

OPERATION BOONDOCK RATS

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A 3rd N@TO Contest Scenario By Agent_Obtuse

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Feature Warning: This Scenario Is Rated "R" For

- + *Strong Graphic Violence*
- + *Possible Sexuality*
- + *Strong Language*
- + *Pervasive Horror*
- + *Mundanger*
- + *The Tree of Liberty Must Be Refreshed From Time to Time...*
- + *A Friendly NPC That's Actually Helpful*

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THE FOLLOWING OPERATION IS R-RATED AND
EYES-ONLY HALLOWEEN-13/TOP
SECRET/NOFORN/ARGONAUT

IF YOU ARE NOT A HANDLER, STOP READING
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IMMEDIATELY

Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	2
BRIEFING	3
HANDLER NOTES	3
CAMP COUNSELORS	4
LOCALS, COPS AND NEWCOMERS	5
HERB "DIEHARD" DEXTER	7
THE "PONDECHAIN MONSTER"	8
PLACES TO VISIT IN CURTIS	9
KEY TO PLACES AROUND LAKE PONDECHAIN	10
THE TUNNELS	12

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In August 1982 Tim Gorey – a young traveling salesman for the *Anglo-American Cyclopaedia* – vanished while visiting the tiny town of Curtis, Connecticut. Locals, not being big fans of door-to-door salesmen, especially those with an eye for housewives, told him the nearest hotel was at nearby Lake Pondechain. None said it had closed for the season.

Herb Dexter was the hotel's caretaker. A Vietnam vet and "tunnel rat" who'd infiltrated Viet Cong tunnels, Herb returned from the war with a head full of Agent Orange and a pathological desire to dig the world. In a bout of uncommon generosity, he found Gorey sleeping outside the hotel and brought the young man to his home, letting him share dinner with himself and his far younger wife, Carol, and stay in the spare bedroom.

But tired of her husband and drawn to the handsome visitor, Carol sneaked into Gorey's room and begged him to take her with him. Before too long they were in a tryst, and Herb caught them in the act. He knocked Gorey unconscious. Gorey woke to find himself chained up in Herb's basement.

For some forty years Gorey was held captive, tortured, mutilated and fed on filth. His mind snapped, regressing him to a bestial state. Beaten and gaslight into submission, Carol fell into her own madness and died in a car crash in 1992 – she never told a soul about the man in her cellar.

Recently Herb slipped up with his toy and Gorey broke free, savaging Herb's arm before fleeing into the woods. Herb has been tracking him down ever since, with the intention of bringing him home for more torture.

Last week, twin brothers hunting in Pondechain forest saw the emaciated visage of Gorey feeding on the carcass of a deer. Thinking it a cryptid, they contacted conspiracy site PX-Penumbra. A few days later, a gas-station attendant on the road by the forest told police he saw a "big foot" like creature skulking near his workplace.

One of Delta Green's friendlies picked up the story and, believing (incorrectly) it had to do with a historic 1972 operation at the lake, told his case officer friend. The Agents are being sent in without official law-enforcement cover to investigate the "Pondechain Monster."

Meanwhile: on Lake Pondechain's bank, a half-dozen counselors are readying the local summer camp for the annual influx of kids. Last night two of them, Sherry Purtz and Luke Elwood, sneaked off to investigate rumors of a spooky old cemetery hidden in the woods.

Believing Purtz was interested in him, Elwood aggressively came onto her. Purtz said no. In a rage, Elwood killed her with a rock. None of the other counselors know the pair went out and believe Purtz has gone AWOL. They won't begin searching or call the police until the afternoon, by which point Gorey has tried to bury Purtz's body, destroying any evidence of Elwood's crime. Once Purtz's corpse is found it won't be long before people blame the cryptid for the killing – likely kick-starting a monster-hunt as out-of-towners arrive to catch the dangerous beast.

BRIEFING

This Opera's case officer is a Friendly by the name of Buddy Saul. A fun-loving retired Connecticut State Police captain and former-Cowboy, Saul has a fondness for bourbon, silk bowling shirts and slovenly personal hygiene. He drives around in his RV, following up on strange events and bringing the serious ones to the Program's (or Outlaws') attention. Buddy Saul meets the Agents in a Walmart parking lot near Curtis to brief them.

Having seen a lot of weird stuff in his time, Buddy Saul's concerned this Opera may be to do with things he calls the "Purple People Eaters" (ghouls). They're big as a man, tough as a bear, fast as a wild cat and got teeth that can bite your head off. He tells the team to be careful.

The 1972 Operation: Buddy Saul says that back in mid-90s he heard from a G-Cell friend of a friend that DG had taken part in an Opera out at Lake Pondechain. Supposedly five or six teens, playing with a Ouija board, had called up "something" from the lake. What it was he's not sure, but he doesn't think it's a lie. Delta Green lacks any records on the case but they've got no reason to believe it isn't true. Agents can always check with locals, historical records or newspaper morgues if they want.

HANDLER NOTES

This scenario has no supernatural goings-on, making it a handy break for Agents low on SAN.

Things to play-up might include:

- Keep Agents thinking there's a bigger monster-mash going on here than there is. Imply the tunnels are made by ghouls, have locals refer to the mysterious 1972 lake incident, insinuate that any lights seen in the forest are mi-go or other beasties, etc.
- The forest is big and dark and spooky; city-slicker Agents should be out of their depth. Have them go in a circle, returning to the same location they left. When that gets boring, an NPC appears.
- If you have a regular PX-Penumbra NPC, throw them in as a wrench.
- If things are slowing down, let the police deputize locals for a monster/murderer-hunt. Agents might join the search – or get shot at by trigger-happy hunters.
- Play Herb and Elwood as too helpful in wanting to "assist" (hoodwink) the Agents. Everyone else should be legitimately helpful, though Agents probably won't realize it until too late.

> 1980s Camp Horror/Teenage Shenanigans

It's possible to run this scenario with players as pre-gen camp counselors. One of them should be Purtz's murderer, with his (or her) job being to cover up their crime, while the others investigate the monster sightings. Herb, Gorey, cops, and Delta Green agents traipse through the setting causing trouble for everyone. Adapt stats and skills as required.

> Connecticut Gun Laws

Remind Agents Connecticut has stringent gun laws; firearms cannot be loaded with more than 10-rounds and other states' permits are not recognized. Curtis' police are pretty lenient with out-of-towners "hunting" with bolt-action or semi-auto long-arms and shotguns, so long as they lock them in a trunk car-safe or give them to the Chief when not in use. Handguns and full-auto weapons will be seized and the courts involved, something that may be potentially job-threatening.

CAMP COUNSELORS

Seven camp counselors are meant to be working at Camp Pondechain, readying the place for the next batch of kids. Unless the Agents have a good reason to be on camp property (**Law**, claiming to be monster-hunters – everyone loves PX-Penumbra after all – etc.), lead-counselor Huddle tells them to go or calls the cops. The teens may be more accommodating if Huddle's driven into town.

Counselor Sherry Purtz was murdered last night by counselor Luke Elwood. No one begins looking for her until the afternoon. Once the murder's discovered, the counselors are locked down on-site for 24-hours under guard for interviews and a property search. They're later taken to Curtis to wait until their parents can collect them.

Since Huddle has jokingly told them about the "lake monster" they may do their own investigating.

> **Rhett Huddle (25)**: Though he'd rather be at home with his fiancée, Politics grad-student Huddle signed up for temp-work with an agency and wound up here. He's going through the motions, bored out of his mind and trying his best to keep away from Naomi Ling. He's the only one with a car and sometimes drives into town to pick up supplies.

> **Tonya Wobash (20)**: Short, redheaded and chubby (she's hoping to lose as much weight as possible during her time in the forest), Tonya's the serious one. Self-declared second-in-command to Huddle, she spends more time telling people what to do and complaining than helping fix it.

> **Raoul Sanfuentes (18)**: Straight-edge and sarcastic, Raoul's a prankster and self-professed ladies-man with a line in jokes out of the 1980s-teen-comedy playbook. Dressing up as a zombie, propping buckets of water on doorjams, leaving frogs in people's beds – everything's funny to him.

> **Naomi Ling (18)**: From California, Naomi's her college's swim champion, track-and-field leader and the tomboy of the group, always up for manual labor, physical fitness and adventure. She has a very blatant crush on Huddle and fears the other girls may be after him too. They're not.

> **Marlon Meeks (18)**: Inquisitive but easily flustered, Marlon is just here to make new friends and add some extracurricular activities to his college application. He's smuggled in some weed to pass the time.

> **Sherry Purtz† (19)**: A bubbly, cute goth, when the scenario begins Sherry is missing. Murdered by Luke Elwood, her body was found by Gorey who dragged her away and buried her. Her body is in the Old Cemetery.

> **Luke Elwood (19)**: Adventurous Luke is helpful and empathetic, but also a sociopath. His murder of Sherry has set him on the path to becoming a future serial-killer. He'd do it again if he could. Contested **HUMINT** tells he's lying about her disappearance; he claims they went into the woods but a monster killed her. He says he was too scared to talk.

Modify statistics as appropriate (Ling should have higher STR and Athletics, for example; Elwood HUMINT and Persuade at 60%).

STR 10, CON 10, DEX 10, INT 10, POW 10, CHA 10

HP 10, WP 10, SAN 50

Skills: Alertness 40%, Firearms 20%, Melee Weapons 40%, Stealth 30%, Unarmed Combat 40%

LOCALS, COPS AND NEWCOMERS

> **“Crazy” Guy Knowles (56):** With his greasy beard and wide, staring eyes, Knowles’ nickname seems legit. In reality he’s a weird if erudite guy and a big believer in the occult. Back in 1972 he was among the kids who were evacuated from the camp after the “monster attack” – he “knows” the FBI or CIA are involved in monster-hunting and agrees with them entirely. Monsters are bad news. If the Agents tell him they’re here to investigate the cryptid he aids them however he can, lending them equipment, covering for them from the cops, acting as a guide. He’d make a good Friendly.

STR 10, CON 10, DEX 12, INT 14, POW 13, CHA 10
HP 10, WP 13, SAN 55

Skills: Alertness 40%, Drive 50%, Firearms 50%, HUMINT 50%, Occult 60%, Navigate 50%, Persuade 50%, Search 40%, Survival 40%

Attacks: Under-the-counter Shotgun 50%, 2D6
Unarmed 30%, D4-1

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> **Chief Sarah Allport (34):** 8-months pregnant and in a failing marriage, Allport has just one officer under her to guarantee the safety of 650 citizens. In public she’s courteous, but she’s tired – so very tired – and a corpse is the last thing she needs right now. If it’ll clear things up fast before the baby pops out she’d be willing to overlook a few corners being cut or outsiders, even civilians, offering assistance.

STR 09, CON 11, DEX 09, INT 12, POW 12, CHA 11
HP 10, WP 12, SAN 60

Skills: Alertness 50%, Bureaucracy 30%, Criminology 40%, Drive 50%, Firearms 50%, Forensics 30%, HUMINT 60%, Law 20%, Persuade 50%, Search 50%

Armor: Can’t fit into her body armor
Attacks: Glock 22 50%, 1D10
Unarmed 30%, D4-1

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> **Connecticut State Police:** When/if Sherry Purtz’s body is found, Allport calls in the States. Four of them arrive within four hours: LT. ROGER RABELAT of CIU, a surly uniformed sergeant and two forensics laboratory specialists. Rabelat pooh-poohs the supernatural and thinks a local – maybe a counselor, maybe a Bannon, maybe Knowles, maybe an Agent – is the real killer. He writes Herb off as a suspect pretty quickly; the nice old guy reminds him of his favorite grandpa.

STR 10, CON 10, DEX 10, INT 10, POW 10, CHA 10
HP 10, WP 10, SAN 50

Skills: Alertness 50%, Criminology 40%, Drive 50%, Firearms 50%, Forensics 50%, HUMINT 60%, Law 30%, Persuade 40%, Search 50%

Armor: 3-points
Attacks: SIG P220 50%, 1D10
Unarmed 40%, D4-1

Note: Forensic officers are unarmed and unarmored, have Firearms 20%, Medicine 40% and Forensics 70%

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> **Chad and Chet Bannon (29):** Big, dumb, identical redneck twin brothers in matching plaid shirts, Chad and Chet reported the “Pondechain Monster” sighting that got Delta Green involved. They’ve been visiting the forest regularly to hunt for the creature, something Chief Allport has warned them is trespass. They don’t really care; they just want to be on Penumbra-PX’s “Cryptid Corner.” Harmless and cheerful, they know the woods like the back of their hand and may make good guides or trackers.

STR 12, CON 12, DEX 10, INT 09, POW 10, CHA 09

HP 12, WP 10, SAN 50

Skills: Alertness 40%, Drive 20%, Firearms 50%, HUMINT 30%, Navigate 70%, Persuade 30%, Search 30%, Stealth 40%, Survival 40%

Attacks: Shotgun 50%, 2D6

Hunting Rifle 50%, 1D12

Unarmed 30%, D4-1

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> **Typical Townsfolk:** Use these statistics for NPC hunters, PX-Penumbra podcasters, Officer Grindle and any state or civilian search teams beating the forest for a murderer/monster.

STR 10, CON 10, DEX 10, INT 10, POW 10, CHA 10

HP 10, WP 10, SAN 50

Armor: Law-enforcement have 3-armor vest

Skills: Alertness 40%, Firearms 40%, HUMINT 40%, Navigate 50%, Search 40%, Stealth 20%, Survival 40%

Attacks: Firearms 40%, avg. 1D10

Unarmed 40% 1D4-1

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> **Search/Hunting Dog:** A professional search-team will bring 1D3 dogs. Hunters have a 25% chance of having a gun-dog with them. Dogs track Gorey but, being scared of him, will not attack. Instead they “point” at him. Dogs might be useful to send down tunnels.

STR 10, CON 10, DEX 13, POW 10

HP 10, WP 10

Armor: 1-point of fur and hide

Skills: Alertness 70%, Track by Smell 80%

Attacks: Bite 30%, 1D6

Knock Down 50%, damage STRx5 contest, on success target is prone

THE REAL MONSTER: HERB “DIEHARD” DEXTER

In his mid-70s, Herb is short, fit, clean-shaven, and intense, playing the helpful old-man routine to the hilt. When he's not at home he's out tracking Gorey with his shotgun and hi-vis jacket. He claims he's hunting deer (**HUMINT/Psychoanalysis** gets a grudging confession he's hunting the “monster” – which won't ping lie-detectors since it's true). He wants to bring Gorey home, but anyone learning his secret is fair game too.

A veteran with no criminal records, Herb volunteered for Vietnam and served three tours as an engineer sergeant with the 1st Infantry Division's 1st Engineer Battalion. When not maintaining fire-bases, he went into the field with recce and chemical detachments, acting as a “tunnel-rat” – crawling semi-naked through Viet Cong tunnels with nothing but a torch, a Colt M1911 and a couple of demolition and white-phosphorous grenades. Unlike his colleagues, Herb loved it, and since coming home he's continued digging, expanding tunnels under Pondechain forest. He uses them to move unseen, spy on people, store things, etc.

He married Carol Montgomery in 1977. She died in a car-accident in 1992.

Herb was groundskeeper for the hotel from 1977-1989 and was sold the house in 1981 (this is why he wasn't evicted when the hotel closed). He still refers to himself as the groundskeeper and chases off anyone who trespasses. He's too smart to kill people out of hand, but he's bumped off a couple of people over the years – mostly young men who reminded him of Gorey. Their bodies were deposited in the tunnels.

He refers to the forest, the lake, the old hotel as “his” and considers the forest almost holy land. At night he hangs animals he's hunted up in the trees, as sacrifices to the spirit of nature. There's nothing supernatural about it, but it's weird and freaky nonetheless.

When Agents meet Herb they notice that his hand is bandaged (he says he was bitten by an animal) and he has a LARGE ST. CHRISTOPHER'S MEDAL hung around his neck. The latter was a gift from his mother, to protect him when he went to Vietnam. Later in the scenario this will be a clue.

STR 09, **CON** 09, **DEX** 13, **INT** 10, **POW** 14, **CHA** 12

HP 09, **WP** 14, **SAN** 27

Disorders: Paranoia, Intermittent Explosive Disorder

Skills: Alertness 70%, Athletics 60%, Demolitions 70%, Drive 40%, Firearms 60%, HUMINT 50%, Melee Weapons 50%, Navigate 70%, Stealth 70%, Unarmed Combat 40%

Attacks: M1911 Colt .45 60%, 1D10

Shotgun 60%, 2D6

Hunting Rifle 60%, 1D12

Buck Knife 50%, 1D6 (Throw 60%)

Vietnam-era Grenade 60%, lethality 15%

Unarmed Combat 40%, 1D4-1

THE “PONDECHAIN MONSTER”: TIM GOREY

Held and tortured in Herb's basement for more than forty years, Gorey is now more beast than man. Gaunt, pale, hairless and emaciated, his body is hideously burned and scarred, caked with filth and ringworm. His few teeth are jagged and shattered. He can no longer talk. A heavy metal collar with a broken chain is hung around his neck. He has enough sense to know what since escaping Herb he needs to hide, and he skitters around the wood on all fours, slipping into culverts and creek-beds, drinking rainwater, eating insects and raw meat from dead animals he finds.

Let's be honest: he looks a lot like a ghoul.

Gorey is harmless; if seen or chased he gibbers and meeps pathetically, racing headlong for his HIDEY-HOLE. If attacked he tries to escape; failing that he curls into a ball. He really hates Herb though and may, however, sneak attack the old coot – particularly if he's threatening someone with his shotgun. Try to use this Deus Ex Machina to show the monster's not all bad.

Gorey also knows Elwood killed Purtz (he saw it happen – and Elwood may well have seen him too, which would explain why he fled back to the cabins without hiding the corpse). If he sees Elwood again, he points and gibbers and mimes the murder. Handlers might even have Gorey be stalking Elwood – perhaps breaking into the cabins at night to find the SKULL RING or looking for ways to incriminate the killer. He won't attack though.

Gorey's fingerprints are in State Police records as a missing person since 1982. His scars and injuries show he's been horrifically tortured for decades. One burn scar is repeated over and over – some sort of branding. If Agents have seen Herb's ST. CHRISTOPHER'S MEDAL, let them mull on it for a moment or two before they realize where they've seen it. Herb had been heating it and using it to mark Gorey as his property.

If caught alive, Gorey will never be able to live a normal life though years of therapy will let him eke out a simple but happy existence in care, catching up on a changed above ground world he'd never dreamed of.

STR 07, CON 07, DEX 10, INT 07, POW 07, CHA 02

HP 07, WP 07, SAN 12

Disorders: Regressed to almost primitive state

Skills: Athletics 30%, Navigate 30%, Stealth 60%, Unarmed Combat 40%

Attacks: Unarmed Combat 40%, 1D4-2

PLACES TO VISIT IN CURTIS

No map is provided for Curtis. It is a small community of barely 650 people and has few visitors; most folk drive right through it without even noticing it's there. It has most of the amenities you'd expect of a small town – a dusty bed-and-breakfast, a late-night diner, a police station and a weekly newspaper.

> **Bannon Household:** The Bannon twins, who reported their monster sighting online, live with their Ma in a bungalow close to Pontechain forest's eastern edge. Ma, a straight-talking woman full of common horse-sense, works at the diner and thinks her sons are possibly the stupidest and most useless people on God's Green Earth. For their part the two Bannons are happy to talk to visitors until they realize the newcomers might be trying to catch the monster first – at which point they clam-up.

> **Police Station:** With just two cops (Chief Allport and Officer Burt Grindle) Curtis' station is more a "police post." Allport has filed Knowle's cryptid report under "crank," but Grindle – who believes he's a latent psychic – is more amenable to talking about supernatural. The police's local records don't go back earlier than 1987 due to a fire.

> **Curtis Weekly Advertiser:** Lowell Franks is editor and sole full-time writer for the town's weekly newspaper. He's had four monster sighting reports just this week – from the Bannon twins, Knowles, a local woman who spotted it from the road by the lake, and a hunter who swears it was big foot. He's thinking of a front-page for it at the end of the week. Searching the morgue for 1972 finds there was an incident at Camp Pondechain. After two children drowned on the lake in a single day, the camp was closed and an investigation launched by "outside experts." One of the experts died in an "accident" but the camp reopened two years later. Despite its relative length, the article's mostly about the two children and lacks details on the investigation and agencies involved.

> **Curtis Community Clinic:** A small "hospital" of two doctors and a handful of nurses, the town clinic caters to the district's health needs. Two weeks ago Herb Dexter came here for treatment for a bite injury. He claimed he didn't see the animal, as it jumped him from behind, but the nurse who treated him swears the injury looked like human teeth.

KEY TO PLACES AROUND LAKE PONDECHAIN

The map of Pondechain Forest is not to scale; if players like wandering around rolling **Navigate**, let them. Otherwise, it takes a couple of hours to walk from the south edge of the forest to the Old Hotel.

> **Camp Pondechain:** Turning off the main road and passing under the big faux-American Indian arch that spans the trail is Camp Pondechain, a summer camp for roughly 120 youth. It's been in use since the 1950s (barring the 1973-1974 season) and has four large cabins to house 25 kids each (two male cabins, two female), a cookhouse, recreation cabin, boathouse, dock, equipment sheds etc. The new counselors are renovating the place between team-building and training. They sleep in the cabins.

After killing Purtz, Elwood stole her SKULL RING and has kept it as a trinket. It's in his pocket or hidden among his possessions at the camp. If he thinks the cops are onto him he plants the ring on someone else, preferably someone who can be easily blamed – like the Agents.

A halved **Search** roll in any of the cabins finds an entrance to the tunnels underneath (**C** on the tunnel map/key). How counselors react to the tunnels depends on the counselor who finds it; some will be excited, some may decide to use it for their own needs, others want to report it.

> **Guy's Garage:** Guy Knowles runs this small, musty gas-station on the road passing by the lake. His clientele are Curtis folk passing to places less secluded and counselors from the camp buying beer. Though he lives in Curtis, Guy's here most days and nights (he rarely sleeps), opening late and closing early. A sign with his cell number is pinned to the pumps when he's out. A chain-link fence at the back theoretically stops access to the forest but it's easy to climb over.

> **Murder Scene:** In this clearing Elwood murdered Purtz. A roll on **Navigate**, **Search** or **Survival** (or 60%+ automatically) when passing nearby notices signs of a scuffle – blood on the leaves, marks in the mud, purple hair stuck to twigs. Drag-marks lead to the Old Graveyard.

If the Agents discover the murder scene before the counselors or police, it's up to them whether they tidy the scene or call it in. If anyone else finds Purtz's body the State Police will be contacted. As word spreads, a lot of people in Curtis believe it's "that monster that done it."

> **Old Graveyard:** A tangled old graveyard, dating from the early-1800s, with a knee-height but crumbling stone wall built around it. There are no grave stones and holes have opened in the ground through subsidence. Peeking into these holes sees cracked coffins and jumbled bones. Anyone doing a more thorough recce from the surface or descending the eight or so feet to the bottom finds tunnel entrances leading north and west.

Purtz's body has been poorly buried in the graveyard (or rather, laid on the ground and covered in an inch or so of dirt and leaves). It takes no real effort to spot her. She is dressed, her head caved in with a blunt instrument, possibly a stone or tree branch. There are no bite-marks or signs of sexual assault. Her SKULL RING is missing – the finger is raw.

> **The Liberty Tree:** An enormous old tree looms tall in this clearing. Hanging from the thick old branches are various skinned animals, bones in the boughs, skulls around its base (**SAN** 0/1D4). **Occult** can tell this is some form of sacrificial site. There are no human remains here.

Most nights Herb visits to hang animals he's killed as a kind of totemic ritual to nature. He strips naked to do so. Technically it's not illegal but it is embarrassing – the cops will tell him to stop if they find he's doing it. Suitably chastised, he agrees – at least for a while.

> **Hidey-Hole:** Here is Gorey's main hiding place; a cavern at the end of a dried-up creek. It requires a halved **Alertness** or successful **Navigate** roll while passing nearby to spot. A few dead birds and animals, gnawed upon, are scattered across the floor near a bed of leaves and moss.

> **Old Guardpost:** Alongside the road beside the fence is a jumble of collapsed wood and a smashed barrier; this was the signing-in point for guests and visitors to the hotel. The track to the hotel – exiting to the east of the map – winds a few miles before joining the main road. The padlocked gate and fence has “DO NOT ENTER” signs strung from the wire. Herb has the key and drives out once a week or so for supplies from town. Searching the wood and junk and bricks finds a trapdoor to Tunnel **E**.

> **Old Hotel:** A 30-room hotel with attached jetties for boating, Pondechain Hotel opened in 1911 as a health-spa and retreat. It closed permanently in 1989 and has fallen into ruin; holes in the floors and ceilings, a tree growing in the foyer, a lot of dust and rat-droppings. Herb parks his car in the garage (the only part that's in good repair).

Searching the hotel is easy. There is no evidence of squatters or kids using it (Herb chases them off saying the place is dangerous; he doesn't like anyone poking around here, though technically he has no authority despite his warnings he's still the groundskeeper). The trash-filled basement is dank. Hidden behind a mattress propped against the wall is an entrance to the tunnels.

> **Dexter House:** Herb Dexter's home is the old groundskeeper's residence, a simple two-story home, ground-floor made of stone and brick, an upper-one added out of wood. Heating is provided by a fire and light by lamps. It has no electricity and the outside-toilet's waste runs via pipe to the Old Hotel's septic tank. It's cheaply furnished, Spartan but well-kept.

Herb doesn't like people dropping by, but he's not going to walk out with a shotgun in hand and holler at them to get off his land. If the game's up, however, he fortifies his residence with trip-wired grenades, barricades himself inside with guns and prepares for a last-stand that he'll hopefully survive by faking his own death and escaping by tunnel.

Herb has extended the basement (the entrance is hidden behind a bookshelf; halved **Search** unless looking for a hidden door) and turned it into a dungeon. It's got a brazier and torture equipment, including vises for breaking bones and simple medical equipment for keeping a victim alive. Gnawed rat carcasses and bones litter the floor near a broken chain bolted to the wall. This is where Gorey was kept. A heavy and bolted door leads to the tunnels on the west side of Pondechain lake.

THE TUNNELS

Crazy old Herb has been digging tunnels for years. While a bunch have collapsed, the core ones remain. Gorey sometimes uses the tunnels to move around unseen, but is nervous of getting trapped inside them by Herb.

The Handler can expand the tunnels as seen fit (with pungee-stake traps, flooded dips, dead-ends, trapdoor exits etc.). They are pitch dark, narrow and cramped, forcing travelers to wriggle on their belly. Turning around is practically impossible. Agents should not get permanently trapped in such tunnels but should face steady Helplessness SAN rolls if inexperienced or remaining underground alone for extended periods.

> **Dexter House:** Herb has expanded the basement under his house and turned it into a torture chamber and dungeon. A large wooden door, exceptionally heavy and bolted from the inside, opens into the tunnels – Agents who fail a **History** or similar roll while looking at it might assume it's ancient. It's not. If Herb thinks anyone's found his tunnels, he buries the tunnel side of the door in dirt, making it look like a dead-end.

> **Hidey-Hole:** Gorey's hiding place is a dank cavern at the end of a dried up creek, connected to tunnels that run north and south. It's a naturally formed cavern, though Herb has worked on widening and propping up the tunnels over the years. Finding the Hidey-Hole requires a halved **Alertness** or successful **Navigate** roll while passing nearby.

> **Old Graveyard:** Parts of the cemetery subsided many years ago, leaving gaping holes in the surface and a semi-open cavern beneath. Some coffins are visible. The tunnel to link "**G**" is far older than Herb's work and someone experienced in the matter could date it to the early-1800s.

> **Old Hotel:** A tunnel connected to the Dexter House exits into the hotel's wine-cellar. This is probably the easiest entrance to spot, since it's hidden only by a mattress propped over the hole in the bricks. Even a casual search (no roll) of the basement finds it.

A) This room is big enough to stand in while stooped and is Dexter's arms and food cache. It's full of metal drums containing state legal firearms and ammunition, boxes of vacuum-sealed MREs, medical supplies, etc. It'd go boom nicely if exploded and would provide extra kit if looted.

B) Here the tunnel comes dangerously close to the lake, the wall and floor both damp, trickling with water. This wouldn't be a problem if Herb hadn't set a booby-trap. A tripwire spans the tunnel, connected to an M26 frag grenade. On a failed **Alertness** roll a tunnel-crawler hits the wire and nudges the pin out. So long as they don't move, they or a friend can use **Demolitions** to defuse it. If they do move the grenade detonates on a failed **Luck** roll (it's Vietnam War surplus). The explosion rips a hole in the wall and floods the tunnel rapidly along the length of the lake's bank. Anybody within that area will not survive. Herb can bypass the trap easily, disconnecting it and setting it back up in moments.

C) Herb's tunnels stretch between the camp's cabins, hidden beneath the big stoves that provide heat as well as inside closets. Unless they're specifically looking for tunnels, a **Search/2** in any of the cabins finds an entrance (further **STR** rolls may be required to open their trapdoors, as the deadbolts are on the underside). Roll **Search** for the counselors every hour of real-life play; on a success one of them finds a tunnel and reports it to the others.

D) This unfinished crossroad has a hidden opening at the southern end, allowing access or escape a few dozen yards shy of the lakeside.

E) A hinged trapdoor entrance to these tunnels is hidden by rubble from the demolished hotel gatehouse. Pungee stakes are planted at the bottom; if the first person down fails an **Alertness** roll (rolled after they enter) they take 1D6 damage and suffer from Gangrene (AH p. 61).

F) A room, enormous tree roots curling from the walls. There are three skeletons here, still clad in clothing traceable to missing person's cases over the last couple of decades. These are trespassers who refused to leave the hotel when Herb asked them to.

G) This large naturally formed chamber is older than the cemetery and served as some kind of ossuary or burial area. **Archaeology** or **History** deduces it's an old religious site, perhaps used by Native Americans or very early European settlers. Odd carvings line the walls and skeletons rest in cubbyholes. It's an interesting anthropological site but a red-herring otherwise. Though accessible from the surface at one point in time, the entrance collapsed long ago.

SANITY BONUSES/LOSSES

Not killing Gorey and getting him help: +1D3+1 SAN

Bringing Herb Dexter legally to justice for his crimes: +1D3

Killing Herb Dexter for his crimes: +1

Turning the ossuary (**Tunnel G**) over to archaeologists: +1

Burning down/destroying the Liberty Tree: +1

Bringing Luke Elwood to justice (may require falsifying evidence): +1D3

Surviving the adventure and realizing it wasn't supernatural: +1

Killing Gorey after discovering he's human: -1D3

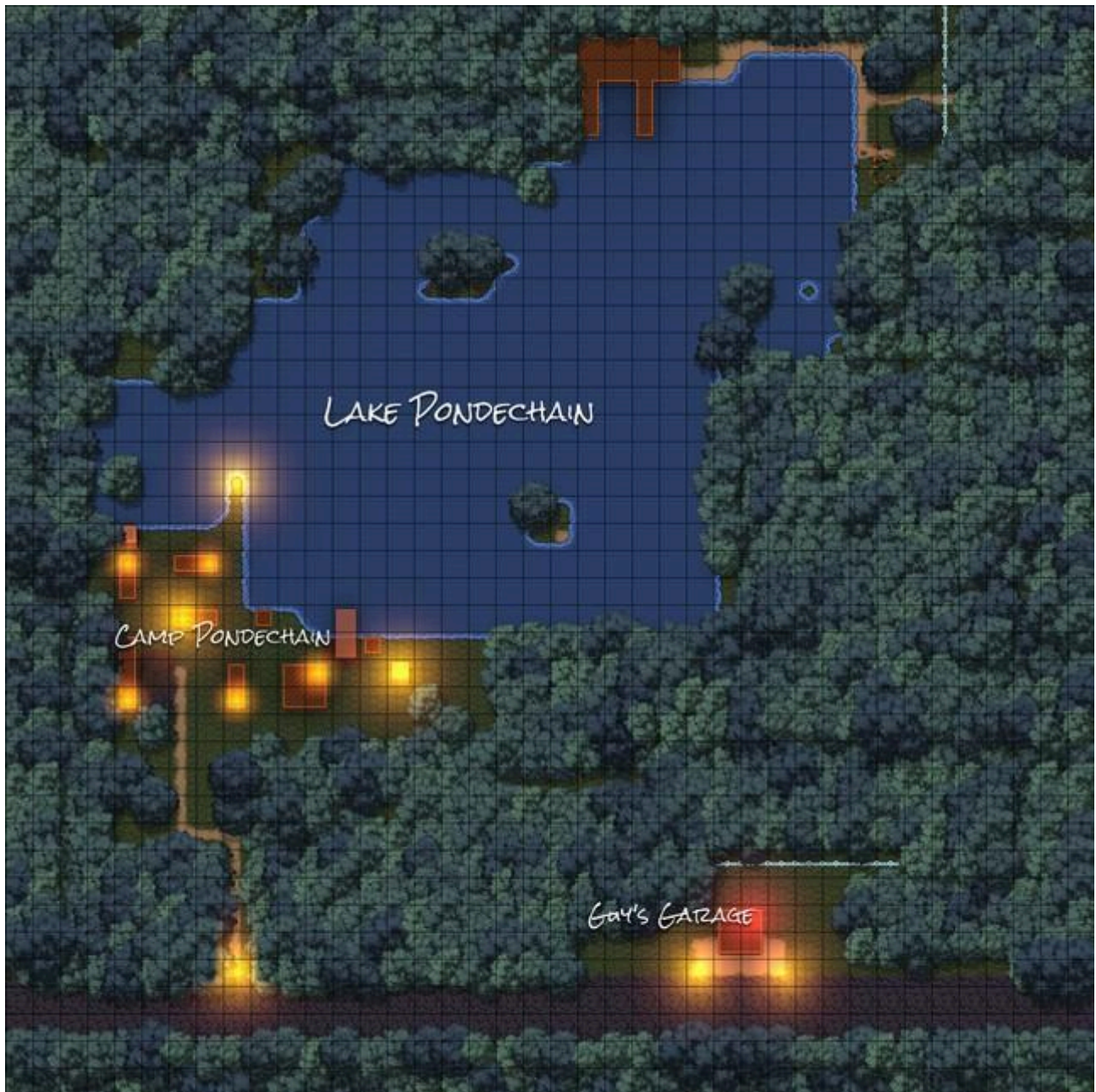
Knowingly letting an innocent be sent-down for Purtz's murder: -1D4

Letting Herb Dexter go free, despite knowing his crimes: -1

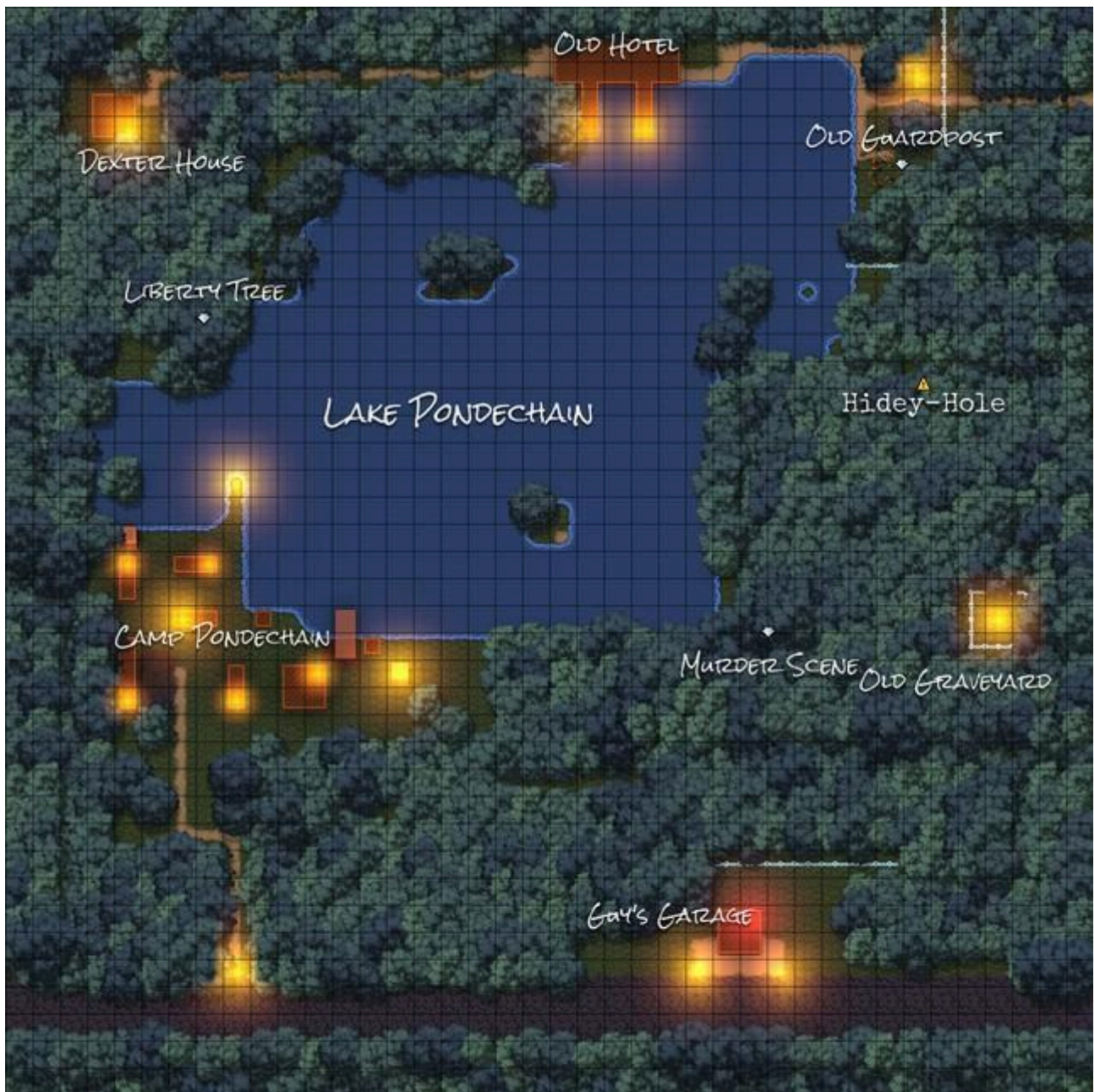
Covering up Purtz's murder and ignoring it: -1

Burning down the forest in order to save it: -1D4 (oh dear)

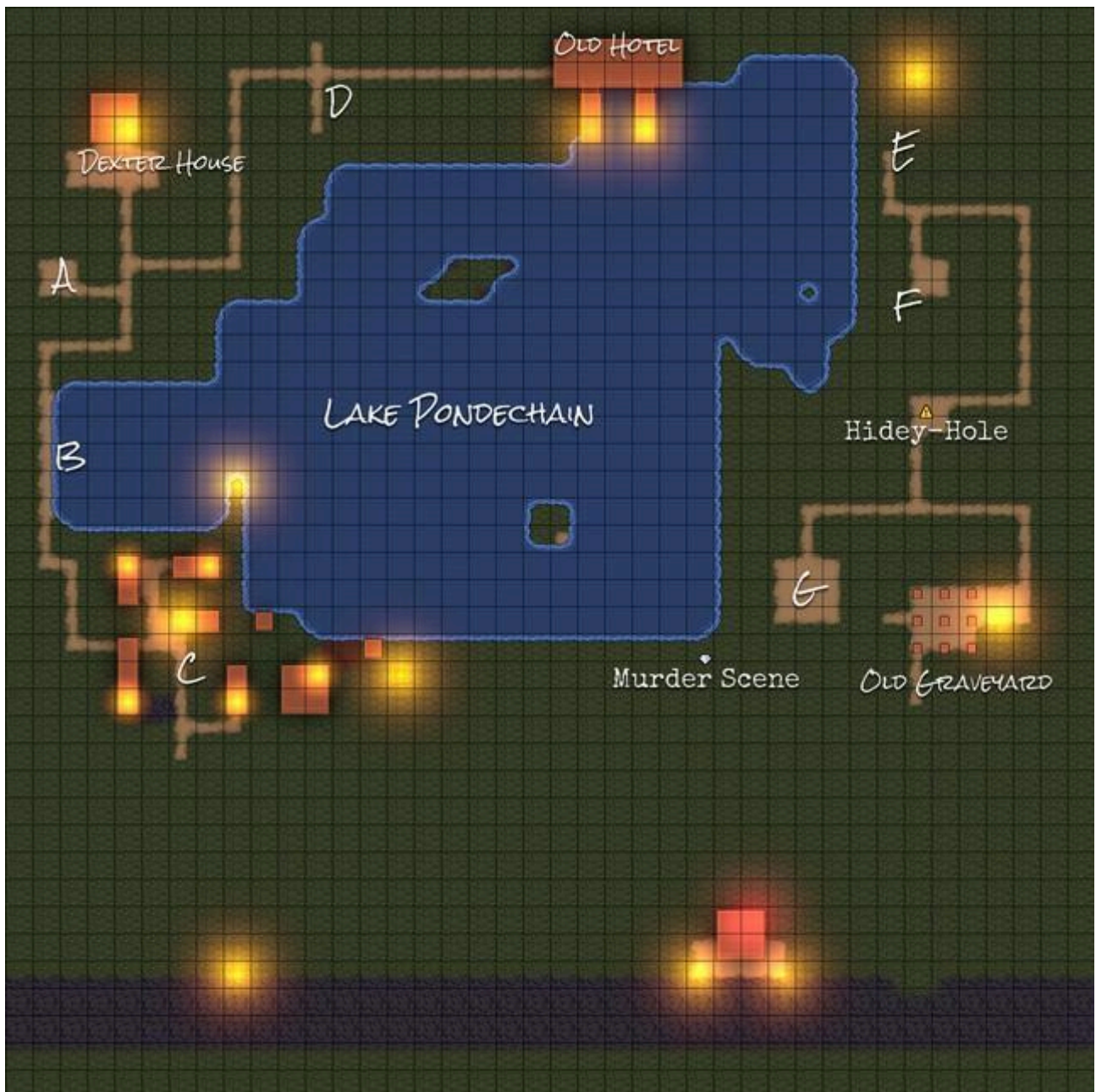
Player still thinks there was occult goings-on but missed them: -1



LAKE PONDECHAIN PLAYER MAP



LAKE PONDECHAIN HANDLER MAP



LAKE PONDECHAIN TUNNEL MAP