

Chapter 0 - prologue

You awake in the early hours of the night. Not a sound can be heard, not even your own breathing after all... you are dead.

By all accounts it should be like any other night, but for some reason you can't quite put your finger on you feel uneasy, everything seems... wrong somehow...

Yesterday you returned from collecting Kate Nightshade from the exceptionally eccentric Nightshade family, when you got back home you followed your routine as usual. Everything was fine but now that you awake, you aren't so certain of that.

The player may now explore and interact with the environment to determine the source of their unease, perception checks are allowed and will lead them outside. If they choose to explore the house you can scatter some strange items around. whenever they find an item, give them a headache:

- A tuft of fur
- drops of unexplained blood
- moved items
- missing hunting trophy

Outside:

It's clear to you now what has set you on edge, the thick smell of iron hangs in the air. It's clearly drifting from somewhere within the woods.

Player pursues the smell

As you follow the smell you notice a fractured antler on the ground at the base of a tree, this isn't necessarily irregular so you pay it no mind.

Player continues on

Squeezing through a dense thicket, the forest seems to grow darker, and an eerie silence envelops your surroundings. The broken antler you initially dismissed now takes on a more unsettling significance. Each step reveals a new anomaly, a scattering of feathers, a desiccated wing, and the remnants of a bird's nest. The air becomes heavy with an otherworldly tension, and you can't shake the feeling that you're being watched.

Player continues on

As you press on, the trail leads you to a small clearing bathed in an unnatural, pale light. In the center stands an ancient, gnarled tree with twisted roots and strange symbols are carved into its

bark. The clearing is adorned with peculiar artifacts: a collection of antlers arranged in a circular pattern, a mosaic of feathers arranged like a bizarre tapestry, and odd-shaped stones arranged in a cryptic formation. A thin mist hangs on the bottom of the clearing. The air becomes charged with an enigmatic energy as you approach the heart of the clearing, entering a mist that seems to distort reality. It's as if the boundary between the natural and supernatural worlds has blurred.

Player move closer

As you move, you notice movement in front of the tree, a sinister transformation takes hold of the once-random collection of animal parts. The antlers, feathers, and bones begin to writhe and contort, melding into a grotesque and nightmarish entity. Its form is a grotesque amalgamation of feral limbs, twisted horns, and leathery wings, casting an unsettling shadow across the clearing. The air seems to grow thick with malevolence as the creature fixes its unsettling gaze upon you. Empty eye sockets, devoid of any recognizable emotion, lock onto your presence, It simply stares. The ground beneath it seems to decay, and a sickly odor permeates the air.

The creature extends a grotesque appendage, a cluster of twisted vines and skeletal fragments. The tormented whispers in the air reach a haunting crescendo, echoing through the ages. When done, you realise its pointing at you.

Blood trickles from its eye sockets as it opens its maw, an unrecognisable screech fills the air and you begin to experience an intense headache. It is a communication that transcends words, delving into the depths of primordial understanding. Images flash into your mind painting a grim picture of forbidden rituals, forgotten masters, eventually settling on the image of a very old kinred.

As you view them they turn to you and smile. "Welcome, to my madness" he says, the headache peaks and you lose consiousness, "Find the heretics, they won't have gone far."

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