Overview:

This scenario is intended for 6 players of moderate skill level and You should be able to play this scenario in one to two sessions of varying length. One player must play Jonathan Crown or the keeper must use Crown to begin the play. The assignment starts with Mr. Crown and he in turn hires the other players for specific jobs. Though everyone will have a specific part to play it may not be easy for the keeper to keep everyone together. Pre-generated characters are provided which match the various tasks Mr. Crown will require through the scenario. The scenario is written with the pre-gen characters in mind. If you would like to use different professions you can, but try to make them fit the skills that the pre-gen character you are replacing has. Also be aware that some of the scenario descriptions may have references to the pre-gen characters so you will need to change those accordingly.

If you are not using the pre-generated characters you should at the very least have a lawyer. The main hook in the scenario is a case that the lawyer receives which leads into the investigation. You will need a lawyer to start, if you can come up with another profession that will work you can however the entire scenario as written is based on one character being a lawyer.

Players Info:

You are a lawyer at the respected firm of Billings and Lafayette, you have worked here for five years and you are the top prospect to gain partnership with the firm. This is an incredibly significant occurrence being that firm, has not, as yet, ever taken a partner in all of its years of operation. It is the beginning of the year and many of your married colleagues have taken time off to be with their families. This has left you and Mrs. Gwyneth Lampton, the office manager, to run the place during this, the slow season, for your firm. You, being a single individual, have no problem working extra hours as you are bucking for that partnership, which is to be announced soon.

The firm deals mostly in real estate law, estate management and inheritance. A particular file has come across your desk and you recognize the name instantly. The McGinley estate is the first and largest client the firm maintains and it behooves you to do your best with this case, as it is a very important one. It is Monday morning February 13th 1922 and you sit at your desk with the McGinley file in front of you. It almost feels like a test of some sort, to receive the firms most important clients file during a time when most of the office is away on vacation. You open the file…

Keepers Info:

Colton McGinley inherited his father’s fortune before he graduated Harvard University in 1852. He was not close with his father and never learned much about the business, which was the corner stone of the family’s fortune. The McGinley’s were in manufacturing and had made a large profit during the Great War. Colton did not exactly know what to do with the company and so left it to the men his father had in place and took a hands off approach.

He spent his time, with another young man he met at Harvard named Abram Penkin. Penkin was a student of philosophy and had grand ideas about our world and that which he called the other side. He believed that there were alternate worlds or dimensions that paralleled our own, and this idea fascinated Colton McGinley. They became friends through this mutual interest in dimensional travel. They began to research the idea that one could pierce the fabric that exists between dimensions and travel freely between them. They traversed many avenues to reach their hypothesis, studying physics, mathematics, biology and finally finding what they were looking for in occult works.

It was in their final year at Harvard that Mr. Penkin made a great discovery. He found reference to a book, which was said to be the spell book of an ancient Russian sorcerer that was contained formulas and rituals dealing with dimensional travel. Penkin convinced McGinley to put up the money for a trip to Denmark to find the alleged book. Once in Denmark they found the location of the grave, it was in a remote cemetery called De Beulen Huis (Danish translation The Executioners House). They procured the necessary equipment and proceed to rob the grave of the Russian sorcerer Maxim Utkin and carry off his book of shadows. Once back in the states Penkin began research in earnest.

Penkin became reclusive and solitary while he researched the book. It was written in Old East Slavic, an older Russian dialect and so Mr. Penkin, a fluent Russian speaker, was the best suited for the translation. It was during this time that Mr. McGinley met two other young men, Mr. Stewart Billings and Mr. Bernard Lafayette. Both of these men were students of law and endeared themselves to McGinley with their sharp wit and their intellectually clinical minds. It was a respite from the oppressive and sometimes dark conversation that he had been engaged in with Mr. Penkin for so long. He began to become more social and involved in the university community as a whole. Attending parties and events, liberally spreading his family fortune around. He met another young man who was studying to be a doctor at Harvard Medical School at one such event, Mr. Wesley Lawton. They became friends and the four men became nearly inseparable.

Eventually the subject of the occult and specifically dimensional travel came up between McGinley and his new friends. They were skeptics but had an interest in delving into the dark arts as a means of amusement and wonder. They began to study magic and practice occult rituals, first as a curiosity and then more seriously as time went on. Eventually Mr. Penkin completed his translation of the ancient tome they pillaged from the detestable graveyard in Denmak. He produced an encrypted translation of the original, giving the cypher key to McGinley and keeping the encrypted translation himself. He told McGinley he was worried that the contents of the book would be found by others and that their research would be stolen. In truth he encrypted the book so that McGinley could not see the translation for what it was and discover Penkin’s diabolical intentions.

The author of the book, Maxim Utkin, was actually a descendant of Mr. Penkin. When his ancestors had migrated to the colonies they had changed their name from Utkin to Penkin attempting the flee the persecution that followed the family line. The Utkin / Penkin family had a long been worshipers of Yog-Sothoth, going back to the time of Maxim Utkin. When Penkin found the location of his ancestors grave he needed only to find others he could convince to help him perform the “Dedication to the Opener”. He found a willing participant in McGinley, however he never revealed his true intentions or his family history in fear that McGinley would sour on the whole affair. He needed to draw power from several individuals to perform the ritual, and he found them in McGinley’s new friends.

Penkin kept on with the group, performing small insignificant rituals and spells, to amuse them and increase their interest and abilities. Outwardly the men all seemed to be good friends, they formed a sort of secret club which they called the Tenebris Circuli, Latin for the dark circle. McGinley bought a house outside of Boston on Waverly Oaks road so that the men had a location to practice their craft. Penkin finally convinced the men that he had a ritual that would send him to another dimension and he wanted them all to attempt it. They all agreed believing this to be research into dimensional travel and, if successful, would be a breakthrough that would gain them all considerable notoriety.

They went to the house on Waverly Oaks and performed the “Dedication to the Opener”. Mr. Penkin was transported to Yog-Sothoth where he was imbued with the dark gods power and horribly deformed then sent back, transformed into a servitor of the blasphemous god, bent on opening the way for his master to reign in our dimension. Upon returning, the others saw this corrupted version of Penkin and panicked. Mr. Lawton, was the Penkin thing’s first victim, mesmerized by the power of the thing he rushed towards it. It pulled him in with writhing worm like appendages and the others watched in horror as the thing bit into Mr. Lawton’s neck and began to gorge on his blood. It was McGinley who, fearing trouble with the ritual, created a silver disc emblazoned with the eldar sign. He ran forward and pressed the disk to the thing and it released Mr. Lawton. Calling for the others to get something to bind the thing he held it fast with the disk, staring face to face with the abomination which once was his friend Abram Penkin. They chained the thing up, fixing the disk to the chain to keep the thing at bay then proceeded to brick it up in the basement. They carved the eldar sign on newly fashioned wall and performed the ritual to seal it. The body of Mr. Lawton was also walled up with the thing. They feared what would happen if anyone had found what they had done. McGinley through Penkin’s book into an empty well behind the house and sealed the “key” away in a safe deposit box at his bank.

The three men, Colton McGinley, Stewart Billings and Bernard Lafayette told authorities that they had all be spelunking in some caverns in norther Massachusetts when a cave in claimed the lives of the other two men. They even when to the lengths of finding a cavern and causing a cave-in to legitimize their story. McGinley gave the two lawyers a large sum of money to being handling his estate with specific stipulations, one of which was that the inheritors of the estate were never to sell or dismantle the house on Waverly Oaks road. This initial capital allowed Billings and Lafayette to start their firm before either had taken the Barr exam and so was blood money they could not pass up. The years went on and they pushed the memories as far down as they could.

A series of horrible incidents followed the McGinley family as they lived in the house. The thing in the basement ever calling for the inhabitants to release it. McGinley pushed his wife down the stairs in a fit of rage brought on by the thing. His son fell in an empty well when the thing persuaded him to retrieve it and use it to release it. Only his oldest son Christopher survived and eventually unable to resist the thing any longer, Colton McGinley shot himself so that he would not succumb to the will of the thing.

Christopher McGinley, found his fathers journal and realized the horrible truth. He attempted to right the wrong done by his father but the price was high. He wife, chased by the shadow of the thing, which it was able to project inside the house, jumped to her death. His daughter seeing the shadow went insane and was committed to the Roxbury Sanitarium. His son grew to manhood and left for college only to here a few years later that his father had committed suicide by hanging.

Peter McGinley, the last descendant of the McGinley line, after finding his father and grandfathers journals also attempted to send the thing back to the hell it came from but the things power was too strong. Fearing he would succumb to the things will he also committed suicide just a week ago. It is now your job as executor of the estate to execute the inheritance as stated in the McGinley’s will.