

Design Document - The Madness From The Sea

CONTENTS:

INTRODUCTION	
STORY	2
RECOMMENDED TEAM SIZES	2
GAME STRUCTURE	3
MYSTERY CARDS	4
BLACKLIGHT CLUES	5
THE INCANTATION STATION	6
GAME LAYOUT (LOGICAL)	8
ROOM LAYOUT (PHYSICAL)	
WHITE ROOM	9
BLUE ROOM AND CLOSET	10
RED ROOM	11
THE MYSTERIES OF CTHULHU	
1. WARMING UP	12
2. ADVENT OF HYPERBOREA	15
3. RELICS IN PIECES	20
4. THE GROCERY LIST	23
5. SCENT OF EVIL	26
6. THE STATESMAN	28
7. SOUNDS OF THE PAST	32
8. A HIGH STAKES GAME	34
9. THE ARTIFACT MOSAIC	37
10. OUR NEW MASTERS	40
11. AID FROM THE LODGE	42
12. A TWISTED PLACE	44
13. ARCANUM OF ARGYROPOEIA	47
BONUS MYSTERIES	50
B1. PERIL AT SEA	54
B2. THE META MAGICIAN	57
ENDINGS	60
HARD MODE	64
CREDITS	68
SETUP	69

INTRODUCTION

“The Madness From The Sea” is a two-hour puzzle hunt presented in the format of an escape room game. It is inspired by the works of early 20th century horror pioneer H.P. Lovecraft, and focuses on the titular creature from his 1928 short story “The Call of Cthulhu”.

STORY

In the early decades of the 20th century, the people of earth started to take notice of a series of unexplainable events: stars had begun to disappear from the night sky; the oceans' tides became unpredictable; nightmares filled the heads of millions; and the corpses of innumerable species began to turn up en masse, mutilated beyond description.

A group of extraordinary minds began the search for answers: scientists, artists, lay workers, and government officials all looked for the meaning behind the increasingly frequent horrors plaguing the globe.

Over time more and more signs began to point to the eventual awakening of an alien being asleep in the depths of the Pacific Ocean. A single name surfaced repeatedly in the scholars research - “Cthulhu, who sleeps in the sunken land of R'lyeh”. Those behind the discoveries attempted to present their findings to the world's leaders, but were laughed at and brushed aside, even as the atrocities continued to intensify.

Then one day in 1926, it finally happened. A grotesque humanoid creature - hundreds of meters tall - rose from the sea and made its way to the mainland. As it approached, the citizens of our world felt their minds begin to slip into madness. The creature's repulsive brethren - the Star Spawn - which had been living among the people of earth for years, shed their human skins and began their murderous rampage amidst the chaos.

When they had realized that humanity was unwilling to listen, the few hundred who foretold the coming of Cthulhu spent their scant time building a mystical sanctuary deep underneath the campus of Miskatonic University in Arkham, Massachusetts. Safe from the mind ravaging-effects of the Ancient One, they spent decades attempting to find a way to defeat the creature.

Ninety years later - in 2016 - the descendants of those in hiding - YOU - have come to accept that Cthulhu is too powerful be destroyed. Instead you have decided that the only way to save the world is to travel back in time to the moment just prior to Cthulhu's awakening. From there you will use a sequence of incantations to seal it in its resting place for all eternity. To discover these incantations, you must travel through time and space, solving mysteries as you go.

The bad news? Your recent increase of mystical activity has alerted Cthulhu and the star spawn to your presence - and they are headed your way. They will be here in two hours.

RECOMMENDED TEAM SIZES

This game contains a large amount of content; as such, its difficulty level is strongly correlated with the number of players on a team:

- **7-8 players:** recommended for **beginner** groups with little to no puzzle experience
- **6 players:** recommended for **casual** groups with some puzzle experience (3+ prior puzzle events per team member)
- **5 players:** recommended for **experienced** groups with significant puzzle

- experience (15+ prior puzzle events per team member)
- **4 players:** recommended for **elite** groups with substantial puzzle experience (generally players with event counts numbering in the triple-digits and/or who have made significant contributions to the puzzle community)

The game is *theoretically* solvable with fewer than 4 players, in the same way that it is theoretically possible for a human to run a 100m dash in 9 seconds - i.e., this hypothetical group would be an outlier among outliers, to put it mildly.

AREAS

Hallway - Kitchen - White Room - Blue Room - Closet - Red Room

After the briefing in the Hallway, players are ushered into the White Room. There is a locked gate that leads to the Blue Room. Once players gain access to the Blue Room, they will also have access to the Closet (which is pseudo-hidden behind a door). Inside the Blue Room, there is a locked gate that leads to the Red Room.

The kitchen functions as a place for the game master to stay while the game is in progress, such that he or she is not a distracting presence to the players. The game master is hidden from view behind a curtain, but can hear the players interacting with the room and with each other, and can thus interrupt the game when necessary

GAME STRUCTURE:

Each team will have 120 minutes to solve the **13 Mysteries of Cthulhu**. If they successfully solve all 13 within the allotted time, this counts as a “win”. Failure to do so counts as a “loss”.

Each Mystery of Cthulhu is a self-contained puzzle that - when solved - yields a **nine-letter word**. Throughout this document, these words will be referred to as *incantations*. These incantations are all English words and “Scrabble legal”; i.e. no proper nouns, abbreviations, acronyms, slang, etc. Once players have discovered an incantation for a particular mystery, they can advance the game state via the Incantation Station (see THE INCANTATION STATION below). If the team either (a) runs out of time or (b) enters the 13th incantation correctly via the Incantation Station, the game ends and an ending scenario is triggered.

In addition, there are two **Bonus Mysteries**. These are complex puzzles that do not count toward the 13 required mysteries for the purpose of winning or losing. Instead, solving these mysteries will reward the teams with “better” ending scenarios. To keep things challenging, these bonus mysteries must be completed **before** the 13th Mystery of Cthulhu is solved. In other words, once a team has completed the required 13 mysteries, the game ends and they will not be able to continue working on the bonus mysteries.

The mysteries are - in general - not related to each other; each is a self-contained puzzle. The primary exception to this rule is the relationship between the mysteries named **(#3) *Relics in Pieces*** and **(#9) *The Artifact Mosaic***. These two mysteries share a great deal of material, and each requires insights from the other in order to solve.

THE INCANTATION STATION

The incantation station is a simple JavaScript application running in a web browser on a computer hidden under a table (see WHITE ROOM SETUP for placement), and is the sole interface via which players advance the game state. On top of the table is a monitor, a keyboard, and a mouse for players to use to enter the solutions to the mysteries they have solved i.e., the “incantations”.



- A** Mystery Icon - links the box to the matching mystery card
- B** Answer Space - blank text area for a player to input an incantation
- C** Unsolved Mystery - contains only an icon and a blank text area
- D** Solved Mystery - once solved, turns blue and blank text area disappears
- E** Unsolved Bonus Mystery - turquoise-colored to differentiate from required mysteries
- F** Solved Bonus Mystery - gold-colored to differentiate from required mysteries
- G** Lock Combination - appears when the 1st, 2nd, and 6th mysteries are solved
- H** Remaining Time

INCANTATION STATION LOGIC:

(1) At the start of the game, only 4 of the 13 answer spaces are available at the incantation station: **(#1) Warming Up**, **(#2) Advent of Hyperborea**, **(#3) Relics in Pieces**, and **(#4) The Grocery List**.

(2) Once **any one** mystery has been solved, the combination to the lock on the larger decorative chest is revealed via (● 457). In addition, the answer spaces for the following mysteries are unlocked: **(#5) Scent of Evil** and **(#6) The Statesman**.

(3) Once any two mysteries have been solved, the combination to the lock on the gate at the north end of the White Room is revealed via (● 7387), allowing access to the Blue Room. In addition, the answer spaces for the following mysteries are unlocked: (#7) Sounds of the Past, (#8) A High Stakes Game, (#9) The Artifact Mosaic, and (#10) Our New Masters.

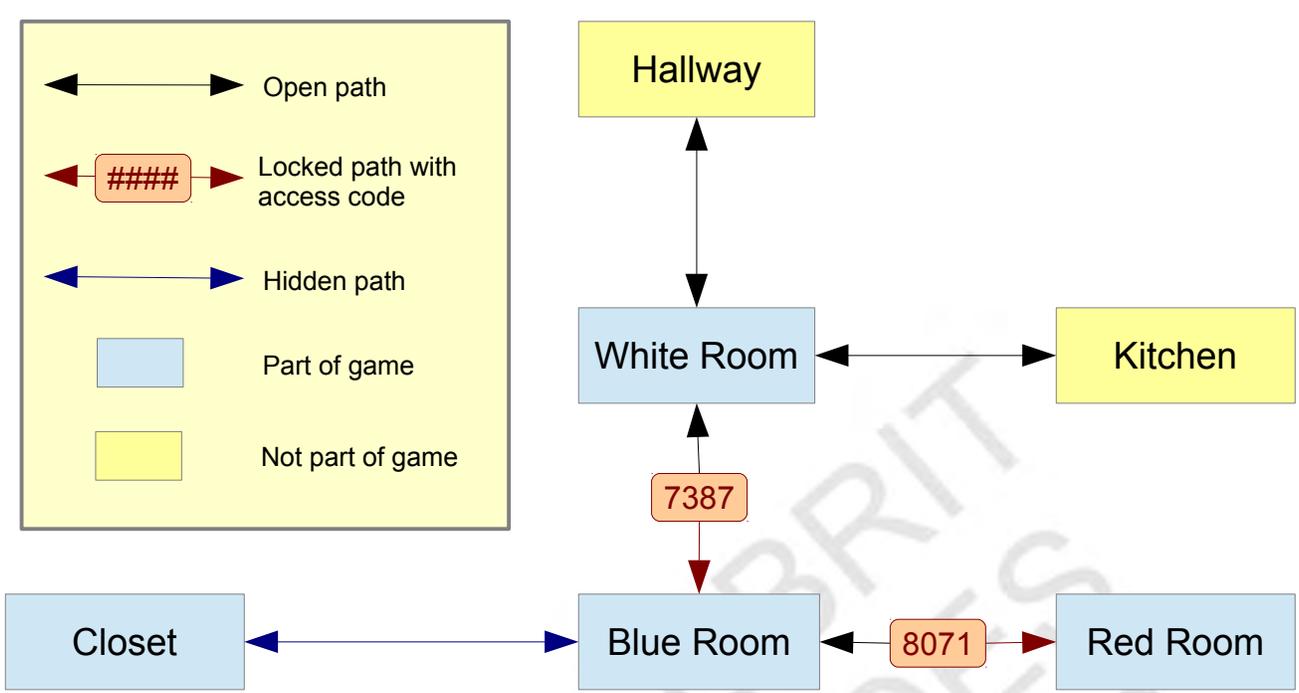
(4) Once any six mysteries have been solved, the combination to the lock on the gate at the west end of the Blue Room is revealed via (● 8071), allowing access to the Red Room. In addition, the answer spaces for the following mysteries are unlocked: (#11) Aid From the Lodge, (#12) A Twisted Place, (#13) Arcanum of Argyropoeia, (#B1) Peril at Sea, and (#B2) The Meta Magician.

(5) Once all thirteen of the required mysteries have been solved, the timer stops, and the incantation station enters the appropriate ending scenario state, based on which (if any) of the bonus mysteries were solved.

(6) Alternately - if the timer reaches zero - the incantation station enters the “Devoured by Cthulhu” state.

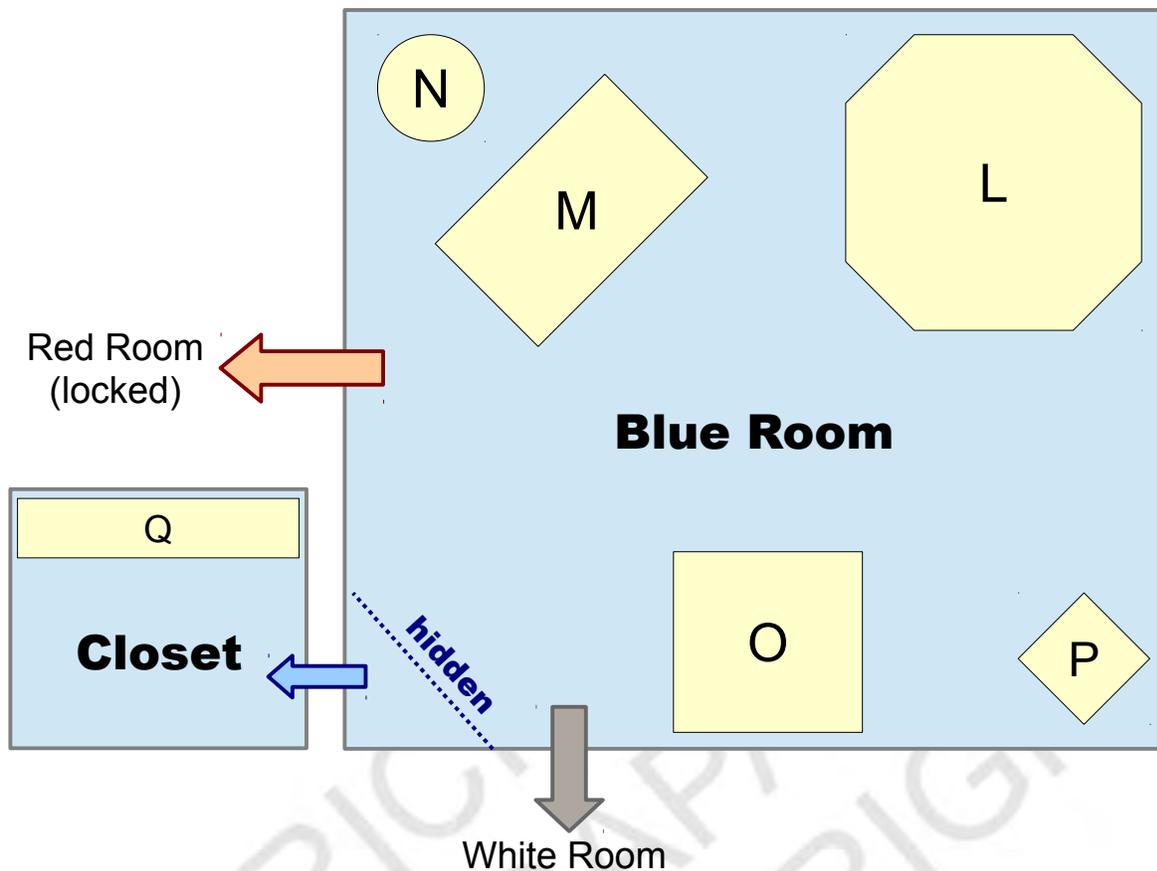
BRICKLEBRIK
ESCAPADES
COPYRIGHT
2017

GAME LAYOUT (LOGICAL):



BRICKLEBRIT
ESCAPADES
COPYRIGHT
2017

BLUE ROOM AND CLOSET LAYOUT (PHYSICAL):



- L: Poker Table
- M: Lounge Chair
- N: Tall Lamp
- O: Coffee Table
- P: Tall CD Storage Shelves (6 vertical compartments)
- Q: Raised Shelf

The door to the closet is “hidden” behind the door that - when closed - separates the Blue Room from the White Room. When this door is fully open, it completely covers the door to the Closet, hence the “hidden” description.



MYSTERY #13 : Arcanum of Argryopoeia Shanghai, 1923

“Most scholars are unwilling to acknowledge it, but there is substantial evidence that alchemy was a widespread practice in ancient Rome.”

Mindy Trafford has come to Shanghai to present her findings, but she does not have high hopes that they will be well-received among the skeptics of the era. She continues:

“Perhaps even more surprising was the way they incorporated divination rituals into their transmutation process. Their methods fell out of common use for centuries, but the introduction of the Tarot in the 1400s brought renewed interest to the field.”

*“In all my research, I’ve found references to **nine compounds** created by alchemists during the 15th century, **each one supposedly infused with the essence of a single card from the Tarot deck**. After everything you have told me, I am convinced that if you can track down samples of these elements, you will find something of great value.”*

*“Naturally, the key would lie in linking the elements back to the **Romans** somehow, but I don’t know if that’s even possible.”*

This mystery involves collecting nine “alchemical compound” cards, matching these cards to their corresponding Tarot cards, and finally extracting letters to build the incantation.

Players will find the alchemical compound cards in various locations throughout the game; they will not have any context for how to use them until they gain access to the Red Room.

Item	Location
mystery card	openly displayed on short cabinet [R]
cork board with the 21 major arcana tarot cards	openly displayed on short cabinet [R]
alchemical compound cards (9x)	inside large decorative chest [D] (1x) inside small decorative chest [D] (1x) openly displayed on raised shelf in closet [Q] (1x) openly displayed on CD storage shelves [P] (2x) openly displayed on short cabinet [R] (4x)

The first step is for players to collect all nine of the alchemical compound cards; this should happen organically, as none of the cards are hidden. Two are locked inside of the chests that players should generally be accessing early on, and the rest are in plain sight.

Each alchemical compound card has a name, a picture, and two numbers. The left number appears inside an orange circle, and the right number appears inside a blue circle:



As the mystery card is not revealed until players enter the Red Room, players can speculate to no end about how these compounds might be used. The idea is to entice, rather than frustrate.

Once the mystery card and the tarot cards are discovered, players are then faced with the task of matching each compound to one of the available Tarot cards, as suggested in the text:

“nine compounds...each one supposedly infused with the essence of a single card from the Tarot deck...”

As the mystery card also notes:

“...the key would lie in linking the elements back to the Romans somehow...”

As a player, the question then becomes: *How will I link each of these compounds to a Tarot card, while somehow using something from the Romans?*

A closer inspection of the tarot cards reveals that each of them has a Roman numeral at the top:



The key to linking each alchemical compound to a tarot card is that the name of each compound is a **chronogram** - a word with a number hidden inside it. In this case, each compound contains a Roman numeral that be be discovered by stripping away all letters that are not also Roman numerals (I, V, X, L, C, D, M). For example, stripping all the non-Roman numeral letters from the compound **BRINXUTH** leaves **IX**, the Roman numeral 9. Thus the Brinxuth compound card would be matched to the tarot card with the number IX - in this case, ***The Hermit***.

Players should also notice that the decimal numbers inside of the orange circles are numbered from one to nine. This suggests that these numbers represent the ordering of the extraction, and that the blue numbers represent the index into the corresponding card. Finally, at the top of the tarot board, there is a notice to players to **ignore the word "THE"** when considering a card; this is important for the indexing task.

Order	Compound	Roman Numeral	Tarot Card	Index	Letter Extraction
1	AXIONITE	XII	The Hanged Man	3	N
2	XENOXITE	XXI	The World	2	O
3	GRAVIONITE	VII	The Chariot	5	I
4	OXYARIX	XIX	The Sun	1	S
5	IRIBIUTH	III	The Empress	5	E
6	PARVORON	V	The Hierophant	10	T
7	BRINXUTH	IX	The Hermit	6	T
8	NIAVORON	IV	The Emperor	4	E
9	EXEVIIONITE	XVII	The Star	1	S

Reading the extracted letters in order yields the incantation: **NOISETTES**



MYSTERY #B1: Peril at Sea

The South Pacific, 1925

You've set sail on the legendary **U**ltima Thule to investigate a mysterious beacon emanating from the **P**acific. The ship glides across the ocean with seemingly supernatural **Q**uickness.

The spray of the ocean is invigorating at first, but becomes harsh as the ship picks up speed. Eventually you are forced to take cover beneath the deck as a storm rolls in from the west.

As you head below, you begin to notice that your shipmates are behaving strangely. The crew glares at you suspiciously and confer with each other in whispers when they sense that your back is turned. Even stranger, wisps of fog materialize in the cabin out of nowhere. The atmosphere eventually becomes so thick that you head up to the deck to clear your head, despite the approaching storm.

To your amazement, there is no storm - but instead a giant rotting necropolis rises from the ocean a few miles ahead of you.

You decide that you've learned all you need to about this beacon. It's time to get the hell out of here.

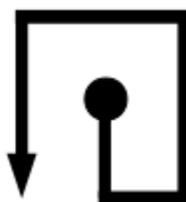
This mystery involves using several insights to color in a grid of numbers to form International Maritime Flag patterns.

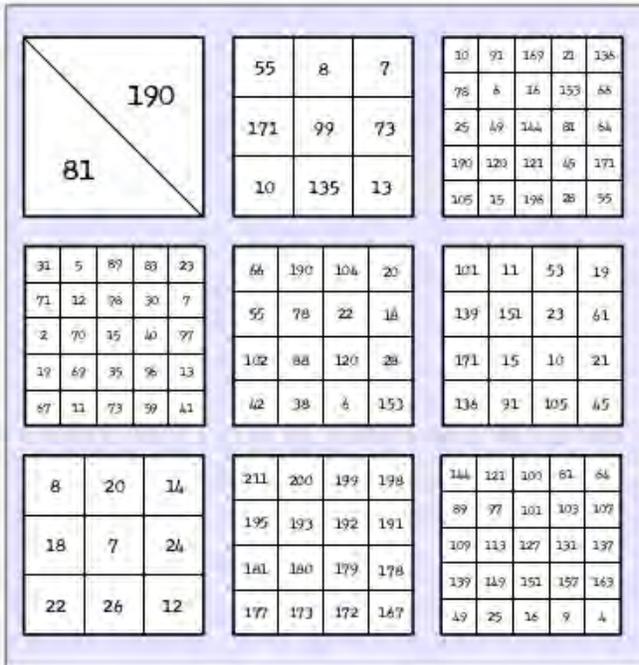
All items required to solve this mystery are locked inside Bonus Box #1, which is found in the Red Room:

Item	Location
mystery card	inside bonus box #1
answer sheet	inside bonus box #1
red, yellow, and blue dry erase markers	inside bonus box #1

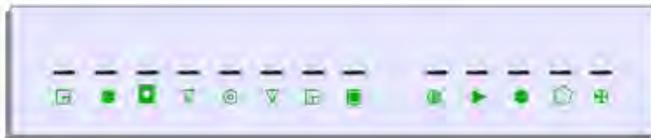
This particular mystery card has several unusual features:

1. Several letters have been replaced with green symbols.
2. Several letters are colored red, yellow, or blue, and are capitalized even if they appear in the middle of a word.
3. The following symbol appears on the back side of the mystery card:





As for the answer sheet itself, players will find nine squares, each containing several smaller spaces containing numbers.



They will also find space to translate the symbols from the mystery card...



and a space to record the incantation:

STEP 1 - Translating the Green Symbols: Translating the symbols from the mystery card is not difficult; in most cases, there is at most one possibility for the encoded letter. For example, for the word...

Sou⊙h

...that appears in the title of the mystery, there is only one possibility to represent the ⊙ symbol that yields a valid word - the letter T. Other translations may have more than one valid possibility, but the correct choice should be easy to discern based on the context of the surrounding words.

Once all the translations have been made, players will have the following phrase:



STEP 2 - Tracing the Colored Letters: Each set of colored letters within the mystery card text spells out a different word when recorded in order from the beginning of the mystery to the end:

Red letters spell out the word **TRIANGULAR**

Blue letters spell out the word **PRIME**

Yellow letters spell out the word **SQUARE**

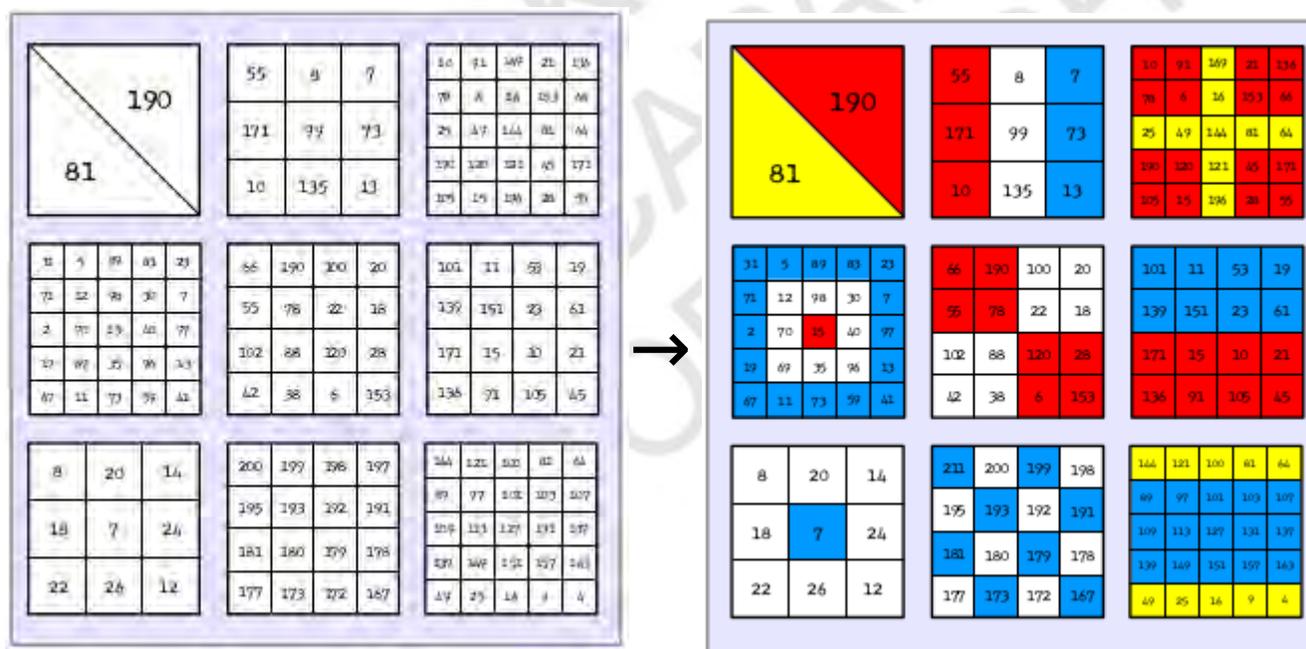
STEP 3 - Filling in the Grid: Using the included dry-erase markers, players will color in the various numbered spaces on the answer sheet. The key is that certain numbers are one of the categories of numbers described by the words traced out in step 2:

- a **TRIANGULAR NUMBER** counts objects arranged in an equilateral triangle
- a **PRIME NUMBER** is a natural number greater than 1 that has no positive divisors other than 1 and itself
- a **SQUARE NUMBER** is the product of an integer with itself

Players should examine the numbers on the sheet, and color the containing space the appropriate color, based on the categorization of the number in question. For example, if players identify 47 as a **PRIME** number (as they should!), they will color its space **BLUE**.

Special care has been taken to ensure that no number present falls into more than one of the above categories. In addition, some numbers used will not fall into any of the categories, and should not be colored in (thus leaving them “white”).

If the players color every space correctly, they will obtain the following:



As hinted at by the phrase translated from the green symbols, these are indeed the flags representing the International Maritime Alphabet.

STEP 4 - Use the Symbol on the back of the Mystery Card: The symbol shows the order in which to read the letters represented by the flags: **UNDERTOWS**



MYSTERY #B2 : The Meta Magician Tokyo, 1913

You have come to Japan to seek the counsel of traveling magician Dominic Deacon. Your recent encounter in Johannesburg has crushed your spirits, and the magician's characteristically cryptic advice offers little comfort:

"You must leave. Stop playing the game and leave the building. You must visit three locations. There you will find clues that will give you the power to save your friend."

You plead with Dominic for clarification: "This makes no sense! What building? How will we know where to go once we leave?"

*"The task is really quite trivial. It's simply a matter of knowing **what three words** will send you to these locations."*

Frustrated, you begin to walk away, but not before the magician issues a final bizarre admonition: "Do not leave the apartment until you know where you are headed. Aimless wandering will just eat up your valuable time."

This mystery involves visiting various locations outlined via use of the website <https://what3words.com>.

All items required to solve this mystery are locked inside Bonus Box #2, which is found in the Blue Room.

Item	Location
mystery card	inside bonus box #2
answer sheet	inside bonus box #2
key to front door	inside bonus box #2
card with URL	inside bonus box #2

It is unlikely that players will have any idea what to do with this puzzle, so their first action will generally be to check out the URL on the included card:



This URL takes players to what3words.com, a website that maps tuples of three words to a 3x3 meter square somewhere on earth. One of the original ideas behind the website was to create a precise addressing scheme to help benefit areas of the world that are heavily populated, but do not have functional or efficient addressing methods. For more

information, see: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/What3words>

formal.senses.march
— N — — — —
4 5 6

thinks.chair.bigger
— — — — R — — — —
2 3 7 8

rests.cheese.crest
H — — — — — — — — —
1 7 8

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

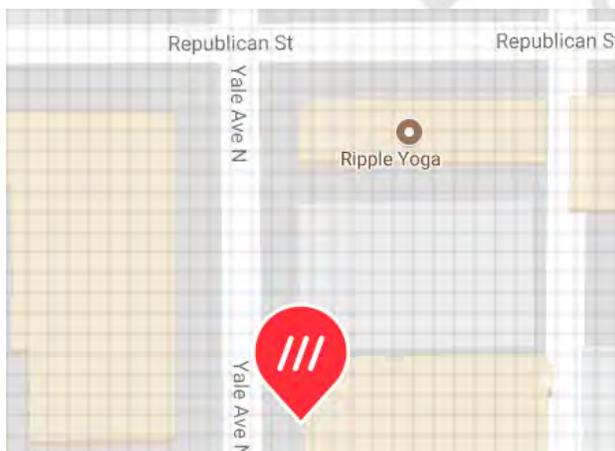
The answer sheet lists three such tuples, and a series of blanks (with a single letter provided) for each tuple. When players input the tuples into the map on the website, they should see that the corresponding locations are all within a block of the building where the game is hosted.

Players will have to visit each of the three locations; once there, they will look for a word that fits the pattern of the corresponding blank and single provided letter.

It is possible to solve this puzzle using Google street view, but unless the team has a laptop to use, this is probably more trouble than it is worth.

Once all three of the unknown words have been found, the players should transfer the letters in each of the nine numbered blanks to the solution space at the bottom of the sheet.

The first location (**formal.senses.march**) takes players to Yale Ave N, one block south of the building where the game is hosted. Once there, they will see this large sign for UNDERDOG Sports Leagues:



CREDITS

Story and Puzzle Design by Samuel Tisdale

Props by Dan Hoke (danhoke@gmail.com):

Wooden answer board and brass tiles for mystery #1 (Warming Up)
Artifact block for mysteries #3 and #9 (Relics in Pieces, The Artifact Mosaic)

Props by Nick Ballenger (nballeng@gmail.com):

Hint board + slats for mystery #9 (The Artifact Mosaic)

Artwork by Marc J. Palm (swellzombie@gmail.com):

<http://marcpalm.tumblr.com>

Promotional poster and fliers
Tentacle monsters for opening bonus box 1
Wordplay images for mystery #12 (A Twisted Place)

Artwork by Dwayne Biddix (dwaynebiddix@gmail.com):

<http://dlxartist.tumblr.com>

Villains Poster for mystery #10 (Our New Masters)

BRICKY LEBRIT
ESCAPADES
COPYRIGHT
2017