**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. He began 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 northern Massachusetts when a cave in claimed the lives of the other two men. They even went 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 Mr. Crown’s job as executor of the estate to facilitate the inheritance in accordance with the stipulations set forth in the estate documentation.

**Setup:**

It is best to setup the appointments, which Mr. Crown will have ahead of time so that the players will have definite connections at the beginning of the game. There is a note on the case file, which states that Mr. and Mrs. Lawton of Boston are the expected inheritors of the estate. It also makes some suggestions about services to contact. If you are using the pre-generated characters the following list will be useful however if you are using custom characters the list could be different.

Mr. / Mrs. Brooks – Accountant setup a time to come to the office to get started on the company documents.

Mrs. Waterford or Mr. Pembrook – Antiquarian / Historian who can appraise the items in the house.

Mr. Stark – Architect, setup a time to meet at the house to check out its condition.

Mr. Elliot or Mrs. Nolan – Contractor / Interior Designer could be contacted by Crown or could be contacted by the inheritor of the house to have their own professional check out the house.

Mr. / Mrs. Lawton – Contact the Lawton’s to inform them about the inheritance.

Character descriptions and stats are included at the end of the scenario.

**Note on the file:**

Mr. Crown,

This is the big one so handle it with care.

Tracked down the last descendants of the Lawton family, see the stipulations for the inheritance.

The company records will be delivered, Monday 13th at 9 am, you may want to get an accountant or someone to look through them. You may also want to contact someone who can appraise items in the house to see what can be sold off. You will also want to get ahold of an architect or contractor to check the place out and see if there are any structural issues we will need to address.

Good luck, Crown, I’ll see you when I return from vacation.

Danforth Billings

**Billings and Lafayette:**

Founded in 1852 Billings and Lafayette is one of the top firms in Boston dealing with real estate and inheritance law. Stewart Billings and Bernard Lafayette started the firm, the year of their graduation from Harvard Law School, and before either had even completed the Barr exam. Mr. Colton McGinley, who was a friend of both founders and the heir to the McGinley family fortune, provided the initial capital used to start the firm.

There is some intrigue to the founding of the firm, which is tied closely to the founders and their first client. A large sum, even for this time, was offered to begin the McGinley estate. This initial capital provided the means to create the firm before either of the two founders had taken the Barr and were accredited lawyers. Some say that this money was in some way tied to a tragedy which the three men were involved in that left two other men, Mr. Wesley Lawton and Mr. Abram Penkin, dead by a cave in that occurred during a spelunking trip the men had taken after graduation.

**Employees of Billings and Lafayette:**

Danforth Billings – owner / founders grandson

Mr. Billings is a kind and compassionate man, and upstanding member of the community and an exceptional lawyer. Billings has taken Mr. Crown under his wing and is the reason that Crown is up for a partnership. Billings is on vacation for the week and will return Monday the 20th of February.

Walter Lafayette – owner / founders grandson

Mr. Lafayette is a shrewd and cunning businessman who is fastidious in both his business and personal life. He is an upstanding member of the community and has aspirations of becoming a judge. He recognizes Mr. Crown’s potential and his aptitude and although he will not say it outright, he believes Mr. Crown is a good choice for partnership. Lafayette is on vacation for an indeterminate amount of time. The keeper can decide if Lafayette returns during the scenario or not, but in most cases he should be on vacation.

Charles Monrow – lawyer

Charles is a decent lawyer but not as dedicated to the firm as one would hope. Charles has only been with the firm for two years and has proven capable but has been rumored to have entertained certain offers from other firms in the city. Mr. Monrow is out of town currently working with a client in New York. He will be back at the office Monday the 20th of February.

Edith Lampton – Office Manager / Secretary

Edith is a no nonsense woman with strong puritanical beliefs. She does not take any guff and is not keen on more liberal ideas about society. She keeps her opinions to herself unless asked but it quick to give disapproving looks when necessary. Mrs. Lampton is an efficient office manager and has files and appointments in order. If there is anything that needs to be pulled up in the firm’s files she will do so in short order. She respects Mr. Crown, though she wonders why he is not married or looking to become so. She does not like Mr. Monrow and believes that he is a deviant that should be tossed out on his ear. She respects and admires Billings and Lafayette and has nothing but good things to say about them.

**Research:**

**Newspapers:**

Billings, Lafayette, McGinley tell about deaths of Wesley Lampton and Abram Penkin.

Boston Globe July 18th 1852

Tragedy befalls recreational cave explorers in upstate Massachusetts

A cave-in caused the death of two Harvard University graduates this Saturday July 17th while a group of armature spelunkers traversed an uncharted cave system in upstate Massachusetts. A group of five men all graduates from Harvard were on a camping trip in celebration of their recent graduation when the tragedy struck. Mr. Wesley Lawton and Mr. Abram Penkin where killed when a portion of the cave collapsed on them, the other men attempted to dig them out but realized the effort was futile and called authorities. The other three men Mr. Stewart Billings, Mr. Colton McGinley and Mr. Bernard Lafayette gave statements about the cave-in, which authorities deemed too extensive for there to be any chance of survivors.

Rescue crews were brought in to search the cave for the bodies but another cave-in, caused by structural weakening as a result the first, forced rescuers to abandon the effort. The cave, near Sutton Massachusetts, has been blocked off and is now off limits for curious cave explorers. This is a great tragedy for both the Lawton and Penkin families.

Death of McGinley’s wife Bethany dies, falls down stairs

Waltham Examiner January 23rd 1864

Obituary:

Mrs. Bethany McGinley, wife of Colton McGinley, mother of Christopher and Charles McGinley died Wednesday January 20th 1864 after an accidental fall down the basements stairs in her home on Waverly Oaks road. Her distraught husband Mr. Colton McGinley told authorities that he came down for breakfast to find the door to the basement open, upon investigating found his wife at the bottom of the stairs. Mr. McGinley stated that the stairs would often ice up on extremely cold night and she must have slipped on the ice. Funeral services will be held next Saturday the 30th of January.

Youngest Charles falls in well

Boston Globe August 7th 1867

Boy found in well after weeklong search

Search parties found the body of Charles McGinley, the young boy who had gone missing five days prior, in a dry well behind the McGinley home. Son of Colton McGinley owner of the prominent McGinley Manufacturing had been reported missing five days prior when he did not return for supper. The oldest boy Christopher stated that he had been playing in the wood behind the house but had lost track of his brother and could not find him. Mr. McGinley immediately set up a search party and a reward of $500 was offered.

After an exhaustive search of the woods and outlying areas the search party was beginning to lose hope. It was when one of the dogs caught scent of something in an old dry well that was covered with years of debris, that the searchers found the old well. A small hold had been uncovered and this was apparently the access which the boy had found. The lifeless body of young Charles was found at the bottom of the 50 foot well. Another sad tragedy for the McGinley family coming only three years after the tragic death of Bethany McGinley, wife of Mr. McGinley and mother of young Charles.

company starts downward spiral

Boston Globe October 4th 1867

McGinley Manufacturing stocks plummet

McGinley Manufacturing stock begins a downward trend as the owner Mr. Colton McGinley leaves on another trip abroad. Mr. McGinley who has not taken an active role in the company since his father’s death in 1851, continues with his globe trotting excursions while the company falls to ruin. Speculation on McGinley’s mental state after losing a wife and child have investors selling off as much stock as they can.

Back home mismanagement of the company has gone unchecked for years and it seems that Mr. McGinley is more interested in seeing the world than seeing his company succeed. It is rumored that several offers have been made to buy McGinley out but as yet the company rests firmly in the hands of the McGinley family.

Colton commits suicide

Waltham Examiner March 21st 1879

Tragedy at the McGinley residence

Mr. Colton McGinley was found dead in his home at 1742 Waverly Oaks Rd. yesterday morning when the mail carrier Stanley Knolls saw what looked like a body lying on the floor through the large bay windows of the home. When authorities arrived they received no answer and finally forced entry into the home. The body of Mr. McGinley was found lying on the floor of an apparent gun shot wound to the head. The home was searched and no evidence of foul play was discovered. Mr. McGinleys own .38 revolver was used and police stated that the injury was indeed self-inflicted.

Mr. McGinley had recently been seen in town in what was described as a bedraggled condition and ranting about his inability to stop his families curse. Mr. McGinley has become increasingly aloof in recent years, spending more and more time confined in his home, when he was not taking trips to exotic locations around the world. It is said that the loss of his wife and child and the decline of his company had played heavy on the mans mind.

His son Christopher McGinley who is currently away at the Miskatonic University in Arkham Massachusetts survives Mr. McGinley. Christophe is the sole inheritor of McGinley Manufacturing and the McGinley family fortune.

Christopher inherits company starts an upturn.

Chirstopher’s wife Claudette falls from third story window dies, Agatha is sent to Roxbury

Christopher hangs himself.

Peter Hangs himself