

SAMUELE ZANOTTI

ARKHAM ARCHIVES:
THE LIMESTONE ABYSS
CHAPTER I OF IV

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www.deltadreamsgames.com

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INTRODUCTION

This entire project was born from the idea of four friends with a passion for board games, game books, video games and clearly everything connected to the world of Lovecraft.

Our passion for the cycle of Cthulhu and oneiric stories have brought us to the development of this book.

The Limestone Abyss is the first chapter of a great adventure that passes through many eras, various regions of the world and in which horrors hidden in the Arkham Sanitarium

will be narrated.

The four chapters can be played independently even though we would advise you to start the reading with the story of Jack (J) to then move on the Queen(Q), King(K) and to finish with Ace(A). This project would never have reached this version if it wasn't for the contribution of the people who have supported the Kickstarter platform.

And it is to them we owe our thanks.

GAME MATERIAL LIST

In order to play “The Limestone Abyss” you will need:

Poker deck

OUIJA board

12 equipment tokens

If you haven't bought the game materials you can download them from our website.

https://www.deltadreamsgames.com/Arkham_Archives/DEMO/the_limestone_abyss/game_materials.pdf

GAME PREPARATION

Divide the two decks of cards so as to obtain the MENTAL SANITY deck and the PHYSICAL SANITY deck.

The mental sanity deck will be composed of all the figures (J, Q, K) as well as aces and two jokers. There are a total of 18 mental sanity cards and it must be placed on the left, inside the section with the brain logo



The rest of the cards will make up the physical sanity deck. This deck of cards will be placed in the section on the right with the blood drop logo (●).

You're ready to start your adventure.

Read the instructions below carefully and good luck.

PATH RULES

The Limestone abyss is an interactive story that allows the reader to follow different paths which will inevitably bring them to different final destinations.

The player will often be required to take a specific number of cards from a specific deck which, unless otherwise specified should always be inserted amongst the discard spaces in the lateral section.

USE OF DECKS

You will be asked to draw a precise number of cards from the respective deck.

REMEMBER:

MENTAL SANITY on the LEFT and

PHYSICAL SANITY on the RIGHT

For the sake of simplicity the mental sanity deck will be indicated with the icon  whereas the physical sanity will be indicated with the icon. 

Esempio:

 Take a card from the physical sanity deck. If its value is more than 7 proceed to chapter J 11 otherwise go to chapter J 25.

 Take two cards from the mental sanity deck. If its sum is greater than or equal to 15 proceed to chapter J36 otherwise go to chapter J105.

Once the action is complete the cards will be discarded and placed in the discard area of the respective deck. You're allowed to check the value of the discarded card during the game at any time you need.

REST ☺

The Limestone Abyss adventure will be thrilling and full of challenges to overcome.

You can rest anytime you wish in any chapter labeled with the icon ☺, Doing so will allow you to get your  *physical sanity back as specified in the respective dream.*

YOU WILL NEED TO REMEMBER THE REST CHAPTER NUMBER. WE SUGGEST YOU TO NOTE IT DOWN ON A PIECE OF PAPER OR TO USE A BOOKMARK TO MEMORIZE THE PAGE.

A player who decides to rest must draw a

 *mental sanity card and go to the NIGHTMARE section (black pages) in the back of the book. Once there, the player reads the effects of the rest as described in the chapter which corresponds to the drawn card.*

Once this is read the player must return to the previous chapter.

Example :

*A player is reading chapter J56 where it's possible to rest. They decide to rest due to the huge loss of  physical sanity. They draw and discard a card from the  mental sanity deck picking up a *sanità fisica*. up a **K♦**. At this point the player will memorize chapter J56 and will go to the NIGHTMARE section in chapter **K♦** to read about all the effects.*

Once this has been read the player must return to chapter J56 and decide whether to rest again or continue reading.

MORTE / † CHECKPOINT

Two types of death exist: PHYSICAL DEATH and MENTAL DEATH .

Physical death can happen:

1. As described in the story if the path you chose has brought you to this result.
2. By finishing the  physical sanity cards. In this case you need to imagine Jack falling to the ground, exhausted and slowly dying.

The player will fall into a dreamlike state between life and death.

You must go to the nightmare chapter relative to the last h mental sanity card drawn and read the ending.

Being swallowed by the horrors of the abyss is very easy. For this reason, in case your body dies, you may restart your misadventure from the chapters marked with the icon †

Whenever you reach a † CHECKPOINT, chapter, it is advised to remember its number by noting it on Jack's diary (or any other piece of paper).

You may return to that chapter without losing your items, but you will have to shuffle the two decks, discarding a certain number of cards from each, as the chapter title says.

For example:

J118 ☾
(† 6  3 )

This is the first chapter where ☾ resting is available to players, and the first † checkpoint as well.

You will have to take a note of this chapter's number, and in case you should die before reaching the next checkpoint, you may resume reading from this chapter.

Remember, you will have to shuffle the two decks,  physical sanity and  mental sanity, then pay that checkpoint's price. In this case you will have to discard 6  physical sanity cards and 3  mental sanity cards.

Cerebral death occurs when the last  mental sanity card is discarded.

You will have to read the nightmare that your last  mental sanity card suggests and read the ending.

The player will fall prey to an oniric state between life and death.

Example:

Jack has to discard 3 cards from the mental sanity deck. He however only has two. He discards them. He first discards the J♣ and then the Q♥ as his final card.

The player will have to read the ending relative to that final card, which is found in the NIGMTARES section, at the Queen of Hearts chapter (the last card that was drawn).

*You're crawling to get out of the darkness.
Have you told the boy yet that whoever walks with me dies at my
hands?*

S. King - The Gunslinger

Flagg: Pleased to meet you Lloyd, hope you guess my name.

Lloyd: What?

Flagg: Oh. Nothing. It was just a classical reference. To tell you the truth my name is Flagg, Randall Flagg.

S. King- The Stand

*The oldest and most powerful
human emotion
is fear.*

And the oldest and most powerful is the fear of the unknown.

Howard Phillips Lovecraft

J1

«He kept calling your name, sir. »

The forty-year-old woman glances at you, with a tired and disconsolate look in her eyes.

« Usually he's one of the quiet ones. But recently, he had some violent episodes. », she states with a not too loud voice tone.

« This visit is unconventional. I would be glad if you could make it as short as possible>>, she says as she resumes walking down the hall.

You start following her and your thought inevitably falls on the grit floor you're stepping on.

That's really depressing, you think.

The sound of the nurse's keys resonates in the long and cold corridor, poorly lit and interrupted by heavy metal doors. A single peephole can be found on each door, which allows you to spy inside every room. Warily, the woman stops in front of one of them.

«Remember», she says after taking some steps.

«Our main purpose is to bring your grandfather back to cooperating with us. We're already busy enough holding off... Are you listening to me? »

Listen to the nurse. → [J115](#)

J2

If you're reading these lines, then the situation surely is tragic. You've found the Cultus and I certainly told you where to look for it. So, if we're here at this point, it is fitting that I explain to you what to do next.

You need to take the board and open it in front of you.

Take the deck of cards. The true power lies inside of them and inside the medallion.

Separate the Jacks, the Queens, the Kings, the Aces and the two Jokers from the deck, and keep them aside.

Now take the remaining deck and shuffle it well. Your own life and the life of everyone else depend on it.

Place the shuffled deck on the top. I marked with an A where to place it.

Wear the medallion when you're ready to start.

I can't add anything else. Except that I'm sorry.

I'll see you on the other side.

Jack

You unfold the board that vaguely reminds you of an old Ouija Board on which ancient and occult looking symbols are illustrated, along with rectangles about the size of a poker card.

Follow the instructions and start the game. → [J105](#)

J7

The skylight is bright enough to light up the engravings. You're able to recognize some sort of order in the symbols before you. In fact, they seem like actual writing. Almost arranged into a sort of table, the characters hint at being instructions for whatever happened in this pond. You're unable to deduce anything else.

If you had a team to dig deeper, you could probably find utensils and other clues to discover the building's function. You check the sand around you, shifting it from side to side. You continue for a bit longer and moving two large handfuls of material you're able to touch the floor. You feel something solid and dusty, and you realize that they are some pieces of shiny material that converge at the same point.

Take a closer look. [→ J197](#)

J10

You open the document and the photo of a man you know very well gazes right at you. That's impossible, but that man is a younger version of your grandfather.

The name written on the document and the birth date actually leave no doubt.

Name: Jack

Surname: Palmer

Birth Date: 8/10/1903

Your hands are shaking. You put your passport back in your pocket and walk over to a metal bucket full of water. When you bow over it, you realize that your reflection is the same as your grandfather's. «*Oh my God*», you whisper.

Even your voice is different. It is deeper. And more rasping. You feel your heart pounding in your chest. Your breathing gets faster and faster. You're about to collapse. Everything around you becomes dark.

You kneel on the hot sand. [→ J12](#)

J12

Your eyes take a few seconds to recover.

You hear a distant, constant, relaxing dripping noise. You feel like you're in a cave you've never seen before. There are lots of stalagmites and stalactites.

«*This is the place where we could always meet* », says a voice behind you.

You quickly turn around and see your grandfather.

This time he's old, sitting on the ground, still wearing his straitjacket. « *What the hell is going on?* », you ask straight away.

«*You are watching and living my life.* », he affirms wearily.

«*This makes no sense.* », you affirm, upset.

«*I know. And you should never live these experiences. But that's one of the gifts of knowledge. I can't tell you anything else for now. Except that we have this curse and we have to move on.* » You're simply speechless. You gaze upon the sitting old man in front of you with an astonished look.

«*Trust me.* » He says with a calm voice. «*Live my life. Make the right choices. And we'll meet here again when everything makes sense. I love you, little one.* »

Those words are the last thing you hear from your grandfather before everything goes black again.

You reopen your eyes.

[→ J127](#)

J19

You check your thighs. A large wood splinter is sticking into your muscle.

Draw and discard 5  physical sanity cards.

You breathe heavily, worried and in shock.

Your hands move awkwardly towards the splinter.

You touch it, discovering that the wound is actually deeper than it seemed.

With your pocket knife you cut your pants up to the wound, freeing it.

You gather your courage as you bite the knife's handle.

You grunt savagely and bite harder as you manage to get the piece of wood out of your flesh.

You immediately press the flap of cut tissue over the bleeding wound, waiting a few minutes in this position.

Afterwards, you tie a knot around the wound using the driest part of the makeshift bandage. Judging its severity, you would need a suture.

You're able to get back on your feet by leaning on the rocky wall.

You feel relatively well, but are afraid your wound will get worse.

Enter the cave. → [J93](#)

J20

After a few minutes you reach the lake and even though the water is extremely clean you smell a strong, almost sulphurous odor. As you check out the peculiar lake you notice to your surprise a flourishing ecosystem.

You strain your ear expecting to hear some kind of sound, but there's nothing.

Silence.

Observe the lake → [J66](#)

J22

<<It's a....complicated question. At the beginning there wasn't a problem. Mostafa hired many capable people. They work hard and complain very little as long as you pay them. The problems started to arise when we found some city ruins. Rumors started circulating. Can you imagine they even sent me to Cairo to ask for 'backup.' Is this a joke?>>

Thomas points to the van in front of yours.

<<As hard headed as mules>> he affirms, irritated.

There's nothing that's trying to kill them. What are they afraid of?
No one has set foot in this place for 1500 years. >>

“But the letters are addressed to the Count of Essex!”

[→ J101](#)

J23

To your left, you immediately recognize a large fireplace in which there's a heavy and rough metal cauldron, now tipped over, undoubtedly used for the hot pours. The stones that it is composed of are darker than the ones used for the structure; grey instead of the light brown that makes up most of the city. In the center of the room, there's another table. This time, it's made of a very solid material, probably a relatively light metal alloy, since it's still intact, but oxidized.

In front of you, on the opposite side of the room, there's a wide exit that leads to a balcony. The moon light from the skylight illuminates the room so it is completely visible, almost as if it was daytime.

Looking outside, it is obvious that this is not only a tactical position, but also a way to address the people in the courtyard in case a speech was needed.

Examine the corpse. [→ J52](#)

J26C

This seems like a good place to rest.

If you intend to REST:

- Retrieve 2  physical sanity cards from the discard pile, then shuffle the deck.
- Discard 1  mental sanity card. Then [click on this link](#) and read the relative dream.

Otherwise, resume your adventure.

Observing the city from the highest floor of the dilapidated house, the view is perfect. You decide on your next goal:

A) An enormous construction with embrasures, walls and windows. If you want to visit it, [→ J78](#)

B) Close to the lake, a construction that appears to be an anachronism: a fallen bell and a nave make you think of a church.
NOT AVAILABLE IN THIS DEMO

C) Surrounded by a wall, you see what appears to be a cemetery. You make out headstones and mausoleums.
NOT AVAILABLE IN THIS DEMO

D) A large body of water that is shining in the night light. Around it is the only vegetation in the city.
If you want to visit it, [→ J159](#)

E) The biggest building in the city, situated not far from the centre. Its entrance is situated on a long flight of stairs. The wind is coming from here. If you want to visit it, [J163](#)



J33

Although your reflexes have almost caused you to stay still, you manage anyway to stay calm and to think.

Your muscles snap and you manage to throw yourself at the wooden planks that make up the elevator.

You lie down on the bottom, trying to distribute your weight, and to avoid the floor below you starts tilting. You seem to fall for an eternity as you grasp as tightly as possible.

And the impact arrives, violent and sudden. You feel once more the air being pushed away from you, while your limbs loosen the grip, and the slam keeps undaunted to hammer in your ears, in the silence into which you have fallen.

Moments after, a pair of sunglasses falls near you, sticking into the sand, as the severed rope scatters around you.

You slowly stand up on your knees and check on yourself. Some pain here and there, maybe a few bruises, but nothing broken. Your joints hurt a bit, but you manage to fully stand up without problem.

After a quick check of your backpack, you make sure that nothing broke during the fall.

Examine the wound. [→ J19](#)

J36

Your hand rubs against the rough, salty surface of the crate you're sitting on, and moves towards your tin canteen.

Your brand new boots are already discolored by the sand, which constantly crunches under your passage, every movement is followed by a crackle.

You've certainly read about it, but nothing prepared you to face this arid heat, and although you're sure about your water being at least lukewarm, they still seem the most refreshing sips you've ever tasted.

Your lips seem entirely different, and you distractedly let some drops flow down on your neck and under your candid linen shirt, shivering slightly. If a few hours of waiting could do this to a person, the simple thought of getting lost out there is worrisome.

[→ J202](#)

J47

A squeeze causes some teeth to stick into your flesh. You try to take a hit at it, but the limb's subcutaneous shell makes the blade slip off, which falls into the sand beyond your reach. Your heart stops in your throat as you helplessly watch the lake creature.

Your attempts to wiggle remain in vain compared to the monstrous strength of the creature, which almost breaks your leg by dragging you to the center.

Terror takes over your very being, stifling your screams. The sand of the ocean floor is being moved by a starfish-like creature. Its enormous mouth opens, full of sharp fangs, towards which you are pushed.

Your last moments are of excruciating pain, where you helplessly try to struggle from being devoured, resulting only in your arm being ripped off clean by the beast's teeth.

Unable to think straight, you see your forearm bleeding copiously before being slammed inside the creature's mouth.

Before your sight becomes completely clouded from panic, you feel your body being torn from chewing. Your bones crack under its grip, and your flesh is being torn apart. Your own cries are drowned by your own blood, engulfed by both the desert and the lake monster.

Your dream ends without an awakening.

J50

You open the document and the photo of a man you know very well gazes right at you. That's impossible, but that man is a younger version of your grandfather.

The name written on the document and the birth date actually leave no doubt.

Name: Jack

Surname: Palmer

Birth Date: 8/10/1903

Your hands start shaking, as everything else around you. You close your eyes instinctively. When you open them again you're standing in the studio where it all began. In front of you, sitting at the table, there is you, wearing the medallion. You look above and from your mouth a hoarse voice that doesn't belong to you, states:

«Ohodos, siez zamoni. »

You see yourself drawing a card from the deck on the top, you lower your head. Your eyes, completely white, look towards you.

«Ohodos, siez zamoni. », you repeat with the same hoarse voice as you place the card in the discard pile.

Everything goes black around you.

Discard 1 card from the  mental sanity. → [J12](#)

J52

You quit stalling, and decide to address the ‘elephant in the room’. The corpse that you were trying to avoid until now is sitting against the wall of the only side of the room you didn’t examine yet. The smell of decomposition only confirms your theory: it’s one of Mostafa’s workers who happened to be here at the wrong time and place. He still wears the same linen robes he had during his shift, but they are ripped along the chest, and soaked in dried blood. You have no idea how this could have happened, but his pickaxe is dry, and there’s no sign of struggle. The floor is free from any trace, and so is the wall, where you find a large framed ruined herald, hanging. “What a way to go”, you think to yourself, getting away from the young man’s corpse. He couldn’t have been more than 30 years old.

Examine the murder scene. → [J181](#)

J66

A small island located at the center of the lake catches your attention. Above it you spot the ruins of a small house. At first look, you realize that it is not just a simple house. In fact, some of the bricks seem to be highly decorated with engravings that you’re unable to decipher from afar.

Choose:

Swim to the islet. → [J113](#)

Go back to the observation point. → [J123](#)

J67

Your friend offers to take the wheel down the road with his pickup, now loaded with supplies for the excavation site.

The leather of the seat is almost scorching due to the sun that until recently was just irradiating it. Judging by the faded brown color, this happens quite often.

Once the key is turned, both the vehicles emit a loud rumble, and the little truck leads the way in front of you.

The workers are sitting on the sides in the back, covered by the shade of the awning, and rest in your sight.

With a very controlled speed, Thomas lights a cigarette, throwing the exhausted match out of the window. Leaning his elbow, he turns to you, asking what you would like to know about the work done here in Egypt by him and his team.

You think about it for a while and reply:

CHOOSE:

What did you find until now? → [J141](#)

Or:

«Why those letters on the table? Is there something wrong?» → [J22](#)

J69

Your gaze falls on the worker, merciless ravaged.

You bring your hand to your jacket, and press the collar against your face to reduce the impact of the smell, which is disgusting to say the least, even more so up close. The large and deep wound runs through his entire torso, revealing to you not only his entrails but also his bones.

You're not a doctor, but you presume by the smell and the dust blown over the now clotted blood, that he has been here for at least a few days.

You hear again the noise from the grate, of sand flowing downstairs. But this time you feel your blood freezing in your veins. You don't feel the wind on your skin.

Pesca e scarta 1 carta  sanità mentale.

Se il seme è rosso (♥ / ♦) oppure è un joker. → [J135](#)

Se il seme è nero (♠ / ♣). → [J108](#)

Percorri una larga strada lastricata, spazzata dalle folate che provengono dall'interno dell'imponente edificio.

J78

Your steps lead you towards a very impressive building. Lifting your face in the distance, you notice that the architectural work is nothing short of impressive, considering the age of this city. There isn't a real ring of walls around the city, but this stronghold had to be the safest point, and surely it could have housed most of the civilians that lived here. You wonder, though, what a military fort is down here for.

In fact, you're not really sure how these people expected visitors. The skylight and the vegetation of the lake make you realize that maybe they had an autonomous method of sustenance, and if that the only entrance you found so far is digging in stone... All of this doesn't make much sense.

Once you get to the building, you easily find the entrance. The wooden door, strewn with heavy studs and iron nails, rests on the ground, almost submerged by the rough sand. A thick wall interrupted by the arch of the door overlooks a large courtyard, empty and abandoned. Attached to the building's walls, there are some flights of stairs, which lead above it, giving access to the embrasures.

The wind sweeps the roof of the building and you feel the sand being pushed against you from over the walls. Having nothing else to examine, you head towards the stronghold's entrance, which still has an intact door leaf.

Enter the stronghold. [J145](#)

J93

The voices you heard from above have disappeared. You're in a wide and deep ravine, with solid but porous walls, while the ground is strewn with sand that rests on a layer of more solid rock. There's no way back.

Just as your hope wavers, your clothes move in the silence of the night, and your skin is lashed by a strong gust of warm air, which you hear ringing hoarsely from a wide crack in the wall. If there's air moving, there's also an exit, you think aloud. Without any other option, you make your way through the big crack. There's enough space to walk in, if you keep your chest turned sideways, and you proceed with this pace for just about a minute before popping out on the other side, with a breath of fresher air than before. Before you, there's breathtaking scenery.

J95

It seems to personally ask for a... security personnel and rifles from the army, directly from the Essex county?
Your eyes begin to rapidly read all the contents. Mysterious cases of missing miners... but how? Thomas clearly stated that they refused to work and sometimes they even quit in the invitation he sent you.

« If it isn't Mister Palmer! Or shall I call you, Doctor Palmer now? I'm truly sorry for the delay, but the cars had a tantrum, with this damned heat... »

Your muscles are petrified, like those of a trapped rat. Your eyes spring up, meeting the ones of your observer. → [J116](#)

J96

« How did you find it, and what does it look like? », you ask, even more curious. « To be fair, we didn't explore it yet. » He affirms, smiling. He turns up to you.

« As I said, I wanted to wait for you before entering the city. At the moment we have a rudimentary elevator that will allow us to descend into the tunnel dug up by the miners. About the 'how'... Heh! » The doctor grins amused.

« It wasn't simple. It took us a lot of time but thanks to your translations, we went up the Nile until we reached the right bend and continued to the west. Knowing the exact latitude, it was just a matter of time before finding the longitude. Once we passed Alexandria in terms of longitudinal distance, we tried to dig for some time. After almost 5 months of trying, one of the shovels hit something solid and... We immediately recorded on the map the site's location. »

“And what does it look like?” → [172](#)

J101

«Ah, after realizing what the alternatives were, I decided not to choose any at all. Anyone around here who knows how to fire a gun is rather a criminal or a mercenary. Or a pirate. I'm sorry, but I don't trust taking them this far. In case there's gold down there, you can kiss it goodbye while you're being mutinied by the cutthroats to whom you also own your salary. »

Thomas shakes his head in dissent.

«No sir, if we need to hire a guard duty, I want them to be from our ranks. Whatever is causing panic in our field, wild animal or folkloric freak, they need to get into their heads that I don't want to hear any excuses again once the area is guarded by OUR boys using OUR rifles. Miskatonic's funds aren't unlimited. »

End speech. [→ J128](#)

J105

Your look rests on a little bug near the wooden planks. The small tufts of grass tend to a yellowish and brownish color and are not very inviting even for the locusts that surround them.

You look around and notice that this is the oddest dream you've ever had. Everything looks so real. Your hands seem different. They seem more adult. And the shirt you're wearing too. Dear God, what kind of color is this? Linen? Beige?

You put your hands in your pockets and take what seems to be a very old model passport.

Draw 1 card from the  physical sanity deck.

If it's a black suit (♠ / ♣) → [J10](#)

Otherwise, if it is a red suit (♥ / ♦) or a joker → [J50](#)

Discard a card.

J108

You grab the victim's pickaxe firmly and you turn quickly. You rapidly inspect the room and perceive the only movement coming from above.

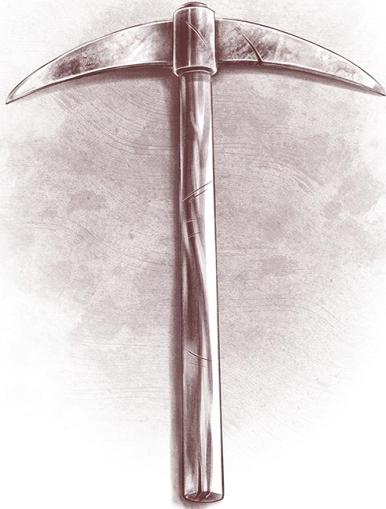
Your attention is drawn by a movement in the ceiling's shadows, your eyes narrow in the attempt to see something.

In a moment, two green and bright slits answer you from the dark, like the ones of a cat dazzled by the car lights, but more menacing and penetrating.

Your hands grab the rough weapon you picked up from the ground, firmly and nervously. Your tendons are tense and ready to thrust. The two fluorescent slits start moving, and seem to turn into spots.

No eyelid beats on them, but their shape changes becoming vertical, and they slowly come closer until they conjoin into a single, shiny and disturbing gem. You observe the darkness moving towards the corridor you came from.

Draw the Pickaxe token and defend yourself. → [J200](#)



J113

You leave your backpack on the lake shore, along with your jacket, your linen shirt and your boots. You take a deep breath and dive into the lake. You're surrounded by water. You're surprised to find that its temperature is much lower than that of the scorching hot desert.

You walk as far as you can, feeling the rough sand moving under your feet, as if it was fine grained gravel. You inhale, and start swimming: it only takes a few seconds to reach the center. Once you've surfaced, you start to inspect the ruins. [→ J7](#)

J115

You raise your head towards the nurse, only to meet a cold and strict expression, which leaves no room for any kind of emotion.

« Your grandfather shows a very remarkable strength and perseverance. Especially for his venerable age.»

Your attention is drawn to the little tag on the door, just above the peephole.

Palmer J., written in capital letters.

Even the font is depressing, you think, while two key turns, grave and creaky, bring you back to reality.

The door opens. The nurse steps aside and invites you to enter.

As you might have predicted, the room is depressing too. Empty.

With only a cot thrown on the side and nothing else.

The dim light from the window enlightens a man, standing, in a straitjacket.

So much for being in 2019, these treatments should be prohibited by now.

Only in Arkham time seems to have stopped in the 1960s.

« Make it quick. I will be back in a few minutes. Talk to him, hit him, anything that will make him stop attacking our employees », she adds, locking the door behind you. [→ J183](#)

J116

« Perceptive, attentive and nosey as usual. » He says, sympathetically.

« I knew I had chosen the right person for this job, and finally here's someone I can trust in these cursed sands! »

He's absolutely more tanned than you recall, this Doctor Fisher.

With those baggy, white egyptian clothes, he would be unrecognizable in the local crowd, except for his stocky nose, emerging from his sunglasses. Strong and slightly thinner than you remember, he's a joyful man that you've known for years. A colleague of yours at Miskatonic. One you can call not only a fellow student, but also a trusted friend.

« Thomas, it truly has been too long since last time! » you affirm, smiling. « And about the delay, don't worry, it's just...»

You take out your pocket watch and check the time, then you give a playful look to your friend.

«2 hours and a half longer than it should have been! » you continue smiling. « If this is the same treatment you give your troops, the ‘discovery of the century’ will have to wait until the new millennium» Your colleague smiles back.

« Sorry for giving a quick look to these documents, but you know how it is, a leopard cannot change its spots...”

The doctor interrupts you. [→ J149](#)

J123

You decide not to swim in the lake, and to keep your clothes dry. After a last look at the ruins, you retrace your steps to the dilapidated house.

You can revisit the lake again, if you wish.

You go back to the house. [→ J26](#)

J126

Your boots slide on the elevator wood.

You can't find any grip, any way to stop it: you feel in free fall and in grave danger.

You do your best to prepare for the impact. You lose your grasp on the wooden planks, and you throw yourself off balance backwards. Upon impact, your knees and your elbows collapse and your face hits bottom.

A very violent hit strikes your body, losing your breath again and in an instant, the pain invades you. The last thing you see before fainting is a pair of sunglasses, falling a few centimeters away from

your face, crushing onto the elevator wood, followed by the falling rope that rolls up next to them.

Slowly, you gather your sight back. It's late at night, and the full moon illuminates the little entrance of the cave. You slowly manage to get yourself back up. Your chest, legs and joints constantly ache for several minutes before you are able to resume normal walking. You have suffered a strong fall, you feel various throbbing points of pain to the touch, but you're quite sure your bones are still intact.

Draw and discard 8 cards from the  physical sanity deck, due to your wounds.

Examine your thigh. [→ J19](#)

J127

The air is dry. The blazing sun, as you've never felt it before, is high in the sky. You're here again. In this place. And as you look around, memories come to your mind.

Memories you shouldn't have. Memories about your grandfather. You see your grandmother, beautiful and joyful, walking hand in hand with you.

You're sitting alone in your office, studying ancient writings. You perfectly understand those illustrations that appear to be Mesopotamian hieroglyphs.

Eridu. Nippur. Lagash. Sippar. Uruk. These are all city-states from ancient Mesopotamia. And you know their names and history.

Your head is full of information and memories that aren't yours.

You remember the journey to that place. You remember the sea.
The ocean and the sleepless nights spent to pray to God.
You remember the pleasure of reaching your destination.
You remember your arrival in Egypt.
You remember the reason for your journey. And you remember
the handwritten letters from your colleague Thomas.
You remember your trip from Alexandria in Egypt, made by car
the night before along the coast.
And you remember your arrival in this little heathland that seems
completely desolated. → [J207](#)

J128

After a few moments of silence, you both let the conversation die out.

Around the convoy, there's only the dust raised by the movement of the vehicles and the hot desert.

In all directions, all you can see is a labyrinth of indistinguishable dunes. If it wasn't for the compass in the dashboard, it would be impossible to find a way around in this maze made of sand.

You lightly pull the brim of your hat, making it slide over your eyes and, despite the heat, you feel them resting almost immediately.

After discussing this and that, about mutual friendships and what to deal with the next day, you let yourself sink in the vehicle's seat.

You feel tired after the trip on the ship, and even more after a loud speech, due to the engine's noises.

A yawn makes Thomas realize that maybe it is appropriate to postpone the speech until later.

You fall asleep. → [J208](#)

J129

Looking quickly over the courtyard, you manage to see the tail of something similar to a scutigera, about the size of a mastiff that drags itself away from your sight, beyond the city walls.

“Whatever that thing was, it’s still out there.” you think, terrified. You carefully retrace your steps until you exit the fort. Your traces have been erased by the wind. Your thoughts linger over the tapestry, and over the disgusting vision you just had right in front of you.

You cannot go back to the fort.

Draw and discard 3 cards from the  physical sanity deck and 1 card from the  menta sanity deck, then go back to the city. → [J26](#)

J135

You suddenly turn, and your hand lifts the heavy pickaxe from the ground. Before you could aim your swing, you realize you’re

completely alone. There's absolutely nothing out of place, not even the corridor where you came from.

You breathe a sigh of relief, at the idea that maybe you only imagined it. You look around for the last time, judging that the inspection of this disturbing place is finally over.

You look at the tool you just picked up, the wood is well treated and fills the head hole firmly. Although slightly oxidized and dull, you find the tool to be in good conditions.

If you want to collect the pickaxe, DRAW the PICKAXE token.

Go back to the city. [→ J26](#)

You may not revisit the fort.



J137

You're falling.

Your reflexes snap to cushion your fall as best as you can.

Draw 3 cards from the  physical sanity deck.

If their sum is above or equal to 15, [→ J33](#)

If their sum is below 15, [→ J126](#)

Discard the cards afterwards.

J141

«What did you find until now? » you ask curiously.

«I'm not sure either. », he reveals, keeping his eyes on the road.

« We found a lot of ruins, but they seem to be all 'suburban' structures, so to speak. They're just small houses, with agricultural tools. Keep in mind, there's no proof that this area has ever been crossed by a single river. Or that there was a lake nearby. »

«Ok» you say, hesitant.

«The sand and the conformation of the land are the same as those found throughout the Sahara. We rediscovered at least the foundations of what we believe could be watchtowers. Very far from each other, with a fairly small base and many unused bricks, found piled up in a corner of the foundations. But no walls at all. Finding the city itself was a true challenge. »

How did you find it, and what does it look like? [→ J96](#)

J145

Smaller, but just as thick, the entrance leads you to a large atrium on the ground floor. You recognize the remains of a big wooden table, at the center of the room, devoured by termites. You can see small wooden scaffoldings. Although bare, it's evident that their shape is suitable for holding weapons. At the other three cardinal points, opposite and perpendicular to the entrance, there are three arches that lead to corridors, but two of them are blocked by a huge quantity of sand and debris, so you go to the only free one. Your steps resonate into the corridor, which leads upwards. The floor is inclined, and leads you to rise several meters in its length.

Suddenly, a noise. The one of sand that rubs. Your head snaps up, and your eyes are blinded. You cough and swing your arms forward, trying to push away whatever was in front of you. You rub your eyes precipitously as you lose your balance and sit on the ground against the wall, kicking in front of you.

Enter the fort. → [J201](#)

J149

« I'm sorry I wasn't completely sincere from the start. I thought you would refuse if I admitted that things weren't going as planned»

You glare at him with a serious look.

«Yes, the others are getting nervous from digging around the ruins, but I assure you that there's something sensational buried in those sands. And by the way, none of this could've been possible without

your contribution. And I want you to be here when we'll make the great discovery! »

You can't help but smile at Thomas. Although he is almost twice your age, in his late forties, his enthusiasm is far more childish than usual.

Some months ago, he had you deliver a huge quantity of texts to translate. It wasn't easy and it cost you many sleepless nights.

« You see, Jake, you were of crucial importance to find the site. Of the documents you've been able to decipher, only the Babylonians have references to this specific area. »

The professor grooms his shiny mustache, well ordered under the nose.

« My hypothesis is that this city we're looking for managed to stay hidden, and therefore to flourish, without ever being disturbed, or even avoided by other populations. What I cannot understand is how a city was able to survive in the middle of the desert without any trade routes. They weren't nomads, nor merchants... Bizarre, to say the least...»

Again, an interruption. This time it was a noisy, blaring horn of the van.

« Alright, let's not keep them waiting. I can explain more on the road. Come, it will be a long trip. »

You exit the warehouse and enter the vehicle. → [J67](#)

J155

Almost pristine and forgotten by time and man, the City rises from the underground.

Houses, palaces, towers. Streets and squares, in the immaculate silence of the night, where only the warm wind speaks in the night light.

Yes, night light. The ceiling, which you believe to be on the same level as the surface, has what looks like to be an enormous skylight. More like a gigantic raw and transparent mineral, this stone is able to radiate the night light inside the city, providing the same brightness you could see outside to the whole underground complex.

You're breathless as you marvel at the discovery of the century, and your hope of escaping from your wicked tormentors flares up. Your name and Thomas's will be remembered in books, once you get out of here!

You start your journey. [→ J171](#)

J159

With your backpack on your shoulder, you head towards the lake. It's not hard to navigate the city in a straight line, and once you exit the maze of little streets and houses, you need to walk a few hundred meters to reach it.

The road is covered in sand, but a rapid dusting is enough to reveal the paved road below, wider than the one in the city. On the sides of the street that leads to your destination there are arid and dead plant remains. They are presumably shrubs and flower beds, with a few of small bare trees still anchored to the nearby sands.

You look around. [→J20](#)

J163

You walk along a wide paved road, swept by the gusts that come from inside the imposing building. You reach the high stone staircase- the usual monotonous stone that makes up the majority of the city buildings. You are about to climb.

Your future is unsure, and you feel the anxiety inside of you fighting against your survival instincts.

It seems that the only way out is through this forgotten and cursed place. As a breeze blows upon you, you get ready to enter the temple.

You spiral down into the stone abyss. END OF DEMO.

[Support us on Kickstarter!](#)

If you want to continue your exploration, [→ J26](#)

J169

You hit it with an unexpected force. It's a stab that pierces deep, making its way through the creature's bone plaques. Blood gushes from the affected limb.

An unearthly sound emanates from the bottom of the water. The roaring creature retreats, freeing you from its limbs.

You take a deep breath, and with all your might, you sprint out the water using both legs and arms, making your way through the rough sand of this damned place.

Only when the lake is about ten meters away, you turn around to look: five tentacles wriggle in the water, searching for its prey. Short of breath and terrorized, you only manage to gather your things and run away.

As you return to the city, your head aches, unable to take your thoughts away from the creature's deformities, and unable to understand how it is still alive, and what it could possibly be.

Go back to the town. → [J26](#).

You may not revisit the lake.

J171

Your legs move by themselves. Reflecting, now you realize why the sand seemed unusual under your boots.

It seems like a different composition, and only now you realize that it is in fact fragments of limestone rock.

The gargantuan walls, the ceiling and each building, are composed of limestone, inexplicably present in this geological area! Whatever people have inhabited these dwellings, they conceal an enormous amount of secrets.

Your boots run along with the cobbles, which have all the appearance of being unused for ages. Eroded by the air, the buildings themselves have rounded corners due to its movement.

Rows of small houses converge in a large square, where you can perfectly distinguish what once was a fountain. Somehow, the missing people had also developed a water transport system!

You spend some time looking for a house that can offer you a city view and in a few minutes, you manage to find a house built on three floors.

Although without any furniture, you understand that the ground floor was used as a kitchen, you in fact distinguish a place for the fire with a cowl and a flat surface to prepare food.

The upper floors must have been bedrooms, with large openings in the wall.

The third floor in particular, now partially collapsed, offers you a view of the city.

You can't help but be in awe at what you see.

The brick sky, 15 meters tall, overlooks a real city.

Using your binoculars, you look around and mentally do a small list of places that may be worth visiting.

Make a decision. → [J26](#)

J172

« It is actually very small. Not more than a few kilometers in width, it looks more like an acropolis than a real city. The sand swallowed it entirely, but we dug enough to lower an elevator at the level of the buildings, and explore them. That's where we'll go tomorrow.»

End speech. [→ J128](#)

J173

Your return home is quieter than usual. On the bus you have a hard time reorganizing all the thoughts in your mind.

Your grandfather's last words, mostly, spoken as his room was closing.

“I love you, Ace. I love you.”

You finally reach your destination and get off the bus and without thinking, you walk the road home. The weak light illuminates the driveway leading to your house.

You live not far from Miskatonic University, where your grandfather used to work, or at least so you have been told.

You go back into your house and find your parents sitting in the living room with the tv unnecessarily on, while being busy on their smartphones, looking for stupid news about what's happening in the world.

You would like to tell your mother or your father about the meeting with your grandfather. But apparently, youtube and stupid memes seem to be more important than you.

Not a word to your parents, just a quick greeting.

You enter your bedroom. You're tired. You lean on your bed. Thousands of thoughts run through your mind.

It takes some minutes before you hear your parents going to their own bedroom. You still wait some more and when you see that the light inside their room has gone off, you decide to go to the study. The bedrooms are located on the first floor while the study can be found on the ground floor, as well as the kitchen and the dining room. You walk down the stairs as slow and silent as you can. In no time, you reach the room.

Although the bookshelves have remained untouched through the years, the room is clean and tidy. You haven't entered this place in years, maybe the last time you set foot in there was when you still were a child, the memories are very vague and confused. Judging by the size of it, there should be hundreds of volumes collected inside the bookshelves.

You take the chair and slowly drag it towards the library, to reach the upper section of it. You start rummaging.

Almost immediately your attention is drawn to a tome that looks like Latin. The spine of the book looks really antique and bears the title "Cultus Maleficarum". It seems particularly heavy and when you place it on the table you realize that, in reality, besides the first written pages, it is a sort of ancient chest.

Inside of it you find a sheet of paper, placed over an old deck of cards, poker cards to be more precise. Under them there is a medallion and a wooden board, folded on itself.

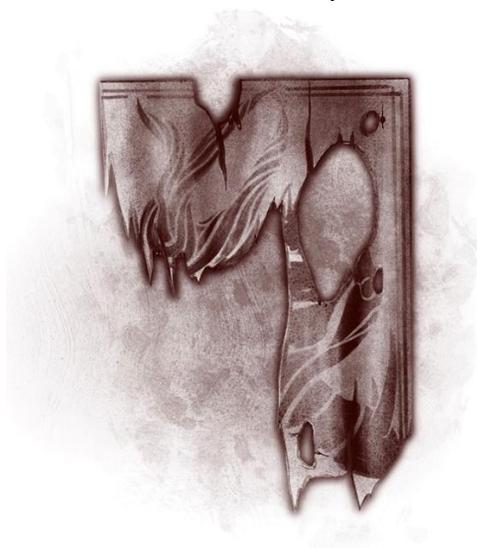
You start reading the sheet of paper. → [J2](#)

J181

Overlooking the unlucky man, the herald is for the most part missing.

Considering the nature of the cuts, it is obvious that it was looted with a dull blade.

The hasty and coarse cuts left some strips attached to the frame.



There is nothing to observe in the left half of the large bronze frame, but there are two pieces left in the center, at the top and in

the lower right corner. In the center you notice some sort of horns, twisted and growing upwards.

They have a quite menacing look, to say the least. Although some are spiral shaped while others are smooth, all are sharp and facing upwards. In the corner you can catch a glimpse of a long and thin figure, with some details that make you think about something esoteric, a tougher skin than a simple animal.

Search the miner. → [J69](#)

J183

You feel paralyzed.

In front of you, your grandfather. His eyes, hollowed and tired, and his hair, white and shaved, doesn't let anyone understand his real age.

His mouth moves, quivering, under his short, bristly beard.

«Ace... my boy, you really came. »

You're afraid. You feel trapped, and you know that even screaming for help won't get you anywhere.

The old man throws himself at you, triggering your anxiety, which appeases however, once you notice his true intentions.

Leaning his face on your shoulder, he starts crying.

Even if he's only a stranger to you, he's still your grandfather and no matter how repulsive he may feel, you can't reject him.

You move your hand to give him some pats on the back, feeling still a bit too intimidated to talk.

After all, the nurse's words seemed like a huge exaggeration. He's just an old man. And he only seems tired and desperate.

Your mind is full of thoughts, and yet again you're called to attention.

«Ace, listen to me carefully, son. We don't have much time. It took me entire weeks to get these damn captors to call you. »

«But, what do you want from me? », finally you speak your voice. You would like to ask him so many questions, like, was it really you? Did you really kill all those people? And while your mind goes on thinking about other questions, your grandfather keeps talking.

«We're in danger. You and I, particularly. »

This message grabs your complete attention.

«I can't explain everything here on the spot! Go back home and go to my study. And for heaven's sake, close the door shut while following the instructions I'm about to give you. »

«What the hell are you talking about? »

«The bookshelf. Find a hidden box. It keeps safe an old heirloom I brought back from my itinerary in Egypt. Arrange the contents on my desk and place the medallion in its recess. I beg you, do be careful...»

All this information flashes inside your mind.

You struggle to register them, while you keep staring at the man with the tired and worried eyes.

«You believe me, right? »

«I can't understand what you want! », you assert, almost sighing.

«Please! You'll understand more once you've read the contents of the box! All the information you need is right in there. »

This time, your answer is complete silence.

His voice seemed cracked with emotion, and his eyes seem to want to express nothing but honesty.

But much could be worth the word of a mad, murdering, old man?

«You've grown up. You're a man now. And I'm too old to even be alive. I wish I had been there when you were young. I would have told you lots and lots of stories and I would have seen you grow up. »
», he's not looking at you anymore. He looks honestly sorry. You would dare to say he's ashamed of his own life. In a low voice, he says: «I beg you, please. Give me a chance. Trust me. »

You let a long sigh blow from your lips, and try with your strength to formulate an answer. You manage to nod to the old man, who turns his head down and gives you his back.

With almost a murmur, he concludes saying: «Just knock on the door, I no longer have any reason to attack anyone. You won't ever hear of me again, if you wish so... Be careful. »

You get out from that damn sanitarium, upset and shaking.

You go back to the house. [→ J173](#)

J185

In a pure 'fight or flight' reflex, you manage to unleash an almost beastly strength. Your arm violently thrashes the tangled tentacle

attached to your leg, and a copious stream of blood stains the water of the lake.

You realize you've made your way through some thin bony plaques, severing the creature's tentacle cleanly. An unearthly roar arises from the creature's mouth, which violently cuts into the air. Still bleeding, it writhes, making sounds of suffering that make you shiver. Slowly and cautiously, you leave the red waters of the marsh, and head towards your backpack.

You tremble at the simple thought of how such a creature could survive down here, and you find it hard to take your mind off its hideous deformity. It resembles a huge toothed serpentine star.

Only when you're at a safe distance, you realize that about a meter of its limb is still tangled around your leg, trapped in your pants due to its small teeth. You consider whether to take it with you or not.

If you do, draw the TENTACLE token.



You leave the lake monster behind, still struggling in pain, and follow your own tracks towards the city.

Go back to the town. → [J26](#)

You may not revisit the lake.

J197

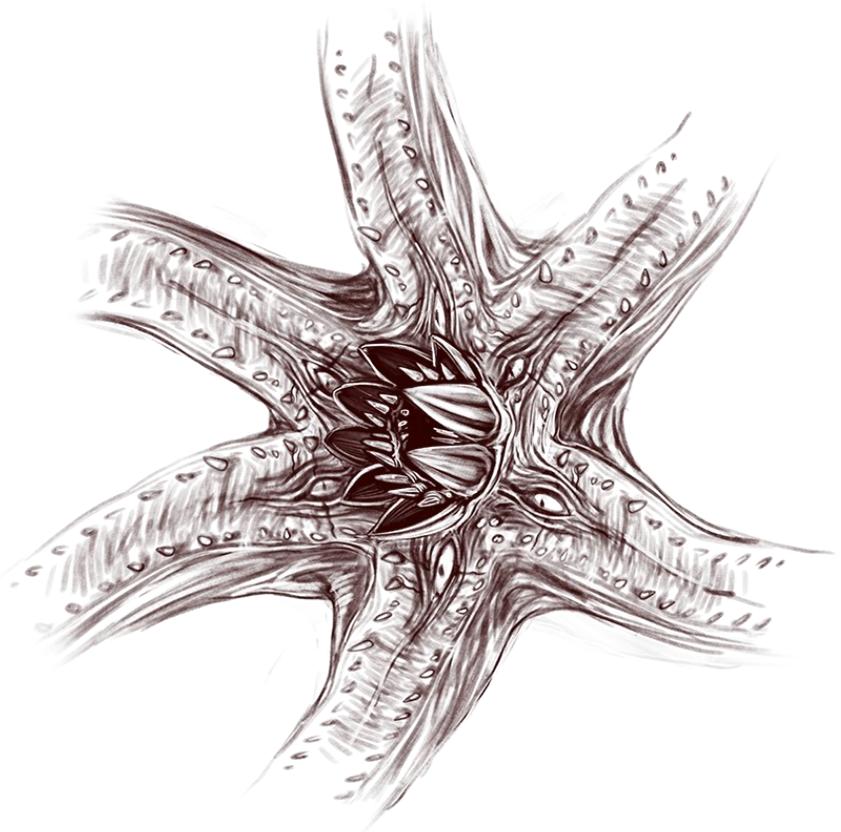
You notice a strange dome and you realize that it is composed of six sharp and pearly parts.

As you're watching attentively, you notice the sand flow beneath your feet. Instinctively you look around you and notice with astonishment that the brick columns are now sinking into the water. You arrive at the conclusion that whatever you discovered is alive.

Silence is pierced by your terrified cry, as the ground moves below you.

Automatically you begin to run towards the shore, as the water is rippling, revealing organic matter around the islet. You're almost at the shore before you feel something slimy and pointy tangle around your leg. Your survival instincts take over and you fight back, without restraint.

Without hesitation, you grab hold of the knife that's in your pocket and you pull it out with a quick flick of the wrist. You raise your arm while your gaze is still fixed on the tentacle which is preventing your escape.



Draw and discard 1 card from the  mental sanity deck.

If its suit is ♠ / ♣ → [J47](#)

If its suit is ♥ → [J169](#)

If its suit is ♦, or if it is a Joker, → [J185](#)

Discard the card afterwards.

J198

You get up from the crate. And while you observe the world around you from the little jetty, you can't help but think of the horror of being abandoned in such a desolate land.

With this thought you gaze at the horizon. On one hand, the immense Mediterranean Sea. Behind you, a sea of sand.

The only details that distinguish the sea from the sky, are the sapphire blue of the deep waters and the absence of seagulls intent on squawking and diving in search of prey.

The shore seems to go on for miles and miles, the only elements that break its monotony are some lonely rocks, smoothed by time, and some lifeless seashells, scattered on the sand.

Your gaze explores turning towards the hinterland, and you realize that none of the books you have read so far have prepared you to face the desert. Not a single cloud in the azure sky, not a single sign of life. The only word that comes into your mind to describe the view is 'boundless'. → [J202](#)

J200

Carefully you drag yourself to the center of the room, keeping yourself on the other side of the sturdy metal table, seeking comfort and safety in the moonlight.

In front of you, the darkness itself seems to have taken shape, moving inside its realm. Its two eyes are now merged into one, vertical and mean.

You realize that it is an oval described by the reticulum of other smaller eyes.

A shapeless mass of black matter that descends from the ceiling to the floor, getting away from you.

A hissing sound, almost like a gruff yet mocking laugh creeps into your ears.

Paralyzed, you are unable to act as the creature makes its way through the meshes of the grate, literally dripping to the lower floor.

The last thing you see in the corridor is the light of its gaze that extinguishes as it descends.

Unable to move, you breathe heavily and break into a cold sweat. A grinding sound of sand comes up behind you.

You turn around. [→ J129](#)

J201

Once you open your eyes, still sore, you notice that there's nothing in front of you. You look above, cautiously, and you realize that you got scared for nothing. A large mesh grate allows the dust to fall due to the blowing of the wind, which in this case enters through the thin and bright windows.

Thinking about it, in fact, this strikes a very marked resemblance to the european castles; grates made especially for pouring boiling oil on the besieging troops... The people who lived here must have had a reason to build something so fortified.

The corridor follows a hairpin curve, and begins to rise again, towards a room with the same dimensions as the one below, the same circular shape, but this time it doesn't branch off. You assume that soldiers could move within the walls themselves, with the now blocked corridors. Taken by impatience, you forget about the grate, and your walk becomes uncertain after you step on it, feeling the emptiness under your feet for a moment. You can see the corridor below, and you judge that the meshes are wide enough not only to let boiling oil drip in, but it also allows arrows and bolts to pass through. After further examination on the grate, you keep going towards what you think may be an actual war room.

Examine the room. [→ J23](#)

J202

You wonder why Dr. Fisher had this small harbor built so far from every city built on the coast.

After all that's nothing more than some large rocks inserted inside the ground, with two piers secured to them.

It appears to be deep enough to allow both small and medium-sized ships to moor here, but you heavily doubt that the ship you arrived with yesterday could stop in this harbor.

The only building, nothing more than a shack, still has no windows, and the only furniture inside are some lockers for the workers' tools and a simple table with some disorganized documents placed on it.

However, something seems to interrupt the limitless expanses of the sand dunes and hills, at the edge of the horizon.

You open your backpack and take out your binoculars. You remove the caps from the lenses. Looking at the edge of the world, you notice a little convoy.

Slowly, the noise becomes clearer and clearer too.

After all, a small military truck followed by a van is enough to break the dreary silence.

Shortly after, even the workers start talking to each other and pointing in the same direction.

At this point, you decide to go to your locker, which was assigned to you at your arrival. Because of this, you enter the building. ➔

[J205](#)

J205

The metal locker seems to be a military remnant from the Great War. Inside of it, you've already placed everything necessary for your journey.

Methodically, you make sure to take everything:

Your binoculars. Your switchblade (Draw the Knife token).



The books you chose to bring with you and of course, your hat. While you take your belongings, you hear some commands and grunts, certainly it is the cargo being loaded onto the van. But your attention is actually drawn to the documents on the desk. These are requests for dynamites signed by the workers' manager, a certain Mr. Mostafa. Although there's an old typewriter, you find a letter handwritten by Doctor Fisher.

Analyze the documents. [→ J95](#)

J207

The quiet murmur of the waves on the beach has cradled you to a sleepy day, it's hard to keep your eyes open without being blinded by the pale color of the sand.

The workers are silently unloading the contents of the ship, surrounded by a myriad of grains that the dry, hot wind is carrying at its passage.

Sandy dust, the burning ash of a few cigarettes, and a few small dried salt crystals swept away from the crusts formed on the heavy wooden crates. Your hand seems sprinkled with what makes the desert an unwelcoming place for any form of life.

A dull sound draws your attention, breaking your stream of thoughts. It is a heavy steel ring at the base of a huge barrel placed right next to you, on the harbor stone.

You feel thirsty but you're also curious and still want to look around.

You decide:

Drink some water. → [J36](#)

Turn around. → [J198](#)

J208

You wake up all of a sudden, to the sound of a closing door, and to Thomas's voice shouting in a fluent Egyptian.

You look around, the landscape has changed during your sleep.

The sky, now of an intense sapphire blue, is illuminated by a full moon, white and radiant.

The temperature has dropped significantly, and the ground is so well illuminated that you can manage to distinguish a few veils of dust, carried by the wind. You slowly pull yourself back together

and let your back bend forward. Accompanied by some creakings, you let out a long yawn as you stretch your arms.

You pick up your backpack from the ground of the van, and after opening the door, you jump out of the vehicle.

Your attention is drawn by the noise you make once you get off.

The sand. There's something different in its composition.

You bend down and pick up a handful of it.

It's not the same feeling that the port one gave to you.

Your urn towards the camp where the workers are now carrying the crates. There are many tents, you can count at least a dozen, from where a small light comes, most likely from a candle or a lamp, while some bonfires shine in the night.

You hear your boots make a different sound as you move the sand with your steps, and entirely ignore the various voices that rise around you.

Once you're close to the nearest bonfire, you open your hand, letting the fire's dancing red light illuminate a handful of sand you lift with your palm.

The grains seem oddly large and irregular in shape to you.

Some of them reflect the light itself. You arrived here just a few minutes ago and you already can't keep the thrill of exploration at bay.

You wear your backpack. → [J210](#)

J210

Once you put your backpack on, you get up and turn towards the direction you've seen Thomas go, to ask him more questions.

You notice a pair of men aiming their rifles at you.

You feel your bloodstream getting slower and colder in your veins, while you back away from the two militias.

One of them says something you can't understand, but their body language is clear enough: a move with their head directs you to walk outside the camp.

As you move away from the tents, you hear Thomas's voice involved in a heated discussion in Egyptian.

"Thomas!", you try to call him, shouting with all the air you have in your lungs.

You get hit in the stomach with the butt of one of the rifles.

Still bent over from the hit, you're pushed on a small wooden platform, which rocks slightly.

You hear Thomas's voice getting closer, the hovering of a blade in the night air and a dull sound of metal on wood.

You fall.

Your gaze rises as the night sky recedes into the square window in the ground. The rope that held the lift, cut clean, slides off from the pulley and flutters in the air.

A familiar face protrudes from the hole, looking down, just to be yanked away from your sight afterwards.

You fall... → [J137](#)