CLUES

David's Notes:

Translation of the Ritual-
The heart must be placed on a flat surface surround by 10 candles. All present must chant "Deus Fiat Mortalis" 3 times and the first candle will ignite with a blackened flame. Another candle will ignite every minute. Once they are all lit, the protective ward around the heart will be disrupted and an obsidian blade can be stabbed into the flesh.

Gregory already has the blade. Need to check in with Sara about finding the hide-out. Ethan has high hopes for his ward, but it needs to be tested. We might actually be able to kill this thing.

Sara's Notes:

Dog – Success, Squirrel – Success, Bird – Success

The ash works! Place it on the head of any animal and it goes running straight towards the heart just as the myth says. Something about them following spirit lines.

Ethan's Journal:

~~*Garlic*~~, ~~*Peppermint*~~, ~~*Sage*~~, ~~*Salt*~~, ~~*Silver*~~, ~~*Mistletoe*~~, ~~*Iron*~~, *Incense*

Incense! Lavender Incense! The little guy can't stand it!

MONSTERS

ZOMBIE: A corpse come to life, starving for flesh. They are fragile but relentless. **Hostile Encounter (2d10)**

FLESH GOLEM: A humanoid hulk composed out of various other creatures. While strong, the segments of its body are clearly delineated and can be ripped away with sufficient effort. **Hostile Encounter (4d10)**

HUMONCULUS: A small creature crafted from viscera and sinew. They are fragile and stand at only a foot tall but have razor sharp teeth. **Hostile Encounter (1d10)**



GM BACKGROUND

Years ago, desperate for success in the medical field, Dr. Eric Moreland turned to the occult and learned to wield the powers of life and death. His healing magic gave him the renown he was after, but he became dissatisfied with his limitations. His powers could stop death from occurring, not reverse it. He sought to end death.

Months ago, Dr. Moreland removed his own heart in a ritual to make himself immortal. The ritual was successful but left him visibly scarred. Dr. Moreland began using dark magic to create life and undo death. He tested his methods on his patients, Marvin Cregger, Gregory Romero, David O'Bannon, and Sara Boyle, branding each with a small mark.

Weeks ago, Gregory, David, and Sara learned of Dr. Moreland's true nature. They, along with Sara's boyfriend Ethan Wright, began to look for ways to kill Dr. Moreland. Using his homunculus creations, Dr. Moreland was able to "kill" David and Sara. They are now mindless zombies.

Yesterday, Velma Cregger discovered that her husband was cheating on her. She put a bullet in the back of his head. He picked himself up 2 hours later.

GM NOTES

HIDDEN: Some clues are marked with a **H** representing that they are hidden. This only means that they are not immediately apparent. Some should be revealed automatically to players, while others might require the characters to look in the right place at the right time.

NOT NORMAL ZOMBIES: The undead present in this game are reanimated corpses made by Dr. Moreland. The transformation is slow but inevitable. They are not contagious, but they are dangerous. They are sensitive to the smell of lavender, and it causes them to be less effective.

CITY DIRECTORY: Addresses were largely publicly available in the 1940s. If the characters know someone's name, they can know their address without much effort.

IMPORTANT PEOPLE

Velma Cregger: Tired wife of Marvin Cregger. Smart and conniving, but mostly just angry at where her life is.

Marvin Cregger: Husband of Velma Cregger. An oblivious idiot and jerk, arguably deserving of the bullet in his head.

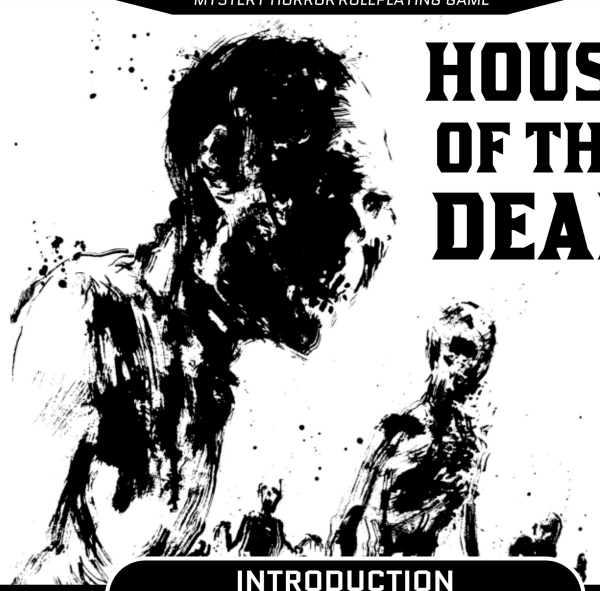
Gregory Romero: Paranoid former patient of Dr. Moreland. He does not know whether or not he is supposed to be alive.

Dr. Moreland: A necromancer that has long renounced humanity. He continues his experiments with life and death to master his craft. He cannot be killed by any normal means.

AN EPISODE FOR THE
STRANGE & TIMES
MYSTERY HORROR ROLEPLAYING GAME

CREATED BY: GAVIN RUBIN
ART: KIM HOLM

HOUSE OF THE DEAD



INTRODUCTION

Vermont – 1947

The characters are setting up a newly opened private investigation company with an interest in the paranormal. (What is the company name? How does everyone feel about going into business together?) Before they put in the finishing touches, there is a knock at the door.

Velma Cregger needs help solving her husband's murder. She knows who killed him: she did. The issue is that her husband is no longer dead, and she needs to know why. She is offering $750 if the characters can explain her husband's… *unusual vitality*… and keep her attempted murder a secret. Velma tells them to visit her home and to pose as doctors who will help Marvin with his "headache."

USING THIS MODULE

House of the Dead sends players on a hunt for the materials needed to kill the unkillable. After a dramatic opening, players will learn of the mystical nature of the undead and the ritual needed to destroy the evil entity creating them.

GMs should first read the GM Background, GM Notes and Important People sections on the back panel before following the mystery describe on the inner panels.

Once GMs are familiar with the mystery, they are encouraged to add, remove, and alter content to best suit their desired style. GMs should plan where they might need to ask for Saves, what Conditions might be used, and how many monsters are appropriate for their group.

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Gregory's Apartment
A worn apartment just off the highway

Gregory Romero – Disheveled, breathing heavily, and wielding a strange black knife. He acts hunted. Paranoid.
H | There is a strong smell of incense.
H | He believes Dr. Moreland is not human.
H | The knife is made of obsidian.
"It's the only thing that cuts deep enough to hurt Moreland."
H | He has a strange mark on his wrist.
H | He worked with a team of people to kill Moreland. He mentions their names: Sara Boyle, Ethan Wright, and David O'Bannon who he holds in high regard.
"David came closer than any of us to figuring out what's going on."
H | David is being held a Saint Mary's Hospital.

David O'Bannon's Farm
An abandoned farmhouse

David's Notes – Documents are piled throughout the house. It will take an hour to sort through all of the information, but one word keeps appearing: **Lich**.
H | One page stands out amongst the rest. ***See- David's Note***
H | A **homunculus** is hiding in the attic.

Sara Boyle's Home
A simple home in a small neighborhood

The door is unlocked. The home appears destroyed. Blood is on the walls, and a faint clanging can be heard somewhere in the home.

Strange Corpse – Lying in the middle of the living room.
H | The corpse has bite marks on it.
H | The corpse's wallet has an I.D. for an Ethan Wright.

Sara Boyle – In a dazed state in the basement.
H | Sara is medically dead. She is a **zombie**.
H | She has a strange mark on her wrist.

Bird in a Cage – An ash-coated bird is continuously flying into the same part of the cage. Blood coats the bars.
H | A pile of ash next to a journal. ***See- Sarah's Note***

Ethan Wright's Home
A cheap studio apartment

Ethan's Kitchen – A foul smell emanates from the cook top. Strange ingredients rot in jars. The oven is secured with rope, and the door bangs as something inside tries to escape.
H | A **homunculus** is trapped in the oven.
H | A small journal is on the counter. ***See- Ethan's Journal***
H | Boxes of lavender incense sticks.

The Cregger Household
A well cared for home in the suburbs

Marvin Cregger – Marvin is eating lunch. He has a "splitting headache" and wants to see Dr. Moreland, not "these doctors."
H | He is eating an uncooked steak.
H | He has a fatal gunshot wound in the back of his head.
H | He has a strange mark on his wrist.
H | Dr. Moreland uses "traditional" medicines such as honey, teas, and blood letting.

Wartime Photo – Marvin and Dr. Moreland in a platoon
H | Marvin boasts that their squadron didn't lose a single man during the war "thanks to Dr. Moreland."

Dr. Moreland's Phone Number – Scribbled by the phone.
H | If called, a polite, deadpan receptionist answers.
"Dr. Moreland is not in at the moment. Can I take a message?"

Next steps: The Creggers think that Dr. Moreland works at Saint Mary's Hospital. Gregory Romero, a war buddy of Marvin, was extremely close to Dr. Moreland in the past.
Velma Cregger is extremely unwilling to let her husband visit the hospital or see Dr. Moreland. She wants to keep her crime a secret.



Depiction of the Mark

Saint Mary's Hospital
A sterile and cavernous building

Jeremy Lee – An administrator willing to answer questions.
H | Dr. Moreland was fired earlier this year. He allegedly experimented on patients using unusual practices.
H | The patients were Marvin Cregger, Gregory Romero, David O'Bannon, and Sara Boyle.
H | David is in the hospital's psych ward.

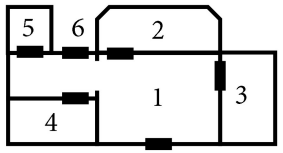
David O'Bannon – Chained to a hospital bed, is struggling against his restraints and biting at the air. The doctors believe he was exposed to some contaminant on his farm that caused this.
H | David is medically dead. He is a **zombie**.
H | David has a very small strange mark on his wrist.

Dr. Moreland's Home
A heavily whitewashed, crumbling house

Mailbox – Overflowing with mail. The letters bear the logo of Saint Mary's Hospital and appear legal in nature.

Dr. Moreland – A polite, calm man who hides his secrets well and always has an excuse.
H | Mud coats Dr. Moreland's shoes and car.
H | His face is caked in makeup.

Dr. Moreland's Hideout
An overgrown house deep in the woods



1. Living Room – Bloodstained chairs and storage cabinets filled with alchemy ingredients dot the walls.
H | A **homunculus** is hiding underneath furniture.

2. Kitchen – Writhing cuts of meat on every surface. A half-butchered pig squeals on the countertop.

3. Reception Office – A small room with a contraption that picks up the phone when it rings. The severed head of a woman acts as the "receptionist." Her eyes are white and blank. Will taunt characters.

4. Study – A desk with a flesh-bound copy of the Liber Mortuorom (Book of the Dead). The storm cellar key hangs above the desk.

5. Bedroom – Viscera lines the edges of the room. A small workstation where a homunculus is being built.

6. Backyard – Skinned animals trot around in paddocks. A storm cellar can be seen across the yard. It is locked.

The Storm Cellar
An arcane chamber

H | If someone leaves with the heart, they will lose 1d10 from their Spirit Save every 30 seconds until the heart is returned.

Low bookshelves
Central table with arcane implements
Basin holding a still-beating heart



Dr. Moreland can sense when his heart is touched and will act to stop the ritual. These are the series of obstacles he will introduce:

1. **Zombies** will emerge from the dirt walls.
2. Acid blood will seep from the walls and pool on the floor. Contact will cause a character to lose 1d10 Body Save.
3. **Homunculi** will form and jump out of the blood.
4. A **flesh golem** composed of the animals from the yard will come down the stairs.
5. Dr. Moreland arrives as the last candle is lit. Desperate, he will bargain with the characters, offering them immortality.

The undead will try to extinguish the candles but can be distracted. Lavender can provoke or ward off the undead temporarily.

Once the final candle is lit and the heart is stabbed, Dr. Morland will crumble into ash, and his undead creations will separate into meat.

