour). The expulsion ritual seems fine at first however, but calls for a virgin sacrifice. If you're feeling extremely nasty have all the NPC's disappear, and the players will have to pick one of their own crew.

The ritual itself will take at least an hour or so to complete (longer with unwilling sacrifices). Remember to be strict about the dawn time limit, if the players seem to be getting things done too fast, then use time changes to your advantage. It would probably be best if the players are unable to complete the ceremony in time, but it won't succeed whatever happens.

And now the characters are left with the ultimate choice - suicide or giving their souls to the demon. Murmur calls for the curtains to be pulled back and outside the rain has stopped and the eastern horizon is lit a glowing white with the approaching dawn. The fires are nowhere to be seen, and all seems so fresh and new and clean. "And now gentlemen, the choice is yours" says Murmur with a grin "Don't let me rush you - you have all the time in the world - all three minutes of it..."

If they choose suicide, and the unknown take them through their "preferred method" in detail, as Murmur taunts them, goading them on. They die.

If on the other hand, choosing to relinquish their souls gives Murmur total control over them. He leads them out back to the willows, and forces them down a moss covered manhole into a tiny stinking sewage pit, it's decaying concrete walls covered by inches of slime and it's ground sunk beneath three feet of mud and shit. Here he leaves them. They live for weeks starving, until finally the rats devour them.

Suggestions:

Murmur offers a few of the characters an "easy" way out.

Apart from serving eternal slavery to him, he says he'll let them free to their families. But only if they each complete one simple task.

Easy.

That is if they're willing to cut off their another's hand ("he wants a hand"), rape a character, or commit other such inhuman sins.

Making half the characters innocents, will hopefully accentuate the perpetrator's feelings of guilt.

Of course if the characters do complete their task, then it was only a perverse lie.

"O, so you thought that I was really offering *that*" (mocking laugh) "Twas merely a *joke*. Even I wouldn't be that sick."

“There is no redemption from Hell”

- Proverb

And then what happens?

“Everything drifts away, and you are in a close airless grey nothing, you float unfeeling, but for the pressure, the need to breathe and an this overriding terror. You remember, clouded images of horrors repeated again and again and again. They lead back, back to a time when you were actually alive, and through madness you sold your souls to something you didn't and could never understand. You shrink from these memories, vainly trying to deny them, shrinking from their truth... and your guilt. And then you are falling, spiralling until, finally your feet touch something solid, and you find yourself able to breathe a smoke-laden air. And, blessedly your minds clear and you can forget...”

“You stand, staring at the crooked chalked pentagram - as Liam reads the Latin text. A chill sweeps through you as it begins to feel just a little too real. But who believes in Demons?”

Or rebirth?

The only possible exception to the said ending is if you felt a character fully and realistically denied everything throughout the story - in which case he/she will be reborn.

Nepharites (Kult rulebook pg. 216)

"The Nepharites are tormentors, created to conjure up the feelings of guilt in a human being and convert it to horrible torture. They have the infallible ability to find a sinner, read his feeling and find his sins. Nepharites exist both in Inferno and in human purgatories. Since Astaroth stepped into our world, many Nepharites have followed and are now spending their times shaping personal hells for the guilty.

Nepharites may change shape as they desire. Usually, they appear human but mutilated and sometimes half decomposed. Open wounds full of puss, and torn, bleeding parts of the body where the muscles are visible, are common. Sometimes, the wounds are kept closed with steel clamps and other temporary means. Among humans, the Nepharites hide their appearance by dressing in long overcoats and wearing dark glasses. In their own hell, they prefer to dress up in baroque garments of steel, plastic and leather.

The Nepharites were originally created by the Death Angels. It still happens that new Nepharites are made. In extreme circumstances humans can be turned into Nepharites."

Name: Duke Murmur, Daemon (As in the Greek - "spirit") of Necromancy and Philosophy .

Personality: Malicious, evil, feeds off the character's fear.

Game Mastering Hints: Be extremely Suave, smile a lot. The characters are merely toys of yours, playthings to do with as you will.

His stats don't really matter, however, since here he is all powerful.

AGL	33	EGO	22
STR	41	CHA	16
CON	41	PER	16
COM	2	EDU	14

Terror throw modification: +5

Appearance: Dark, angular face, but good looking. Black suit and top hat.
Carries silver cigarette case engraved with own symbol

Height: 6'

Weight: 99 kg

Senses: Like humans, but also has the ability to see auras and sense people's mental balance.

Communication: Speaks all languages, Telepathy (but is loathe to use it).

Movement: 16m/combat round

Actions: 5

Initiative Bonus: +19

Damage Bonus: +9

Damage Capacity:

10 Scratches = 1 Light Wound

9 Light Wounds = 1 Serious Wound

7 Serious Wounds = 1 Fatal Wound

Takes 2 Fatal Wounds before dying

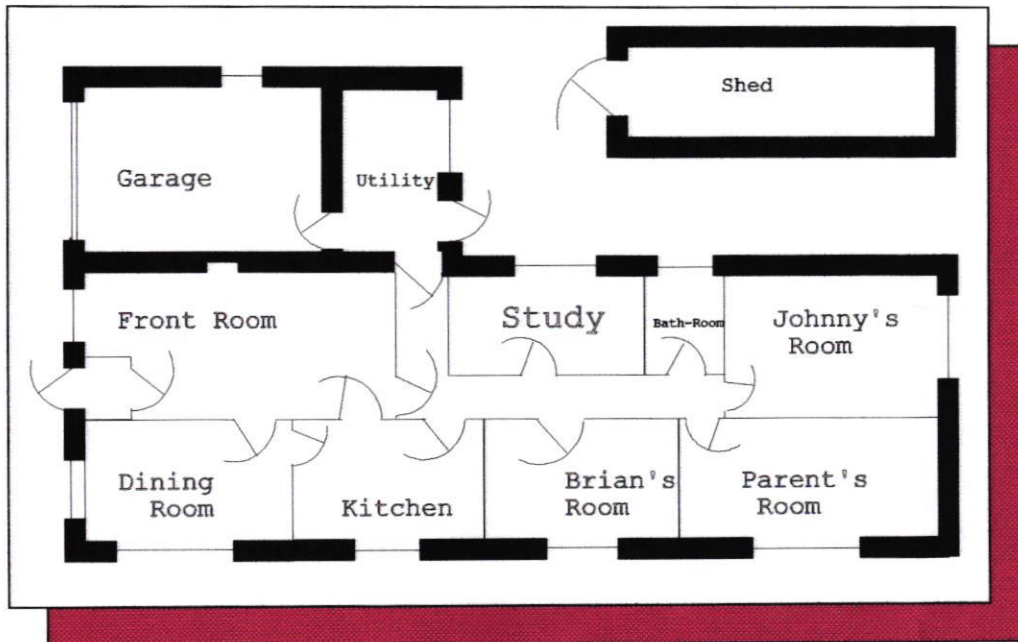
Endurance: 235

Natural Armour: none

Powers: Telepathy - can read memories and feelings. Distort time and space as a being with mental balance 300. Can change appearance up to twice down to half of his own size, control all people with a mental balance between -50 and -100

Skills: Automatic weapons 15, Handgun 15, Heavy Weapons 15, Sneak 25, Dodge 25, Dagger 25, Whips and chains 45, Unarmed combat 20, Search 15, Torture 75, Psychology 15, Etiquette 15.

Magic: Death Magic to 50, all spells. Possession spell, LR 30.



A Key to the map:

Front Room:

A TV, two battered brown armchairs and a matching sofa on which Brian OD has panned out. Bookshelves and cupboards take up the remainder of the fireplace wall. The carpet is etched with chalk. The lounge is the centre of the house, the place where Murrur is summoned, and will take residence when he appears. At the back of the room is an ancient grandfather clock.

Dining Room:

A sparsely furnished room with a square table at it's centre and five chairs. Maeve is on one of these, attempting to play solitaire. The phone is also in this room.

Kitchen:

Unsurprising & on the whole, pretty normal.

Hall:

As kitchen but has trapdoor up to the attic.

Study:

A cold room with a smallish desk for a 386 PC, a filing cabinet and a few shelves stacked with the father's books on engineering.

Character notes:

The PC's:

- † **John Healy** The "Kind Host". Things to remember: Has a tendency to faint when subjected to large amounts of pain, has phobia of snakes, but is also lucky.
- † **Brian Healy** John's eight-year old brother.
- † **Sarah Roche** Nexus anorexic. Things to remember: extreme negative mental balance / isn't quite all there; phobia of the dark; Schizophrenia (**NOT** Multiple Personalities). She can see some of the "true reality", but being unable to handle this she also witnesses pieces from her own imagination. Cannot tell what is true and what isn't (Have fun with this); Magical Intuition (ability to see auras); Animal friendship (animals will not harm her).
- † **Liam Manning** Occult Dude, sociopath. Has a phobia of blood and severe bad luck (a la Murphy's Law).
- † **Lisa Simmons** Conceited fashion victim (and also blonde... (No offence, I'm sure there are simply *loads* of nice blondes out there. I was even blonde once, but I grew out of it... (Please don't hit me Sarah, Mike, Steve etc., etc., etc.)). Sarah's cousin.
- † **Kieran Matthews** Cynical Britpop-worshipper

And the NPC's

- † **Pete Fitzgerald** A wise and severely unlistened to oracle, Doing his Mr. Chameleon man act (His face being a cool and rapidly shifting green, yellow or pallid white), and being marvellously sick.
- † **Brian O'Donoghue** alias: drugs supplier. Too far gone to feel completely out-of-place (or even out-of-head) as he is seven years older than the others.
- † **Neil Crowley** Black Mettler. Will attempt to escape. Failing that will try to sell his soul to Murmur. Use as an example.
- † **Maeve O'Sullivan** Plastered, sits trying to play solitaire for most of the story.

The Ever Useful Drunkenness (Drunkenness??) Rating: (Out of ten)

John	6
Brian	4
Sarah	0
Liam	5
Lisa	4
Kieran	3
Pete	9
Brian OD	6(+ extras)
Neil	Doesn't count
Maeve	10