

ASYLUM

A GRIN SCENARIO

"TRUE!—nervous— very, very dreadfully nervous I had been and am; but why will you say that I am mad? The disease had sharpened my senses—not destroyed—not dulled them. Above all was the sense of hearing acute. I heard all things in the heaven and in the earth. I heard many things in hell. How, then, am I mad? Hearken! and observe how healthily—how calmly I can tell you the whole story."

—Edgar Allen Poe

By Eugene Fasano
ARCANA GAMES

THE FACTS:

For the Master and his Players:

St. Mary's Asylum was condemned in 1984. But that won't stop a group of high school friends going there as the sun sets with the intent to stay the night.

It is supposedly haunted. Legend says that a group of highschoolers tried to stay the night twenty years ago and disappeared.

St. Mary's was originally a sanitarium called Oak Hill until tuberculosis was cured.

It was renamed after Sister Mary, a nun who took it over in the 60's.

It was meant to be used as a home for the criminally insane.

They say Mary was a monster who punished patients for their perceived sins.

Rumors of her bloody reign can be gleaned in tales of forced sterilization, shock therapy, and lobotomies.

Legend goes, one night there was a great storm and the power failed.

The patients got out of their locked rooms and they say they found her, dragged her into the operating room, and chopped her to bits.

For the Master Alone:

In truth, though strict, sister Mary was no devil.

The newspapers from the time simply say she disappeared one night.

In reality, she was brutally killed, but it was by a doctor named Leeman Schroeder.

The doctor was a young Nazi doctor who fled to America after the war.

He performed terrible experiments during the war. And After.

In '75 Mary thought he had gone too far, and confronted him.

She became another of his subjects. And he took over as ward of the Asylum.

He continued horrible experiments, seeking immortality.

The place got shut down in '84 and the patients were transferred elsewhere.

But Doctor Schroeder continues his work.

Prelude

The Master gives each Player a set of Character questions to be filled out in secret.

Players decide on their relationships to one another during creation.

Once complete, the Master converses with each Player about their Character. Some changes may be made.

The Players introduce their Characters by name, describe their appearances, and share any generally known information about themselves.

The Cast:

Policeman – Robert McGill. A slightly overweight night watchman.

Doctor – Leeman Schroeder. An aged Nazi scientist.

Bum – Harry Larson. A homeless man squatting in the dilapidated attic.

Rich Kid – Mike Pierce. A handsome blond haired, blue eyed highschooler from a wealthy family.

Cheerleader – Sarah Lee. A pretty highschool girl and the girlfriend of Mike Pierce.

The Characters – Up to Five Characters each acted by a single Player.

ACT I

I. EXPLORATION

The story begins at dusk, as the group of friends makes their way past the rusted iron gates, and up the narrow, tree lined drive to the ivy covered brick face of the abandoned Asylum...

Door

The large old front doors bear a rusted “keep out” sign and are slightly ajar.

[Draw] Notice a padlock and chain to the side. The chain was broken with a twisted iron fence bar.

Entry Hall

The peeling paint of the walls are covered in layers of graffiti. The floor is thick with rubble and debris and rat droppings. There is a grand central stair, grey with dust, leading up to the second landing.

A hall runs to the left and right past unhinged swinging doors. *Many small rooms line these halls. They are full of rubble and graffiti. Many are patient rooms, with wire bed frames, springs bared.*

To one side is a large Grandfather Clock with the hands ominously stopped close to 3 o'clock. Should the players investigate the clock, touching the pendulum inside will set it into motion. The chime of the clock as it hits 3 can be used to scare the players if they ever linger in the hall.

Grand Central Staircase

[Draw] Any Character attempting to climb the stairs will collapse a rotten board. *Do this more than once if needed to try and keep the Characters on the ground floor the first act.*

[Draw] Notice that beyond the shattered glass, every window is barred. *This is true for the entire building.*

Drip Hall & Room

The hallway to one side of the entry hall is flooded with ankle deep black water. There is an audible dripping sound echoing through the hall.

[Draw] Avoid stepping on a nail in a board beneath the stagnant black water.

A large room off this hallway is flooded to thigh height. It smells of rot, and the walls are spattered with black mold. Burst and rusted pipes protrude from the back wall.

From a wet, stained ceiling, a large single drop precipitates every second or so, and makes an echoing drip in the dark water.

2. ENTER THE WATCH

When the Characters have explored a little, Officer McGill will arrive on the premises. He will drive up to the front of the building with his squad car lights on. He'll see the flashlights if the Players have them. He'll come inside with a flashlight of his own, and call out to the kids, telling them the fun's over and its time to go. *Shortly after he enters The Doctor will lock the doors with a heavy padlock from the inside.*

[Draw] Run away. Electing not to run will result in the Policeman handcuffing the Character to the stair railing while he searches for the others.

[Draw] Hide

[Draw] Do it in the dark

[Draw] Stay Quiet. If don't pull to be careful in the dark, arm is cut on jagged pipe.

Boots

As the Characters hide, invariably one will slip into an empty ward room in the hall. The room is bare save for a dilapidated wheel chair sitting empty amid the debris and another door. Charters hiding here will hear heavy foot steps form the hall. They will draw closer.

[Draw] Slip quietly and quickly through the other door.

This other door is a bare closet. If the characters do not draw to enter the closet, the following still occurs outside the main door of the room. The footfalls draw closer, the Characters see the beam of a flashlight shine through the keyhole and illuminate a figure under the crack of the door. The boots crunch on the debris as the figure and light move away. Soon you hear sloshing as the figure moves through the flooded hallway. *The Policeman is checking for the kids. Unbeknownst to him, he is being followed by the Doctor.*

Have the Characters wait in the dark. All they hear is their own breathing and the steady drip coming from the room down the flooded hall.

[Draw] Hear soft, almost inaudible footsteps outside the door.

There is no flashlight that accompanies these footfalls. They stop outside the door. Then they move away. You hear a soft sloshing as they move through the black water. They never heard the policeman come back across. *It is the Doctor. He know they are there but plans on dealing with the Policeman first.*

Rec Room

At the end of the hall with the Drip Room, is a large communal recreation room. There is a dilapidated piano and a cracked billiard table.

[Draw] Notice the photographs on the wall. They seem to be yearly shots of the staff. The Nun, Mary, is clearly visible in front of a group of a few other clergy members and men in white jackets. After a run of photographs Mary has disappeared. A young doctor seems to be at the foreground in her stead.

3. ONE LESS

After the Players have run and hid from the Policeman, they will each notice that someone is missing. Mike is not with them. If they split up, they may not think much of it, but eventually, the Characters will notice that Mike is gone. Sarah can be used to remind the players about Mike, she is adamant about finding him and then getting out of here. *He has been taken by the Doctor and is now in the Isolation Room on the second floor.*

Operating Theater

At the end of the other hallway opposite the rec room is an operating theater. Several rows of broken chairs ring a recessed dais, mounted with a rusted chair with moldered leather straps. A rusted surgical light with shattered bulbs is over it. Next to it, a dusty tray with implements.

[Draw] As a Character steps down the stairs to the operating stage, bats will be startled and fly at them. Not drawing may make the Character fall. *Describe them as dark shapes. Play on the Player's fear of the supernatural.*

Notice doors locked, make it clear escape is not an option, huge iron bars enaged, riveted plates, windows all abraded, place built like a prison, don't imply they're trapped, say they are.

4. DRIP, DRIP

The Doctor kills the policeman for fear of his interference.

[Draw] A Character in the drip hallway, entry hall, or rec room hears the echoing drip of the drip room. They notice there is a second, irregular dip.

The Drip Room

The remains of the Policeman can be found. He is impaled on the far wall, several bent broken pipes protrude from his chest.

[Draw] Not to scream or panic.

[Draw] keep calm enough to get close. He has handcuffs, a pair of short range radios, a gun with six bullets, pepper spray, and a baton.

If the Characters attempt to flee the Asylum they'll find the doors locked with a heavy and immovable padlock.

[Draw] Think of the idea that the second floor windows might not have bars. *They do.*

ACT II

I. THE SPIRAL STAIR

on top of landing spiral stair, metal white peeling paint. Attic, sloping eaves. Window circle small, looks down over drive.

Children's Ward

To one side of the upper landing is the children's ward. It is marked by broken dolls with glinting eyes, and toy animals with their stuffing pulled out, a dusty rocking horse, and small dusty chairs, a single small shoe. *At the end of the Children's ward is where Harry has been sleeping for the last couple nights.*

Homeless Nest

The faint sound of Harry's battery powered radio can be heard from the children's ward as a low voice. A pile of dirty blankets and old newspapers mark Harry's berth. Harry himself will likely be there. He can be used by the Master to help move the narrative along. Perhaps he's already been killed. Perhaps he's there but violent. Perhaps he's seen the doctor but is drunk and offers only incoherent snatches of madness.

2. ISOLATION

Isolation Chamber

Beyond a painted steel door is a concrete octagon of a room. The only way in is a red painted steel door with slits at eye and floor level. On opening the door, Mike can be seen inside, seated and slumped against the far wall.

Mike is dead. This should not be apparent unless a Character enters the room to investigate. His head is down, but upon inspection, his eyes have been removed and two bloody holes are all that remain. *The Doctor has his eyes now. He replaced his own old ones with a new fresh pair.*

The door shuts automatically, locking anyone inside. Depends on whos around. Try to get all nearby characters in the room.

[Draw] If some Players are left outside, let them pull to get the idea that there may be a key in the office they passed.

[Draw] Player's in the room may get the idea to reach the handle through the eye slit in the door. The room's occupant would have been straight jacketed. If they put their arm through the door, the Doctor, who is nearby, will grab it.

[Draw] Pull away from the doctor. This should take a struggle and several pulls. Engage the other Player's whose Characters are in the room. They can pull on the stuck Character. If the stuck Character elects not to pull, have their hand or finger's cut off, or have them injected with a syringe of hallucinogenic drugs. After the Player either pulls free or is injured, the Doctor will leave the scene to return to his lab.

3. INFORMATION

Office

On the second floor is an office filled with rusted filing cabinets and mouldering piles of paper. An aged typewriter sits on a desk by a chair with the cheap upholstery spilling out.

[Draw] Searching the office thoroughly will reveal two interesting things: Old film tapes and blueprints of the asylum

The blueprints are in an old frame. They are of the original sanitarium. There is a tunnel that runs from the east wing out into the forest. It is a possible exit.

[Draw] again for the idea to shine light through film and medical magnifying glass on the desk for crude projection on the wall. Horrible scenes of a young doctor cutting into living subjects in an operating theater.

ACT III

I. UP IS DOWN

The room that would lead to the tunnel out to the forest is behind a locked steel door.

[Draw] Get the idea of going through the collapsed ceiling of the Children's wing to bypass the door.

Through the jagged hole in the floor, let the players catch a glimpse of the Doctor dragging away Mike's body down the stairs. Only let them catch a glimpse. He should just be dark shape.

[Draw] Climbing down through the splintered wood should take at least a draw per player, more for wounded Players.

2. THE LAB

Down a dark concrete stair, at the end of a long, pipe lined basement tunnel is the lab. First are the shelves, long shelves, like bookshelves, but stocked with jars, strange murky containers with grotesque limbs and organs suspended in green fluid. The lab itself is equipped with outdated surgical equipment, tables and chairs with straps, and any other embellishments the Master sees fit. Mike's body is strapped to a table. The Doctor bends over him and begins to saw off one of Mike's legs. Mike screams – still alive. Beyond him, at the other end of the lab, is a steel door with an arched top. *The door is locked. A key sits on the Doctor's tray of operating tools.*

The Doctor will turn to look at the Players with Mike's blue eyes.

[Draw] not to scream or run.

[Draw] notice the key.

[Draw] Any engagement with the doctor should involve at least a pull. This is the climax. Characters should die here if they haven't already. *Though nearly a century old, the Doctor has been replacing pieces of his body with younger ones. He is nearly immune to pain and most harm the Characters can inflict on him.*

3. TUNNELS

Beyond the arched door is a long brick tunnel with a low arched ceiling, sloping away and slightly downward into the darkness. *The Doctor will give chase.*

[Draw] Run.

[Draw] Put key in the door.

[Draw] Open the door.

[Draw] To slam door behind.

The Characters that survive will emerge into a grey dawn. The tunnel mouth opens to a little valley of dark pines. Ferns and moss cover its steep sides, and in the pale morning light, skulls and bones can be seen peeking out from the undergrowth among the ferns and moss. The Characters scramble up the dirty slopes and make it to an empty stretch of quiet of the road.

Why are the cool kids friends with you even though you're such a nerd?

Why is the library your favorite place to be?

Do you believe in ghosts?

Of what aspect of your stay tonight are you most afraid?

Why did you bring your camera?

What else did you bring with you tonight?

From what physiological disability do you suffer?

What do you look like?

What is your name?

At what popular sport do you excel and why?

Why is it so important for you to be the best?

Why do you need to prove yourself by staying the night?

Why do most people think you're a jerk? Are you?

Why do you find your social life unrewarding despite being popular?

Why do you feel responsible for your friends?

What did you bring with you tonight?

What do you look like?

What is your name?

Why are you always cracking jokes?

Why are you here even though you think it's dumb?

Which of the other Characters is your best friend? Why?

Why don't you believe in ghosts?

How are you going to prank scare your friends?

Why did you try to kill yourself last winter?

What did you bring with you tonight?

What do you look like?

What is your name?

Whose younger sibling are you?

How much younger are you?

Why did you want to tag along?

Why do you annoy your older sibling?

Who do you look up to?

What did you do to gain the favor of the group?

What did you bring with you tonight?

What do you look like?

What is your name?

When did you realize your drinking was a problem?

Why can't you go home tonight?

Why do you drink so much?

What did you bring to drink? Where did you get it?

What happened when you crashed your car?

Who is your best friend? Why?

What did you bring with you tonight?

What do you look like?

What is your name?

[Optional Character for Advanced Games]

Why are you going to kill all of your friends?

Have you ever killed anyone before?

How long have your parents been dead? How did they die?

Why do you act so nice all the time?

What do you look like?

What did you bring with you tonight?

What is your name?