

Secrets of the Facultas

House Book Two:

The Writer

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by, John M. Hayeck

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Description: Trent Posterus now knows the truth about the Secrets inside of the Facultas House, but what lies outside? A new twist on an old mystery brings Trent and his three friends back inside the House boundaries to meet a thought-to-be-dead writer and kill Smith and Gunshot once and for all.

Genres: 1.Fiction–2.Thriller–3.Suspense–4.Mystery–5.Drama–6.Revenge

To the Four Who's Story Will Never End...

Part 1

Prologue

“Edgar Allan Poe? HE’S still alive?” The old man seemed to ignore me.

“We are the Outsiders, and like you read, We Offer a Choice.” The image of Antallon flickered and flared, leaving the hillside, as though it never was, leaving four teens scared and confused.

At some point, I remembered the new journal I got, and wrote down the last bit of what had happened. I’m not entirely sure what happened next, I think my SenCome kicked in, but it all seems like a big blur. I’ll just go with that.

SenCome

“Guys,” I said. “They’re here!”

“What?” asked Brandon. “Where are they?”

“They’re as close as could be!” I said. “Come on!”

I led them up the hill, and we watched as Gunshot and Smith went over to the rock, with the bars pried out of it.

“My friend,” Gunshot said, “what do you make of this?” He pointed towards the two bars that had been kicked out.

“Blasted animals!” Smith said. “They been chewing away at the bars!”

“Are you sure the children did not find the exit?” Gunshot asked.

“Impossible!” Smith yelled. “Just go fool!”

Gunshot took out a key from his pocket, and

opened the pipe in the rock, crawling down it.

As soon as Gunshot followed down the pipe, shut it, and locked it, I stood strait up.

“Guys, we gotta go!” I said. “As soon as they realize we’re gone, well, it won’t be good!”

“What about going back?” Jill asked, “helping Antallon?”

“Guys, Antallon could be gone by now!” Brandon said. “We’ve been out here for ten minutes regular time, and Antonio could’ve already been in there for two days! They’re gonna kill both of them!”

I pulled out my cell phone, and saw where it usually read: Antallon 2.5 in baby blue letters turn to red, and soon turned the screen much brighter, and looked like it was higher quality.

“Guys, look,” I said, showing them my phone. Where it had read Antallon 2.5 in baby blue, it now read in all caps: ANTALLON 3.0.

“It says Antallon 3.0,” I said. “He’s gone.”

“So, the good Antallon is dead?” Kelly asked.

“That would be right,” Brandon said. “But, what do we do now?”

“We get out of this nut hut!” I said. “They could be back any second!”

“Like you said Trent,” Jill said, “time is slower in there, it will take them longer to get to us. Seriously though, who do we go to, to say something like this?”

“Edison?” Jill asked.

“Where could he be though,” Brandon asked. “It’s not exactly like the guy could lead us to him, he was

a scientist, not a novelist!”

“Wait,” I said. “A novelist that’s it! Brandon, you’re a genius!”

“Wanna tell me why?” Brandon asked.

“A novelist!” I said. “Edgar Allan Poe, he knew about these plans, maybe he’s left instructions of how to get rid of the Two or where to find him!”

“What’s this guy got to do with any of this though?” Jill asked.

“A few of his stories have some strange parallels to what’s been going on with the House,” I said. “Like the rooms’ colors each of you guys were in were also the different colored rooms from ‘The Masque of the Red Death’, AND each of us have a strange connection to the characters in ‘The Oblong Box’.”

“So what about like, ‘The Murders in the Rue Morgue?’” Kelly asked.

“Wait a sec,” Jill asked, “who IS Edgar Allan Poe anyway? All I know is that he used to live here.”

“We don’t even know that, though,” I said. “Well, basically he was a writer in the 1800s, who was famous for his creepy stories about being buried alive, and getting trapped in a pit, with a razor coming slowly to cut your neck off.”

“Well, why?” she asked. “Was, was there something wrong with his childhood or something?”

“Well, his mom died when he was two, and his dad cut him off from all communication by the time he was a teenager.”

“And then he got kicked out of West Point,” Kelly

added.

“And then when his wife died he became drunk,” I said. “But his death is the weirdest mystery of all.”

“He was in Baltimore at a pub and collapsed. He was also wearing another guy’s clothes, and kept shouting out the name Reynolds,” Brandon said.

“He died at the hospital for unknown reasons a few days later,” Kelly finished.

“Huh, nice guy!” Jill said sarcastically. “So we’re going on some nut-job’s stories to lead us to some answers before Smith and Gunshot find out we escaped, and mummify us alive!”

“Wait!” I said, “Jill, now you’re the genius!”

“Why?”

“Buried alive! In one of his stories, the main

*character has taphophobia, the fear of being buried
alive! Genius!”*

“So he’s buried alive?” Kelly asked.

*“No, there’s probably a clue BURIED somewhere
that will tell us where to go,” I said. “Let’s keep
moving, we need to make up for lost time!”*

Day 19: Circa Noon

We didn't stray too far from the house, but just far enough; that is of course until we found something.

"Guys, it looks like it might rain," Kelly said.

"We're gonna need to take cover, and fast!"

"I got that covered!" Brandon said.

"What, you're gonna build us a shelter?!" Jill said.

"Yeah right!"

"Oh heck no!" he said. "I meant that underground bunker I saw a few minutes ago."

"The what!?" we all yelled.

"Oh yeah, while you guys trail blazed ahead, I looked down there, it goes a *WHILE* deep, probably

has enough room for ten people; fully stocked kitchen, a few rooms, possibly the next clue.”

“Why didn’t you tell us?” I asked. “There might be a phone down there we could use to call for help! Just show us where it is!”

Brandon lead us only a few feet down the trail, and showed us a small, nearly invisible grey square, that seemed loose.

He pulled it off, and we saw a latter, that looked like it stretched down a long ways.

“So...” Kelly said. “Who wants to go first?”

“I think Trent does!” Brandon said.

“Oh thanks for nomination Brandon!” I said sarcastically. I held onto the wet forest floor, and sank my feet into the decaying wooden rungs of the

latter. I put one foot down first, then a hand on the top rung. Another foot; another hand. Another foot; another hand. Another foot; another hand. I continued to climb down the seemingly-endless latter, until I finally DID reach the end. I set my feet down upon the concrete floor, that also had traces of gravel lined in them. The walls were a dark grey, that could just barely be seen by a dimly lit candle. Jill came down after me, and Kelly after her. I offered Kelly a hand down, which she accepted. Brandon came down after that.

There was a sudden burst of light, that covered the room much nicer than the candle. Kelly shrieked, and grabbed my arm.

“Light switch!” Brandon exclaimed. “Wow, it

would've been a LOT harder without those lights on, don't you guys think?"

"Yeah thanks a BUNCH Brandon," Jill yelled, hitting him on the shoulder. "You nearly gave me a heart attack!"

"Sorry, give me a break!"

"Wow," Kelly said. "This place is like a hotel! Why do you think it was made?"

"It could've been an original spot for the house," I suggested. "Or maybe it's a place built by Edison or Poe, for when kids escape or get out, they come here."

"Let's just hope there are no ceiling-swinging pendulums," Brandon said. "Now, I don't know about you guys, but I'm starving! I'm gonna grab some food, maybe watch some Dancing with the

Stars re-runs on the T.V., see what I've missed while we've been away."

"It's only been a day!" Kelly said.

"Yeah, and I missed it last night!"

She and I exchanged looks.

"Once again we enter the strange and bizarre world that is... Brandon's mind!" I said. I got a laugh out of Kelly, but I think Jill was too busy making some Macaroni and Cheese in the small kitchen, and Brandon was too busy watching whatever mess was on the T.V. I thought at one point I was hallucinating, because there was a kitchen and a T.V., and bedrooms underground, somehow they all got great reception, and no one else was questioning this.

It didn't hit me until now how tired I was. I DID spend the whole night up looking for my kidnapped friends and piecing together an ancient mystery.

I walked from the main room that had the kitchen, T.V. and couch down the hallway.

"Trent were are you going?" Kelly asked.

"I'm gonna set some of my stuff up in one of these rooms, take a nap, and then I'll have some dinner."

"Okay," she said.

I walked down the dark hallway, to nearly the very end.

I opened one of the doors, and saw a darkened room, which I reached my hand out into, and found a light switch. I flicked it on, and tried to get my tired eyes not to adjust too much.

I thought, for a split second, that I had seen the

*plump, grey-haired, image of Gunshot in the corner,
but squinted, and saw that my eyes were playing
tricks on me.*

*I sat down on the bed, not even taking off my
coat; because I had already fallen into a deep sleep.*

Day 19: Circa 3:00 p.m.

*DEEP into that darkness, peering. Long I stood
there, wondering; fearing; doubting. Dreaming
dreams no mortal had dared to dream before.*

Who said that quote?

*I woke up. Something was going to happen.
Within today and tomorrow, something big will
happen. Something dark.*

Day 19: Dusk

*Did they find me? I woke up screaming,
wondering if they had found us. I barely slept a
wink, and knew that the end was coming.*

Because the beginning of the end had just begun.

Day 19: 7:45 p.m.

I rolled over in bed for a while. 'Dreaming dreams no mortal had dared to dream before.' I had forgotten where that quote came from. Maybe Poe? Or Edison? One thing was for sure: at the Facultas House, my SenCome improved 75%, but my eidetic memory: a flat -100%, meaning it got worse.

I checked the time on my iPod Touch reading: 7:45 p.m. I looked out into the hall, where all had gone dark. The kitchen lights had shut out, and the only other lights were the blaring T.V. from down the long hallway.

I looked at the wall ahead of me, that was a silver-ish color, and had something written on it that

I hadn't noticed before. They were written in a deep red, that looked similar to blood.

HILLSIDE: Three Steps Down, One Step Up.

What was this? I went back into my room, thinking about whether or not I had seen these markings there before. I feared that I was becoming VERY paranoid. I tried to remember whether or not they had been there before, but struggled.

I got out of my room, and followed down the hallway, to the kitchen and small living room, where Jill and Brandon were sitting on a couch, watching some sports show.

"Where's Kelly?" I asked them.

"She left about a half hour ago on a walk through the forest."

“And you guys didn’t follow her!?” I exclaimed.

“What if Smith and Gunshot are out there? By now they know we’re gone, and we obviously haven’t called for help yet, since none of us have international coverage, and oh yeah, we still have NO IDEA where we are!”

“Oh,” Jill said. “That might be a problem. But Trent, we need answers, and we need to find Edgar or Thomas, and both are no where to be found!”

“Not exactly,” I said. “Let’s go find Kelly, and I’ll show you guys what I found.”

I walked up to the latter, and climbed up, hand then foot; hand then foot; hand then foot, and so forth.

When all three of us reached the top, we saw Kelly

up ahead of us on the trail, away from the hillside.

“Kelly,” Brandon said. “Trent thinks he found a clue!”

She still didn’t move.

“Kelly?” Jill asked.

No reaction.

I walked up to her. She seemed alive (or NOT DEAD to say it better) and looking strait ahead. I put my hand on her shoulder.

“Kelly, what happened?” I asked.

“I-I-I think they’re coming,” she said, calmly. “It could’ve already been two weeks in there! Smith and Gunshot must’ve been in and out a few times already!”

“Kelly, it’ll be alright,” I said. “We’re gonna get

Antonio and Sarah out of there, and make sure that Gunshot and Smith go down. HARD. I already found a clue, and it might lead us to Poe.”

She walked silently down the path, towards the hill, and the three of us followed behind.

“It was painted on the wall,” I said. “It said that from the top of the hill, we need to take three steps down and one step up.”

“So three down, then turn and go up on the right?” Jill asked.

“It’s worth a shot,” I said. “I’ll go, just in case it’s dangerous.”

I took a step down the hill, then another one. I stopped, and turned on my heels, so I was facing the top again. I took a step forward.

Nothing.

Nothing...

Nothing!?

NOTHING!?!?!

“Nothing!” Kelly said. “Well where is it?”

“Wait a sec,” Brandon said. “Three steps forward and one step back. That means four. And there’s four of us!”

“So we all do it?” Jill asked.

“Or what about all at the same time?” I suggested.

“THAT is what I meant!” Brandon said. “Trent come back up here, and I’ll go first.”

I came back up another two steps to the hilltop, where just this morning the holographic Antallon had appeared, and thrown us all into this mess!

Brandon stepped forward.

Jill came down, exactly a step in front of him, so

his nose was close enough to touch her hair.

Kelly stood in front of her.

I took four steps down in front of Kelly, and stood right next to her. I took one step forward, so then I was right next to Jill.

Nothing!?

“Nothing?” Kelly asked. She had seemed to return to her normal self after her whole ‘bizarro’ phase a minutes ago.

“Why don’t we try... Jumping?” Brandon suggested.

“What?” Jill asked.

“I saw this movie once!”

“On three,” I said. “One. Two... Three!”

We all jumped on the spot and heard a wooden cranking from a few feet away.

“Whoa, what was that?” Jill asked.

*“I think it came from that huge rock down there,”
I said.*

*I lead them down the hill, so we were in line with
the other Barrier mark (the left one if you were in the
clearing on the House’s side of the Barrier).*

*We went down from there. Directly down the other
small hillside in the forest, dodging trees in the
nightfall, we saw a rock that appeared to be hollow.*

*I saw, at the bottom, a small bit of it had opened
up, and inside was a piece of paper, that looked
beige. I pulled it out, and saw another riddle written
on it, in the same handwriting.*

The first record of Immortality hides, in this be-leathered

and clasped recipe for the eternal rides.

“Be-leathered and clasped?” Brandon asked. *“A book?”*

“Not just any book,” I said. *“Where do we all know eternal life is mentioned?”*

“The Masque of the Red Death?” Kelly guessed.

“Good thinking, but I was thinking earlier,” I said.

“That new book Dark Eden!” Brandon asked. *We all stared at him. “What? I won an advanced edition, and besides, it was classic!”*

“Some book in the time of the Crusades?”

“The Crusades,” I said. *“Religious wars. Religion.”*

“The Bible!” Kelly said. *“But where?”*

“I learned at school that the first account of

eternal life in the New Testament is in John Chapter 5, Verse 24.”

“How do you remember that?” Jill asked.

“I figured that if I ever get on Jeopardy or Wheel of Fortune, than that, of course, will be the final question, so I knew it would come in handy.”

“Well, obviously this isn’t just any ‘Bible,” Kelly said. “It’s a be-leathered and clasped one. Where could it be though?”

“The House?” Jill asked, staring over at the Facultas House, from the hilltop, where we had come from the Bunker before.

“No,” Brandon said. “Probably on one of those bookshelves in the Bunker.”

“What!?” Kelly and I exclaimed.

“Is there anything else you’d like to tell us about these clues?” Kelly asked. “Do you know where Poe IS already?”

“C’mon!” Brandon said. “We’ve still got loads of work ahead of ourselves.”

Part 2

Day 19: Circa 11:30 p.m.

When we got back to the Bunker, the others looked all over the bookshelves in the small kitchen for a Bible, but were unsuccessful.

I don't know what it was, but something kept telling me to check where the writing was again.

I went down the hallway, all the way down, and saw the red words on the wall across from my room.

I went all the way down to the gravel wall at the end, and smelt something rather peculiar: wet paint.

I went over to the gravel, and saw something faint in the dead center: a faded image that had just become visible: a raven.

Painted there, in the smallest of brushes I ever did

see, was a miniature raven. Nothing more.

I knew that this mark wasn't new, but it seemed like, behind the gravel wall, was new paint.

I pressed the sketch of the raven, and before I knew what had happened, the wall had come out, and turned me with it, to the other side, as I yelled for help.

A secret passageway.

Day 20: Midnight

DEEP into that darkness, long I stood there, wondering; fearing; doubting; whilst I was dreaming dreams no mortal had dared to dream before.

I was still trying to jog my memory on what I had forgotten about the whole origin and sayer of that quote, but it certainly applied.

I must've been in some secret room. I stepped forward, into the room, and a set of lights flickered to life, revealing a larger, less modern room.

It consisted of old, wooden furniture, lined with leather, and a maple desk, on which, was a book, in the dead center. There were also some pens, old papers, a few empty bottles with old writing on them,

and a strange animal: a stuffed raven.

Not necessarily a stuffed plush raven, but the kind that a taxidermist would have.

Of all these things it was, surprisingly, the book in the venter that caught my attention.

Just the book, and nothing more.

I sat down in the leather chair by the desk, put my feet up on it, and opened up the book's clasp.

I opened to the first page, and saw it was empty, except for one word, printed at the very top:

GENESIS.

Genesis, I thought. The first book in the Bible!

I flipped through some more pages, but they were blank: all blank, except for that one.

I came towards the end, and saw one more page

with writing on it. It said: One bookcase you tried, and fell a plunder, but now look, look in this room, find a secret passageway and try another.

I thought these things were getting easier!

I looked around, and saw not one bookcase in the entire room. I went over to the wall that I had been turned around by, and saw two levers on it.

I pulled the first one, and heard a creak, and the wall turned around again, pulling me with it, back to the end of the hallway in the Bunker.

‘What did the other one do?’ I wondered.

I pushed the small raven on the wall, and spun around again. The lights flickered on again as I reentered the room.

I noticed that the wall that had spun me around,

came around again, and the two levers popped out.

I pulled on the second one, and heard a wooden cranking, as something in the back corner of the room opened up: a secret room *WITHIN* this secret room, who would've thought that?

I walked over the secret corner, and saw a piece of the wall, a small square slab, had opened up.

It had several cranks, and gears inside of it, but any other contents: I don't think so.

I looked inside, and saw another gear, that I didn't think had turned before, when it had opened, but there was only one way to be sure.

Well, I guess four heads are better than one.

Day 20: Late Night

I had to wake Jill and Brandon up, but Kelly had been reading a collection of Edgar Allan Poe's books that had been left on the bookcase in the main room.

She was reading 'The Cask of Amontillado', nice.

"A secret room IN a secret room?" Kelly asked.

"That's right," I said. "I think that our next clue is gonna be in there, but just a guess."

"So where is this room?" Jill asked. "I don't see a lever, or handle to get in."

"It's right here," I said, showing her the raven painted on the door. I pressed it, and the wall spun all of us over to the secret room.

I stepped forward, and the motion-sensing lights

engaged, lightening up the room.

The wall turned around again, and we saw the levers.

“Which one of them?” Brandon asked.

“The one on the left,” I said. “I’ll go over and wait for where it is, while Brandon pulls it down, then I’m gonna get into the room, and you guys need to pull the lever down, got it?”

Nods mixed in and out from the three, as I went over to the corner of the room, where the room was hidden.

I heard Brandon crank the lever down, and the wooden wall pulled up.

I climbed deep into that darkness, where only the gears lie, and noticed the one I had thought was

fake.

“Now!” I said. I clicked my flashlight on, and the wooden wall fell shut slowly, and loudly.

The gear didn’t move.

Fake, I thought. I turned it to the left, but it seemed to just spin, as though it was loose.

I pushed the fake gear in, and heard a click, then spun it left, and it tightened.

Click!

I don’t know where the sound came from, but it was faint, and didn’t come from the secret room.

The wooden door opened up, and I climbed out.

I couldn’t help but think that someone could’ve been like, put in there, if they were being kidnapped.

This reminded me of the Poe story Kelly had been

reading called 'The Cask of Amontillado', where the victim is shoved into an unfinished wall after he's murdered.

Could I be that victim?

What could it be used for? It must be more than JUST a secret room, like it has a further purpose.

Hmm. I'll need to think about that.

I climbed out of the room, and saw the other three gathering around a space next to the wall that we had spun around on, from the hallway, and a pocket-watch, or compass had come out of it.

"Trent," Kelly said, "how did you know where it was?"

"The gear looked fake," I said. "I pushed it in, and turned it, which, I guess made this come out.

What's the next clue?"

"It's etched in on this compass," Brandon said.

"It looks like it says: 'Hidden in this map, a secret location you will see, after it, the final relic will lead you to me.'"

"So, how's it work?" Jill asked. "Does the compass's direction point lead us to where Poe is?"

"Let me see it," I said. I clicked the button at the top, and the face fell forward, revealing what looked like a pocket-watch, but appeared to be just a piece of paper with scribbled lines.

"I have no idea," I said.

"Ditto," Kelly admitted.

"C'mon guys, this is an easy one!" Brandon said.

We all looked at him, asking for enlightenment.

“Latitude and longitude,” he said.

“Oh,” we all said similarly to him.

“So where is it?” Kelly asked.

“Well,” Brandon said. “Just a rough guess, but it’s probably somewhere between the two Barrier rocks, since the dotted point is at the top of the map, which is where the Barrier is.”

“You figured all that out?” Jill asked.

“I know right!” Brandon said. “If we go now, we’ll find Poe by morning!”

We all followed Brandon to the bookcase, down the hall, up the latter, and out to the dark forest.

DEEP into that darkness, long I stood there, wondering; fearing; doubting. Whilst I dreamed dreams that no mortal had ever dared to dreamed

before. We shut the squared-off, silver entrance to the Bunker, and covered it with leaves and twigs, hoping that no one would have to find it again, after tonight.

We ran down the hill, and went to the Barrier, and saw something on the left side of the Barrier, concealed in the left rock, it looked like it was about the same shape and size as the compass.

“I think this is it,” Brandon said. “We need the compass to open it.”

I pulled my backpack off, and found the compass at the top of the the things we had collected from the Bunker (i.e. the Bible, Poe’s stories, compass, clues etc.).

I pushed the compass into the rock, and the back of

it fell forward, and another be-leathered, and clasped book fell out of it.

“What is it?” Brandon asked.

I opened the book up, and saw the first page had five little words written in a VERY familiar handwriting style: Property of EDGAR ALLAN POE.

“So, Poe HAS been leaving us these clues?” Jill asked.

“Looks like it,” I said. “He tends to write in either invisible ink, or just wait until the end of the story to tell us what he needs to. Let’s look ahead, shall we?”

I flipped to the back of the book, and saw another few sentences written there.

Now that you have discovered this journal, I realize that you must wish my advice on your predicament. Escape

from the Facultas House is no easy task, alas it took me years to build up the courage to leave; but getting back IN takes even a stronger young man or lady.

DEEP into that darkness, you now peer as you wonder, fear and doubt, dream dreams no mortal will dare to dream again, as you wonder what to do next.

If you climb down and into this rock, you will find passageway, very similar to that of which you exited the House from, except this one leads under, through and behind the House, to the replica bunker, in which I hide, waiting for you to come. It won't be long now.

That was the end of it.

Day 20: Final Entry

I have now finished writing anything else important down, and packed my backpack, ready to leave for the tunnel. I don't remember how exactly we all agreed to go to visit Poe, but I remember Jill thinking it was a trap, and the three of us going against her, until it became unanimous.

I'm leaving a copy of my first journal, and this one (the original) in the Bunker, but luckily anything my Recorder transmits, will print off, the Bunker's computer and fall into this journal, so you can read it, just in case I don't come back.

I now know where it is that quote had come from: Edgar Allan Poe's: 'The Raven'. DEEP into that

*darkness, long I stood there wondering; fearing;
doubting; dreaming dreams no mortal had ever
dared to dream before.*

*I've now recounted everything that has happened
to me while and after escaping the House, and how it
really HAS impacted me.*

A Message.

The Writer.

A Trail Left for Us.

Darkness.

A Raven.

Immortality.

A Mystery.

HOPE.

Part 3

Day 20: DARK, Early Morning

We crawled down the tunnel, and began ran as fast as we could. I had thoughts of whether or not Smith would pop out from one end of the tunnel, and Gunshot would come from the other.

They'd get us from both sides.

We eventually came to a place where the light became brighter and the ceiling opened up. We were obviously not there yet, and we were probably under the House somewhere. A ladder lead upwards, and I wondered where it had lead.

"Let's check it out," Brandon suggested. I climbed up the ladder, until it seemed t tighten up, and become smaller, like it was on the inside of a wall.

I shimmied my way up, to the very top, where a skinny door came out, which I pushed open.

“Whoa!” I said. I think we were back in the House, and not just anywhere in the House, but at the end of the long hallway, where Smith and Gunshot sleep if they come to visit.

Kelly, Jill and Brandon continued to climb out of the door, and we all had the same scared reaction to the room: it was creepy.

Above the king-sized bed was a poster of a man, who looked in his thirties, and was surprisingly familiar.

“That’s Edgar Allan Poe,” Kelly said. We saw a few other pictures of him around the black painted room. On the dresser, we saw a stuffed raven:

identical to the one on the desk of Poe's study in the Bunker, but this one looked newer, like it was made more recently.

"Guys," Brandon said. "Check out the library!"

He lead us to a sitting room, off of the main bedroom, that seemed to lined with bookshelves.

We all shuffled over to the bookcases, and saw books filled with papers sticking out of them, and we noticed the symbol between all of them: they were all written by Edgar Allan Poe.

"Okay guys, this is seriously weird," Kelly said.

"Who would've put ALL of these here?" Jill asked.

"Poe?"

"No," I said. "But, I have a feeling that Smith or Gunshot may have had a LITTLE bit of an

obsession with these books.”

“Bot just books either,” Brandon said. “Books, journals, poems, essays. Some of these are in the same handwriting as in the note. Look at this one.”

Once upon a midnight dreary, as I pondered weak and weary...

“I think that’s the beginning of ‘The Raven,’” I said. “Who would keep all of this stuff in here, and more importantly, why?”

“Yeah,” Jill said. “It’s weirding me out. Wait! What’s that?”

I heard it too, it sounded like footsteps, coming down the hallway, from either my room or Brandon’s.

“What if it’s Smith or Gunshot?” Kelly whispered.

“Hide!” Brandon whispered. Brandon and I dodged into the sitting room, and hid behind a bookcase, whilst Kelly ducked under the bed, and threw a sheet over the part she was under, and Jill went for the bathroom.

The door slammed open.

Day 20: Still DARK

“Psst!” I heard someone whisper. “Smith, Gunshot? Sarah?” said a familiar voice.

“Antonio?” I whispered. I came out of the sitting room, and saw, out of the darkness, a familiar body, who seemed altered in a way. I saw that he had a deep cut down his face, that seemed like it was only recently put there.

“Antonio!” Brandon said. Kelly and Jill began coming out of their hiding places. “How long has it been in here?”

“It’s only been the same amount of time since you guys left,” he said. “About a day. Smith’s got, like, this watch that controls the time duration in here.”

“Do they know where we are?” Kelly asked.

“No,” he said, “they asked me and Sarah, but we just played stupid and said we had no idea, so until they come back, they’ve slowed down our sentence here. What about you guys? Did you contact help?”

“No,” I said, and I could tell that Antonio’s heart and hands had just dropped. “But, we have good reasons. We need you guys to stall until we meet up with a friend, and we think he might have some answers.”

“How long will that take?” he asked.

“It’s hard to say,” Jill added, “but probably by morning. If not, tomorrow night at the latest. Hey, where re Smith and Gunshot anyway? It’s nearly...”

She checked her watch. "It's nearly two a.m."

"They're there," he said. "They're waiting for you guys in the cellar, they're CONVINCED that's the only way back in."

The thought of having Smith or Gunshot waiting in that deep cellar darkness, waiting patiently for us to come back, so they could kidnap us, or kill us, or both in whichever order they choose; well, that thought just disturbed me.

"Hurry up you guys, they could be back any minute," he said. "oh, and try not to get killed."

"We'll make sure not to," Kelly said. She slid down the opening in the chimney first, and Jill followed, then Brandon, then I myself slid down the dusty, old, charcoal infested pipe, into more darkness.

Day 20: Before 2:30 a.m.

When we reached the bottom of the chimney, we followed the tunnel a long ways down, and continued walking towards the end off it.

“Hey guys,” I said. “If we’re gonna make sure that Smith and Gunshot don’t live forever, and keep repeating this trick, we need some things to use against them.”

“Like weaknesses?” Brandon asked.

“Yeah,” I said, “like a nervous shoulder, they don’t fight too well, anything.”

“Well, I know that Gunshot has hemophilia,” Jill said.

“And Gunshot has permanent arthritis in his hands.”

*“They say it’s from being at the House too long,”
Brandon added. “But, it might be because of their
immortality thing.”*

“Wow, I didn’t know that,” I said.

*We eventually came to the end of the tunnel, where
there was a gap, a huge hole above us. Some light
seemed to be emanating from it, and it looked like
someone was rustling around up there.*

“Hello?” I called. I heard the rustling stop.

“Visitors?” I heard a voice ask. “Residents?”

*“Yes?” I asked, questioning. “Edgar?” Whoever
was up there moved away whatever it was on top of
the entrance and offered a hand to help us up. I
accepted it, and a rather muscular man pulled me
up. I looked around the small room while the others*

were brought up.

It was set up like a den, with a leather couch, a T.V. and a refrigerator. There was a small doorway, and I could tell that there was a bedroom through there.

I looked at the man, while he pulled Brandon, the last one of us, up to the room.

He had what looked like a clean cut mustache, and a vertically shaped rectangular face. He had on a pair of dress pants, and an old, white, button-down shirt that was dirty from being underground, and a black bow-tie on.

“Mr. Poe?” Kelly asked.

“That would be me,” he said. “Why don’t you lot have a seat, I’ll fetch us some refreshments.”

He wondered into the other room, and came back

about a minute later, like he had them ready at a second's notice.

*“Now, what is it that you know about the House?”
Poe asked.*

“Well, we escaped the House,” Jill said, “and then we got the message from Antallon, and then we found your old Bunker, and the clues, and found you.”

“Ah!” he said. “And what do you know about the two partners? Um, what were their names?”

He pondered for a moment.

“Oh yes! Smithshot and Reynolds!”

“Um,” Brandon said. “I think you mean Gunshot and Smith. Where did Reynolds come from?”

“Oh, very well then, they must have changed their

names again, how silly of them! Oh, the larger one called himself Reynolds back when I knew him.”

“When did you know them?” I asked.

“Well, quite some time ago, um now was it... 160 years ago?”

“That long?” I asked. “Mr. Poe, we need your advice. We know that Reynolds and Smithshot, as you call them, are immortal, and we know that you know that. We’ve been trying to escape the House for SOOOO long, but when we got out, we were roped back in again. What should we do? Leave, or get rid of them?”

“Oh you **MUST** get rid of them!” he shouted, like he was worried.

“Well, Mr. Poe,” Jill said, “if you’ve know about

their plans THIS long, why haven't you tried to stop them.”

“Well, as you children know, I have been made temporarily immortal, and I hope to die soon, but I couldn't have, until one hundred and fifty years has passed. Immortality, as you also know, comes with a price. I have VERY limited movements in my joints, and therefore, cannot be that active. I knew that you children were coming though, and you MUST stop them!”

“How'd you know we were coming?” Trent asked.

“I have SenCome Trent,” he said. This was creepy, he even knew our names. “Just like you. I spent quite some time at the House, and took advantage of it, improving my ability. I knew that

you four would be the first to find my clues and bunker, nearly seventy years before you were even born.”

Anyone else thinking that this guy is REALLY creepy? He knew about us before we were even born?

“So, how did you know them Mr. Poe?” Kelly asked, trying to get out of an awkward moment.

“Well, for a few years we worked together, trying to create a permanent immortality, and I was eventually successful.”

“Well what happened?” Jill asked.

“You see, after my wife Virginia died,” he said, “I returned to the House, and told the Two that I wanted out of their project. What I didn’t tell them about was one of the original ingredients of the

immortality serum, a purple liquid known as AEVITAS, which is literally Latin for 'AGE'. I had re-created some of it, and hid it. I knew that in a few years, Thomas Edison, another House Resident would re-discover it and..."

"We know the rest after that," I said. "And now it's gone."

"What do you mean 'it's gone'!?" he asked.

"Impossible!"

"Napoleon once said 'Impossible is a word found only in the dictionary of fools'," I said. "And anyway, I hid it somewhere that no one will ever find it. You didn't know?"

"Well, I keep many, many journals," he said.

"Each one with a year of major events going through

the course of human history. I can do about three years worth of information in one regular year, that is, in time outside of the House."

"What year are you on now Mr. Poe?" Kelly asked.

"Umm, let me think?" he said, as he pulled out a leather book with the cover ripped a little bit. He opened it up.

"Right now I am writing about the events in 2137."

"2137!" Brandon asked. "Wait, I have a question. Will the world end in the year 2012?"

"I've always hoped someone would ask me that," he said, laughing. He all of a sudden turned stern.

"Spoiler Alert: the answer is no."

“I knew it!” Brandon said.

“Now Mr. Poe,” I said, as he looked through his old journals, “what would you have suggested we did with the elixir?”

“Well it can be destroyed you know?” Poe said.

“What!” I exclaimed. “How?”

“Well it can only happen once every seventy-seven and a half years, because that this the halfway point to when the temporary elixir wears out. Like this year to be exact, there is one day that you can either destroy or recreate the elixir, and you can either do it the year that the elixir wears out, or seventy-seven and a half years from then, exactly halfway through the process.”

“Well when is it this year?” I asked.

“Oh, well I have no idea,” he said. “Unfortunately, it is nearly my time to go.”

“How much longer do you have?” Jill asked.

“Oh, well um,” he said. “About three hours?”

“Three hours!” we all exclaimed.

“So you’re gonna die in three hours time?” I asked.

“That would be right,” he said. “Unless of course I have more elixir, which I mustn’t.”

“Why not?” I asked.

“Have you kids ever asked the question ‘is there a such place as hell?’” he asked us.

“No, not really,” we all kind of muttered with other mixed emotions.

“Well do you know the answer?” Poe asked.

“No,” Brandon said bluntly.

“Well the answer is: life is a hell. Every minute you live, you have to suffer, sometimes being away from the ones you love, or sometimes facing a terrible situation. I’ve had to live for one hundred and fifty years with nothing on my mind but escaping this hell.”

“Very curious,” I said. “Well why would people like Smithshot and Reynolds want to live forever?”

“Well Mr. Posterus, you see there is an old quotation said by one of my favorite poets. Lucius Accius once said ‘A man who’s life has been dishonorable should not escape disgrace in death’.”

“Still, immortality?” Jill asked. “You’ll be able to share your stories with the world again!”

“Edgar Shoaff once said that immortality is a

worse fate than death.”

“Well, there’s no changing his mind now,” Jill said.

“You know,” Poe said once again, “my idol, Da Vinci, once said that: ‘While I thought I have Been Learning to Live, I Have Actually Been Learning to Die’, and that quote couldn’t be truer now. I have waited all these years for you four, the next generation, to help bring down the Facultas House, now that 2.5 is gone.”

I had almost forgotten at this point that Antallon 2.5, the good version of Antallon, had been upgraded to version 3.0, the bad one.

“Mr. Poe have you ever been to your supposed gravestone?” I asked. “You know someone visits it every year and places flowers and wine there to mark your birthday and death-day. Is it you?”

“Oh, my boy, I have in fact visited my gravestone. Only once in fact. I have left the Facultas Boundaries only twice, yet I can leave whenever I choose. I have no clues as to who is the ‘Poe Toaster’ though it is not I.”

Kelly quickly changed the subject after that.

“Mr. Poe,” Kelly said, “we know that Thomas Edison is currently alive as well, when will his time pass?”

Poe looked in his 2011 journal.

“Umm, about nine minutes ago,” he said, checking his watch.

*“Wait, Thomas Edison is dead?” Brandon said.
“And we missed him by nine flippin’ minutes!?”*

“That is correct,” Poe said.

I was startled to hear this news, but I knew what I had to do to restore Edison's spirit in death: destroy the elixir.

"Mr. Poe, how exactly DO we destroy the elixir?" I asked.

"Oh, well it must be done inside of the House walls, and it must be done within a certain hour, on a day that is closer than you expect."

"Let me guess, it's today isn't it?"

Poe nodded.

Part 4

Day 20: Pitch Black Outside

“Well, in order to destroy the elixir,” Poe said, “you must first bring it to the black mixing room, underneath the basement. In there, there is a trapdoor, and under that door is a machine that is capable of destroying it if you put it in the destroying table, but it must also be brought there if it is to be drunk. The same room is used to destroy the elixir as it is to drink the elixir. If that method is not in your doing, than you must dispose of it by methods of a phonograph. Where the horn is, you must pour it down, and it will have been destroyed.”

“When is this hour exactly?” Kelly asked.

“It is this morning from five a.m. to six a.m.,” Poe said. “During which period Smithshot and

Reynolds can be killed along with the elixir.”

“Mr. Poe,” Brandon said. “Antallon said that there was an entire group that was trying to become immortal, how many people are there?”

“Oh no,” he said, chuckling to himself. “It misunderstood then. There were six people that originally became temporarily immortal, but not trying to become permanently immortal.”

“Who are they?” I asked.

“Well there are the Two Partners, myself, Edison, another lost member who died during one of the original re-generations, and... The Betrayer.”

“Who?” I asked.

“We don’t like talk about him, but he was close to the truth, and was willing to go through some pretty... High stakes to become immortal. He

thought that if he could kill the subjects rather than dissect them, it would be easier for the society. You see what I mean?"

Just the thought of being referred to as a 'subject' made me think of what steps Smith and Gunshot were willing to go through not to die.

"That's... That's terrible," Kelly said. "When did he re-generate?"

"Two terms ago, back in the year 1711."

"And now he's dead?" Brandon asked.

"Probably, yes," Poe said. "The Immortalists will soon have met their match, and the elixir will have been destroyed. The Betrayer must be gone by now."

"Uh, Mr. Poe," I said. "Do you know what time it is?"

“Nearly 4:30 a.m., we best be moving!” he said.

Day 20: Roughly 4:30 a.m.

We went to the bedroom and found a latter that lead upwards. FAR upwards. I climbed up first, Brandon behind me, Kelly behind him, Jill behind her and Poe last. I went to the top and pushed off a trapdoor that must've kept the small bunker hidden well. I could tell we were somewhere close to the tip of the peninsula, because I could just about hear the water rushing against the cliffside. In my last journal, I think I mentioned that we were on a peninsula, and there was a MASSIVE cliff leading

from the edge of the forest down to the ocean and beach.

I gave Brandon, Kelly and Jill and hand up, and we all saw darkness in the woods.

DEEP, into that darkness, peering; long I stood there wondering, fearing doubting.

“I know what to do now,” Brandon said. He took out his cell phone and put it on speaker phone, so we could hear his conversation.

“Hello?” said a familiar voice.

“Antonio? It’s Brandon. We met up with Poe and we need you to signal Smith and Gunshot to get down the peninsula. Say that you saw us running down here, and you want to help.”

“Why? You’re not giving up are you?”

“Of course we aren’t,” Brandon said. “We just

need you to. We're setting up a trap to stop them, and we think that they're gonna die soon. Just help us out? Please?!"

"Okay, I'll do it. Just be ready, they'll probably get there in fifteen minutes or less. Bye."

The line went dead and Brandon put the phone away.

"So what's the plan of action?" Kelly asked.

"The plan?" Poe asked. "I didn't think we would make it thus far."

"I've got a plan," I said.

Day 20: I've Lost My Watch

“Hello!?” yelled Smith. I heard his voice from somewhere deeper from the forest. I was hiding from behind a tree on one side of the clearing near the peninsula, whilst Brandon was on the other.

I had never seen the cliffside of the peninsula before. The geography of the southern peninsula was never quite that important to me. I saw just how large of a drop it was now. It must've been at least half the size of the Empire State Building.

Poe had been waiting inside of his bunker, in case

Smith or Gunshot found it, which was a high probability.

Kelly and Jill had been waiting behind two trees on opposite sides of the clearing, just behind Brandon and myself.

“Who’s there!” Gunshot yelled. They were getting closer.

“You get the upper forest,” Gunshot’s voice said directing to Smith.

I heard Smith running up to the upper forest, and Gunshot’s muddy boots coming down the small path to the cliffside.

“Now!” I yelled. Gunshot was directly between Kelly and Jill’s trees. Kelly held rope in her hands and tried to tie Gunshot around the torso while Jill held his hands behind her back.

Gunshot kicked Kelly in the shins, causing her to lose her grip on the rope. He took the rope and wrapped it around Jill's mouth. Hard. He took the rope and swung it hard enough to throw Jill against a tree and knock her out unconscious.

Kelly regained her balance and attempted to get the rope from Jill.

Brandon, teething with anger, ran from behind his tree and towards Gunshot.

Gunshot took a crowbar that he had pulled out from nowhere and hit Brandon in the neck with it. In turn, Brandon hit Kelly, throwing both of them against a tree, and knocking both of them unconscious.

"Posterus!" Gunshot yelled. "You're the only one left! I know you're out here! Turn yourself in now,

and your friends will suffer less!"

I held my breath, as he got even closer.

"So, it's a game of hide-and-seek is it?" he called.

I heard the crowbar drop against the forest ground, and Gunshot/Reynolds pulled something else out of his pocket: a large knife.

"I know that you are aware of my past!" he called.

"There's no stopping the process now that it's begun!"

Now, he was right next to the tree

Day 20: I'll Look at a Watch Later

I stepped to my left, trying to sneak away, but I stepped on a twig. CRACK! Gunshot/Reynolds came around the side of the tree closest to the peninsula, and grabbed the top of my arm. He pulled my out. Gunshot's eyes had a manic look, and his breath, a rancid smell. I could tell that something was wrong with him at this point. His grey hair was turning white-ish and his yellow teeth turning brown.

I took my hand and forced it against his wrist,

and pulled his wrist down hard, forcing him to drop the knife and let go of my arm.

I threw his large body down to the ground.

The forest seemed to disappear as we got closer and closer to the tip of the peninsula.

Gunshot grabbed my left arm, and forced the tip of the knife into it. The rusty blade stung against my skin so badly. Gunshot threw me on the ground, and pulled out a pistol from his pocket.

“I’m staying alive,” he said, “no matter what it takes.”

I felt something hit my foot, and looked down. It was a crumpled up piece of notebook paper. I thought about picking it up to read, but was too busy trying to avoid not being shot.

From behind Gunshot/Reynolds came the crowbar,

which struck Gunshot/Reynolds's waist. From behind, holding the crowbar, was Poe.

Gunshot/Reynolds dropped the pistol there, and Poe dropped the crowbar.

"Edgar?" Gunshot/Reynolds asked.

"Yes Reynolds," Poe said. "I hope you've missed me!" Poe swung his fist against Gunshot/Reynolds's cheekbone, causing him to fall backwards.

"I've been waiting for you for years and years," Gunshot/Reynolds said. "You were my idol. I never wanted you out of the society!"

"I'm sorry Reynolds," Poe said. "I cannot have you live forever!" Poe was close enough to Gunshot/Reynolds and close enough to the edge of the peninsula to do something drastic.

Poe grabbed the back of Gunshot/Reynolds neck

and squeezed his skin hard with his dirty, pointy fingernails until we saw blood.

'Gunshot's hemophilic', I remembered. Hemophilia was the disease where if you start bleeding, then you're not gonna stop until it's treated or you die.

Poe struggled with Gunshot/Reynolds, and hung onto his neck as tight as possible, and in one sharp move, threw the both of them plummeting over the side of the cliff, and down the LONG rock-face to the shore.

By the time they hit the bottom, they would both already be dead.

Day 20: Not as Dark... But Still Dark Enough

I don't know what was worse, knowing that I'd never see Poe again, or knowing that he wouldn't even have done what he had if we had stopped Gunshot/Reynolds in the first place.

I forgot about Gunshot/Reynolds and Poe for a minute, and looked at the crumpled up paper by my foot.

I picked it up, and un-crumpled it, and on it was a note.

Trent,

It's been nearly one-hundred years since I wrote those notes, and my handwritings barely changed as you

can see. I've known about this night all along, and I knew that you would die quickly and quietly, along with your friends, right after the Two became immortal once more. I guess that the old saying is true and that you really can change your fate, and the fate of those close to you. I haven't much more time, and neither do you, just remember this: an African Proverb once said that 'A Person is Never Truly Dead Until They're Forgotten'. Watch out for Smithshot, he is close; and Beware the Betrayer!

E. A. P.

Smithshot is close, Beware the Betrayer? What do those mean?

I went back to the forest path and saw something even more disturbing: there was someone, a dark figure, hunched over at the body of Jill, with a small

dagger in his left hand, and a vial in the other.

Smith, I wondered.

“Hands up!” said a voice from behind me. I turned around and saw Smith right there behind me, on the edge of the peninsula. In one hand he had Gunshot/Reynolds’s pistol and in the other hand a huge knife.

“WHERE’S THE ELIXIR!” he yelled at me. “I want it NOW!”

“Okay,” I said. “Just come with me.”

“No Tricks!” he yelled. I turned around, and saw that the figure next to Jill was gone; it must’ve been Smith, and he just went to the side of the forest, circled around to get the pistol, and just made it look like he tricked me.

I lead him down the dark forest trail, to the

Bunker that Poe lived in.

I opened up the trapdoor, and jumped onto the latter, crawling down. I felt the earth beneath me instantly make the temperature drop. I went down all the way, and pulled the small sofa away from the top of the trapdoor under it. I jumped down, and Smith followed.

I ran down the passageway with Smith beside me.

“Smith,” I said, “can I ask you a question?”

“Sure why not?” he said.

“When did you get into Edgar Allan Poe that much?” I asked.

“What do you mean?” he asked solemnly. “Poe ripped us off, the only thing we took off from him were the room colors.”

“What about you room?” I asked.

“What about it?”

“It has posters, books, notebooks, poems and even a stuffed raven, all about Edgar Allan Poe.”

“I’m almost never in there, I wouldn’t know.”

What, I thought. Then why was it decorated that way.

We had come to the end of the hallway and I climbed up grabbed the rock-face, pushing it out. I pulled myself out, and saw the darkness ahead.

DEEP into that darkness, peering, long I stood there wondering, fearing, doubting; whilst dreaming dreams that no mortal had ever dreamed before.

I couldn’t help but remember Poe when I was about to get rid of Smith for good, especially when it was Poe that needed the job done.

I lead Smith up the trail, also thinking about the

confusion he put me in about his room, and how it was decorated like it was Poe's own room.

"I didn't know there was another way out of the House," Smith said. "And it's my House! Where is it?"

I opened up the trapdoor and went down the latter again. When we reached the bottom, I flicked the lights back on and heard a few pages of the very paper you're reading printing off at that very minute.

I took him down the hallway and started thinking of an actual plan. I saw the ground wall at the end of the hallway, and reached for the raven painted there.

I pressed it, and the wall turned, taking both of us with it.

“Okay,” I said. “In the corner of the room, down there,” I pointed to the wall corner, “is a trapdoor. I need to pull this lever to get it opened, and hold it open. If you got in there, once it’s shut, there will be another passage with the elixir in it.”

“Smart boy Posterus,” Smith said. He waited in the corner. I pulled the lever, and the metal wall pulled up. Smith climbed inside, and waited looking for the made-up panel with the elixir in it.

I pulled the lever down with all of my might, and the metal wall corner slammed down, trapping Smith in there once and for all.

Day 20: Getting Lighter

I returned to the rock, down the passageway, up through the second bunker, and down the path known by few to where Brandon, Jill and Kelly were getting up from.

“Did you do it Trent?” Kelly asked. “Are they gone?”

“Well, it was mostly Poe,” I said. “He got rid of Gunshot.”

“How?” Brandon asked.

“He grabbed onto his neck and threw both of them down the cliffside,” I said, pointing at the peninsula side. “And I kind of got rid of Smith. He’s trapped behind the metal door in the Bunker outside the

House.”

“Are you sure that will contain him?” Kelly asked.

“Smith was a desperate man,” Jill finished.

“He’s aging up rapidly,” I concluded. “Even if he stays at his current state, the lack of food and water will only get him another two weeks in there at most. Besides, I didn’t even kill him, he bought it himself.”

“Where IS the elixir?” Brandon asked.

“That is a secret until it’s destroyed,” I said.

“Which reminds me, what time is it?”

Brandon pulled out his iPod Touch, and opened the Lock Screen quickly.

“Oh no!” he screamed. “It’s 6:09 a.m.! You can’t destroy the elixir!”

A deep depression came over me and I started wondering if getting rid of Smith and Gunshot was

all for nothing, because now I couldn't even destroy what they were after.

"So, what now?" Kelly asked.

"The Immortalists are wiped out," I said, "so we should have nothing to worry about over the elixir. I guess we can just leave now."

Observations

Recorded After Further Consideration

I've spent a while thinking about these events and I'm wondering more and more now about Smith and Gunshot's histories. I used my calculator, and their first regeneration was in 1111, exactly 1,000 years ago, so what they looked like at the time of their death is what they looked like on their first day of regeneration. I'm also wondering if over time they change their names to get old house residents off their backs, or just because they keep forgetting. Immortality comes with a price, and what if that price just happens to be forgetting your own past?

I'm also curious about how Smith and Gunshot became immortal in the first, I know that they

devised some kind of method, or someone else devised it for them. The only thing I'm saying is that Poe was right once again while he wrote his story The 'Masque of the Red Death' no can cheat death forever.

There's one last thing that I can't seem to wrap my head around. On the night Edgar Allan Poe supposedly died, he was shouting the name 'Reynolds'. Was the Reynolds he was talking about really Gunshot? If it was, did Gunshot maybe try to kill Poe, and it didn't work? Or did it have something to do with Gunshot turning young again?

Whatever it is, the only two men who knew the truth are now dead.

A Side-Note About 'The Betrayer'

I think that my eidetic memory is starting to come back, because I'm remembering something else that I thought was really important to the whole matter.

In the woods that night, the one hunched over Jill, it wasn't Smith.

We all checked, and somewhere, on each and everyone of us, there was a small wound where whoever it was took a small bit of our blood.

I wondered how they had gotten mine, and then I remembered that Gunshot had forced his knife into my arm when we struggling on the cliff. Some of it fell off.

The worst part is though, is that I think I know

who it might be.

Poe told us about 'The Betrayer' a mysterious man who used the subjects cruelly to get their blood and his youth. The Betrayer WAS one of the immortalists, and the worst part is, is that now he's the only one left. On our way out of the Facultas House for the last time, I began thinking about the tree I saw a few days ago: 'When There is One'. I now knew that wasn't tree isn't for one of us in the tunnel under the basement, it was for the Immortalists. And now there only is one left, and that's the Betrayer. I'm positive that he's still out there. And unfortunately, he will be for another 150 years.

A Final Word

There are two things I want to conclude with. The first being the Edison elixir. When I found it in the attic I kept it in my pocket, so Smith and Gunshot wouldn't think of taking it again. Unfortunately, I lost it somewhere. I forget where, but it was probably someplace that no one will ever bother to find again.

The second thing is that the Betrayer will try to find the Permanent Elixir that's hidden in the House. It's still under the basement stairs, where I left it, so I'm hoping that he won't find it before I can destroy again.

That's right. If I live another 77 and a 1/2

*years, I'll be waiting to destroy the elixir. The
Betrayer took something from each of us, and he's
going to regret it.*

*If there's a way to make him pay, I'm going to find
it.*

THE END

Well, Almost...

Epilogue

Smith sat in the cold underbrush of the wall. It was getting colder, and he was older than ever. White hair, cracking voice, skin peeling. He wouldn't last much longer. Smith closed his eyes and tried to think of all the bad things he'd done. He prayed for a few minutes, trying to make his last ten minutes or so on Earth count. He put his hand to the ground, near the other wall, and felt something: a small, soft tube. Whatever was in it was red as old wine, and had been around longer than need be.

It was the Edison Elixir.

Smith recognized it immediately, and opened the small tube, fitting it into his mouth, so no part of it

could fall out.

Pressing it to his lips, the last drop of the Edison Elixir fell into his mouth, and his white hair turned black again, and his voice back to normal.

He looked young again.

Food and water wouldn't matter, since he had taken the elixir. No matter what happened, Smith still had more life than ever left in him.

Then, Smith began to laugh. He laughed a maniacal, dangerous laugh.

A laugh that would no doubt, last another 150 years.

Specter Seer

and More by John M. Hayeck Coming Soon

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