UNDO

WEAVING FATE ANEW

Forbidden Knowledge – Detailed Solution

Would you like to know more about the historical background and connections in UNDO – Forbidden Knowledge*? Below are details for all of your decision options for each of the Story cards in the case.*

A Reminder: What Truly Happened

The deceased's name was Randolph Carter and he grew up with his mother in Arkham, Massachusetts. His parents had another illegitimate child before he was born, but it died and was secretly buried in a remote cemetery. One year after the burial, the father found the grave empty and desecrated. Since that day, he never spoke with anyone again, not even his son Randolph. His father was admitted to an asylum and died there soon after Randolph turned five. Randolph was a physically weak child with many fears.

After high school Randolph decided to attend college in Arkham, so as to remain close to his mother.

During his studies, Randolph met Harley Warren, an eccentric man his own age who had discovered the fascination of forbidden books and who wanted to use the knowledge they hold to gain supernatural powers. One of the books spoke of an "ancient something buried deep in the earth", which supposedly could bestow tremendous power.

Harley knew he would need help with his plan to find the "ancient something". He made use of Randolph's latent fascination and weak will to turn him into an obedient accomplice.

Harley believed that a deceased body does not decompose if its soul remains inside. This was verified when they cut open an undecayed body that was centuries old. The body turned to dust as its immortal soul exited the body.

Harley then suggested there might be a way to preserve one's soul in a magical receptacle and thereby gain immortality.

They were both captivated by this fascinating idea. Harley remembered reading a description of such a container in an ancient forbidden tome written by time travelling entities 50 million years ago. And furthermore, Harley believed this ancient object was located in a crypt under the ancient cemetery in the nearby swamp.

This UNDO-Case is based on the short story The Statement of Randolph Carter *by H. P. Lovecraft. Here is a short synopsis of a key moment in the plot.*

Two men open an ancient crypt with stairs leading into the depths. Harley descends on his own with a portable telephone connected by wire to a second phone that allows Randolph to hear not only what his friend discovers underground, but also Harley's growing madness, evoked by the terrible things he sees there. Harley's words throw the waiting Randolph into sheer horror.

In our UNDO-Case, Randolph is then so overcome by his fears that his weak heart fails and he dies. Thus, he succumbs to the cemetery's horror just like his father. We leave it to your imagination why a police officer reports seeing Harley's body walking around Arkham the next day.

Details for All Decision Options

1: 50 million years ago, in an unknown Dimension

A: Since you do not change anything, you receive the usual 0 points. (0)

B: If you take the Red Book, Harley Warren probably would have never seen it and would not have been able to use it for his horrible theories. (+1) However, the entities of Yith delay you: you must discard 1 extra Time card.

C: Since you didn't take the book, nothing is changed and it will still end up with Harley Warren. (0) However, your conversation with the Yith gains you more knowledge of time travel: you may take back 1 Time card.

2: A cemetery in a swamp, February 10, 1892, early evening

A: If Randolph's father had buried the corpse of the dead child in the forest, it would probably still be there in peace. (+1)

B: A map of the swamp in his father's testament clearly increases the chance that Randolph would one day find his way to the cemetery. (-1 ☠)

C: This is what actually happened. Randolph's father buried the dead child with a crucifix in a remote cemetery in the swamp. (0)

3: A house near Arkham, MA, February 10, 1893, nighttime

A: Fearing books, Randolph would never have wanted to attend college and would probably have never have met Harley. (+1)

B: With the courage to dare the unthinkable, Randolph would be even more likely to be involved in Warren's experiments in his quest for immortality. (-1 ✳)

C: This is what actually happened. The man found the child's grave desecrated and empty. Ever since that day, he was terrified of the underground – a fear he passed on to his son Randolph. (0)

4: A house near Arkham, MA, May 23, 1914, in the morning

A: Attending college away from Arkham in Providence, RI, Randolph would not have crossed paths with Harley. (+1)

B: This is what actually happened. Randolph decided to attend college in his hometown of Arkham to stay near his mother. (0)

C: By attending college in Alsace, Randolph would not have run into Harley. However, a few weeks later, Randolph would have succumbed to the turmoil of World War I, which would also have reduced his chances of survival. (-1 ☠)

5: The Library of Arkham, MA, May 2, 1919, 3:12 am

A: This is what actually happened. Harley went in search of the unblemished vessel of immortality. (0)

B: By means of the eternal candle of invocation, the two would have come into contact with demonic sciences that would have brought them closer to madness. (-1 👁)

C: A moldy book would have greatly dampened both researchers' urge to continue. (+1)

6: In a cellar in Arkham, MA, June 7, 1922, just before midnight

A: This is what actually happened. Randolph put out the candles. Then he and Harley witnessed the soul emerge from the corpse. A few minutes later, the physical body disintegrated. (0)

B: If Randolph had torn Harley away from the corpse, it would have weakened their relationship giving Randolph an opportunity to end it. (+1)

C: Touching the soul would have strengthened his faith in these dangerous studies. (-1 ✷)(Insanity)

7: A private home in Arkham, MA, June 22, 1923, 9:34 am

: This is what actually happened. Harley didn't care about the warnings. In this ancient, forbidden book he discovered the reference to the unblemished vessel of immortality. With his prior knowledge of the "thing deep in the earth," he now guessed that this "thing" was the vessel. (0)

: If you had changed the characters in the Red Book and made them illegible to Harley, he probably wouldn't have thought of opening the grave. (+1)

: Devouring a page in the book would certainly have enhanced his journey into insanity. (-1 👁)(Insanity)

8: A private home in Arkham, MA, July 29, 1923, 11:07 am

A: This is what actually happened. Randolph grabbed a wooden stake, which was ultimately of no use. (0)

B: The 5-pointed star is known as the "elder sign" in Lovecraft's mythos that serves to protect against evil. (+1)

C: Using the blue-gray powder in the cemetery to resurrect a corpse would have driven Randolph to insanity even faster. (-1 👁)

9: A church in Arkham, MA, July 29, 1923, 4:55 pm

A: The story of Lazarus, in which Jesus opens Lazarus' tomb and revives his body, would have strengthened Randolph's belief that death can be conquered on earth. (-1 💀)

B: Visiting his father's grave would have reminded Randolph of the sanctity of the dead and may have dissuaded him from his plan. (+1)

C: This is what actually happened. Randolph sensed that their project that night threatened danger. Although he wanted to see his mother before he left, he said goodbye quickly as he didn't want to go into the church. (0)

10: A cemetery in a swamp, July 30, 1923, 2:12 am

A: If Randolph had gone down into the crypt, he would have had no chance to escape. His heart would have failed even sooner due to the fear evoked by insanity. (-1 👁)(Insanity)

B: See A above. The same, except that alone, he would have been more helplessly exposed to insanity. (-2 ✳)(Insanity)

C: This is what actually happened. Harley could not wait for Randolph anymore. He had spent too much time feverishly waiting for this moment. He went down the stairs alone. (0)

11: A cemetery in a swamp, July, 30, 1923, 2:46 am

A: If Randolph had followed his friend down, he would have gone to a certain death along with Harley. (-1 ☠)

B: Flight would have been Randolph's only chance to save himself. (+2)(Insanity)

C: This is what actually happened. Panic-stricken with fear, Randolph frantically tried to close the grave slab, but that would not save him from the madness. A minute later, his heart failed him. (0)(Insanity)

13: The police station in Arkham, MA, July 30, 1923, 2:13 pm

A: What it meant and how it could happen that the policeman saw Harley at church the next day and wants to question him, we leave to your own imagination ... (0)(Insanity)

B: If evil forces are indeed at work, Dr. Henry Armitage is the only one who might save humanity from it. However, this won't change anything regarding Randolph's death. (0)

C: At some point during the day, the search party found Randolph's body in the swamp. Of course, nothing can change Randolph's death, but at least his soul was preserved by a burial in the cemetery of the local church. (0)

Credits

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