

The Anascestral House



By Sonya Nobody



The Anascestral House

CREDITS

Writer: Soryn Nobody

Special thanks to Sean for the proofreading, Alan, Dimitri, Iann, Son, Fabien, and all other for the beta-tests.

CONTENTS

I – Introduction	4	Bedroom 2. (2.G)	14
Background information	4	Bedroom 3. (2.H)	15
The Nationalities	4	Balcony (2.I)	15
The Saxts	5	Stairs (3.A).....	15
The problematical rumors	5	Sitting Room 2. (3.B)	15
Mastering suspense	5	Bedroom 4. (3.C).....	15
Designed progression.....	6	Bedroom 5. (3.D)	16
II - What's truly going on.....	8	Bathroom 3. (3.E).....	16
The House	8	Attic (3.F)	16
Lady Anascestral	8	Roof (3.G).....	16
The Portraits.....	8	The impossible phenomena	16
The Past Cult	9	The last victim.....	17
Lulia and Madalina Poenaru	9	The runaway girl	17
III - The External House	11	IV - The Inner House	19
Overview	11	Overview	19
Foyer (1.A).....	11	The Corridor.....	20
Parlor (1.B)	12	The endless hotel.....	20
Library (1.C).....	12	The Spherical Room	20
Dining Room (1.D).....	12	The Desk	20
Kitchen (1.E)	12	The two mirrors	20
Breakfast Room (1.F).....	13	The Cylinders	21
Lavatory (1.G).....	13	The All-Mother altar	21
Stairs (1.H).....	13	The sitting room.....	21
Passage (1.I)	13	The deposit stair	22
Porch (1.J)	13	The stone library.....	22
Stair Hall (2.A)	13	The forest cathedral	22
Sitting Room (2.B)	14	Corridors star	22
Master Bedroom (2.C)	14	The Aylith Encounter	23
Bathroom 1. (2.D)	14	V - The Pit.....	24
Bathroom 2. (2.E).....	14	Overview	24
Laundry (2.F)	14	The Pit.....	24

The Riddle	24
The Prison	25
Appendix A - NPCs and Creatures.....	26
Alcina Anascestral	26
Alina Baci	26
Aylith	26
Cindy and Jeremiah Saxts.....	26
Lulia Poenaru	26
Madalina Poenaru.....	27
Mirabela Botezatu.....	27
Shub-Niggurath	27

Appendix B – Handouts	28
1. Accesoriile Article	28
2. Slate Article.....	30
3. Hat	31
4. The Note	31
5. Tom’s Letter	32
6. ID card.....	33
7. The Plan	33
8. Satyp Article.....	34
9. Birth certificate	34

I - INTRODUCTION

The Anascestral House is a big old Victorian manor lost in the forest of Cuptoare, Romania. Abandoned and dilapidated, the House and estate were bought for a song by the Saxts, a couple of rich Americans. They want it transformed into a luxury cabin-in-the-woods for wealthy holidaymakers.

It's the summer of 2023 and the Saxts have sent a small team to Romania to begin the renovations: audit the layout and the design of the rooms, clear up the administrative issues, and take care of the problematic rumours devaluing the property.

Background Information

The Keeper should familiarise themselves with the adventure content before attempting to run it. This allows the Keeper to determine which characters should make their appearance and when, and how their interactions will guide or illuminate the Investigators. Not everything that hides in the darkness should be given a voice, though.

There are key locations in the External and Inner House where the Keeper can introduce certain NPCs. Those that the Keeper does not wish to appear can be removed or could ignore the investigators during play. This is true for any part of the story: it is important to adjust the game to your table. A full list of NPCs is found in *Appendix A*.

Additional information can be gathered from ancient or recent documents that the players can find and translate. Remember: some translations take longer than others, and you can space out the information based on how long they keep investigating the materials. For example, one

The Anascestral House is a dark immersive adventure that sinks the investigators deeper and deeper into the inapprehensible. It's driven by ambiance and the exploration of spatially and geometrically impossible places.

might find one piece of information, but upon continuing to translate the rest of the book, they find that the first piece was only the tip of the iceberg.

There are other things for the players to investigate in Anascestral House, some of which are hinted at in the sections below. However, the dread of the incomprehension of the House itself should drive them deeper.

Lovecraft's Cthulhu Mythos and *House of Leaves* by Mark Z. Danielewski were huge influences. It helps to be familiar with them, but is not essential.

The Nationalities

The nationalities are mixed in this scenario. The location itself is Romania but due to the House's history, clues are in English, French and Romanian. The Saxts are from the USA but other characters mostly speak Romanian – but can adapt to any language of the PCs.

So, the PCs can have different nationalities. They could all be Romanian engaged remotely, European or U.S. citizens sent to Romania, or any combination.

It's advised they share a common language, but it's not necessary. There are bilingual dictionaries for many languages in the Library (1.C) of the Anascestral House.

The Saxts

The Saxts are wealthy Americans historically unconnected with the House. They sponsor the expedition but stay distant from events.

They never visited the Anascestral House and have only seen pictures of it. They bought the House for a very low price due to its reputation, the rumours, and its location. They are not connected emotionally or otherwise to the property or to the former Cult – though the Keeper could change this point if they wanted. They might not have even met the PCs directly.

Here are some examples of PCs that the Saxts could hire: designers, home decorators, architects, engineers, historians, builders, lawyers, painters, mechanics, VIP specialists, undercover private investigators, any business partners.

Appendix A contains additional roleplaying notes for the Saxts.

The problematic rumours

The Anascestral House has the reputation of an old scary House caused by legends and the missing persons surrounding it.

The Anascestral House deteriorated for ages before Cuptoare council noticed the disappearance of its owner, Lady Anascestral. Some think it's been abandoned for ten or more years, as the owners have not been seen since

then. Other clues and details point toward it having been abandoned for only a few months.

Stories and legends were associated with the Anascestral House for a long time, even before it was abandoned. It's a big, grim, old House lost in the forest, stimulating the imagination of the youth and the fears or jealousies of adults. It's been called the Crazy Lady's House, the Dark House, the Witch House, the dark cabin in the wood. Those associations hardly relate to true incidents and mostly come from folklore or campfire stories.

Small groups of two to four people have disappeared in the forest or near the Anascestral House. People blame the Anascestral House, in accordance with its reputation, but there hasn't been any proof, only hearsay.

They are right, actually. These disappearances are caused by Madalina luring people inside to their deaths. (*See II - What's truly going on, Lula and Madalina Poenaru*)

This aspect can be as important as the Keeper wants. It could be the central focus of the PC's investigation, a secret underlying reason mandated by the Saxts or somebody else, or perhaps just some clues in the background or not mentioned at all.

Mastering the Suspense

One of the great challenges and beauty of this scenario is the descent into the craziness, horror and unbearable nature of the Anascestral House.

The atmosphere is important and evolves with the story: take your time and leave details for later, letting the players' imagination add some flavour. Theatre of the mind works best in this scenario. Players will work out their own fears with only slight pushes from the Keeper.

As the story progresses, more of the impossible is present. There are some aspects that make no sense at all and that is the point. You should not have to come up with an explanation for everything. The logic they will try to infuse into those aberrations is part of the experience.

It's good to let the players breathe at some points but it's important to push them when needed. This scenario does not require the Keeper to be overly fair and you can abruptly throw the PCs into danger.

At the beginning, the mundane activities of investigation, exploration, measurement, planning, will be the principal action of the players.

Slowly at first, the oddness of the Anascestral House motivates the players to explore and investigate the absurdities preventing their work.

The biggest overt threat then becomes the Anascestral House itself and its geometrical impossibilities, especially the dread of being trapped in the Inner House.

Designed Progression

This is the order of events that occurred during playtesting. It's a big picture guideline that can be rearranged for your table.

1) Investigation and mundane life.

The PCs discover the House, abandoned, decrepit and slightly dangerous in its current state. They encounter difficulties due to the condition of the building, its old design, the fact that some places will be inaccessible at first and that some documents will take time to understand.

This section takes as long in game as desired. Perhaps, the PCs have spent ten minutes looking around the House and must force their way into some inaccessible room. Alternatively, after weeks the PCs could have solved some access

problems and start working on the Anascestral House renovation, becoming familiar with it, with a flawed feeling of safety.

2) Non-Euclidian surrealism and the ghost

The PCs discover their first impossible House phenomenon. Examples are given in *III - The External House, the impossible phenomena*. It obviously has no logical answer but feels like it has.

After the first impossible phenomena, the ghost of Madalina starts appearing. She might have been seen before, as a fleeting vision during an incident or during the exploration of the House. She first appears to one of the PCs on their own, who sees her as a harmless lost teenager but with a strange aura. Once she has tricked one PC, it will be easier to attract the others.

3) Discovery of the Inner House

Once the PCs have discovered the Inner House or after one of them is tricked inside, they are doomed and pushed towards their fate.

The entire group will find themselves in the Inner House. They could be tricked by Madalina, they could be chasing a curious or crazed PC, to save or find one of them, to explore, pushed by a dread threat.

The Inner House presents an incoherent layout and continuity of places, rooms, and corridors. Nevertheless, it is always more than a simple natural place. It expresses a sense of meaningful design, strangely human.

This is purely an exploration phase. The Inner House is a curiosity of the mind and geometric laws.

4) Trapped & Escape

The Inner House reveals its dangers and threats. It isn't direct threats most of the time. More a strange feeling, and the dread of infinity and

impossible place with a chaotic labyrinth aspect. The players experience the impossibility of the place itself and the impossibility of escaping.

Madelina pushes them to go deeper to help her sister. She could easily promise there is an exit further, maybe food or water. She looks desperate. Never forget she wants them to arrive at the end of their journey to her sister, and at least two of them.

5) The Pit

The pit is the most unfair and cruel part of their adventure. Here, the PCs face the possibility of opposing each other or choosing to sacrifice themselves. And once their goal reached, the fatal reality will be revealed.

The pit is probably the end of the adventure for some – the place of immoral decisions, disastrous acts and unfair consequences. While the threat is physical, it's the psychological damage that has the biggest impact.

II - WHAT'S TRULY GOING ON

The House

The House is more than a disturbing place. It is essentially a living being utterly indifferent to humans who can barely begin to apprehend it or even comprehend it.

The House acts on its own. It has neither a bad nor a good side, never siding with the PCs, Lady Anascestral or Madalina side. However, Madalina and Lady Anascestral seem to get along with it.

It creates geometrical anomalies and psychically and mentally pressures its occupants. The threats are slow and insidious.

There are two conceptual parts of the House. The External House is the old one discovered by the PCs. It seems mundane at first with a few small disturbing impossibilities. The Inner House is the part between the walls, beyond reality. It's nearly its own dimension with its own logic concerning geometrical configuration. The two parts are conceptual, but together it's only one House, one entity.

The village of Cuptoare is not aware of the true nature of the House. The townsfolk have only seen the external part of it. Perhaps one poor tortured soul did look at the Inner part and escaped, only to be seen as crazy after this traumatising experience.

Lady Anascestral

Lady Anascestral was the former owner of the House, a long-lived lady and one of the head members of a nefarious secret Past Cult venerating the All-Mother.

Lady Anascestral was born in France in 1860, married a Cult member that mysteriously died. As a young widow, she moved to Romania and acquired the House during her thirties. She aged slowly and was always around during the mid-2010s.

She was a clever woman devoted to the Cult. She managed her way on the top, using money, trickery, and thanks to the Inner House that hosted the Past Cult meeting.

Thanks to her devotion, she slowly transformed into an Aylith, a wood-branch monster. Now, she lives inside the Inner House (See IV - *The Inner House*, *The Aylith Encounter*). In some ways, she hunts anyone before they access Lulia's Prison.

The Portraits

Three Portraits of Lady Anascestral should be found in the Anascestral House: two in the External House and one somewhere in the Inner House. They hide clues to unlock Lulia's prison cell (See V - *The Pit*, *The Riddle*).

A) *The old Lady Anascestral*, in the Foyer (1.A). This painting will be the first major detail they find upon entering the House. The painting is dated from 2012, with the title "*No one knows true the value of water, until under their feet the source dries up.*" It features a seventy-year-old-looking Lady Anascestral sitting in a wooden chair on an infinite plane of water. She seems exhausted with a vivacious stare. She wears a beautiful long robe that hides her legs. Looking closer, PCs cannot see the break between her body and the wooden chair (since this is already her body). There is no background visible but looking long enough gives the impression the darkness is looming over her. Looking longer

and you can feel the All-Mother looking directly at you.

B) The middle-aged Lady Anascestral, in the Parlor (1.B). The painting is dated from 1937, with the title *“The faintest ink is more valuable than a missing memory.”* It shows a forty-year-old-looking Lady Anascestral writing at a small desk with a long white feather. She is thinking and energetic. She wears a practical masculine outfit, but her skin looks woody. Looking closer, PCs can see some shadowy patron acting like a muse. There is no background visible but looking long enough gives the impression the patron is looking at you.

C) The young adult Lady Anascestral, in the Inner House. The painting is dated from 1880, with the title *“Our blood forever nourishes her.”* It depicts a twenty-years-old crazy-looking Lady Anascestral holding a bleeding ceremonial dagger. She is menacing, covered in blood, and wears typical expensive clothing from the Belle Epoque. Her skin is perfect. PCs can easily see a menacing aura or presence around her. The background looks like tortured souls and cult members in the distance.

Appendix A contains additional roleplaying notes for the Lady Anascestral and her Aylith form.

The Past Cult

The Cult was a secret sect venerating the All-Mother. Nowadays the Cult has mostly disappeared and they haven't been heard of in decades. The reason is unknown: there could have been an incident, a successful group sacrifice, dark magic, or a drop in interest.

Lady Anascestral was one of their most influential, powerful, and devoted members. She bought the House to host most of their meetings after an incident in the local church area attracted unwanted public attention. (See

Appendix B –4. The Note and 5. Tom's Letter and Handouts, 8. Satyp Article). Most of the meetings were held in the Inner House. Some curious neighbours could have seen cars of guests across the years.

They sacrificed Lulia and Madalina Poenaru, two daughters of a Cult member in the late '20s.

Even if the age of the Cult is long past, their influence remains in the House and maybe in some distant memories and strange local rumours.

Lulia and Madalina Poenaru

Lulia and Madalina Poenaru are two young girls sacrificed by the cult in the late 1920s. They were clever girls of one of the cult members.

Lulia was 11 and turned into a ghoul. She was trapped in a prison cell deep inside the Inner House. The secret to open the door is hidden in a riddle (See V - *The Pit, The Riddle*). She is trapped and can't leave. As a ghoul she always thirsts for human meat and acts like a raging animal.

Madalina was 15 and turned into a ghost. She lures people into the Inner House up to her sister's cell to feed her. She acts like a lost child, begging the PCs for help, explaining that her sister was taken by *them* and is in danger. She helps the PCs go further, deeper. She will cry, beg, push, and cheer them on. She talks and shows the way, but can't truly interact with the physical world. She has a limited charm effect on the living. If the PCs understand that she is a ghost, she plays delusional, denies it and then accepts it: playing the innocent, pure of heart, helpful ghost sister.

Madelina is stuck in the House, but she can appear and disappear anywhere in the External or Inner House. She tries to get multiple victims at once, due to the sacrifice part of the riddle

and the difficulty to reach the Pit. She doesn't do it often, once or twice every half dozen years. She is more limited by the small number of people coming near to the House and the even smaller number surviving it.

For some reason, Lady Anascestral in her Aylith form hunts anyone coming down to Lulia's

prison. Apart from the detriment to the Sanity of the PCs and some dangerous places, it's the most dangerous obstacle they face. It's also where Madalina loses most of her offerings.

Appendix A contains additional roleplaying notes for the Lulia and Madalina.

III - THE EXTERNAL HOUSE

Overview

The Anascestral House is a lovely three-floor mansion of late Victorian style, built in the forest of Cuptoare, Romania. The property includes a few acres of private forest around the building.

The village of Cuptoare is negligible. It's more an administrative group of homes around a Church than a big village. It's slightly mountainous and close to a national park. The inhabitants of the region don't mind the Anascestral House that much. It's possible to ask people around but nothing more than rumours will come out of that.

The House was found abandoned and after a year without finding any relatives to Lady Anascestral, the village decided to sell it as it is.

The Anascestral House deteriorated for ages before someone discovered the owner's disappearance, Lady Anascestral. Some people say it's been abandoned for ten or more years.

Any of the rooms can be the scene of intriguing events witnessed or encountered by the PCs. In most aspects, it is a normal mundane old abandoned House, at first.

The dangers initially come from the state of the House itself: rotten floor, broken glass, strange architecture, etc. While exploring the House, the PCs find curious objects and documents that should tickle their investigators' side about the Cult, Lady Anascestral, and Madelina's latest victim. After the first impossible disturbing phenomena, Madelina begins manifesting and asks for help.

The investigation of the House is the logical first part of the story. It rewards motivated PCs with clues about what could happen next.

The architecture is antique, but the furniture is modern as Lady Anascestral renewed them over time. There are phones and electricity even if the wiring is ancient. Nevertheless, the House is dusty, full of webs and dirt.

The House appeared to correspond to The Plan (*Appendix B – Handouts, 7. The Plan*), that can be found in the Attic (3.G) with only minor discrepancies.

Any clue or handout can be found somewhere else if it suits the story better. The PCs must at least find the two Portraits of Lady Anascestral.

The number in parentheses after the room refers to the floor of that room. *Sitting Room 1. (2.B)* is on the second floor.

Foyer (1.A)

The Foyer is the main entrance of the Anascestral House.

The old Lady Anascestral portrait hangs on the wall. (See *II - What's truly going on, The Portraits*). This painting will be the first major details they will meet entering the House.

From the front door, a small vestibule one step below the rest of the main floor with a red carpet and two closets on the sides. The Foyer itself is as dusty as the rest of the House. The floor is composed of ochre and white tiles. A large glass chandelier hangs down.

Exits: The Foyer connects to the front door, the Parlor (1.B) (locked), the Dining Room (1.D), Stairs (1.H) and the Passage (1.I). Another double door leads to the Porch (1.J).

Parlor (1.B)

The Parlor was one of the main living rooms of the External House, with the Dining Room (1.D).

The door leading to the Foyer (1.A) is locked. The key can be found in the Bedroom 5. (3.D).

On the wall in front of the double door is a large fireplace with **the middle-aged Lady Anascestral** portrait hanging above it. (See *II - What's truly going on, The Portraits*). The walls are covered with various paintings with golden frames. They mostly depict landscapes from around the world. A large carpet occupies the middle of the wooden floral floor. On top, is a low table with good condition late 80s armchairs and couches around it. Near the front windows are long dead potted plants.

Exits: A locked modern double door leads to the Foyer (1.A)(locked) and an archway to the Library (1.C).

Library (1.C)

The walls are bookcases here, leaving just enough space for the windows and the door. Those bookshelves are full of all kinds of books, culinary, history, bilingual dictionaries for translation, novels and poetry in English, French and Romanian.

There are bunches of local archives too. In a folder can be found articles about witchcraft and pseudo-magic, including two articles (*Appendix B – Handouts, 1. Accesoriile Article and 2. Slate Article*)

Two armchairs of the same style as those from the Parlor (1.B), are placed in the corners. Between them, some unfinished knitting waits with its skein on a small side table.

Exits: The door leading to the Passage (1.I) is locked (the key can be found in the Bedroom 5. (3.D)). An archway to the Parlor (1.B).

Dining Room (1.D)

The Dining room was one of the main living rooms of the External House, along with the Parlor (1.B).

A long wooden table for up to twelve people is placed diagonally in the room and occupies most of it. The chairs are pushed in and have been for a long time. A small fireplace, next to the Kitchen (1.E) door, can be used to warm the House. On the side, against the walls, are two cabinets with baubles and trinkets from another age. The walls themselves are painted grey-blue.

The only thing on the table is a police cap. (*Appendix B – Handouts, 3. Hat*). It's clean and there are finger traces on the dust on the table next to it. It belongs to the last victim of Madalina: the Officer Mirabela Botezatu, who left it here while looking into the House. (See *The last victim*, bellow).

Exits: A double door connects to the Foyer (1.A) and a simple door leads to the Kitchen (1.E).

Kitchen (1.E)

The kitchen is modern and full of remnants of rotten food so old that it doesn't even smell anymore. The fittings are from the early 2000s. A phone hangs on the wall.

It was ransacked during the last few weeks, which is easily noticeable. The door leading to the Porch (1.J) is missing a glass panel, making it easy to open from the outside. (See *The runaway girl*, bellow).

A thin layer of grime is particularly present here, on the floor and furniture because of the broken pipe from the Bathroom 1 (2.D).

Exits: Simple doors connect to the Dining Room (1.D) and the Porch (1.J) and an open archway leads to the Breakfast Room (1.F).

Breakfast Room (1.F)

The breakfast room is an informal dining room with a round table with four chairs. The only other decoration is a big mirror in the back of the room.

The window was recently left ajar and the floor in the room is full of dirt, leaves and other detritus carried by the wind.

Exits: Simple doors lead to the Passage (1.I) and the Stairs (1.H) and an archway leads to the Kitchen (1.E).

Lavatory (1.G)

It's a basic lavatory with a toilet and a sink, both working. As the only toilet of this floor, it can be tricky to find for newcomers.

Exits: It connects to the Passage (1.I) by a door.

Stairs (1.H)

The stairs are quite tricky, even in their normal form.

The main staircase starts in the Foyer (1.A) and the Breakfast Room (1.F). They form a landing between the floors then the main stairs finish in the Stair Hall (2.A).

Exits: A door to the Breakfast Room (1.F) and open onto the Foyer (1.A).

Passage (1.I)

The Passage is a small corridor connecting multiple rooms. It connects to the Foyer (1.A), the Breakfast Room (1.F), and the Lavatory (1.G). Another locked door connects to the Library (1.C).

There are two other doors. One opens to a closet under the stairs from the Foyer (1.A). The other door, beneath the stairs from the Breakfast Room (1.F), leads to stairs going down to a small unmapped cellar full of ancient wine bottles.

Porch (1.J)

The Porch is a beautiful wooden construction that covers a quarter of the House's perimeter.

It is 80 cm above the ground on average. There is an old garden bench just on the side of the main entrance. There is a storage cupboard with a broom, a rusty rake and a shovel, next to the Kitchen (1.E) back door. The porch is covered by a roof starting on the second floor.

Footprints can be found on the Porch, near the Kitchen (1.E) door, leading both ways. There are two sets – large boots of Officer Mirabela Botezatu (See *The last victim*), going into the Anascestral House, and smaller boots of Alina Baci (See *The runaway girl*), leaving.

Exits: The porch connects to the through a large double door and through a simple door to the Kitchen (1.E).

Stair Hall (2.A)

The Stair Hall is the central axis of the House. Electrical chandeliers hang on the walls to illuminate the place.

At the top of the stairs is a discreet string holding a bunch of empty cans and silverware. If missed, the objects fall to the ground level and make a lot of noise. It's an alarm made by Alina Baci (See *The runaway girl*).

Exits: The staircase leads down to the Stairs (1.H) and up to the Stairs (3.A). The hall has doors leading to the Sitting Room (2.B) corridor, the Bathroom 2. (2.E), and the Laundry (2.F) corridor.

Sitting Room (2.B)

The Sitting Room seems like it was once beautiful and cosy but is only dirty and old now.

In the middle of the room, three white armchairs, ripped by rodents, sit around a broken low table near the windows. There is a small alcohol cabinet with almost empty bottles of hard liquor. Two simple doors are simply closets.

Exits: A small corridor leads to the Stair Hall (2.A). The Sitting Room is connected to the Master Bedroom (2.C) by an open archway.

Master Bedroom (2.C)

The Master Bedroom is one of the richest rooms of the House and one of the most dangerous.

In the centre of the room is a large bed with a wooden structure and curtains. The windows are open. There are two large wardrobes, full of ripped old clothes, occupying a large amount of space. A dresser and a desk are next to the entrance. There is a lot of makeup and as many documents: formal letters, various bills, newspapers. Amongst those can be found a small folder with most of the paper totally unreadable except a note and a letter (*Appendix B – Handouts, 4. The Note and 5. Tom's Letter*).

Lots of branches, small and large, can be seen in the room. PCs might think they come in through the windows, but there are no trees near this side of the House. In reality, it is residual parts of Lady Anascestral's transformation.

With the Kitchen (1.E) below it, the open windows and the broken pipe somewhere near the Bathroom 1. (2.D) that has seeped in: the floor is rotten and will crumble. PCs that enter the room will have to escape the collapsing floor: falling to the Kitchen (1.E) and avoiding the falling pieces of furniture. Any PCs in the Kitchen (1.E) at the same time will have to dodge the falling floor too. The

remaining hole can be carefully crossed to access the rest of the bedroom.

Exits: Connects through an open archway to the Sitting Room 1. (2.B) and to the Bathroom 1 (2.D) by a simple door.

Bathroom 1 (2.D)

This bathroom is old fashioned but repainted in a modern way. It contains a bath, a toilet, a sink and two closets near the entrance.

Exits: Connects to the Master Bedroom (2.C) by a simple door.

Bathroom 2. (2.E)

This bathroom has old fixtures but is painted in a modern way. There's a bath, a toilet and a sink.

There are signs this bathroom was recently used, as it is cleaner than the rest of the House. It's because Alina Baciú has used it a few times (See *The runaway girl*).

Exits: A simple door connects to the Stair Hall (2.A).

Laundry (2.F)

The laundry room is tiny and efficient. There is a large washing machine and a sink, with shelves full of sheets above it, occupying most of the place. In the back is an empty cupboard that opens to the roof.

Exits: A small corridor connects the Laundry, the Stair Hall (2.A), Bedroom 2 (2.G) and Bedroom 3 (2.H) by simple doors.

Bedroom 2 (2.G)

This bedroom was made up a long time ago and has not been used.

There is a double bed with old sheets, an empty table, a perfect leather armchair near the windows and a closet inside the wall.

A large medieval chest sits at the footboard of the bed. It's secured with a large padlock. The key was lost a long time ago, probably in the Inner House. If opened, the chest only contains the old cliché: fanatics robes and accessories from the Past Cult.

Exits: Simple doors lead to the Laundry (2.F) and the Balcony (2.I).

Bedroom 3. (2.H)

This bedroom, unlike the rest of the Anascestral House, was inhabited recently.

A big soft bed is directly to the left of the entrance. There is a large desk near the windows, full of things. An alcove at the back of the room has a small bench and a low round table. Closets surround the alcove on either side. All curtains are kept closed.

Alina Baciú used this room as a hiding place and slept there (See *The runaway girl*). Her backpack is still here, with her stuff. There is lighter, snacks, a sleeping bag, two gold neckless and other things. The PCs can find her ID card (*Appendix B – Handouts, 6. ID card*) in it.

On the large desk is what she found in the House. There are clean sheets, two bags of pasta, chocolate, honey, two can of soup, and a lot of keys on one side. Alina searched for the key of the Parlor (1.B) but didn't find it. She gathered all the keys she found.

Exits: A simple door leads to the Laundry (2.F).

Balcony (2.I)

The Balcony is an empty exterior space that extends the Bedroom 2 (2.G) above the

Anascestral House main door. A small frosted window opens to the Bathroom 1 (2.D).

Exits: A simple door leads to Bedroom 2 (2G).

Stairs (3.A)

These stairs are slightly narrower than the previous stairs, but nothing is otherwise significant.

Exits: Staircase down to the Stair Hall (2.A) and opens onto the Sitting Room 2 (3.B).

Sitting Room 2 (3.B)

This room is a mix between a landing and an actual sitting room.

A glass display pyramid can be seen in the middle of the room. It showcases two metallic black rocks and an African mask. Next to it is a unique walnut armchair from the Victorian era.

The Attic (3.F) and the Roof (3.G) were built, but contrary to the House design plan, there are not accessible from the Sitting Room 2 (3.B).

Exits: Doors lead to Bedroom 4 (3.C) and Bedroom 5 (3.D).

Bedroom 4 (3.C)

A basic bedroom with two single beds and two individual closets. The beds were made up long ago and never used.

There is a door poorly disguised as a wall that links to the Attic (3.F).

Exits: Doors to Sitting Room 2 (3.B) and Bathroom 3 (3.E). The hidden door leads to the Attic (3.F).

Bedroom 5 (3.D)

A basic bedroom with two single beds and two individual closets. The beds are tidy but still dusty, last used a long time ago.

The keys to the Parlor (1.B) and Library (1.C) can be found in one of the closets.

There is a door poorly disguised as a wall that links to the Roof (3.G).

Exits: Doors to Sitting Room 2 (3.B) and the Bathroom 3 (3.E). The hidden door leads to the Roof (3.G).

Bathroom 3 (3.E)

This bathroom is old fashioned but repainted in a modern way. It contains a bath, a toilet and a sink. It is shared by the two bedrooms on this floor.

Exits: Doors connect to Bedroom 4 (3.C) and Bedroom 5 (3.D).

Attic (3.F)

The Attic was a dusty room even before the Anascestral House was abandoned. It is unfinished with exposed beams and unpainted walls.

It's full of boxes with old mundane stuff from Lady Anascestral. Some of them are marked "Alphonse", Lady Anascestral's dead husband. In those boxes, the PCs can find the Plan of the House and an old news article (*Appendix B – Handouts, 7. The Plan and 8. Satyp Article*).

Exits: The Attic is only accessible from Bedroom 4 (3.C) via the secret door.

Roof (3.G)

The Roof was used a long time ago as a storeroom for Lady Anascestral's dressmaker passion. The sewing machine was abandoned decades before Lady Anascestral's disappearance. Now, it's just a creepy room full of mannequins wearing old fashioned dresses made by Lady Anascestral.

Exits: The Roof is only accessible from Bedroom 5 (3.D) via the secret door.

The Impossible Phenomena

In the Anascestral House, impossible geometrical phenomena will drive some PCs crazy (and perhaps even some players!). They are puzzles for the mind, the type of phenomenon that feels like they make sense even if deep down you're not sure. There are more impossible observations than a threat or a magical phenomenon. They have no obvious logical answer but it feels like there must be.

As mentioned before, those phenomena are rare at first. Let the PCs struggle with the first one a bit before throwing them another. The first phenomena can be quick, happening to just one PC, leaving just an impression. Feel free to give the PCs some hard-to-believe justification, as if they tried to convince themselves, it should not be too much to chew on, at first.

Here are some examples that could occur in the External House:

- **Doors appearing or disappearing**
- Doors opening to **impossible corridors** that are 2 metres long but connect two points that are only a few centimetres apart.
- **Impossible measurements:** if the House is measured, inside the House will be about five centimetres larger than outside. It's like the inside was slightly larger than possible.

- Flights of stairs are a different length than they should be: for no reason the stairs are **four steps longer (or shorter)** than before. The PCs mightn't realise it immediately but feel strange.
- **Arriving at the wrong floor:** climb the stairs from the first floor to the second floor and arrive at the ground floor.
- **Incompatible room shapes:** from outside, a room should be five-or-six-sided, but from inside it's rectangular.
- **Peoples lost in the walls.** No point of entry can be found to know how they arrived there, they don't know either how it happened.
- **Sound travels wrongly:** hearing someone as clear as if they were in the next room but really, they are far apart, on another floor even.

The last victim

The last victim Madalina lured in was the Officer Mirabela Botezatu, who came after a small storm to check the Anascestral House. As usual Madalina lured her by asking her to save her sister. It happened no more than two days before the PCs arrive.

Botezatu saw the glass panel missing on the Kitchen (1.E) door and the open cupboard, so she suspected someone was there.

She was lured in the Inner House quickly after inspecting the ground floor, so she did not trigger the alarm made by Alina Baciú on the Stairs Hall (2.A). But Alina saw her arrival. (See *The runaway girl*).

She left her police cap in the Dining Room (1.D) and footprints on the Porch (1.J). There are no police cars near the Anascestral House. She was dropped there by a neighbour as the visit was on her own initiative while off duty. If she manage a few days before being trapped in the Inner

House, the police can come to check if they've seen anything.

Botezatu did make it far in the Inner House, just not up to Lulia's Prison. She can have become crazy or just died. She could be encountered by the PCs alive or dead, as an enemy, someone to save, or an ally, but only once inside the Inner House.

Appendix A contains additional roleplaying notes for Mirabela Botezatu.

The runaway girl

Alina Baciú is a 16-year-old runaway girl from Steierdorf that used the Anascestral House as a hiding place for a few days.

She ran away after the umpteenth dispute with her mother one week ago. She walked through the national park Semenice-Cheile Caraşului and slept four nights in the wild before finding the abandoned Anascestral House.

She broke a glass panel on the Kitchen (1.E) door to enter. She ransacked the place immediately for food and took anything that was not rotten.

She mostly used the first floor, but left traces pretty much everywhere. She made her base Bedroom 3. (2.H). She has drawn the curtains to hide her as much as possible. She occasionally used Bathroom 2. (2.E).

Alina looked for the keys of the Parlor (1.B) and the Library (1.C) but never found them. She found a bunch of other keys and gathered them in her base. In addition, she stole what valuable things she could find to take with her.

She made a harmless alarm trap in the stairs designed to warn her of intruders while she sleeps. (See *the Stair Hall* (2.A))

She was surprised by the Officer Botezatu's arrival, seeing the Officer before she entered the

Anascestral House. The teenager managed to hide from her and ran outside without being noticed. This is why she left footprints leaving the House on the Porch (1.J).

But all her stuff is still in the House and she will try to get it back. She did not try before because she never saw the Officer leaving the House, then the PCs arrived.

She doesn't know the House's reputation and so was not frightened of it. The House was a great hiding place as it was isolated, abandoned, big and comfortable with a bed, water and electricity.

Madelina chose not to lure Alina into the Inner House as she doesn't look like she could make it to Lulia's Prison, at least alone. Perhaps Alina met or saw Madelina. She does not know Madelina is a ghost.

Appendix A contains additional roleplaying notes for Alina Baci.

IV - THE INNER HOUSE

Overview

The Inner House is another dimension that is sometimes accessible from the External House. It's full of incoherencies and impossibilities but it has a sense of meaningful design, human or at least some kind of intelligence.

Madelina could easily be the trigger that pushes one or more PCs to start exploring the Inner House. Once the PCs have discovered the Inner House for the first time or after one of them has been led inside, they are all doomed and pushed towards it. The entire group will finish in the Inner House.

They could have been tricked by Madelina; it could be by following a curious or crazy PC, to save or find them; to explore; or to push past a threat generated by the House in its external part.

For this last point, the House can become threatening, the trees outside ominous, the place darker and darker, up to a point where the PCs are blind and no light sources can pierce the darkness. The PCs can try to find where they are using their touch sense but it's useless, as progressing using touch does not make sense. Their only working sense is hearing. Following each other's voices, they reunite to find themselves in an unknown corridor. Truly, they were in the Inner House as soon as the darkness covered them.

This is a pure exploration phase. Madelina will be there to push them always to go deeper to help her sister. She manifests as needed. She could easily promise there is an exit there, further on. She will look desperate. Never forget she wants them to arrive at the end of their journey to her sister, or at least some of them.

Inside the Inner House it's a series of rooms, corridors, bigger rooms, stranger rooms. Following are some examples that can be encountered in the Inner House, but let your imagination go wild and don't hesitate to invent any additional rooms.

Always keep in mind some kind of progression in the strangeness. That doesn't mean you need to make every room more strange and inapprehensible than the previous, but more of a progression from a more distant point of view. Not all the rooms need to be cruel jigsaw puzzles: most of them are just bizarre and hard to apprehend.

Remember that the PCs should find ***The young adult Lady Anascestral*** portrait somewhere in the Inner House (See II - *What's truly going on, The Portraits*).

Lady Anascestral birth certificate (*Appendix B – Handouts, 9. Birth certificate*) can be found anywhere here: in a folder in the middle of a twenty-acre room, in the hand of a cadaver or a crazy lost soul, or pinned to a door.

The PCs can meet a lost person in the Inner House but there should be no more than one, as loneliness is part of the threat of the Inner House. The sanity of the PCs will sometimes be impacted directly, but more often indirectly by the continuous untenability of the place.

They should encounter the Aylith (See *The Aylith Encounter*) at some point near the discovery of the Pit (See V – *The Pit*) as an unstoppable chasing entity. But that doesn't need to be their first encounter with it.

The Corridor

Impossible corridors are common in the Inner House but no less disturbing. Here is an example.

The corridor looks like a mundane office corridor with a lot of doors, a lot. The corridor is long and straight. It seems infinite and takes many hours to go from end to end but that's not the only disturbing aspect. The walls are covered with identical doors every five metres with perfect regularity. Those doors open to mostly empty rooms, mundane at first sight. The issue is some rooms are too big to be compatible with their neighbours. Some are immense without necessity. Some are occupied by a single object, which could be a personal belonging of the PCs, like an old teddy bear or a baseball cap from childhood. And to simplify the struggle, some doors open to other corridors or other doors inside the same corridor like wormholes.

Is there a door that will let the PCs progress?

It's a good anomaly to start as it's not that threatening but gives a good impression. Any door can lead to another anomaly. It's important to be clear about the aspect of the next room after this anomaly, so the players understand it's not another mundane room but truly a development.

The Endless Hotel

The endless hotel might be comfortable at first, but infinity is long.

The endless hotel looks like a luxury hotel from the '30s. The issue is the endless part, as the corridors and the number of floors never ends. Every tenth floor is level with facilities, restaurants, ballrooms, and reception. On other floors, every twentieth room, the corridors split to new corridors.

Apart from this, the hotel is luxurious, charming, and relaxing. Up to the point when the PCs

discover skeletons, corpses and gruesome scenes. Growls can be heard down hallways.

It's a good anomaly to take a break, then start a chase, or encounter the Aylith.

The Spherical Room

The room is a perfect sphere of smooth grey concrete, ten metres in diameter.

The issues can be the location of the openings. They could be just out of reach and difficult to access as the smooth concrete is hard to climb.

A variation could have gravity always attract things to the side. It makes it easy to walk up to the roof, depending on the definition of "roof" with this new paradigm.

The Desk

The desk is a room of roughly 30 by 20 metres, full of desks perfectly aligned next to each other. On the desks are everything required for a writer. But in their middle is a sink hole.

Sitting at a desk makes you want to write anything: fiction, your story, a passion of yours. And slowly your desk sinks. You compulsively need to finish your work. It takes an inhuman will to extricate yourself from your writing but maybe someone else can drag you far from here before you sink fully away.

The Two Mirrors

The two-mirror room is a small square room with facing doors and mirrors face to face on the other walls between them.

The mirrors make the room look like an infinite number of rooms. The exit door is locked but a key is still in the lock.

The issues here are multiple. The first is that PCs entering here find themselves alone, but they can see the others alongside one of their reflections. The PC sees their own reflection as if everything were normal. It seems like if other PCs are in separate rooms and the same at the same time, but only for one iteration of the reflection.

The second issue is the keys do not work. They correspond to the other PCs' doors and should be exchanged to open them. The trick is that the PCs can feel the keys on all mirror iterations so they can grab the keys in their iteration and move it around so the other PCs can feel the key, which will appear for them if they try to grab it. This can be used to exchange keys between the PCs. But it can also be the source of serious injuries as one PC moving the key in a room means potentially passing through another PC's location with a sharp object. Be mindful of the superposition of people.

The Cylinders

The place is a grill of spaced cylinders set into concrete.

Each cylinder is 1.7 metres in diameter and 50 centimetres apart from the others. The lower part of the room is totally empty for a 1.2 metres high section, letting anyone crawl freely between cylinders. The floor is irregular: chaotic, like large stacked rocks, really treacherous. The cylinders are infinite in height and naturally lit so no darkness can be seen.

There are two kinds of cylinders that differ from the others.

The light ones present a bright light source 10 metres above ground, making them slightly easy to find when looking around. If a PC looks into them or stays beneath them for too long, they could temporarily become blind.

The dark cylinders are the opposite. They are filled with darkness and coldness. If a PC stays in them or below them too long, they will freeze and hear strange disturbing mumbles.

Those two kinds of cylinders can seem arranged randomly at first, but actually form lines that cross to an exit cylinder. However, the closer you get to the exit more the dangerous cylinders are present. The final three layers of cylinders around the exit are all dangerous, darkness or light. PCs should carefully try to crawl between them or quickly pass them. Both ways are risky.

The All-Mother Altar

The room is indescribable. No form, no space, full of chairs, empty, menacing, no life, everywhere, dread, no name, nothing, every nightmare.

The room is a threat and an attack on the sanity of the PC who opened it. They cannot describe it, they can't remember it: it's too much. They can recall the name of the All-Mother, a feeling of devotion, a filling of fatality, a call, the Cult presence, a direction, tentacles, or a vision, but all of those memories come with a cost.

Appendix A contains additional roleplaying notes for the All-Mother Shub-Niggurath.

The Sitting Room

The sitting room is a simple room with a lot of chairs arranged facing an altar or communion table. It seems to have been set up for a wedding, religious process, or formal presentation.

This room is deeply mundane, except its being in the Inner House. If this room comes after other disturbing ones let the PCs (and players) struggle and fear it. The door out is only hidden behind a curtain, nothing more. But the PCs (and players) will probably fear it and look for any trap or clue. They will build their own theories and nightmares.

The Deposit Stair

In a dark void, two doors are linked by a set of paintings arranged as floating stairs above a bottomless pit.

Each step is composed of two to four paintings with their frames stacked. They are unstable and the PCs must be careful.

It's a good place for **The young adult Lady Anascestral** portrait (See *II - What's truly going on, The Portraits*). Her portrait could be one of the many paintings or the only one there reproduced many times.

The Stone Library

It's a large library of stones.

The room presents itself like a classic large public library with bookcases, chairs, desks and a reception. The strangeness comes from the fact that instead of books on the bookcases, on the desk, everywhere, there are stones. These are not stones in the form of books but just plain stones of different colours, size, style, form, nothing artistic; just stones. Nothing is written on them, no magic, no meaning; just stones. But sometimes, all stones change position and fly in all directions rapidly, possibly violently striking each other.

It's a good place to find Lady Anascestral birth certificate (*Appendix B – Handouts, 9. Birth certificate*) as the only real document in the middle of all those stones.

The Forest Cathedral

The forest cathedral is a vast room encapsulating a strange green hill. The room is so big it's magnificent and the pillars made it seem like a strange excavated church.

The room measures 260 by 120 metres. Every 20 metres, a 2-metre-wide pillar goes from the floor to the roof, 30 metres above. The floor is a green slope of grass from one corner of the room to the opposite one, with a 10-metre height difference. There are branches, hedges, and some trees, but it's mainly a large plain. The walls and the pillars are not perfectly smooth and straight, but seem to have been carved as if the room was dug out. The dirt is deep, at least 20 metres, under which it is a stone floor. This wild room is totally covered by a roof with the same aspect as the wall and pillars. No source can be found, but there is a perpetual daylight similar to a calm sun of a spring afternoon.

The entry is a simple door on the higher side of the room, in the middle of the narrow edge, at ground level.

The exit is a simple door too, at the same height but on the other side of the room. A wooden platform with narrow stairs was built to access it.

It's the perfect place to encounter the Aylith. It might seem easy to hide, but the hiding places are far from each other. Once spotted by the Aylith, the PCs will be chased ruthlessly. It will be a feat if they all survive. It is like running from a wave of branches.

The Corridor Star

The corridor star is a disturbing hub intersection.

It is the crossing of eleven identical 20-metre corridors converging on a central point from which it looks like the centre of a star. There are doors at the end of each corridor, slightly bigger than a normal door. One door is at the end of each corridor.

It's a good place for **The young adult Lady Anascestral** portrait (See *II - What's truly going on, The Portraits*). Her portrait covers the doors at the end of the corridors. From the central

intersection eleven fanatically menacing Lady Anascestral will be looking directly into the soul of the PCs.

The Aylith Encounter

The Aylith encounter can start in any place large enough to cope with its size.

The Aylith, also known as the Many-Mother, is a huge branch-like entity with glowing yellow eyes. It seems to have some form of limbs and a face, but its form is uncertain. Its movements are somewhere between waves, a tumbleweed of branches, and animal movements. It can jump, crawl and almost run. Quick and deadly, it can use branches as projectiles or as tendrils, targeting a creature directly or emerging from beneath the floor by surprise. Its vision is poor, but nevertheless it won't miss an easy target.

It fears fire. If it catches fire, it tries to extinguish itself. If it's fully on fire or the fire doesn't stop, it will eject the burning part to escape it and regrow from distant branches. It's extremely difficult to burn it completely as it's always rooted deep around itself.

It has one single purpose: chase and kill any encountered creature. It's deadly and ruthless. Any encounter with it has a high possibility to be the death of some PCs – or at least serious injuries.

Once a safe space is reached, behind a closed door or passing a too-small opening for the Aylith the PCs might feel safe. But they haven't escaped for long. The Aylith can infiltrate any small opening, force its way if necessary, as branches crawl on the floor, walls and ceiling, slowly following the PCs.

From there the chase will never end. The PCs can out-distance it but only momentarily. They will face it again, entirely or through its crawling branches.

The PCs should encounter the Aylith close to the discovery of the Pit (See V – *The Pit*) as an unstoppable entity that pushes them against the death clock. But that doesn't need to be their first encounter with it.

Appendix A contains additional roleplaying notes for the Aylith.

V - The Pit

Overview

The Pit is the final destination of the PCs: quite literally for some of them.

It may not be the deepest part of the Inner House but it is the part most influenced by the Past Cult and Lady Anascestral. It's the access to Lulia's prison. It's where Madelina pushes the PCs to reach her sister.

The PCs should reach the Pit while being dogged by the Aylith. This acts as a deadly clock for them to deal with the pit Door. It will be impossible for them to go back.

The Pit

The Pit harbours the door to Lulia's prison.

There is only the entrance door through which the PCs come and the door of the prison, with their entrance blocked by the Aylith.

The top part of the Pit is a perfect square room with 10 metre sides. The walls are grey smoothed rock. The place is empty of everything, object, smell, sound, except the sound of the PCs and the branches crawling behind them.

In the middle of the room is a perfectly 8-metre diameter circular hole. This pit descends 20 metres to a 4-metre diameter floor. Helical stairs with white steps form from the Pit walls. There is no handrail. Slowly but surely the Aylith branches cover the Pit opening as a lid, sealing in the PCs. Then, the branches descend at a dreadfully slow pace.

At the bottom, just in front of the stairs, is a spectacular large black metallic rock-like double door. If PCs have seen the All-Mother room (See

IV – The Inner House, The All-Mother altar), they will feel its presence here.

At the sides of the pit there's an old small writing desk and a small pond. On the writing desk is a long feather standing vertically with no support. Beside it is a bottle of black ink. In the centre of the desk are two pages of pure gibberish. The pond is small with a small rock at the edge and three long blades of grass in the middle. The water isn't perfectly clean but is drinkable.

The Riddle

On the door of Lulia's Prison Cell is sculpted the All-Mother ravaging the world.

Looking closely, PCs can find three bowl-like shapes in it. One on the top of what should be the head, one in its mouth, and one close to its feet. They need to pour the ink in the one on the top, the blood in the mouth and water in the foot. The portraits of Lady Anascestral (See *II - What's truly going on, The Portraits*) give clues by themselves and with their inscriptions.

There is ink on the writing desk and water in the cage if the PCs lack one of those liquids. For the blood, they have plenty...

Every time the correct liquid is poured in the correct bowl shape, all of it is collected from the vessel. Then, the bowl shape closes and fuses with the sculpture again. The container is completely emptied by this process. Even if only a part of it is poured, the rest crawls to the floor and onto the wall to get into the mechanism. That's not a big problem for the ink bottle or the pond. But the poor soul giving blood will be sucked until the last drop. This takes up to two minutes.

If someone else decides to give blood, the first victim will no longer be drained but the new giver

suffers the same phenomenon. The door will not stop at a fixed quantity: it will only stop once one of the givers is emptied.

Once the liquids are poured, the bowl shapes disappear. The doors open to a too-bright totally white place. Nothing within can be seen from outside.

The Prison

The Prison is a 3.5 metres-side white cube cell holding Lulia.

There is no door here: even the entry disappears. Against the far wall is a suspended and enchained Lulia. Behind her, on the wall, is a blood pentagram. She is chained by the wrists and ankles in a starfish position. She looks, at first sight, like an 11-year-old wounded girl. But soon the PCs realise she really is a trapped child ghoul covered in blood.

As soon as the PCs have had time to have a look at her, she falls to the floor. She is agitated, wanting to eat the PCs, and sobs when she sees her sister too. She remains chained but can move up to 2 metres from the wall, for the moment.

Madelina drops the act here. She first comforts her sister, who cannot speak. Lulia acts as a feral beast. Madelina mocks the PCs and

simultaneously congratulates them for making it that far, contrary to her last victims. She explains that the PCs are the food for her hungry sister.

If multiple PCs made it to the cell, Madelina might be convinced to let some of the PCs go back to the External House. A door appears for them while Lulia eats.

If there is only one survivor or if the PCs take too long to decide, Lulia's chains become more and more loose.

This is the final scene. Some PCs have died, some are injured, the blood required to open the door left a bitter dilemma and treacherous taste. These are the few survivors left and they are exhausted and nearly resourceless. The cost to end this is too much, it is. It's definitely unfair.

It is possible to kill Lulia. Then, Madelina is free to take revenge to the extent of her abilities by trapping the survivors here, releasing them into the Inner House, implore the House *or worse* to avenge her, or perhaps just give up and disappear.

Appendix A contains additional roleplaying notes for the Lulia and Madalina.

APPENDIX A - NPCs and Creatures

Alcina Anascestral

Alcina Anascestral is the former owner of the House. A clever woman devoted to the All-Mother Cult, she managed her way to the top with money and trickery.

She was a dark black-haired lady with a small nose and shiny eyes. She knew her place and what she wanted.

For her devotion, or through it, she slowly transformed into a branch monster, an Aylith. Now she wanders inside the Inner House.

(See *II - What's truly going on, Lady Anascestral*)

Alina Baci

Alina Baci is 16: a runaway girl from Steierdorf who used the Anascestral House as a hiding place for a few days.

She is small, resourceful, and edgy. She wears a large sweatshirt and cargo pants. She is happy to wait to get her bag and escape with it. If confronted, she responds as a brat. But if the PCs talk to her calmly, she won't mind and talks to them.

She ran away after the umpteenth dispute with her drunk mother a week ago. She walked through the national park Semenic-Cheile Caraşului and slept four nights in the wild before finding the abandoned Anascestral House.

Aylith

The Aylith, also known as the Many-Mother, is a huge branch-like entity with glowing yellow eyes. It seems to have some form of limbs and a face, but its form is uncertain. Its movements are somewhere between waves, a tumbleweed of branches, and animal movements. It can jump, crawl and almost run. Quick and deadly, it can use branches as projectiles or as tendrils, targeting a creature directly or emerging from beneath the

floor by surprise. Its vision is poor, but nevertheless it won't miss an easy target.

The Aylith is a servant of the All-Mother Shub-Niggurath and a ruthless hunter.

The Aylith encountered in the Inner House (See *IV – the Inner House, The Aylith encounter*) is the new form of Lady Anascestral. She is hunting any person coming down to access Lulia's prison. She is clever even if she acts like an animal. She was devoted and it's her reward.

Cindy and Jeremiah Saxts

The Saxts are rich Americans superficially connected with the House. They are the sponsor of the expedition but are barely seen or mentioned as they remain distant.

Jeremiah is an Iranian-American: a well-built man who always wears luxury suits and watches. Cindy is a blond, a smiling high-pitched girl: a Barbie-lookalike with a brain nonetheless. There are snobs and don't care. They manage a niche global luxury estate empire.

Lulia Poenaru

Lulia Poenaru was sacrificed by the Cult in the late 1920s. She was 11. She still wears a long light blue robe covered in blood. She has long matted brown hair and a pale skin.

She is now a hungry ghoul deep in the Inner House, devouring the ones Madalina lures in who make it to her prison.

She is chained there and can't leave. As a ghoul she is always thirsty for human meat and acts mostly like a raging animal. She obeys her sister, and can ignore someone if she is already eating. She can no longer speak or formulate complex ideas.

(See *II - What's truly going on, Lulia and Madalina Poenaru* and *V – The Pit, The Prison*)

Madalina Poenaru

Madalina Poenaru was sacrificed by the Cult in the late 1920s. Madalina was 15 and became a ghost. Ever since, she has lured people into the Inner House up to her sister's cell to feed her.

She wears timeless simple light-blue clothes. She has perfectly tied brown hair, nearly colourless skin, and big eyes.

She acts like a lost child, begging the PCs for help. Explaining her sister was taken by *them* and is in danger. She helps the PCs to go further, deeper into the House. She cries, begs, pushes, and cheers them on. If the PCs realise that she is a ghost, she plays delusional, denying it before coming to accept it. She plays the part of the innocent, pure-of-heart, helpful ghost sister.

She can talk and show the way, but can't truly interact with the physical world. She has a limited charm effect on the living. Madalina is stuck in the House, but she can appear or disappear anywhere in the External or Inner House.

She tries to get multiple victims at once, due to the sacrificial element of the prison door's riddle. She is ingenious, having done this for a long while.

She was – and still is – clever and dangerous. She does not do it often, once or twice every 5 to 7 years. She is more limited by the small number of people coming close to the House.

Mirabela Botezatu

Mirabela Botezatu is a police officer working in Reșița, and living alone in Cuptoare. She was the last victim, lured in by Madalina while inspecting the Anascestral House for an intruder. (See *III – The External House, The last victim*).

She is 32, single, devoted to her job. She has short dark hair, and an anchor tattoo on her arm. She is strong and muscular. She is empathic and good with people. But she won't sacrifice herself for unknown foreigners.

Shub-Niggurath

Shub-Niggurath, also known as the All-Mother, is a horrifying Outer God, a perverse fertility deity.

It's the entity venerated by the Past Cult (See *II - What's truly going on, The Past Cult*) and the entity shadowing Lady Anascestral in the backgrounds of her portraits (See *II - What's truly going on, The Portraits*).

APPENDIX B – Handouts

All Handouts can be found separately.

There are two versions of the Handouts, their intradiegetic languages and in English.

1. Accesoriiile Article

What it is:

It's an article from an international newspaper about a funny story of the Wizard of New Zealand.

Text: (Romanian)

Accesoriiile

TOTUL DESPRE STIRI DIN LUMEA, STIRI EXCLUSIVE

Christchurch își ia rămas bun de la Vrăjitorul său

Ian Brackenbury Channell a fost considerat o operă de artă vie de Asociația Directorilor Galeriilor de Artă din Noua Zeelandă (getty images)

Gandalf, părăsește acel corp!

Vrăjitorul din Christchurch, Noua Zeelandă, își ia concediul după 23 de ani de slujire. Consiliul municipal a încheiat contractul lui Ian Brackenbury Channel, 88 de ani. Acest britanic a fost angajat să promoveze orașul cu „acte de vrăjitorie și alte servicii asemănătoare vrăjitorilor”.

Consiliul orașului Christchurch a declarat că a trimis o scrisoare oficială către Vrăjitorul pentru a-i mulțumi pentru munca sa. Purtătorul de cuvânt, Lynn McClelland, a recunoscut dificultatea acestei decizii, dar a asigurat că „[Vrăjitorul] va fi întotdeauna o parte din istoria Christchurch”. Orașul a făcut o întorsătură în planurile sale turistice și vrea să se prezinte ca mai „dinamic, scafandru și modern”, pentru a atrage „noi rezidenți, vizitatori naționali și internaționali, noi companii și muncitori migranți calificați”. Ian Brackenbury Channell a luat personal faptul că nu corespunde noului ambianță a orașului vizat. „Asta înseamnă că sunt plictisitor și bătrân, dar nu mai este nimeni ca mine în Christchurch”, a comentat Vrăjitorul.

Vrăjitorul a sosit în 1974 la Christchurch, la scurt timp după ce calea sa de vrăjitori a luat-o cu adevărat. În 1982, Asociația Directorilor Galeriilor de Artă din Noua Zeelandă a declarat că a devenit o operă de artă vie – documentul Auckland City Art Gallery descria mediul operei ca „substanța corporală a artistului” și valoarea acesteia ca fiind „neprețuită”. 8 ani mai târziu, premierul Mike Moore, l-a angajat. Într-o scrisoare pe care Vrăjitorul a păstrat-o până în acele zile, i s-a cerut să devină Vrăjitorul din Noua Zeelandă, un Gandalf modern, așa cum și-a scris el însuși Moore.

De atunci, The Wizard a fost plătit cu 16,000 de dolari neozeelandezi (10.400 de dolari) anual. Vrăjitorul a fost distins cu Medalia Serviciului Reginei la onorurile de naștere a Reginei din 2009, pentru serviciul adus comunității. Dar, în ultimii ani, aparițiile lui Ian Brackenbury Channel din oraș au scăzut. În principal pentru că consiliul orașului i-a făcut umbră și nu a luat în considerare propunerile sale turistice. Oricum, popularitatea Vrăjitorului pare să sfideze decizia consiliului, deoarece susținătorii și-au manifestat

dragostea pentru el cu numeroase scrisori. Un nou viitor pentru The Wizard ar putea fi posibil, doar fără consiliul oraşului Christchurch.

Translation:

Accesoriile

ALL ABOUT NEWS AROUND THE WORLD, EXCLUSIVE NEWS

Christchurch says goodbye to its Wizard

Ian Brackenbury Channell was considered a living work of art by the New Zealand Art Gallery Directors Association (getty images)

Gandalf, leave that body!

The Wizard of Christchurch, New Zealand, takes his leave after 23 years of service. The city council ended the contract of Ian Brackenbury Channell, 88. This British man was hired to promote the city with “acts of wizardry and other wizard-like-services”.

Christchurch city council declared they sent a formal letter to The Wizard to thank him for his work. The spokeswoman, Lynn McClelland, admitted the difficulty of this decision, but assured that “[The Wizard] will always be a part of Christchurch history”. The city restructured its tourist plans and wants to present as more “dynamic, diverse and modern”, to attract “new residents, national and international visitors, new companies and qualified migrant workers”. Ian Brackenbury Channell took personally the fact to not correspond to the new targeted city ambiance. “That implies I’m boring and old, but there is no one else like me in Christchurch” commented The Wizard.

The Wizard arrived in 1974 in Christchurch, soon after his wizarding path really took off. In 1982, the New Zealand Art Gallery Directors Association said he had become a living work of art – the Auckland City Art Gallery document described the work’s medium as “artist’s corporeal substance” and its value as “priceless.” 8 years later, the Prime Minister Mike Moore, hired him. In a letter that The Wizard kept until those days, he was asked to become The New Zealand Wizard, a modern Gandalf, as Moore wrote himself.

Since then, The Wizard was paid 16,000 New Zealand dollars (\$10,400) annually. The Wizard was awarded the Queen's Service Medal in the 2009 Queen's Birthday Honours, for service to the community. But, during the past years, Ian Brackenbury Channell’s appearances in the city have dropped. It was mainly because the city council shadowed him and did not consider his touristic propositions. Anyways the popularity of The Wizard seems to defy the council decision as supporters manifested their love for him with numerous letters. A new future for The Wizard could be possible, just without Christchurch city council.

Where to find it:

In the Library (1.C), in the External House.

Important information:

- An interest for witchcraft and sorcery history.

2. Slate Article

What it is:

It's an article from a regional newspaper from 2016 about a group led by Lady Anascestral and their fight for the recognition of the Transylvania witch hunt.

Text: (Romanian)

Slate

22 iunie 2016

Peste 3.000 de vrăjitoare executate cu trei secole în urmă vor fi grațiate, de Mark Synon.

Între secolele al XVI-lea și al XVIII-lea, vrăjitoria a fost o crimă capitală în Transilvania. Popoarele acuzate de vrăjitorie, în mare parte femei, au fost condamnate la moarte prin spânzurare sau ardere pentru a face imposibilă îngroparea corectă a unui cadavru.

Aceste execuții au fost denunțate de gruparea activistă Baja Vrăjitoare condusă de Alcina Anascestral. Gruparea Baja Vrăjitoare a luptat de mai bine de doi ani pentru recunoașterea acestei persecuții. Este gata. Parlamentul României a adoptat o lege pentru dezincriminarea acuzațiilor de vrăjitorie și vrăjitorie postum. Legea a fost susținută activ de premierul separatist Nicola Brava.

Au fost nevoie de trei secole pentru ca Transilvania să recunoască epurările împotriva vrăjitorilor și vrăjitoarelor. Ideea unei astfel de legi a fost inspirată de un verdict al Camerei Reprezentanților din Massachusetts din 2001. Acest verdict le-a exculpat pe vrăjitoarele condamnate în timpul proceselor de la Salem. Mai simbolică decât orice, această lege a fost lăudată de Baja Vrăjitoare ca un prim pas pentru reabilitarea memoriei strămoșilor lor. În Transilvania, între 1563 și 1736, când legile vânătorii de vrăjitoare au fost desființate, au fost executați 3'837 de suspecți. 84% dintre ei erau femei.

Translation:

Slate

June 22, 2016

More than 3,000 witches executed three centuries ago will be pardoned, by Mark Synon.

Between the 16th and the 18th centuries, witchcraft was a capital crime in Transylvania. People accused of witchcraft, mostly women, were sentenced to death by hanging or burning to make it impossible to properly bury a body.

Those executions were denounced by the activist group Baja Vrăjitoare (Baja Witches) led by Alcina Anascestral. Baja Vrăjitoare group was fighting for over two years for the recognition of this persecution. It's done. The Romanian parliament adopted a law to decriminalise accusations of witchcraft and sorcery posthumously. The law was supported actively by the separatist Prime Minister Nicola Brava.

It took three centuries for Transylvania to recognise the purges against sorcerers and witches. The idea of such a law was inspired by a verdict by the Massachusetts House of Representatives from 2001. This verdict exculpated witches sentenced during Salem trials. More symbolic than anything, this law was praised by Baja Vrăjitoare as a first step for the rehabilitation of the memory of their ancestors. In

Transylvania, between 1563 and 1736, when the witch hunt laws were abolished, 3,837 suspects were executed. 84% of them were women.

Where to find it:

In the Library (1.C), in the External House.

Important information:

- Alcina Anascestral was still active around 2016.
- She had an interest in witchcraft and sorcerous history.
- She was an activist for the recognition of the witch hunts.

3. The Hat

What it is:

It's a modern but used police hat. It's Officer Mirabela Botezatu's hat left from her visit, her name can be found in it.

Where to find it:

In the Dining Room (1.D), in the External House.

Important information:

- The presence of a Police Officer at some point in the House

4. The Note

What it is:

It's a small bill on old paper about the denunciation of Anna Goldi by Lady Anascestral for witchcraft and her execution by an unknown authority, in 1881.

Text: (Romanian):

Dragă Lady Anascestral,

Vă mulțumim pentru participarea la procesul Anna Goldi. Acuzata a fost dovedită vinovată de vrăjitorie, seducție și vrăjire a angajatorului ei, baronul Stroud. Ea va fi executată în această marți, a doua august 1881.

Translation:

Dear Lady Anascestral,

Thank you for your participation in the process of Anna Goldi. The accused was proved guilty of witchcraft, seduction and enchantment of her employer the Baron Stroud. She will be executed this Tuesday, August the second, 1881.

Where to find it:

In the Master Bedroom (2.C), in the External House.

Important information:

- An interest in witchcraft and sorcery history.

- Lady Anascestral denounced a supposed witch.
- Lady Anascestral was born before 1881.

5. Tom's Letter

What it is:

It's an old (love) letter from Tom Slather to Alcina Anascestral, about her hosted party in her newly acquired House.

Text: (French):

Ma chère Anascestral, hôte des hôtes,
On ne pourra pas se mentir en disant que si
nos attentes étaient grandes, Alcina,
c'est certain, vous les avez surpassées de façon optimum.
Oh dubitatif, mon inquiétude vola
en éclat face à la taille surprenante de votre bordj.
Une réception exceptionnelle qui sera
remémorée et nous l'espérons, oh,
nombreuses fois reconduites prochainement.
En ami, il faut vous avouer, à
bien y réfléchir, trouver,
à la volée, chaque fois un nouveau lieu
titanesque de la taille d'un bourg
qui puisse nous accueillir, était un long
, un peu trop hasardeux, processus qui
en votre trouvaille prend fin.
Pour soutenir votre aplomb,
oh, je vous ferais parvenir un cadeau,
un sublime scotch
russe aux arômes subtils.
Vous le découvrirez lors de notre,
oh combien attendue, soirée en or.
Une excitante attente déjà m'assaille.
Sous votre charme, Tom.

Direct Translation:

My dear Anascestral, hostess of the hostess,
We can't lie saying that if
Our expectations were huge, Alcina,
It's certain, you surpassed them with optimal results.
Oh, doubtful, my doubts were
Crushed when we saw the size of your House.
A fabulous reception that will
Remember and, we hope, oh,
Numerous times renewed soon;
As a friend, I have to say,
Thinking about it, find,
Like that, every time a new place
Huge as a town
That could host us, was long
, a little too hazardous, process that
With your discovery ended.
To support your poise,
Oh, I will send you a gift,
A great scotch
Russian with subtle aromas.
You will discover it during our meeting,
So much expected, gold evening.
An exciting suspense already gains me.
Under your charm, Tom.

Translation:

My dear Alcina, stunning augur,

Your success is undeniable.

Ho! Thank you so much.

Expectations were challenging, at least
and your discovery was fantastico.

Regarding the difficulties we had to find a charm
that own a House adequately substantial,
in size, to welcome us all.

Sincerely, you saved us here Alcina.

All we can expect is that your new home,
 luxurious as it is, will church
 lot of, if not all, our future parties of our act.
 You will receive not less than fifteen
 of your favourite wine from Guiyang.
 Upholding your ascension, since Albi,
 reassure yourself, for you I will be there.
 Sincerely, Tom Slather

Where to find it:

In the Master Bedroom (2.C), in the External House.

Important information:

- The gathering of an organisation (The Past Cult) in the House.
- The Anascestral House was big enough to discretely host an enormous number of guests.
- The organisation (The Past Cult) had difficulties finding such a place.
- Lady Anascestral had a strong personality.

Bonus information:

- Tom was an admirer (maybe a lover) of Lady Anascestral
 - The first letter of each line reveal: My heart is all yours (Mon Cœur ne bat que pour vous / My heart only beats for you – in French/direct Translation)
- The Cult venerated Shub Niggurath
 - The last letter of each line in revers reveal: Reign the All Mother (Mere Shub Niggurath à jamais/ Mother Shub Niggurath for ever – in French/direct Translation)

6. ID card

What it is:

The ID card of Alina Baci, the 16-year-old runaway girl.

Where to find it:

In the Bedroom 3. (2.H), in the External House.

Important information:

- The name Alina Baci
- She is 16
- She is Romanian

7. The Plan

What it is:

The Plan of the Anascestral House as proposed by an English designer. Some details (in the third floor) differ between the Plan and the building.

Where to find it:

In the Attic (3.F) , in the External House.

Important information:

- The stairs are confusing.
- There are a Roof (3.G) room and an Attic (3.F) room (but not with doors as designed).
- The dimensions are described. They are not totally accurate.

8. Satyp Article

What it is:

It's an article from a local newspaper about ritual desecration of a church in Domaşnea, near the Anascestral House.

Text: (Romanian):

Satyp

5 martie 1895

Ritual întunecat în Domaşnea

A fost o ceremonie întunecată găzduită în capela Sfântul Atanaie de Athon din Domaşnea? Numeroase indicii ne lasă să credem. Picturile satanice de pe pereții capelei și urmele unui ritual ciudat sunt suficiente pentru a provoca un profund disconfort, chiar și pentru cei mai flegmatici anchetatori.

Se deschide o anchetă, toți martorii sunt chemați să se prezinte la secția de poliție Sănățești.

Translation:

Satyp

5th March, 1895

Black mass in Domaşnea

Was a dark ceremony hosted in Saint Athanaius of Athon chapel in Domaşnea? Numerous clues let us believe it. The satanic paintings on the chapel walls and traces of a strange ritual are enough to cause profound discomfort, even for the most phlegmatic investigators.

An investigation is open, all witnesses are called to report to the Sănățești police station.

Where to find it:

In the Attic (3.G), in the External House.

Important information:

- A dark ceremony was hosted in a chapel near the Anascestral House.
- There were some police investigations into the Past Cult activities (they never lead to anything).

9. Birth certificate

What it is:

It's the birth certificate of Alcina Anascestral, born Maria Alcina Carmen MILET, the 30th of May 1860, in France.

Text: (French):

REPUBLIQUE FRANCAISE
DEPARTEMENT DES PYRENEES-ORIENTALES
VILLE DE PERPIGNAN
EXTRAIT D'ACTE DE NAISSANCE

L'an mil huit cent soixante
et le vingt huit janvier
à une heures trente est né à Perpignan
un enfant du sexe féminin qui à reçu les prénoms
de Maria, Alcina, Carmen
et dont le père est le sieur Manuel MILET né le
trente mai mil huit cent quarante
quatre à SANTA BARBARA (Espagne)

et la mère, la dame son épouse Maria Térésa
GOMEZ, née le vingt un avril
mil huit cent quarante à SARRAGOSSE (Espagne)
domiciliés Perpignan,

On lit en marge :

Certifié le présent extrait conforme aux indications
portées au registre par Nous,
Officier de l'Etat Civil de la Ville de Perpignan.

Perpignan, le vingt cinq septembre
Mil huit cent quatre soixante

L'Officier de l'Etat Civil,
Le Chef de Service délégué

Direct Translation :

FRENCH REPUBLIC
PYRENEES-ORIENTAL DEPARTMENT
CITY OF PERPIGNAN
BIRTH CERTIFICATE

The year one thousand eight hundred and sixty
and the twenty-eighth of January
at half-past one was born in Perpignan
a child of the female sex who received the first names
by Maria, Alcina, Carmen
and whose father is Mr. Manuel MILET born on the
thirtieth of May, one thousand eight hundred and forty-
four in SANTA BARBARA (Spain)

and the mother, the lady his wife Maria Térésa
GOMEZ, born on April 21
one thousand eight hundred and forty in
SARRAGOSSA (Spain) domiciled in Perpignan,

We read in the margin:

Certified this extract in accordance with the
indications entered in the register by Us,
Civil Registrar of the City of Perpignan.

Perpignan, September 25
one thousand eight hundred four sixty

The civil registration officer,
The Delegate Head of Service

Translation:

CERTIFIED COPY OF BIRTH RECORD , REGISTRATION NUMBER 7791

NAME OF CHILD – FIRST NAME: MARIA | MIDDLE NAME: ALCINA, CARMEN | LAST NAME: MILET

SEX: FEMALE | DATE OF BIRTH - MONTH DAY YEAR: JAN, 28TH 1860

PLACE OF BIRTH – CITY OR TOWN: PERPIGNAN | PLACE OF BIRTH – COUNTY: PYRENEES-ORIENTALES

MAIDEN NAME OF MOTHER: MARIA TERESA GOMEZ | COLOR OR RACE: WHITE

NAME OF FATHER: MANUEL MILET | COLOR OR RACE: WHITE

DATE RECEIVED BY LOCAL REGISTRAR: JAN, 30TH 1860 | DATE(S) OF CORRECTION(S), IF ANY:

This is to certify, that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of statements appearing on the record of
birth of the above-named child, as filed in this office

SIGNATURE OF CERTIFYING OFFICIAL: Learge M. Ufil. M.W. | OFFICIAL TITLE: Health Officer & Registrar

PLACE OF CERTIFICATION: PERPIGNAN | DATE CERTIFIED: JAN, 30TH 1860

French Republic, DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Where to find it:

In the Inner House.

Important information:

- Alcina's original identity and origin.
- Alcina has had an abnormally long life.