

THE OLDEST HOUSE

KEEPER'S MYSTERY GUIDE

THE OLDEST HOUSE 1/51

Complexity: 8

Main Location: [REDACTED]

Date: [REDACTED]

Contact: the Oldest Cat (they/them)

OMEN-CLASS MONSTERS, several personnel, agents, and OMEN-CLASS monsters have been reported missing, changed, or terminated. BLACK ALERT PROTOCOLS ACTIVATED. Do not approach the Oldest House. It does not exist. Its lies are ancient and inescapable. It is hungry and cannot be sated. The Oldest Cat has come to me in my dreams and purred against what's left of my heart, but I can't remember, I can't remember what the Oldest House wants me to do, I need to disappear, I need to become changed and unchanged, body and unbody and please don't open the door don't open the door don't open the door I don't want to please please please - [END OF TRANSMISSION]

CONTENT WARNING: *Amnesia, unreliable and fragile memory, body horror.*



Description

There is a singular place that is older than the universe itself. It has taken on many forms over the millennia, both horrifying and comforting. Eventually, it named itself the Oldest House. It has its own sentience, desire, and agenda.

The Oldest House can appear anywhere. People in the area will have their minds and hearts slowly and gently rewritten. If enough time passes, they will believe the Oldest House has always been there. It will become beloved. Sometimes it appears as a quaint cottage, an old office building, a lonely hotel, or an abandoned mansion.

Then the House will begin to call out. The Oldest House is seeking something or someone. One by one, humans and monsters alike will wander into the Oldest House. Soon, the people who once knew and loved them will forget they ever existed. After a while, the Oldest House disappears. When the Oldest House leaves, it leaves behind something or someone. New monsters birthed, new folktales that somehow have always been told, new people with beautifully crafted memories that will change the world around them forever. Often, whatever is left behind by the Oldest House can be used by the Harbingers of the apocalypse.

DIVISION has been aware of the Oldest House for quite some time. Rumors have it that several key personnel of DIVISION were rescued from the Oldest House. Other rumors suggest that DIVISION owes much of its power to what the Oldest House has left behind.

DIVISION reports of the Oldest House are inconsistent, confusing, and obfuscate more than they clarify. A litany of eyewitness reports contradict each other. Evidence gone missing, or taken on new forms. Photographic and video evidence grows strange, especially if left alone and unobserved. Some DIVISION personnel have only one job—to ensure a pair of eyes are always watching the evidence and listening to its whispers.

It doesn't seem to help. Evidence remains the same, but the personnel will find themselves deeply changed and will dream of the Oldest House. Many of them disappear under mysterious circumstances, leaving behind strange letters, warnings, and manifestos.

The Oldest House has found its way into the heart of DIVISION. Its power is now tied to one of the strangest places on earth. It calls out, and several agents have gone missing. With every passing moment, DIVISION is changing into whatever the Oldest House wants it to be.

Beginning the Mystery

DIVISION's monstrous agents find themselves standing in front of the Oldest House. Their memories are hazy and nonsensical, often contradictory. When the PCs look down, they'll find they each bear the mark of the Oldest House: an inverted black pyramid that pulses under the skin. It rotates slowly when no one is looking at it.

The Oldest House has currently taken on the form of an oppressive government building—its Brutalist architecture is intimidating and larger than life.

The Oldest Cat sits patiently at the glass doors of the Oldest House. They are a sphinx cat, their hairless skin a curious shade of lavender. They watch the PCs with large eyes of amber.

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Establishing Questions

Ask each one to a different PC:

- ✿ **The Oldest Cat once came into your dreams to save your life.** How did they help you? Why didn't they erase your memories of the encounter?
- ✿ **You were part of the first team sent in to infiltrate the Oldest House.** Only you survived. What are you afraid of seeing again in the Oldest House? Which agent still haunts your dreams, begging you to rescue them?

Contact: the Oldest Cat (*they/them*)

The Oldest Cat speaks in a soft and measured voice that almost sounds like a hymn. While their hairless skin appears lavender, upon closer inspection, it is clear that the cat has been tattooed in the most delicate purple inks. The layers of tattoos are difficult to decipher, but appear to be ancient symbols from cultures all over the world. Fine jewelry hangs from their neck.



The Oldest Cat beckons the monsters into the Oldest House. They ask the PCs to stay close and to not stray from the path. Whether or not the PCs choose to enter the Oldest House, they find that it will build itself around them. A wooden panel here, a grey carpet under the feet, a fluorescent office light suddenly appears above. A painting hangs behind them that reflects a recurring dream one of the PCs has.

The Oldest Cat expresses their distaste over the rudeness of the Oldest House and waits until the house has settled into its desired shape. The cat explains their own power is dwindling, as powerful infiltrators are corrupting and claiming the power of the Oldest House.

The halls are dark wood, and its walls pulsate like a beating heart. Paintings hang on either side, but every subject has their back turned—or they are covering their faces with their hands. Underneath each painting, small plaques have strange titles upon them, such as “The Garden Eternal,” “The Cracked Vow,” or “The Night’s Scream.”

The Oldest Cat brings the PCs into a room filled with outdated computers. The monitors flicker on and the keyboards softly type whatever is said, or unsaid, in the room.

The Oldest Cat cannot trust their own memories. They only know that someone or something has infiltrated the Oldest House, and it was not called or invited in. The Oldest Cat knows that this is not the first time the PCs have come here, and they suspect that they and the Oldest Cat have made several attempts to take back the Oldest House. However, they are more confident about success this time around, “Call it a cat’s intuition,” they’ll say.

At this point, several dot matrix printers start up by themselves, and threatening messages come through. “GO NO FURTHER,” “DIVISION IS OURS,” “THE APOCALYPSE ON OUR TERMS,” and so on.

But a few of the printers, hastily painted in thick strokes of red, print out other messages from personnel or agents from DIVISION that the PCs have worked with in the past. “HELP US,” “YOU ALMOST MADE IT LAST TIME,” “PLEASE DON’T GIVE UP,” and similar.

Custom Move: Servants of the Oldest Cat

When you attempt to follow the Oldest Cat’s guidance to navigate the Oldest House, spend Darkness Tokens and roll.

ON AN 8-10 you wander into a welcoming area of the Oldest House. Choose one:

- ✿ You find a friendly face
- ✿ You find an object from the Oldest Cat that can help you
- ✿ You find evidence from your past self about what to do next

ON AN 11+ the Oldest House responds to your presence. Choose one from above, but the Keeper will describe what challenges or monsters you find waiting for you here.

ON A 7- the infiltrators intervene and temporarily cut off communication with the Oldest Cat. Prepare for the horrors of reality fully corrupted.

New Keeper Moves

Some new moves to consider using to best portray the strangeness of the Oldest House:

- ✿ Rewrite a small but essential part of reality
- ✿ Defy physics or natural laws
- ✿ Trap the PCs in their dreams or their past
- ✿ Introduce a victim of the Oldest House
- ✿ Invoke the memories and secrets of the Oldest House
- ✿ Infuse magic into mundane technology
- ✿ Reveal evidence of a memory erased or altered

Note

You are encouraged to offer this Mystery after the PCs have spent some time interacting favorably with DIVISION agents and personnel.

Reincorporate characters who showed up in previous Mysteries. Present these characters as significantly changed by the Oldest House.

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People of Interest

THE OLDEST WITCH *(they/them)*

Long bedraggled hair, blindfolded, mouths carefully placed on palms but sewn shut.

The Oldest Witch doesn't speak out loud. Instead, their words scratch and ease into your mind. When their hair parts, different faces appear each time. Sometimes the face is smooth, soft, and smiling. Other times, the face is wretched, twisted, and despairing.

The Oldest Witch speaks in riddles and part truths. But often they say something deeply intimate only the monsters would understand. It's clear they are in much pain, unable to perceive reality clearly. Their heart is the heart of the Oldest House, and they can feel the infiltrators corrupting its power without mercy.

The witch is infected by a dream of the Oldest House, which twists their tongue and makes it impossible for them to speak clearly. They hope that someone from DIVISION can shatter the dream.

QUOTE: *Have you seen the rose? Shattered by your breath? You held it in your hands, didn't you, cutting me open with your thorns? No? No? Why can't you remember, you remembered the last time you were here. Surely, an illusion you must be.*

SUSAN LOPEZ *(she/her)*

Former DIVISION agent. Thick hair pulled back into a messy bun, broken glasses, pristine suit. Agent Lopez' skin is scarred and peeling. If she breathes too deeply, a new eye appears somewhere on her body, slowly cracking a lid open. As the conversation continues, more eyes will reveal themselves, each moving independently. Some of the eyes will cry strangely bright tears.

Agent Lopez has no clear memories, and will often "reset" in the middle of a conversation. She'll stop and repeat her terse and straightforward introduction. The reset times appear to be random, but a reset often comes on if she feels agitated or upset. If someone asks about the eyes on her skin, she will look confused. She is unable to see or feel them.

QUOTE: *Agent Lopez here. Are you the new team DIVISION has sent in? I hope you'll do better than the last group they sent in, they barely survived five minutes. When we went up against the... when we saw the... and then... the screams, I couldn't look away, they wouldn't let me look away I... Agent Lopez here. Are you the new team DIVISION has sent in?*

THE HANGED MAN *(he/they)*

Applying for the position of monstrous agent at DIVISION. Painfully thin and tall. Elongated Limbs. Black suit. No face. The Hanged Man has a black noose tied around their neck. They speak in a carefully clipped accent and cheerful tone, but there is no clear indication of how they are able to speak.



When the PCs arrive, the Hanged Man is eager to help, he may even be trying to make sense of a **Key**. The Hanged Man explains that he came to DIVISION for the Omen application process, and he is aware of the PC's many exploits. He is quite perky and optimistic, and is under the mistaken impression that all of this is part of an exam to test their skills.

QUOTE: *Oh hello! Hello! Ahem, yes! The Hanged Man here, terribly pleased to make your acquaintance. Oh my, to meet you lot in person, to stand in the presence of such fine heroes! What fine Omens you are! Are you here to check in on the applicants?*

SISTER MIDNIGHT *(all pronouns)*

Muse, large black eyes that contain a galaxy.

Soft and full bodied, dressed in exquisite finery and silks. Sister Midnight looks like she stepped out of a Renaissance painting. He smells of the forest after the rain. Sister Midnight's form subtly changes from moment to moment, appearing more masculine or feminine between breaths.

They were a muse to a painter that time forgot many lifetimes ago. Sister Midnight will leave from time to time, sometimes taking on the shape of an animal, to visit an artist in need of inspiration. She is fond of the Oldest House, even if she is technically a prisoner there.

QUOTE: *I understand that the Oldest House is dying. Such a shame, really. I don't feel alive anymore, so I suppose dying along with the house won't be too terrible. I will be sad to say goodbye to that charming agent. Walker is terribly handsome, but I daren't tell her that.*

ADRIAN WALKER *(she/her)*

Agent of the BUREAU. Slicked back red hair, a trench coat covering a badly damaged suit, goggles that glow in the dark. Agent Walker is shocked to meet DIVISION agents, and murmurs worriedly about converging timelines and reality degradation. When pressed, she will insist that "The BUREAU and DIVISION cannot exist in the same time and space."

The Bastion for Universal Research, Extranormal Affairs and the Unusual (BUREAU) is a shadowy organization from another reality, classified as a rival to DIVISION's interests. Adrian has heard the terrible things DIVISION is capable of, but is also determined to uncover every secret available to her.

Agent Walker has spent the last 20 years in the Oldest House, attempting to unlock its secrets and find the source of its power. She has not aged and is not sure why. She is desperately in love with Sister Midnight, but does not dare to emotionally entangle herself with a supernatural anomaly like them.

QUOTE: *Well, now that you're here, I suppose there isn't much else we can do but team up. But please, try to not trip through any more reality breaches or trigger any alarms. I've heard stories about DIVISION, I suppose we'll see how true they are.*



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The Infiltrators

The PCs have to figure out what the infiltrators are and what they are trying to do to the Oldest House. While the PCs uncover Keys and try to make sense of them, focus on making the infiltrators be foreboding and terrifying presence who are trying to expel the PCs.

Infiltrators often shapeshift to take on more innocuous forms. A painting on the wall, a locked chest, a mug by a computer. When the monsters least expect it, describe an infiltrator revealing itself, drawing random objects towards it and reshaping them into something sinister or haunting.

The more powerful infiltrators will use the fallen bodies of previous victims of the Oldest House and former DIVISION agents, combining several of them together to create something truly terrible.

The infiltrators are violent, deadly, and horrifying.

Locations

THE COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

The halls are filled with dozens of red rotary phones. Operators place white-knuckled hands on the phones, each one patiently stands by with strained smiles. The operators never blink. *When the phone rings, what strange sounds or words do you hear? What are the voices telling you to do?*

THE CATACOMBS

The boiler room's pipes and metal give way to ancient stone and tombs. In the distance, there is the sound of metal clanging on metal, and the soft sound of a choir. *Why do you recognize the ghosts that haunt this place? What do they want?*

THE CONTROL ROOM

Bodies are suspended near the ceiling, twisting and turning gently. They are all deeply asleep, their dreams slowly leaking out of their heads. Below them is a sea of computers, spewing out floppy disks that record the dreams. *What shared dream are they all creating?*

THE HOTEL LOBBY

A grand chandelier, lush carpeting, a friendly swarm of bellboys. The concierge beckons you over and hands you your room key. The contact triggers a violent flashback. *What horrifying thing is waiting for you in your hotel room?*

THE SURVEILLANCE ROOM

Dozens of screens flicker in unison, each one showing a live feed. An empty seat is covered in blood. You see past versions of yourselves on the screens. *What do you see your past self doing that shocks you?*

THE RITUAL ROOM

Hundreds of cubicles stretch as far as the eye can see. Each cubicle houses a CRT monitor that slowly bleeds static and ichor onto the desk. *What ritual signs do you recognize? What are the computers summoning?*

THE MUSEUM

Beautifully lit exhibits feature key moments in the history of DIVISION. *How is your most harrowing moment portrayed here, for all to see?*

THE DIRECTOR'S OFFICE

The office is sparse and unwelcoming, a table sits in a painfully open space. *What evidence of violence do you find here? What is the murder weapon?*

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Keys of the Apocalypse

- ✿ a floppy disk with the words "don't forget" scrawled on it
- ✿ an antique rotary phone with blood splattered on it, it starts to ring
- ✿ a phone booth built into an improbable place, a skeleton made of obsidian rests inside
- ✿ Post-it notes cover every available space, each one bearing frenzied warnings
- ✿ a corpse wrapped in red telephone cord
- ✿ a dossier containing files of several members of DIVISION, revealing dark secrets
- ✿ a group of ghosts hovering in mid-air, swaying gently in a breeze no one feels
- ✿ an entire room that holds a large computer, made of hundreds of parts—reel-to-reel tapes play conversations no one remembers
- ✿ a fax machine prints out pages full of blank ink, ghost-white eyes watch from each page
- ✿ a rainstorm trapped in a single room
- ✿ a microcassette recorder, the PC who finds it recognizes their own voice, "Please listen to me, I don't have much time before the next reset"
- ✿ plans of a secret underground facility for DIVISION
- ✿ a statue of an office worker embracing a keyboard, their eyes closed in bliss
- ✿ a painting that gently bleeds, soft sighs coming from the black void in the middle of it
- ✿ a lie detector machine that responds to the thoughts of those nearby
- ✿ a Victorian style baby carriage that gently leaks suffocating smoke
- ✿ a staircase that descends forever, muffled sounds of pain come from deep below
- ✿ the Service Weapon changes form depending on who wields it—a pistol, a mythic hammer, a holy sword, a whip of chains
- ✿ old photographs of an abandoned bunker full of shadows, the figures move closer and closer
- ✿ a large brain that slowly drags itself across the floor before skittering away into the shadows
- ✿ a towering stack of books that detail with haunting accuracy the entire lives of the PCs
- ✿ a Betamax tape, its label a series of numbers and letters. When played, it shows an instructional government video that cheerfully details how to handle "a soul reassignment"

Facets

- ✿ Missing Memories
- ✿ Time Restarting
- ✿ The Harbinger
- ✿ The Door of Power
- ✿ DIVISION's connection with the Oldest House

Doomsday Clock (ticks: 8)

MOMENT

Dozens of projectors descend from the ceiling, displaying video footage from different timelines. There is truth in the contradictions, patterns that cannot be ignored.

- ✿ What cold announcement comes from unseen speakers?

INTRIGUE

A spinning black pyramid immense and hanging upside down in the air. Distorted voices speak at different volumes, a single voice breaks through "The threads of time cannot take much more, we are running out of chances. We must proceed."

- ✿ What do we see of the Oracle that translates what the chorus says?
- ✿ What are the effects of time breaking down?

EVENT

The Oldest House begins to dream. Pathways and walls rearrange themselves into illogical patterns, gravity is an illusion. Infiltrators attack the agents.

- ✿ A doppelgänger who wears the face of a beloved NPC appears to command the infiltrators, who is it?

INTRIGUE

An office with the sharp smell of disinfectant stretches out into the distance. A cassette tape and gun lay next to each other on the desk. The cassette tape plays itself, and a group of voices speak in perfect unison, "The initial stage of the soul transfer has proven successful, we must follow the rest of the procedure with great care."

- ✿ Who waits, cowering in the corner, regretting what they have done?
- ✿ What message is scrawled on the cassette tape's label?

MOMENT

Paintings larger than life, faces that slowly erase themselves. Under the paint are whispers and messages, blood and blades.

- ✿ Who is painted to reflect a different timeline?

EVENT

The Oldest Fears have broken past decaying seals, and they stalk the PCs. They warp reality into dagger sharp focus, and the infiltrators take advantage of the chaos.

- ✿ What face does the strongest Fear wear?
- ✿ Which of the PCs is unaffected by the Oldest Fears? Why?

INTRIGUE

A chorus of voices stand around the Oldest Door. A red phone appears in front of the red door. The Oracle steps forward, and picks up the phone. Wherever the PCs are, a red phone appears and begins to ring. Whether or not someone picks up the receiver, a distorted voice echoes in everyone's mind, "Thank you for your cooperation. Your services will no longer be required, DIVISION belongs to us now."

- ✿ Who recognizes the voice of the Oracle?

THE DOOR OPENS

The Oldest House begins to fold in on itself and all of reality will soon follow. New patterns, new timelines, new realities, a new DIVISION, a new world. The Harbinger has unlocked the ancient Door of Power.

- ✿ When the door opens, who is most affected by the timeline reset?
- ✿ What power or wisdom does the Harbinger take from beyond the door?

