

The Facility

A Beginning Scenario for The Nearside Project™

Plot Synopsis

The characters are brought together in order to protect a remote research Institute, which only has a single patient.

During their mission, what appears to be an assassination attempt occurs. It is unusual in respect of those who are trying to kill their patient- people identical to the characters themselves, though with odd powers and abilities.

The characters defeat their Variant Selves (just about!), though one of the assassins escapes through a seemingly impossible route.

The characters follow this last assassin, and leave their world behind.

Finally, the characters return to Earth¹ and must decide the fate of the patient they had been assigned to protect in the beginning.

"All journeys start with a single step. All adventures begin with a single decision. We can never guess where either will end, but on hindsight, we can always see clearly the point of origin. The first cause, which leads to everything else that follows. If we could, would we make a different choice?"

Dr Neil Ellington

Overview

The characters are brought together by The Regency Group in order to form a security detail. The building they are assigned to protect is based on a remote island off the coast of Scotland. It is an old castle, large and fairly empty except for the extensive medical support system for a single patient, about whom the characters will be told nothing, except that his protection and the safety of the facility is all important.

The group are given the run of most of the building and grounds, and settle down to their work.

After a week of this, on August 13th, 1999, the attack takes place. It will last one hour, and before it's over, the groups' lives will have changed forever.

The Castle is attacked by the group themselves, or rather Variant selves. They are drawn from Earth¹² and Earth⁵, and so are possessed of either Elevated abilities or Magical powers. They are part of an internal conspiracy called Monarch, hidden within the Regency Group, interested in many aspects of Dr Neil Ellingtons secret research. However, they are not the only conspiracy that is involved with The Facility. This other group, called C¹³ are pitted against Monarch. Eventually this conflict will decide the fate of the entire Nearside itself. (This plot line will be covered in the Nearside2k1 RPG due

out next year from Nearside Games.)

Because of the timing of the attack, Displacement will not occur for at least an hour, and the characters will meet their variants- though not whilst alive. The group will be split up, and will not have to face themselves in combat.

One of the assassins escapes through the Broken Room in the lab beneath the Castle. The characters are sent after him, without being told exactly what is going on.

In the Broken Room under the Castle, Suzanne Matthews attempts to invoke particular emotions within the characters in order to open the Room. She will do whatever is necessary.

They leave their reality, and venture onto the Nearside.

Pre-Game Activities

Prologue

- Design characters
- Discuss situation
- Brief players on their characters careers to date.

Discuss Situation

The characters have all, at some point in the last year, been hired by The Regency Group via holding companies. They will be transferred to the Dark Island facility just after the beginning of the game. Wing this bit, as it won't be totally clear as to who the characters are or where they are from. But they have all been cleared for Red Level operations.

Brief players on Characters careers

Go through character backgrounds a bit, discuss what they've been doing, and for how long. Try and inject a tiny piece of weirdness into each discussion, try and indicate how each character has long suspected that they were different for some reason, how they always felt as if they were not totally complete. Discuss this with the characters, it'll be important later.

The Facility

A Nearside Project Scenario

Act One

- The characters arrive at the Dark Island facility.
- They are met by Dr. Neil Ellington, their contact at the facility.
- The group is briefed as to their duties and the island.
- The characters get a tour.

Act Two

- The group begin testing the facility and its security
- The group explore the island
- They find files on themselves marked HBA
- They find hints of an underground lab that appears on no maps

Act Three

- The attack begins on the facility
- The attackers are killed, except for one, whom escapes.

Act Four

- The Assassins are revealed as being identical to the characters.
- The Broken Room
- The Journey begins

Epilogue

- The characters arrive on a dying world.

Act One

- **The characters arrive at the Dark Island facility.**

The game begins as the characters are sitting on board a black unmarked corporate helicopter on the way from a small airstrip outside Glasgow. They are crossing the islands on the way to the Facility. The flight time is just over one hour.

They are in a pressurised cabin and the engine noise is reduced to a loud rumble in the background. The characters should use this time to talk and generally get to know one another.

- **They are met by Dr. Neil Ellington, their contact at the facility.**

The Helicopter lands on a helipad just outside the Facility. Standing on the sidelines waiting for the group are two people.

The first is Dr. Neil Ellington, the facility manager. He is a tall, sheepish looking man in his late 30's. He stands solidly against the downdraft of the rotors, and smiles expectantly at the characters as they walk towards him.

Beside him is Suzanne Matthews, an attractive woman in her early 30's. She is wearing dark grey clothing and looks distinctly out of place. Her expression is one of boredom.

Ellington warmly greets the characters, and they walk together up towards the facility, which is visible as a tall Baronial style castle tower. It takes only a couple of minutes to get to the main entrance.

Ellington chats with the group, asking them questions about the flight and the weather. He seems genuine enough, if slightly uncomfortable with making quality small talk. If asked about his Doctorate, he blushes and says that he actually holds three PhD's, in Physics, Maths and Biochemistry.

Matthews says very little. She is seemingly Dr. Ellington's assistant, and if spoken to, speaks quietly and softly in short sentences. Characters may notice that she is armed, with an unusual looking sidearm under her long grey coat in a shoulder holster.

The main entrance to the Facility is a secure setup of two thick ballistic glass doors, stylishly marked with the Regency logo and revealing a plush, modern interior. Ellington uses a swipe card to open the first door, but the second one only opens once he says the words "Solyent Green is people".

The second door opens, and the characters enter the Facility. The large circular staircase to the left of the entrance has been replaced by a spiral staircase surrounding a glass elevator.

A reception area is located here, though it is currently un-manned. The computer

is a terminal, of high quality though generically branded.

At the far end of the reception area is another staircase upwards, and a small waiting area with seats and a vending machine.

- **The group is briefed as to their duties and the island.**

The characters are taken to the staff lounge, located on the ground floor. Already waiting in the lounge (which is comfortable and modern, with tea, coffee and biscuits spread out across one of the tables) are some other people.

Dr. Edward McCann is sitting nursing a cup of tea. He looks like Fitz out of *Cracker* (The UK version), and wears the same sort of black clothing. He is talking amiably with an attractive blonde woman in her late twenties, Alice Toye, who smiles when she sees Dr Ellington enter. They stand to welcome the characters, and introduce themselves.

Dr. McCann insists that they call him Eddie, and he is jovial if somewhat sharp witted. Alice finds him amusing, they seem to have a comfortable working relationship. Neither takes themselves too seriously.

Alice explains that she is the Section Supervisor over the non-medical and research staff, which included the previous Security Team. She indicates that this will also probably be the case with the characters if they decide to stay after their current assignment.

Dr. Ellington invites the group to sit and partake of the refreshments available, whilst he tries to find one of the groundskeepers to join them.

This is an opportunity to chat with Eddie and Alice, to try and check out what the Facility is about before the official briefing.

Eddie and Alice will be open with the characters, but will not talk about the Nearside or anything else in that particular area. They will correctly describe the Facility as being a private hospital and counselling centre for Regency Members, particularly field operatives. They will not speak further on the matter, for reasons of confidentiality. Eddie will let it slip that there is only one patient at the Facility at the moment. Alice gives him a 'look' but says nothing.

Just at that point, Dr Ellington arrives with a hoary old Scotsman in tow. This is James McGougan, the head groundskeeper. He nods to each character as he is introduced, but keeps his distance and does not shake hands. He has nothing to say to anyone, really.

With this, the briefing begins.

Briefing, August 6th 1999 Dark Island Facility, Scotland
Dr. Neil Ellington, Consultative Committee Member

“First of all, I would like to welcome you all to the Regency Group’s Dark Island Facility. We are currently undergoing a security review at the Facility to bring us in line with the Committee’s recent report.

You are here today because of your unique abilities and background that the Group found so attractive in the first place. You are expected to bring your expertise to this situation, and evaluate the Facilities current security systems and to advise and consult on changes that may need to be made, and to assist in the hiring of new security personnel at a later stage.

I’d like to give you some background on the Facility itself, and it’s purpose.

The castle we now sit in was built in 1562 by Sir James Hepburn, who had been granted this island by Queen Mary as a gift. He was highly favoured by Mary, and it is rumoured that before she abdicated at Lochleven , she stayed here for a night.

The castle fell into disuse in the late 18th century, and passed from owner to owner until the Group bought the island in 1992.

It took three years to refurbish and restore the castle and its grounds, and it is now one of the most modern facilities of its kind today.

So, what sort of facility is it ? What do we do here ? No doubt you will have read in the Groups induction material of the ‘air of secrecy’ that surrounds Dark Island. This is entirely intentional. This is a private medical and psychiatric hospital exclusively for Regency Group Members, especially those who operate primarily in the field. It offers the highest level of surgical and recuperative medical care, as well as first class psychiatric treatment and counselling in a beautiful, yet secluded part of the world.

The Castle is obviously the centre of our work here. As well as this building, there are a dozen others across the island, mostly accommodation for staff as well as a small generator and some maintenance facilities down at the harbour, which you will see later. All patients are accommodated here in the Castle, and most staff live onsite as well, unless they are off-duty.

At the moment, of course, we are not operating at full capacity, with only one private patient onsite at the moment. It’s important that this patient’s treatment is not disturbed by your activities whilst on Dark Island, and you will be shown which areas are off-limits due to this.

If there are any questions about specific aspects of the Facility and its functions, do not hesitate to ask. If I can’t answer them, I will direct you to someone who probably can.

After a brief tour of the facility, you’ll be left to your own devices. Please liase with Alice for any equipment you might need, and report to her on at least a daily basis.

We estimate that you’ll be here for at least a month, and by the end of that time you’ll have a full security report regarding the island and all facilities upon it. I’ll not attempt to prejudice your final decisions or patronise you by giving suggestions as to how you may begin. You are all experts in your field, and I trust that you’ll come up with some interesting ways to test the security here.

I’d like to start holding interviews for new security staff at the end of the third week, although I’m also sort of hoping that you’ll be tempted to remain as security personnel as well.

So, any questions ?”

- **The characters get a tour.**

Once the question and answer session has been completed, the characters get a full tour of the facility. The characters have already seen Rooms 1 and 3 (the Reception and the Lounge) so the rest of the Ground Floor tour goes as follows;

Security Office (Room 4)

They are shown all the rooms on the ground floor first, starting with Room 4, the Security Office. The Office is entered through a switch carded door. This room is well equipped, with monitors along one wall showing each room and corridor of the Castle, as well as remote cameras at the helipad, the harbour and along the road between the two. There is also a small array of screens that switches between each of the cottages and the power generator. This will be the first glimpse that the characters have of the rest of the island.

There is a map of the Facility and the island on the other wall, which will on closer inspection be revealed as a huge computer screen. The map is interactive, and touching a point on the screen will bring up a small window with various details, as well as a window with the nearest camera image. It is possible to use the map without the array of monitors, but the Security Office is designed for two people to use. This level of technology is military issue.

On a table in the office is a spread of security ID's and switch cards. These are handed out to the characters, and a recording is made of their voices saying a short phrase that will be unique to each character.

Store (Room 5)

Beside the Security Office is a small store room. It contains a wide variety of stationery and office supplies, as well as some preserved food and emergency equipment. Buried underneath boxes of paper is a small petrol generator.

Staff Kitchen (Room 6)

This is quite a large kitchen, with restaurant level facilities. There is a small dining area as well, and well stocked shelves. A wall-mounted freezer / fridge contains a large quantity of fresh food. Dr. Ellington explains that food is brought in weekly from the mainland, and the groundskeepers keep a small allotment near the harbour for fresh vegetables. Most of the staff take turns cooking, though, he admits, Eddie is probably the best cook.

Administration Office (Room 2)

Alice shows the characters her main office, which is extremely high tech. There are several computers, a nice array of 21 inch flat screen monitors on her desk, and various other bits and pieces. On a wall is a similar flat screen wall monitor, which at the moment is running a Monet screensaver. The only really odd thing is an odd item on Alice's desk, resting on a pile of papers. It is a strangely organic sphere about the size of a baseball, hard as rock and with odd ripples and wrinkles covering it. She will explain it away as a paper weight, but it is actually a dead K'thari's heart, given to her by Dr. Ellington as a gift.

This concludes the tour of the ground floor.

The tour of the first floor begins as the characters are led up the small tight spiral staircase that leads from Alice's office. They are led into

Personal Assistants' Office (Room 10)

This is Suzanne Matthew's office (yes, she's still tagging along). It is bare, functional and without the technological clutter of elsewhere in the castle. There are no art pieces, only a table, chair and a telephone. A small laptop sits open on the table.

There are a number of seats around the room, notably the small nest in the window alcove. A restroom is also nearby. The door into the Managers office lies open.

Facility Managers' Office

The characters are led into Dr. Ellingtons office. It is a messy comparison to Suzanne's office. Papers and files sit open on every surface, and the room is themed with a dark brown mahogany. It is smaller than Suzanne's office, but filled with books and academic material. On a swept clear section of his desk, a laptop sits, without a case and attached with various cables to a much smaller pda that is also caseless. Some very intricate pieces of technology and fine tools sit on the desk.

Ward (Room 7)

This large room is the critical care ward at the facility. There are twenty beds, each curtained off into an individual cubical. The ward looks as if it could hold twenty more, but the rest of the space is taken up by large amounts of medical equipment. There are monitoring devices, automatic medication delivery systems and much more that the characters are unlikely to recognize. There is also a small nurses office. Sister Margaret Dutton is currently inside the office, typing up reports. She is introduced to the characters. Sister Dutton is in her early fifties, and slightly overweight. She is incredibly busy, and is brief with the characters.

The characters are led upstairs to the second floor.

Ward (Room 11)

This is a much less intimidating room, with ten beds each inside it's own frosted glass cubicle. Each partitioned cubicle has a bed, table and chair, as well as a computer/television terminal. This room is for recuperative care, and is also currently empty.

The characters are shown **Ward (Room 13)** and are told that it is currently off limits, as the single patient still at the facility is currently under intensive care inside. This Ward is the ICU and cannot be entered by non-medical personnel.

The third floor is left until last.

Training and Stores (Room 14)

This is a large room with exercise and physiotherapy equipment, and the room looks as if it's not quite finished. Some tools and off-cuts of wood and steel are piled in one corner. There is a small store at the south end of the room, but it only holds workmen's equipment at the moment.

Dr. Ellington explains that this used to be a Dormitory for staff, but since a couple of small crofts elsewhere on the island were refurbished, there was no longer a need for all staff to live onsite. The idea of changing it into a physical training room was in line with the concept of not just treating patients but helping to rehabilitate them afterwards.

After this, the group are led across the landing to;

Staff Dormitory (Room 16)

This is another large room, which has been partitioned off into 6 small areas, each with limited privacy. There is a shower room built into the southwest wall. Imagine an loft apartment on one level with frosted glass walls making up each room. There are six king sized beds, and each room has a desk and chair, with a tv/vcr combination as well as a computer terminal and a telephone. Not luxurious, but more than a simple dormitory.

There are three vending machines just outside the north wall's bathroom, and a small communal area there also. The vending machines stock soft drinks, confectionary and light refreshments.

The characters notice that their bags have been brought up and left in rooms. At this point, they are left to themselves to settle in. The rest of the staff on the island have rooms in crofts nearby the facility.

So, at this point, the characters are basically on their own. They may make requests of Alice as they see fit, but they are being trusted to explore the island and facility themselves and make daily reports as to the security situation.

Act Two

Act Two is mostly freeform. Some important events must occur, but for the most part it is a week of character development and plot foreshadowing. This is when the players will get their chance to interact with each other and the environment, and prepare themselves for what will occur.

- **The group begin testing the facility and its security**

At some point within a few hours of settling in, the characters will want to begin to look around on their own. They may opt to fully explore the castle first, or perhaps the rest of the island.

They will certainly want to check out the Security Office. It is as described earlier, though a more detailed examination will reveal more.

A safe contains a large amount of money, around 12,000 pounds sterling. There are small bags containing gold, diamonds and platinum, each bag worth about 5k Sterling.

A concealed gun cabinet is locked (the characters cards can open it) and contains a small arsenal. There are the following standard weapons;

5 x Glock 17 pistols

*10 x Clips (fully loaded) of 9mmP for the Glock*s

2 x 200 round boxes of 9mmP

5 x SPAS -12 Shotguns

5 x 24 cartridge boxes

3 x SA-80 Rifles

10 x Clips (fully loaded) of 5.56N for the SA-80's.

4 x 200 round boxes of 5.56N

Maintenance kits for all weapons

Laser Sights, with mounts for all weapons (including the shotguns)

1 x 20 unit box of flares + flaregun

10 hand held radio sets, with headsets and longlife batteries. There are wall chargers nearby for each set.

There is at the bottom of the cabinet a locked iron box. There is no key available that fits it. Inside, should the characters get it open, is a very odd looking handgun. It weighs nearly 10kg, and requires a Strength of at least 7 to wield. It is a weapon from Earth¹² and is Suzanne Matthew's backup piece. It is a Series Stopper pistol designed by Marble Arch, and it's stats are as follows;

SeriesStopper / 12mm Special / Single Shot / +1 Accuracy / 10 round mag / 2d6+24 Damage

It will come in useful later. If the characters don't get it now, Suzanne will give it to the most responsible member later on.

The characters will find nothing else in the Security Office. They may search the rest of the facility to their hearts content with two exceptions;

They cannot get into Room 13

They discover that the stairwell at the north-end of the building has a locked door underneath it. If asked, they are told it is merely a small cleaning materials store. It is not, however, as it leads down into the underground research lab which is also off limits to the group- in fact, they still have not been told of it's existence.

The rest of this part of Act Two can only be improvised. Let the characters meet other members of staff currently on the island, and hint at something odd going on at the Castle.

The group will probably want to run mock attacks on the Castle, attempt to break in and so on. They will find that the alarm systems are very good, and sensitive to most forms of attack. The walls of the Castle are difficult to climb, and the cameras are situated in hard to sabotage locations.

It is soon clear that the island is well secured, and even a minimal security team, with the correct training, can keep the Castle safe. The amount of firepower in the locker is odd, and might be mentioned to Ellington. He will shrug and say that the previous security manager obviously 'had her reasons' for the weapons.

- **The group explore the island**

When the characters head outside, they notice that the helicopter is still there. The pilot is preparing to leave, but can be persuaded to do a flight around the island (as long as it's not too late). He will not land the characters anywhere except back at the Castle or at the Harbour.

From the helicopter, buildings like the crofts and the power-plant just outside the harbour are clearly visible. Nothing odd or striking can be seen anywhere on the island apart from that. The forests are thick, but could be crossed probably on foot. The higher land is steep and rocky, whilst the heather-strewn heath is peaty and wet. The coast is rocky, and looks forbidding.

The Harbour is well equipped but somewhat sparsely populated, with a large shed for maintaining boats, the power generator and a huge tank for the fuel. There are three small cottages very nearby, used by the groundskeepers and their families. There is a speedboat currently moored.

The power generator is operating at 80% of capacity, and any character with appropriate skills or abilities will be aware that the entire island could not be using as much power as the generator is currently outputting, especially considering the current lack of activity at the Castle itself.

- **They find files on themselves marked HBA**

At some point, the characters may find themselves looking through papers in one of the offices. If they find their personnel files, they will find that they are very complete. Any secrets the characters may have will appear in their file, and medical details are included. One section, marked HBA is ticked. There is no explanation for this, though Doctors or others with medical training may be

reminded of the blood factor HbA1, as a check for previous blood sugar traces. Files for other members of staff are unavailable.

Ref's can allow the players to find *Letter to Ellington* (Handout) as well.

- **They find hints of an underground lab that appears on no maps**

There is a river which runs along the side of the small hill on which the Castle sits, and a maintenance access hatch can be opened. It is out of sight of the current camera angles (these can be slightly altered).

About ten feet into the tunnel, there is a smell of ozone and a lot of static electricity. There is no apparent source of power, but a great sense of danger. The tunnel ends slightly further on with a solid mesh of thick steel. Strange sounds can be heard echoing from further within. This would take the tunnel to below the main Castle. There is a good possibility that there is some sort of basement level to the Castle. No trace can be found of this inside the building, and no one claims to know much about it. If one of the groundskeepers is questioned, he will hint that he believes that the real work is done somewhere else on the island, 'right under your noses', but he will say nothing else about this matter. If pushed, he will react with fear, and if this is brought up with anyone in the senior staff, they will also deny it. However, the groundskeeper who revealed the information will be sacked soon afterwards.

The characters may try and open the door at the bottom of the northern staircase. They will eventually succeed, and find stairs down. There is a large steel door at the bottom, with no apparent method of opening it.

Characters who monitor the door will not notice any activity, though they will find themselves called away for a few moments. In that time, whoever needs to go in or out of the underground lab can do so. The computers and security systems are set to ignore any activity (something which may be found out by a computer literate character) and will not record people moving up and down those stairs.

Act Three

The date is August 13th 1999. The time is 11pm.

This is the key scene of the first episode. After all the talking, the action begins. This act is a fight scene, spread across several possible locations on the island. There is a path that the attackers will follow, and if they are not interrupted by the characters, the attackers may be already inside the Castle before they are discovered. This is a fight to the death, though the secret behind the identity of the attackers will not be uncovered until the next Act.

- **The attack begins on the facility**

Just after 11pm, a Broken Room opens underneath the Castle, in the laboratory. A Broken Room has existed there for a few months, ever since an experiment went wrong.

A group of Nearsiders enter, equal to the number of characters in the group, plus one. These are the characters Variant Selves (use the PC's stats, and modify them based upon which Variations you'd like the Variants to originate from).

The other Nearside is one of Ellington's Variant Selves, someone who will become a very important enemy of the characters in later published scenarios.

They enter the basement level, and search it thoroughly. They do not find what- or whom- they are looking for.

The first time the group will probably be aware of the Variants is when they emerge from the northern stairwell and enter the Castle. They will move quickly through the building until they find the ICU ward. Any attempt to enter this sets off every alarm in the building.

However, one incident occurs immediately before the alarms go off.

One of the characters, on patrol of the Castle, sees Ellington working in his office. He looks up from his desk, and smiles at the character in question. His smile wavers slightly, and he quickly goes back to his work, asking the character to shut the door of the office. This is Ellington², searching through the files of Ellington¹.

A few seconds later, outside the office, the character sees the real Ellington walking up the stairs towards him. At this point, all hell will break loose.

The fight will move through the entire Castle, and the Variants will split up in hopes of escaping. They will be hunted down by Suzanne Matthews who uses her Avatar abilities to move around unnoticed. Suzanne knows of the Avatar who is part of the Variants group and has been waiting for them to arrive. She kills this one first, and uses her main SeriesStopper pistol to do so. Make sure that one of the characters witnesses her fight with the Avatar. Suzanne will take plenty of hits that would kill a normal person, but they merely ruffle her hair. She will no doubt raise eyebrows when she is thrown off the balcony and lands

cleanly on her feet.

The teams efforts seem to be directed towards two objectives.

- 1) Capture the solitary patient.
- 2) Uncover Ellington's research.

Many encounters will take place, especially between Dr. Porter and his missing patient, as well as Jack Stryker and his long-dead friend.

- **The attackers are killed, except for one, whom escapes.**

These Variants will not defeat the characters in the upcoming fight. No matter how hurt the characters actually get, they will be not be killed. This is important, as dead characters can't continue the game ☺.

But the fight which does occur is terrible, and each character should be brought to the brink of death, but spared the final blow by bad luck on the part of the Variant self, or good thinking on the part of the character.

An option here is to actually *let* one of the characters die if it should occur, and replace them with their Variant Self. This is for advanced players and refs only, as it will demand a lot of work between the concerned parties. Only allow this to happen if the player is in agreement.

The fight ends when the Ellington's Variant Self rushes back into the basement, and uses the Broken Room there to leave. The 'explosion' of Distance will knock all the characters off their feet with a wave of vertigo and nausea.

Now, it's time to clean up the mess.

Act Four

- **The Assassins are revealed as being identical to the characters.**

The denouement of the fight scene is a quiet, sullen attempt to clean up the damage. The bodies of the Assassins are taken to one of the Wards and put into beds. The characters should be present to search them. Each wears a full face gasmask/night sight combo, and when these are removed, it is clear that the faces belong to the characters. This will raise unanswerable questions. Any of the staff, if asked, will be silent, yet knowing.

Dr. Ellington will try to explain. He will say that he cannot explain what has happened, but the characters should stay and wait until the status of the patient in ICU has been ascertained.

The characters will probably want to know what's so important about this patient, and may bring up the HBA subject here as well. Dr. Ellington will give no answers, and will leave the room with most of the staff. He is muttering something about a conspiracy. He and Suzanne have a quiet conversation. She shows him a small card, which he reacts to with some surprise. They both turn and look at the characters, and he nods. He looks incredibly worried.

The characters will not understand what the conversation is about, but here, for the ref, is what was said.

Suzanne has told him who she works for, and why she is there. Ellington is indeed surprised, though somewhat relieved that C¹³ is there to protect him. He tells her that the other 'Assassin' was his Variant Self, and must have been Displaced- though it took longer than had previously been reckoned. He instructs Suzanne to track down and find this Variant Ellington, and to stop him.

She tells him that she wants to bring the characters with her- it is clearly no coincidence that the attackers that came with the Variant Ellington are the Variants of those hired to guard the site. She reckons that it might be useful to bring them with her.

There is no way of finding out exactly where Ellington's Variant has gone, but they need to open the Broken Room under the Castle in order to follow.

- **The Broken Room.**

The characters are instructed to search the basement lab once more, to double check that all ways in and out are secured. Suzanne goes with them, but it is her intention to find some way to open the Broken Room inside the lab.

Once she gets all the characters into the main lab, she begins asking them questions about the fight. She is trying to tap into the emotional key that will open the Broken Room for them. It is keyed to fear, hate and anger and each emotion, once strong enough, opens the Broken Room- but to a different Variation. She must try and provoke the characters to feel the same emotion at the same time. This may not be easy. If it comes to it, she will shoot someone in order to get the emotions to the correct level to open the Room. She is unsure as to which key the other Ellington would have used, but she knows that a C¹³ backup team is waiting on Earth², and that would suit her fine. The key to opening the Room to Earth² is fear.

- **The journey begins**

Once the emotional key has been turned, everything goes white. The characters are hopefully still geared up from the fight, and are well armed and prepared (at least, equipment-wise) for the journey.

They each experience a sense of numbness, a knowledge that whatever they try to do, nothing can save the world. This feeling is tangible- describe how in the nothingness that surrounds them all, Numb reaches out and touches them, caresses them, cloaks them.

Then it's cold and wet and reality slaps them in the face.

Just not their reality, that's all.

Epilogue

This is it- the end of Episode One. The characters have been ripped from their own world and dumped on another. Earth³ to be precise, a dying version of Earth.

- **The characters arrive on a dying world.**

The characters are still in the Castle, but it lies in ruins, much as it did before the Regency Group bought it. The roof is gone, and the ruins reach only up as far as the second floor. The sky is black, no stars to be seen. It is *much* colder than an August night should be, and snow is falling. There is a blanket of snow, a foot thick on the ground, and a howling wind is whipping it up into drifts.

Suzanne Matthews looks around, and then addresses the characters.

“We’re here. Welcome to another world.”