

Absinthe Waves

A *Lovecraftesque* scenario by Ralph Lovegrove

Witness

Gracia Namata is a music journalist for Melody King Magazine. She's in Draytonage, home village of rock legend Sullivan Hook who died early this year, shortly after the long anticipated album "Unkind Mysteries" was released to a lukewarm reception.

Gracia's strength is *empathy*. Her personality trait is *deep in the music*.

Other Characters

- **Wilko Davidson** was Hook's manager and only constant companion over his 50+ year career. He has the keys to Hook's mansion.
- **Gemma Craig** is a farmer whose business has been struggling. She blames all her misfortunes on "rural gentrification".
- **Dominic Baxter** is a dentist with a private practice in London, and the chair of the village residents' association.
- **Thomas Wolfe** is an idealistic young farmer. He's going through a bad patch with the decline in the local farming industry, and to make matters worse his wife Allison just walked out on him.
- **May Persky** is a farmer's daughter with ambition to become a vet. She dresses in black and does tarot readings as a side business.

Location and Era

Draytonage is little more than a winding main road of Berkshire stone cottages surrounded by farmland. Winner of *Best Kept Village 2012* it's also become attractive to commuters, making the

village a mix of locals and well-heeled professionals and celebrities converting the interior of listed buildings and erecting automated gates outside their mansions.

Other Locations

- **The Jude** is the village's only pub. It does good food and offers a few Bed and Breakfast rooms. Most people drink here, and while the proprietors Tony and Alex are welcoming and won't stand for violence, occasionally conflicting views are aired between militant farmers and local professionals.
- **The North Tower** was Sullivan Hook's mansion and recording studio. The original front of the building belies the ultra-modern glass extension to the rear, which divides the house sharply between the period low ceilings, creaking floors and dark wood and the airy and light open-plan new build. Many of the rooms contain instruments, hifi equipment, records and books but are sparsely furnished as if they are intended to be walked through rather than lived in.
- **Gryppe Wood** is an area of natural beauty. Hook allegedly incorporated ambient sounds from the wood into most of his recordings. At the centre of the wood is a "miz-maze" or turf labyrinth with a wide grassy space at its centre.
- **Tufnell's Farm** is a dead farm and a graveyard of machinery and outbuildings. The farm was supposedly sold to an anonymous buyer about fifteen years ago but has never been developed since.

Cards

- A hostile group
- Strange writings
- Eldrich technology
- Flashback
- A strange location

Clues

- A bottle of absinthe with a hand-drawn label and accompanying CD labeled "instructions".

- The turf of the Miz-Maze in Grypphe's Wood is vandalised with deep scars.
- Moonlight through a window becomes a rippling pool of light on the floor.
- The attic in *The Jude* has a strong animal smell.
- A subsonic droning.
- Two people haul a six-foot long shape out of one of the foundations on the housing development.
- A picture of Sullivan Hook's early avant-garde band *Psychic Colossus* with mystery fifth member whose face is hidden by cigarette smoke.
- The Residents' Association meets in closed sessions.
- Concept album art depicting village scenes as tarot cards.
- A rough cut of "Unkind Mysteries" is accompanied by a second disk of out-takes labeled "Kindly Ones", where Hook narrates an imagined history of the village.
- A basement full of reel-to-reel tapes labeled "field recordings".
- A wardrobe-sized recording instrument using coloured glass discs.