

“House Rules”

By J. Ross Keverne.

Introduction:

House Rules is a single “episode” (a generally self contained scenario, with some hooks to larger story arcs) of a role playing game based on the World of Darkness rule set. The episode is designed to be combat light, with a focus on investigation and dialogue.

‘Deramore’ the city, in which the Pauper House stands, is an Arkham-esque fictional city in the middle of the North York Moors; founded during the mid 1800s when a large deposit of natural gas was located beneath the moors. The players for this episode are: a *black market fixer*, a *Catholic Priest*, an *ex-special forces soldier*, and a *detective*. All of whom work for, the Emerging Threats Branch (E-Branch), a government agency with a broad ‘national security’ remit and deep pockets.

This episode opens with the players being called in to investigate a politically sensitive murder. Arriving at the Gwen Kenning Pauper house the players are caught in a twisted game of cat and mouse with a serial killer of unique means, if tragically mundane motivations.

The overall goal of the episode is for players to locate the **Manuscript** of a biography being written by the first murder victim **Howard Baldwin**. Once the **Manuscript** has been secured the players are free to leave the Pauper House, and the episode ends. It is possible for players to ignore the majority of the murders and concentrate on finding the **Manuscript** though some degree of investigation into the murders will be needed in order to locate it.

All text written in **red** pertains to information unavailable at the start of the episode, and which can be determined by detailed and sustained inquiry into the background of individual characters and the Pauper House itself.

All text written in **blue** refers to specific locations, usually within the Pauper House, which are separately described in the **Locations** section.

All text written in **green** refers to specific named characters all of which are described in detail in the **Characters** section.

All text written in **purple** refers to **Objects of Interest** which are described in their own section.

Locations:

Scene Setting:

Sitting sulking in the middle of the city, the Gwen Kenning Pauper House is at once violently beautiful and blandly ugly. Five stories of neo-Gothic architecture, the harsh Yorkshire weather has done little to soften its edges and it remains steadfastly jagged, aggressive and unwelcoming. Despite its visible harshness the building goes largely unnoticed by the majority of the city's residents. Even the oldest among them, sure that it has stood for as long as they can remember, struggle to recall what its purpose is or who owns it. Superstition and urban legend being what they are the true origins of the building have been long since obscured by a dozen rumours of varying veracity and plausibility.

Though they might not know what it is, and rarely give it a second glance, still people seem possessed of an unnatural desire not to stray too long in its shadow, unconsciously hurrying past if they should find themselves confronted with its great arched entrance.

Background:

The Gwen Kenning Pauper house was named for the late wife of the current own [Samuel Kenning](#). [Formerly the residence of a religious figure of some long forgotten fundamentalist Christian sect](#), it was built between 1845 and 1860 with a design heavily inspired by the gothic revival movement in architecture at that time. [The originally owner was so paranoid of religious persecution and potential attack, that as part of the design he ordered the construction of a wealth of camouflaged doors and secret passages. All of these exist in the original floor plans which can be located in the City Library if the players choose to look for them.](#)

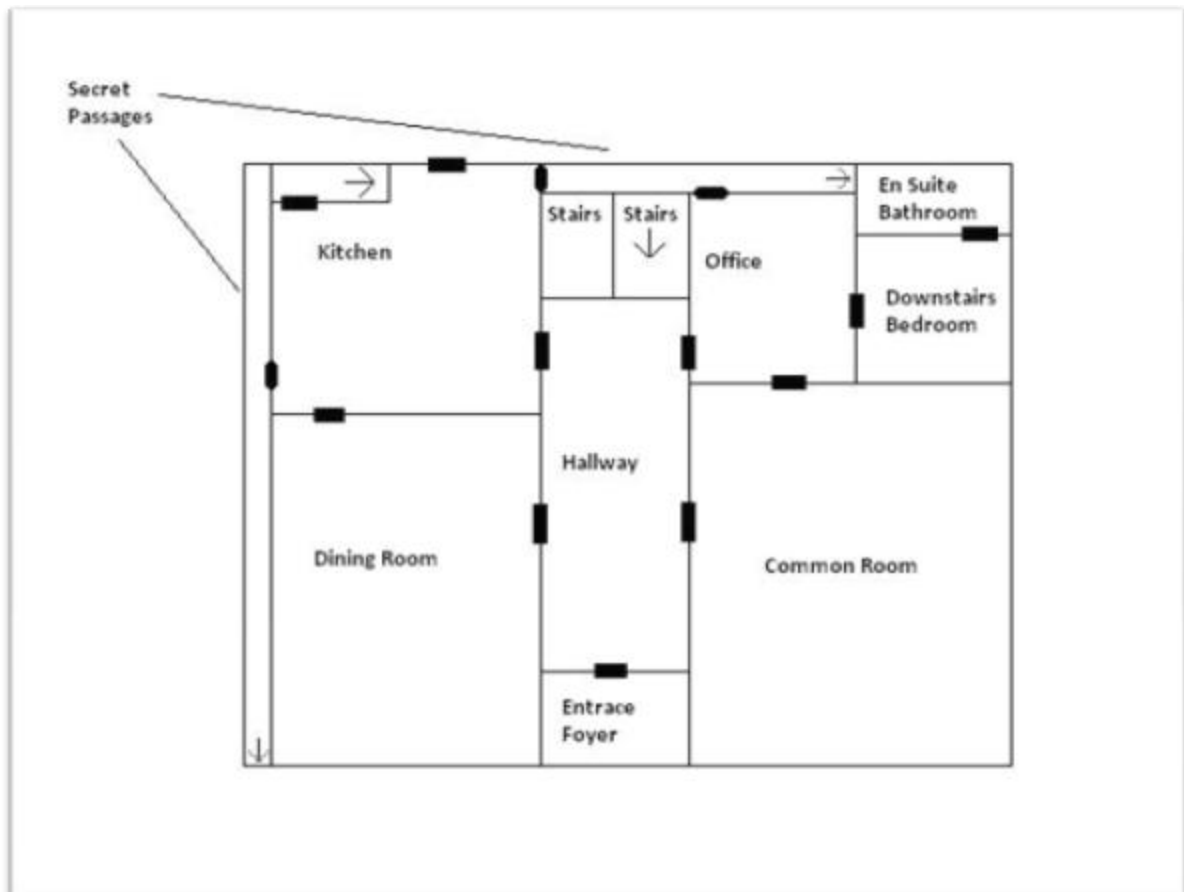
Layout:

Built in the gothic revival style, the Pauper House is a five story structure (With a [Basement](#), and a single room sixth floor tower, converted into a [Rookery](#)) which has been co-opted for its new purpose. All the rooms on the ground floor are taller than those above, having high arching ceilings with exposed beams. This gives the sensation that everything above the ground floor has been compressed down to fit into the available space. All rooms on the ground floor are largely intact though the interior fittings and designs have suffered greatly from neglect. Floors throughout the building are exposed hardwood with a variety of styles of rugs and off cuts of carpet over them.

A lot of the basic structural elements have been built slightly off centre, with doors that are not in the exact centre of corridors. This gives everything an ill fitting vibe and makes people generally uncomfortable even if they can't quite put their finger on why.

The first floor and above has been almost entirely converted into bedrooms with shared bathrooms on each level. Interior walls have been built separating the original bedrooms into much smaller rooms for residents.

The layout of the ground floor is depicted below as it's the only floor where the physical layout of rooms is important. Game Masters are free to improvise the layout of the first floor and subsequent floors as required, though the location of the [Secret Room](#) above the [Common Room](#) has important gameplay implications and so should remain in place.



Ground Floor: (Not to scale.)

Common Room:

Situation on the ground floor at the front of the building, the Common Room is a large room that was once the lounge, living room, for the original owners. The room is dominated by an ornate stone fireplace and mantle, the former of which has long since been blocked up. The walls are textured wallpaper over bare stone; the pattern on the wallpaper is so faded that little can be made out beyond a vaguely geometric pattern picked out in gold on a red background.

The room is full of furniture, in a range of styles and designs from Victorian leather armchairs and writing tables to seventies era school chairs and fold out tables.

Dining Room:

Situation on the other side of the ground floor hallway and almost identical in structure to the [Common Room](#) the Dining Room has fared better in the years since its construction with the pattern on the green and gold wallpaper easier to make out.

The room has been emptied of all original furniture, which has been replaced with rows of sixties and seventies era folding tables and hard wooden chairs in order to seat most of the residents in a single sitting. Though generally residents prefer to take their food from the [Kitchen](#) at the rear of the building and return to their rooms.

Kitchen:

Directly behind the [Dining Room](#) is a large Victorian Kitchen with black flagstone floors and off white, almost yellow walls. Most meals are either cooked by the residents themselves or on special occasions by [Hannah Roth](#) and various hired help.

The facilities in the Kitchen are a mixture of the antique and the modern, with a classic stove in one corner and a Microwave and Washing Machine in the other.

Office:

Originally a drawing room, [Hannah Roth's](#) Office can be accessed either from the [Common Room](#) directly or from the central ground floor Hallway. A third door leads into the [Downstairs Bedroom](#) which its own en suite bathroom.

The Office itself is full of filing cabinets and dominated by a large table on which is a computer that has been there since [Hannah Roth](#) arrived a decade ago and which was far from state of the art then. The contents of the computer are a duplicate of the files in the filing cabinets, though not all information is up to date. If players want to find information about specific residents they can consult either the filing cabinets or the computer and the extent of detail they uncover will depend on how much information the Game Master feels is necessary. However if players choose to examine both the computer and the filing cabinets they should gain more information than if they had only examined one or the other.

Also on the table are an equally antiquated printer, fax machine and paper shredder.

The Office also contains a safe, **the combination for which is the date [Hannah Roth](#) arrived in England, 14-06-69. Inside the safe are [Hannah Roth's](#) master keys, along with syringes and a quantity of heroin she was supplying to [Leonard Reed](#).**

In general the Office is very tidy, with everything in its place, though dotted around are a number of small personal items, a favourite pen, a cigarette case etc.

Downstairs Bedroom:

[Hannah Roth's](#) bedroom has a limited amount of furniture; a bed, a bedside table and a wardrobe. The wardrobe is usually left open, one of the door hinges has broken and unlike every other minor fault in the rest of the building [Hannah Roth](#) has not arranged to have it fixed. The clothes are all variations on a theme, plain skirts, cardigans and simple cotton blouses.

Various piles of books, several of them with bookmarks in them are dotted around the room, pushed into corners or otherwise stacked neatly if haphazardly against the walls. A tarnish silver frame sits on the bedside table; in it is a faded picture of a distinguished gentleman in his mid thirties. If players examine the picture closely they will find it has been folded in half and the other half contains a woman of a similar age and three children a twelve year old girl and a boy and girl in or around three and seven respectively. **This is the family Hannah Roth was formerly the nanny for, including the girl whose death she caused.**

Next to the frame is a similarly patterned silver jewellery box, inside which are assorted jewellery and items of personal significance. **At the bottom of the box is a heavily fade ticket stub for a train journey from Dover dated 14-06-09 the day Hannah Roth arrived in England.**

Residents Rooms:

Created by building interior partition walls between the various upstairs bedrooms, each of the Resident Rooms is generally fairly similar. The partition walls are plain off white brickwork and clash somewhat with the more ornate pre-existing walls.

The floors are hardwood boards though the main corridors have been carpeted over and each individual room has a variety of rugs and off cuts of carpet over the floor.

Each resident has been allowed to decorate their room as they desire and are able, with those having lived there longest having the most individualised rooms.

Rookery:

Extending the buildings five standard stories up to a sixth level, the tower on the front corner of the building has been converted into a Rookery by **Tengfei Yang**, at the allowance of **Hannah Roth** who has seen his violent outbursts lessened somewhat when he was able to spend time alone with his birds.

The small windows circling the wall have been knocked out allowing the birds entry, and as a consequence the Rookery is always much colder than the rest of the building.

The Rookery itself is accessed by a narrow spiral staircase at the end of a hallway accessible from the fifth floor central hallway.

Basement:

Accessed from a stairway at the rear of the **Kitchen**, this level has three interconnected spaces which together take up almost the entire floor plan of the building. The first two rooms are used as storage, the majority of which is the original furniture from the upper floor rooms, in various states of disrepair.

At the rear corner of the building, below the **Office**, the last area has been converted to a **Furnace Room** for the heating system built after the original fireplaces were blocked up.

Throughout the Basement the roof is low, around five feet six inches, so any characters taller than that have to stoop reducing their movement speed, and making combat difficult.

Furnace Room:

Built during the early 1900s, the Furnace itself is a huge coal powered construction that heats a nearby water tank providing hot water to the various radiators throughout the building.

Coal for the furnace is stored in a separate blocked off annex accessible from outside via a wooden hatchway and from inside via a small opening on the floor. Physically smaller characters can enter the annex by crawling through the opening, while all characters can enter from the outside if they can either pick or force the lock on the wooden hatch. Of curious note is that the lock itself can be access from inside as well as outside.

Inside is the most obvious access to the multitude of interconnected [Secret Passages](#) that run throughout the building.

Secret Passages:

Running throughout the building are various Secret Passages, accessed by hidden doorways in many of the rooms, and with an exit to the outside in the basement annex of the [Furnace Room](#).

Most of the passages are built just behind the interior walls of the building and are only two to two and a half feet in width, making movement slow and difficult. The intentionally off centre and haphazard construction of the main rooms leave little evidence that there is any unaccounted for space, however a dedicated and careful observation of each room and a comparison with others will allow players to determine that some rooms are slightly smaller than they should be. Movement between floors is handled by a variety of concealed staircases in corners of the building, as well as secret doors that open half way up the existing staircases.

In the [Common Room](#), [Office](#), [Dining Room](#), and a number of the [Residents Rooms](#), peepholes and false bricks can be used to spy on the occupants without their knowledge. If necessary the Games Master can include additional Secret Passages in locations not explicitly shown on the floor plan.

Secret Room:

On the first floor, directly above the [Common Room](#), an entire former bedroom has been sealed off, the original door plastered over and the only means of access being the [Secret Passages](#) themselves.

Entering the room causes an instance reaction for all players, something is decidedly wrong about the room. The walls are bare plaster and covered with overlaying patterns, markings, and blood stains. Various corrupted and warped religious symbols can be made out along with several hundred tally marks scrapped into the plaster. Examination of these will reveal that they have been made by around ten to fifteen different people. They are highly reminiscent of the marks made by prisoners on the walls of their cell, though there is little to indicate if each mark indicates a day, a week or a longer period of time.

The floor is plain wood with a number of dark stains visible across it.

When the house was a religious building the owner used this room for his forced indoctrination and cult like reprogramming, locking people in here for months at a time, and subjecting them to torture both psychological and physical.

This room has been converted by Samuel Kenning for his observations of the residents. It contains various Notepads on the activities and background of the residents, along with a collection of knives, and other weapons and tools. Howard Baldwin's Manuscript can also be found in this room.

Characters:

Samuel Kenning (*King*)

- Logical.
- Methodical.
- Amoral.

Background:

Owner of the Pauper House, which he purchased after the death of his wife (For whom the building is named) and son during a hit and run accident over a decade earlier. A lawyer specialising in business law and fraud, Samuel Kenning made his fortune early in life after making a series of high profile cases against the owners of several large city banks. The late Gwen Kenning had been a social activist and campaigner for the city's underprivileged; she was thirty three at the time of her death, their son Maxwell Samuel Kenning had been five.

Already struggling under the stress of his larger cases Samuel Kenning mentally snapped when his wife and son were killed, murdered as he saw it. At first irrational and unfocused his mania eventually found a target when the killer of his family was identified as a junkie former mental patient who'd stolen the car mere minutes prior to the hit and run. Exactly the type of individual who his late wife would have striven to support, he and those like him became the target of Samuel Kenning's brilliant and now unhinged mind.

His family's killer died before the case could come to trial from a heroin overdose; caused when Samuel Kenning replaced his usually highly cut supply with a much higher dosage. Finding his murderous impulses and desire for vengeance unsatisfied, Kenning scoured the city to find somewhere to dispense his justice to those whose depravity and addiction had led, however indirectly, to his wife's death. Two months after his wife's burial Samuel Kenning purchased the then abandoned building in the centre of the city, reforming it as the Gwen Kenning Pauper House, a hostel for the underprivileged, the drug addicted, and the homeless, a lasting memorial to his wife's work.

Appearance:

Tall and slender in his mid to late fifties, he maintains his health and physical fitness with regular games of Golf and Squash with his former colleagues; his once jet black hair is now liberally streaked with grey, though his eye brows remain jet black lines across his forehead, drawing attention away from his watery blue eyes.

Attributes:

Intelligence	Wits	Resolve	Strength	Dexterity	Stamina	Presence	Manipulation	Composure
4	4	4	2	2	1	5	4	3

Hannah Roth (*Queen*)

- Terse.
- Lonely.
- Romantic.

Background:

The matron of the Gwen Kenning Pauper House, Hannah Roth seems not to have aged a day since she arrived a few months after it was opened. Somewhere between fifty and seventy years of age she is a severe spinster of German Jewish descent. She speaks fluent English with a clipped overly formal manner and a slight but noticeable accent.

A former nanny in her native German **she was responsible for the death of a young girl in her charge and in order to avoid prosecution fled to England in her early twenties. Having fallen in love with the father of her charges and after being rebutted for her advances she led his eldest and most cherished daughter into the woods where she was bound and gagged. The naive Ms Roth thought she could blackmail the father into accepting her advances in return for his daughter’s safety. Unfortunately for her the young girl choked on her gag and died.**

Appearance:

Of indeterminate age, visually somewhere between fifty and seventy, **she is actually sixty three**, a strong Germanic woman; her originally red hair is now completely white and worn scraped back into a tight bun.

Attributes:

Intelligence	Wits	Resolve	Strength	Dexterity	Stamina	Presence	Manipulation	Composure
3	2	3	1	2	3	4	3	4

Tengfei Yang (*Rook*)

- Violent.
- Intelligent.
- Compassionate.

Background:

Resident of the Pauper House, a Chinese immigrant with a background in engineering, and a passion for ornithology, he came to England to find work in the mining industry. After a sudden downturn in the price of natural gas he lost his job and turned to drink. **One night after a particularly aggressive argument turned into a fight he shoved a shattered beer bottle into the face of a former co-worker, who died from his injuries before the ambulance could arrive. Tengfei fled the scene, disappearing into the large immigrant Chinese community who were unwilling to give up one of their own to the authorities.**

Unfortunately his erratic nature and bursts of violence soon made him unwelcome even among the immigrant population and for several years he lived on the streets, before finding his way to the Gwen Kenning Pauper House.

Appearance:

Short and stocky, he is incredibly short sighted and needs to wear glasses at all times. Though only in his early forties he looks much older, his face is heavily lined and his hair has receded significantly making him nearly bald except for a fringe of hair around the back of his head.

Attributes:

Intelligence	Wits	Resolve	Strength	Dexterity	Stamina	Presence	Manipulation	Composure
5	2	2	4	2	3	2	1	1

Leonard Reed (*Knight*)

- Passionate.
- Competitive.
- Obsessive.

Background:

A successful and highly competitive jockey until he started to get beaten by younger rivals. **Desperate for any edge he could gain over his rivals he experimented with various drugs, eventually settling on heroin when he found the loss of appetite led to dramatic weight loss. Having originally benefited from the support of his trainer, who helped him cover up his drug habit and pass the blood tests, Leonard Reed's increasing dependence on Heroin and his subsequent mental and physical decline, led to a confrontation. Unwilling and unable to deal with his Heroin addiction and facing a trainer who threatened to turn him in 'for his own good' Leonard trampled him under his horse.**

Though claims of an accident allowed him to escape murder charges his drug addiction was reveal to the world and he never rode competitively again. Unable to compete and with nothing to 'live for' Reed spiralled deeper into addiction, eventually losing his house and finding himself, after passing through various hostels and halfway houses, living in the Gwen Kenning Pauper House.

In recent years he has been trying desperate to combat his addiction and get his life back, most recently with the help and support of **Hannah Roth.**

Appearance:

Never a large man Leonard Reed is now anorexically thin, giving him the physically size of an adolescent. His bright red hair is utterly unkempt, seeming to stand up in all directions at once. At the height of his career his green eyes had seemed to sparkle; now they look empty and almost grey beneath his leaden brow.

Attributes:

Intelligence	Wits	Resolve	Strength	Dexterity	Stamina	Presence	Manipulation	Composure
3	1	3	2	4	1	1	1	2

Howard Baldwin (*Pawn*)

- Aggressive.
- Loner.
- Guilty Ridden.

Background:

Ex-servicemen who returned home to find his wife had left him for a successful political figure, he lost almost everything he had in the divorce and has since been living in Gwen Kenning Pauper House. **During his time in the military he fought in Afghanistan where in the middle of fierce fighting in an insurgent held town he shot and killed two Iraqi civilians, a man and a teenage girl. Since that time he has suffered from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder finding it extremely difficult to sleep, and has violent nightmares whenever he does. This has led to him spending a lot of his nights sitting in the Common Room working on a biography of his time in the military.**

In addition to his time in Afghanistan there are a number of other events in his past that his biography is rumour to reveal, events that the government would like to keep secret. The nature and veracity of these revelations is up to the Game Master to decide as necessary for future episodes.

Appearance:

A brute of a man, even living off the meagre food available in the Pauper House, Baldwin has somehow managed to keep his physique. His bright blonde hair was cut right back during his time in Afghanistan but has since grown out and now forms a rough thatch over his head, though his blue eyes have retained their intensity.

Attributes:

Intelligence	Wits	Resolve	Strength	Dexterity	Stamina	Presence	Manipulation	Composure
3	3	3	4	3	4	3	1	2

Jacob Masterson (*Pawn*)

- Deceptive.
- Mercurial.

- Empathic.

Background:

Undercover agent for the Government, Masterson is a trained actor and master of disguise able to change his appearance and movements to blend in with almost any crowd. He arrived at the Gwen Kenning Pauper House several weeks ago, after the initial rumours of Howard Baldwin's biography began to surface. Portraying himself as another ex-serviceman he quickly made friends with Howard Baldwin and had been trying to get him to open up about the contents of his biography.

Appearance:

Naturally around six feet tall, Masterson is capable of changing his posture and bearing to make himself appear either much taller or much shorter. During his time in the Pauper House, he has let his hair grown out to shoulder length and adopted dark contact lenses to cover his naturally grey/blue eyes.

When/if he reveals his presence to the players he adjusts his posture, straightening from a stooped and shuffling gait, that gives him the appearance of a man of around five foot four, to his full six foot stature.

Attributes:

Intelligence	Wits	Resolve	Strength	Dexterity	Stamina	Presence	Manipulation	Composure
3	5	3	2	4	2	3	5	4

Murders:

Pawn takes Pawn:

Howard Baldwin is murdered by a fellow resident (whose name and character it is free for the Game Master to invent as deemed suitable). After being seen writing his Manuscript by several residents the contents of it have become an item of significant interest amongst the other residents. When the Manuscript goes missing Howard Baldwin confronts the most vocal and aggressive of his inquirers. Woken by the angered ex-serviceman hammering on his door the resident grabs a Knife from the bedside table (Put there by Samuel Kenning) to protect himself. During the ensuing argument the resident attempts to explain he had nothing to do with the missing Manuscript, a response which is not accepted. In the ensuing fight the resident stabs and kills Howard Baldwin.

When questioned the resident responds with a statement similar to the following:

“Always scribbling away in the book of his. What was he writing all the time? What the fuck was so important, eh? Of course I was interested, probably writing crap about us, not that anybody would care about what that thug had to say about nobody. Still, not right that he'd keep it to himself if he was writing about us eh? If he had something to say why didn't he say it straight?”

“The knife? No idea where it came from? No I didn’t own it, what I need a knife for in here? I heard him hammering on the door, saw it there and grabbed it. You’ve seen him right? Huge fucker, wasn’t going to face him unarmed now was I? I ain’t stupid.”

He admits to killing **Howard Baldwin** but maintains that it was in self defence, wasn’t premeditated, and he has no idea how the **Knife** came to be sitting by his bed.

On the bedside table, underneath where the **Knife** had been, there is a **Sealed Envelope** addressed to the murderer. Inside is a single line of printed text reading: **Pawn takes Pawn.**

Queen takes Knight:

Leonard Reed is found dead in his room from an apparent overdose of heroin; on the table beside his bed is another **Sealed Envelope**. Printed inside is: **Queen takes Knight.**

Still struggling with his addiction, **Leonard Reed** had been attempting to wean himself of the drug with the help of **Hannah Roth** who had been buying him Heroin and gradually decreasing his dosage over time. On this occasion however the dose in the syringe was not the usually cut quantity **Hannah Roth** had intended but a highly potent cocktail (**Substituted by Samuel Kenning**).

The knowledge that **Hannah Roth** was supplying **Leonard Reed** with drugs is a badly kept secret among the residents. If the players choose to interview **Hannah Roth** she sticks to her story that she was trying to help him with his addiction:

“I was helping him with addiction, yes. He is a decent man, trying to get his family back. Yes, he made mistakes, we all make mistakes. I had no reason to hurt him. I purchase his drugs, I didn’t administer them. I provided him a reduced dose. Each week a more reduced dose. He was getting better, more himself. No, I did not kill him.”

Each Monday she would fill enough syringes for that week and keep them in the Safe, in her **Office** on the ground floor. The latest one had been there from the time she purchased and cut the heroin (Two days previously) until the time she took it to **Leonard Reed’s** room.

Bishop takes Rook or Rook takes Pawn:

Depending on the needs of the game **Tengfei Yang** can become a murder (In which case the Pawn is played by one of the many residents) or a victim (In which case the player character playing the Catholic Priest becomes the Bishop), either way the manner in which the murder is instigated is the same.

After visiting his birds in the **Rookery Tengfei Yang** has been in a state of depressed agitation, one of his beloved pigeons is missing and there was blood in his cage (**the pigeon has been killed and mutilated by Samuel Kenning**). At some point when all parties are present in the **Common Room**, or **Dining Room**, the Bishop\Pawn finds a bloody cloth on the floor near them (**planted by Samuel Kenning**) and upon inspect it’s found to contain the remains of a mutilated pigeon. Seeing this

Tengfei screams something in Chinese, grabs whatever is available that can be used as a weapon and attacks the Bishop\Pawn.

If he survives **Tengfei Yang** will refuse to answer any questions, until he is able to bury the body of the pigeon, if allowed to do so he will bury the body in a small area of earth in the rear yard of the Pauper House. He will then answer any questions, but his story remains the same:

*“He takes my lovely bird, gentle bird, and kills him? Why’d he do that? She never hurt him, she did nothing to him. He wanted to get back at me; he thinks I’m stupid, think birds are stupid. I showed him who’s stupid.” *Spits* “I guess he liked little boys more than little birds.” *Laughs* “He won’t like little boys anymore.”*

Inside the cloth under the corpse of the pigeon is a **Sealed Envelope**. Printed inside is: **Bishop takes Rook** or **Rook takes Pawn**.

King takes Queen:

At some point after the murder of **Leonard Reed Hannah Roth** attempts to use the paper shredder in her **Office** to destroy his file, in which are notes written by her describing how he admitted to the murder of his trainer and the guilt he has felt since. When she turns on the shredder at the wall it overloads and electrocutes her, killing her instantly and causing a switch to blow in the Pauper House plunging the ground floor into darkness. The junction box can be found in the **Kitchen**.

Samuel Kenning has rewired the electrics in the wall between the **Common Room** and the **Office**, which is accessible from the **Secret Room**, causing it to administer a fatal shock when the power sockets are turned on.

Underneath the paper shredder is a **Sealed Envelope**. Printed inside is **King takes Queen**.

King takes Pawn:

Filled with hysteria by the deaths around him, and goaded by his fellow residents one of the many ex-servicemen living in the Pauper House attacks the Players, and tries to kill them. Inside the pocket of the resident’s jacket is a **Sealed Envelope**. Printed inside is **King takes Pawn**.

Objects of Interest:

Manuscript:

The manuscript of **Howard Baldwin**’s biography is written in a Book Cipher (The key for which is a book he took from **Hannah Roth**’s **Downstairs Bedroom** and which will be revealed in a later episode).

It was taken by [Samuel Kenning](#) in order to provoke [Howard Baldwin](#) into attacking the resident who would eventually murder him. It can now be found in the [Secret Room](#), along with various [Notepads](#).

Knife:

The Knife used to murder [Howard Baldwin](#) is a standard hunting knife that can be found in many Army Surplus shops around the City.

There are three separate sets of prints on the handle and blade of the knife, the two clearest are those of the murder himself, and [Howard Baldwin](#), the third is highly smudged and only a partial print can be made out. This partial print could be a match for either [Samuel Kenning](#) or [Hannah Roth](#).

To ensure that any wounds inflicted were fatal, the knife has been coated with a mild poison that would cause temporary paralysis, making it easier to administer a killing blow.

Notepads:

Found inside the [Secret Room](#) are various Notepads written in [Samuel Kenning](#)'s own hand detailing each of the residents, with special attention paid to those who have at some point in the past caused the deaths of others and not been convicted for those crimes.

Sealed Envelopes:

Found at the scene of each death, the envelopes themselves, and the letters within, are a fairly high quality paper, often used by lawyers and other professionals. The messages are all printed in black ink, from the type of laser printer that can be found in almost every office.

They contain only partial finger prints, the majority of which belong to whoever found and opened them.

Gameplay:

Beginning:

Players are asked to investigate the death of [Howard Baldwin](#); he was known to be writing a biography that could potentially be damaging to the government. His ex-wife is now married to a well know politician and there is some fear that [Baldwin](#)'s revelations could be damaging to her new husband. Though ostensibly there to investigate the death it is made clear than their main goal

should be the location and retrieval of the **Manuscript** of **Howard Baldwin**'s biography. They are not informed of the presence of **Jacob Masterson**.

Arriving at the Gwen Kenning Pauper House players are met by local police, **Hannah Roth** and **Samuel Kenning**, from whom they learn that there was a fight between two residents and **Howard Baldwin** was stabbed to death.

At this point the players are free to explore the Pauper House and talk to any of the residents.

If players are unable to discover that the fight and **Howard Baldwin**'s subsequent death was not as straightforward as it seems, **Jacob Masterson** can reveal himself to them and attempt to push them towards investigating the death as a murder. The ideal situation is that players quickly discover the **Sealed Envelope** and realise there is more going on than the obvious.

Middle:

Once players have begun to investigate the death of **Howard Baldwin** as a murder, the episode moves into the second stage at a time when the Game Master feels it is appropriate.

The second death to occur is that of **Leonard Reed**, he is found dead by another resident. If the players have already located the **Sealed Envelope** from the first murder then it is up to them to locate the second **Sealed Envelope**. Otherwise the resident who found the body finds it and opens it, sharing its content with the other residents. This causes a degree of panic that makes the residents less willing to cooperate with the 'outsiders', the players. If this happens players will need to rely on **Samuel Kenning** and **Hannah Roth** to help them talk to the residents.

If the player's investigations appear to be stalling, then it might be necessary to involve them directly through **Tengfei Yang**. At some point when the players and other residents are in either the **Common Room** or the **Dining Room**, one of the players (the Catholic Priest) finds the bloody cloth and the remains of a pigeon, causing **Tengfei Yang** to attack them.

Alternative they can be witness to this event, with one of the residents being attacked and killed by **Tengfei Yang**.

Ending:

After the attack by **Tengfei Yang**, **Samuel Kenning** goes missing. This should not be obvious at first, but if players go looking for him they will be unable to find him.

Once the players start to notice that Samuel Kenning cannot be found, **Hannah Roth** is killed, (**King takes Queen**). If any of the players are on the ground floor they will witness the lights going off, otherwise they will hear a commotion. Whoever goes to the **Kitchen** to find the junction box will see **Hannah Roth** lying in the doorway of her **Office**.

From here on the residents will be increasingly unwilling to cooperate with the players, and increased interaction with, or questioning of, them will lead to at an attack on the players themselves (**King takes Pawn**).

If by this stage the players have not found the [Secret Passages](#), something occurs during the attack (A chair is thrown and breaks a hole in the wall) that reveals their presence.

When and if the players choose to confront [Samuel Kenning](#) they will first have to find him, when they do so he will be somewhere in the [Secret Passages](#) and will attempt to flee to the [Furnace Room](#), either via the [Secret Passages](#) if possible or through the main floors of the building.

The final confrontation with [Samuel Kenning](#) occurs in the [Furnace Room](#), where he will attempt to hold them back with a crowbar or other instrument found in the [Basement](#). During his flight through the building he will have lost the key that would enable him to escape through the hatch in the annex. He will be both frantic and pleading, his plan having been interrupted though he will still attempt to manipulate things to his own advantage, claiming that those dead deserved to die and if given the opportunity explaining their past crimes to the players.

If at any point during the episode the players have made it clear that they are looking for the [Manuscript](#) [Samuel Kenning](#) will have it with him and threaten to burn it in the furnace unless they let him go. If attacked he will indeed throw the [Manuscript](#) into the furnace, though it can be recovered with little effort and at the expense of a few burnt pages.

The episode ends at any point after players recover the [Manuscript](#) and decide to leave.

It is possible for any of the deaths after [Howard Baldwin](#)'s to be stopped if the players are able to prevent them coming to pass. This is challenging but if it happens [Samuel Kenning](#) will disappear and events will unfold as described from his disappearance onward.