

SWEETNESS

©2016 Dennis Detwiller

An operation for Delta Green where a parent's love fuels darkness.

INTRODUCTION

Sarah Garrison is a Chicago police officer and former Delta Green friendly who has lost everything. First, she lost her police partner to a cult, then she lost the trust of Delta Green, and finally, after the divorce from her husband Timothy Bernier in 2009, and the child custody battle revealing the ritual abuse she perpetrated every night, she lost her children. After she failed her psych evaluation, she lost her job. Now, she finds herself at 46, alone, in a walk-up, with nothing but fragments of a pension.

It was only a matter of time before she lost her mind.

Garrison spent a year in the service of the group, and in that time, in Chicago, she faced many threats, human and otherwise. In 2008, she faced and defeated a cult with access to a power only vaguely understood. She lost her partner, but gained access to things man was not meant to know. In secret, she kept it for herself.

The artifact, the Stone of Yos, is the centerpiece of a storage facility she rents. She spends a lot of time in front of it, now, *in it*. Almost all of her time.

Her ex-husband lives in Tampa, Florida with her children and his new wife, happy to be rid of her. The kids were content to be away from their mother, and the cuts she inflicted on them after dark, for a time.

Then the shadowman came.

THE TRUTH

Sarah Garrison has used a cult-artifact, the Stone of Yos, recovered from a burned out drug den in 2008, to call up a power that allows her to spy and interact with her children in Tampa Florida, from Chicago, every night. What she does not know is the entity the stone manifests *remains* behind, invisible, even when Garrison is not using the stone, and as she uses it more and more, the influence of this entity infects her.

Soon, the creature and Garrison will become one, and she will be trapped in the stone forever, just as it has fed many, many times before. Then, freed of her influence, it will feed on the Bernier family.

THE NEWS STORY

Delta Green is alerted to the incidents at the Berniers house in Tampa Florida through a friendly noticing a crime story on the local news, and, in particular, noticing a mark painted on the door of the house in the story.

The story is angled as if the Berniers' are the victims of a hate crime (Mr. Bernier is African American and his wife is Caucasian), and that someone has been terrorizing their house. The story is a short blurb on the news, indicating the police were (briefly) involved, a small fire was reported, graffiti and other marks have been found on their house, but so far, none of the family have been injured.

The mark on the door, scratched into its surface and coated in blood, triggered the call to Delta Green.

THE CALL

Agents are alerted to the operation via secure means, which can include:

- A FedEx envelope is returned to the agent. The envelope appears as if the agent himself filled it out and sent it to an obviously false address. The handwriting is NOT that of the agent.
- An unknown person bumps into the agent, drops a sheaf of stapled papers, and then pawns them off on the Agent *as if the agent dropped it*.
- A phone call from the local police department informs the agent that they've recovered the agent's wallet. There is indeed a wallet in a plastic ziploc bag, with a state issued ID for the agent, and a folder of papers.

The papers are all the same. They are a brochure for a real estate seminar at the Holiday Inn in Tampa Florida this coming Friday. Each lead paper is marked by a small, hand-drawn green delta. On the last page is a ten digit number written in the same ink. It may be a phone number, but it has no dashes in it.

CALLING THE NUMBER

Calling the phone number on the sheets *before* arriving in Tampa will elicit a non-response. The phone rings and rings. Investigating the number with Computer Science or Electronics over 35% reveals the number is likely a PIN dial-through number; not a real phone number.

THE CONTACT

A huge sign—"THE TAMPA GREENFIELD HOLIDAY INN WELCOMES THE BURKE-TORRENCE REAL ESTATE SEMINAR"—floats above the entrance of the hotel. Getting a room at the hotel is nearly impossible, as it has been pre-booked, and is filled with real estate agents at all hours. In the bar, at the pool, in the lobby. Delta Green agents will have no problem fitting in, if they're in a suit and tie, and no problem moving about, as they will be assumed to be part of the seminar.

Agents who make a Search roll, or with a Search of 35% or more spot their contact in the lobby. He's an older caucasian male in his late 40's. Sandy blond hair, round, metal glasses, nicotine stained fingers. He's wearing a concealed pistol (Glock), and has the feel and mannerisms of law enforcement about him. Those with a Search of 60% or more notice his shoes are stained with sidewalk salt from a much colder clime.

When the agent's notice him, he in turn will wave the agents over. He'll say nothing else, just wave them along to one of the smaller conference rooms (The Pine Room), and inside, brief them.

THE BRIEFING

"Call me John," he says. He's brief and to the point.

- A friendly called in the incident after seeing a restricted symbol on the door.
- "John" shows the agents the news story on a projector from a laptop.
- The news story is available on Youtube (he fills out a url on a sheaf of hotel stationery).
- He hands out a single, brief dossier on the Bernier family.
- The group has reason to believe the mark on the door is serious enough to warrant investigation.
- The agents are to locate the origin of the mark and remove all vectors which might produce it.
- The Bernier's are eager to solve the issue, though they believe it is some sort of harassment. John recommends the Federal hate crime angle, but how the agents enter, remains up to them.
- "Questions?" He answers what he can, never revealing his name or place of origin.
- He excuses himself to use the restroom and does not return. He leaves the laptop. It is new, nearly unconfigured, and its browsing history only shows the youtube video. There are no email accounts or passwords.

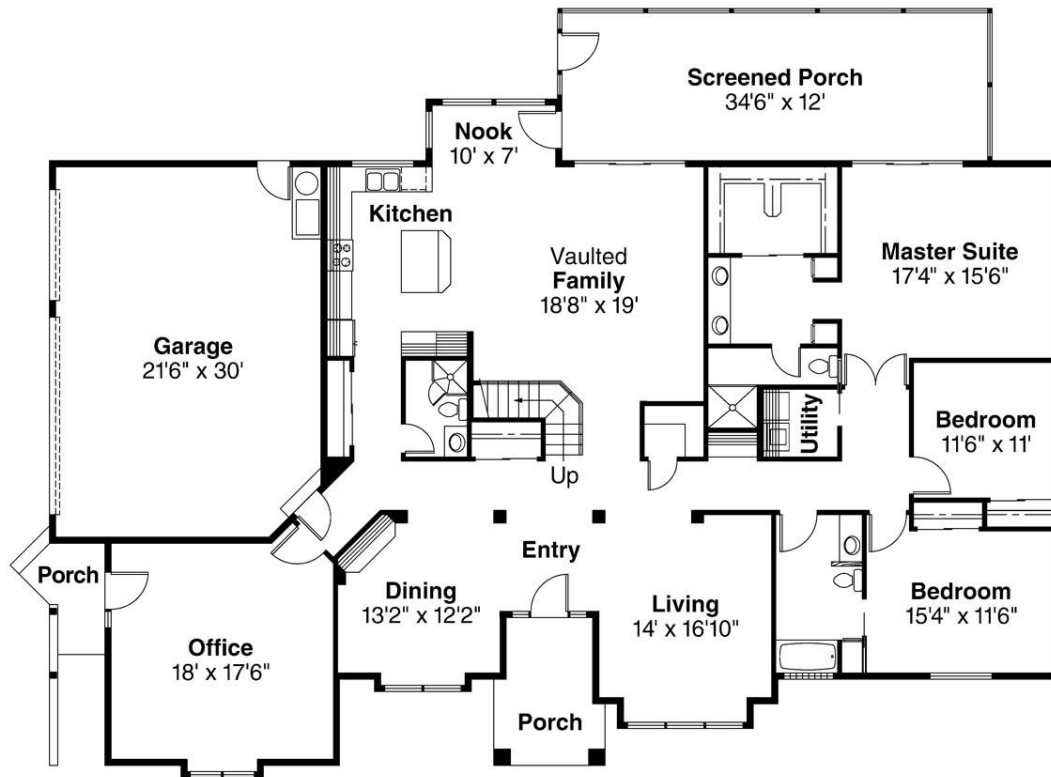
3591 NORTH RIDGE AVE, TAMPA FLORIDA-THE BERNIER'S HOUSE

The Bernier's house is a 3,500 square foot recently built rambler in the upscale North Ridge area of Tampa. Timothy Bernier purchased it in 2010 for \$350,000, new, from the QuadMark Housing development company, with a mortgage from Bay Street bank. These facts are easily checked out, and nothing illegal is involved. Before the housing development, the area was occupied by a large scrap yard from 1913 to 1988.

The house is recessed behind a high wall, with a large garden, backyard with pool, and several fruit trees. The garage is accessible via remote controlled gate, with a long driveway up through the yard.

The house is pink stucco, the roof new, grey shingles, and the decor inside the house is light and airy. It is new, has no structural secrets, cubbyholes, or a basement (this is common in Florida), and is temperature controlled.

The Bernier's have lived there for six years without incident until January 10, 2016, when the mark on the front door appeared.



THE MARK

The mark is an oblong circle cut with two lines, with a smaller circle and line within it, drawn in what appears to be blood and effluvia on the tan front door of the Bernier's home.

A successful Forensics roll, or Forensics of 30% or more identifies the marks in the door as made with some sort of horn or claw — something sharp enough to deform the door, but also somewhat blunt. Black streak marks beneath the blood and guts are marked on the outside edges of the cuts. The blood and effluvia are a mixture of cat, lizard and small rodents innards. By the time the agents arrive, this effluvia has been removed by industrial cleaner, and a new door is ordered and expected to arrive within the week.

The friendly who called it in identified the mark as a symbol for Kore, Kos or Yos, a deity worshipped by a Greek Mystery cult, about which very little is known. The entity is mentioned in several restricted books known to produce hypergeometrical effects.

A successful Occult roll, or an Occult of 40% or more indicates that Kore is the “queen of the underworld”, related to rituals called *Katabasis* — a *physical* descent into the underworld. Though the terms Kos or Yos is, as far as even the most experienced consultant is concerned, are names which mean nothing.

A successful Unnatural roll, or an Unnatural of 30% or more indicates that Yos, is actually an *abbreviation* used in many restricted hypergeometrically active books (usually written Yo.s). It stands for *Yog-Sothoth*.

THE BERNIERS

The Bernier's are a normal family, who up until January, lived a quiet, unremarkable existence in Tampa Florida. Tim Bernier is a microchip designer for Altex Microelectronics, a local secure chip production company and makes a *very* good living. His wife Evelyn is a stay at home mom who was once a dispatcher for the Tampa Police Department. Though the children are not hers biologically, their relationship is as close to perfect as can be imagined.

The two children barely remember their real mother (Chad was 7 when he last saw her, and Kathryn was 3), and never speak of her.

Kathryn has special health needs. She was born deaf in both ears, and the entire family is fluent in American Sign Language.

Their days are mostly concerned with getting the kids to school, various sports, shopping and generally enjoying each other's company. They are a tight-knit family. However, lately, it seems something has been haunting them.

Count all of the Bernier's as having 10 HP, and 50 SAN.

TIMOTHY BERNIER (49 YEAR OLD, AFRICAN AMERICAN MALE)

Timothy "Tim" Bernier is a microchip engineer with a degree from CalTech and a string of high-paying jobs—his job history is easily searchable (it meanders from California, to Chicago, to Tampa). His current employer is *ecstatic* to have him, and have lavished him with bonuses, raises and various perks (free vacations and such).

He thinks the current string of problems at the house are a combination of some idiot racist, some over-excited children, and a protective wife. He has seen nothing "supernatural" (and he doesn't believe in such things) and will always work to talk-down a situation back to the solid ground of reality.

Timothy is the only one who will spill about Sarah Garrison. His children will not mention it, and Evelyn does not believe it is her business. If probed, he will reveal that he gained custody of the children after their mother was found to be suffering from psychological problems, and was abusing the children. Further, that she lives in Chicago, as far as he knows, and that she's had no contact with them in years. Further prying will reveal that she was a Chicago police officer. If her name is run up the chain, Delta Green has no organizational memory of Sarah Garrison.

EVELYN BERNIER (42 YEAR OLD, CAUCASIAN FEMALE)

An ex-Tampa Police department dispatcher, Evelyn met Tim Bernier at Clearwater beach a year after his move from Chicago. They became involved quickly, and Evelyn, who cannot have children due to polycystic ovarian disease, nearly instantly became the surrogate mom to the Bernier children. They in turn, took to her just as quickly.

In 2010 they married, and have been happily married ever since. Having deep involvement with law enforcement, she knows the ropes, and will be cooperative to feds (or people *pretending* to be feds) unless she spots something unusual. Anytime an agent makes a miscue, have them make a Luck roll,

She's certain something bizarre is going on in the home, and has entered a mode where she hopes to brute-force her way to the bottom of the mystery. She can't say exactly *what* is going on, but she has a terrible feeling of foreboding.

CHAD BERNIER (16 YEAR OLD, AFRICAN AMERICAN MALE)

Chad is a teenage boy, and all that implies. His mind is elsewhere. He knows of the things going on in the house, but chalks that up, like his dad, to overzealous women. He believes the mark on the door might be from someone at his school. Twice, he has heard things in the house when he thought he was alone, at night, and once, he thought he heard his sister *and someone else* moving around upstairs when he *knows* they were alone. But this doesn't weigh too much on him. He is almost always out and about until 10 PM every night.

KATHRYN BERNIER (10 YEAR OLD, AFRICAN AMERICAN FEMALE)

Kathryn is a very smart young woman who is completely deaf. She attends the Tampa Language and Learning center, a school which caters to those with hearing impairments, where she is an excellent student. She is the favorite of the family — in all cases. Even her brother dotes on her.

Kathryn has a secret. Something has been visiting her at night since the mark was made on the door. At first, she was terrified (and woke her parents the first night complaining of nightmares), but later, as the creature approached her and contacted her through American Sign Language, she became fascinated with it. She still does not know what "Sweetness"—as it identified itself in ASL—is, but she is so drawn to the mystery she will lie to cover it up.

She has no idea it is her biological mother.

INCIDENTS IN THE HOUSE

The Shadowman only appears at night. However, a version of it (the non-Garrison version) haunts the shadows of the house even during the day. In this shadow mote form, it can do next to nothing but listen, and follow, creeping along the cracks of the house where the light cannot go.

When Garrison is piloting the Shadowman, it appears late at night, swims to a reflective surface and emerges from another reflective surface *in* the house (usually the kitchen) 20 minutes later. It then freely stalks the house, collapsing into a mote when someone it doesn't want to see it comes near. It always moves to Kathryn's room, and once inside, wakes and "talks" with her for hours using American Sign Language.

Otherwise, it might be found moving around the house in the dark of the night.

SARAH GARRISON

Sarah Garrison is sick, that much is easy to see. Anyone who sees the 46-year old during one of her many furtive trips to and from the place she stores the Stone of Yos in Chicago will think "cancer". Her clothes hang off her. Her teeth seem too big. The whites of her eyes are a yellow-brown, she coughs all the time.

She's also quite insane. She lost her mind about a year back, after having been "in" the stone once too often, moving the Shadowman — that cannot ride in vehicles—relentlessly south to Tampa, one manifestation at a time.

If confronted by authorities, she will shoot to kill (she carries a .44 "Bulldog" revolver in her coat pocket everywhere). If she can ditch her pursuers she will flee to the storage facility and enter and disappear in the Stone. If they somehow subdue her, she will collapse in hysterics, becoming a weeping mess. However, if given a moment's respite from captivity, she will attack anyone present and attempt to escape.

Notably, capturing her will not stop the Shadowman manifestations.

STR 11, CON 12, DEX 10, INT 14, POW 9, CHA 9
HP 12, WP 9, SAN 0

SKILLS

Alertness 45%, Athletics 30%, Bureaucracy 45%, Criminology 35%, Dodge 55%, Drive Auto 55%, Firearms 45%, First Aid 25%, Forensics 30%, Law 25%, Persuade 45%, Stealth 35%, Search 60%, Unarmed Combat 45%.

ATTACKS

"Bulldog" .44 45% (Damage 1D12, 6 shots, Base Range 20 m).

APT 311, ROSEHILL APARTMENTS, 2399 NORTH CLARK STREET, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS-SARAH GARRISON'S APARTMENT

Her apartment is a walk up on the third floor of a large apartment building with a view of the Graceland cemetery, and beyond it, the lake. It is a studio, and it's obvious even from the hallway that something is not right. A strong smell of rotting food is detectable outside the door.

Inside, the apartment is a wreck. Piles of fast food bags, rotten food, half consumed Coca-Cola 2-liters congealing to caramel. Flies alight off everything. This filth is in the

bathroom, the kitchenette and even on the bed, where it's clear no one has slept for some time.

On the wall is a map of the eastern United States. It begins carefully marked with thumbtacks and strings in intervals heading southeast, first towards Indiana, and then into Kentucky. By Tennessee the tracking becomes erratic, and is no longer marked in thumbtacks, but in scribbled red pen. It ceases to be updated past Alabama; instead, at the bottom, in tightly written Pilot marker is a bizarre scrawl of writing:

The door. The key. The keyhole.

Are the same.

Open the way for me now.

The living. The dead. The dying.

Are all the same.

Open the way for me now.

Praises to Yog-Sothoth. Praises to his name.

Open the way for me now.

Piles of bills are scattered about, some ripped open. Looking these over as a whole and making an Accounting roll (or having Accounting of 30%+) indicates two things:

- Garrison is on the brink of bankruptcy. She's moving money between credit cards to cover bills she can't afford. In the last year those payments have become crazily erratic.
- She has defaulted on her Jeep, but is up to date renting a storage facility in Chicago. Unit 31, Lock 'Em Up Self-Storage, 3306 N Kedzie Ave.

Neighbors questioned on Garrison will make faces indicating they know something is deeply wrong with her, and that frankly, the building might be better without her. They are also relatively reluctant to speak too much about her, with her "being a cop and all." No one, including the super seem to know she was dismissed from the Chicago PD.

They will say they see her at odd hours coming and going from the building, and get the feeling she's not here too often. Twice, due to complaints, the super watched as she filled garbage bags with filthy food and trundled them down to the compactor. She did so willingly, though she seemed "pretty messed up".

LOCK 'EM UP SELF-STORAGE, 3306 N KEDZIE AVE-THE STORAGE FACILITY

This is a four level, climate controlled storage facility with forty 20x15 lockers on each floor. It is maintained by a clerk 24-hours a day, there are three clerks, each with a very different attitude on life, and the value of personal property. No one can access the upper levels without a key card (carried by one of the clerks), and to enter they must pass the front desk.

Larry Martinez (24 yo Hispanic Male): Flash a badge, any badge, and Larry jumps to attention. He will let anyone into any locker with no hassle if they even vaguely smell of the

police. He did 2 years in Federal prison for auto theft — something no one at Lock ‘Em Up knows. He will eagerly identify which unit is rented by Sarah Garrison.

Sonny Cardwell (36 yo Caucasian Male): Sonny is the worst kind of Libertarian. He carries a copy of the Bill of Rights on his person, and will immediately meet any badge flash with actively filming the Agent while asking for the ID number, their agency and their full name. He will refuse access to anything without a warrant, and even then, will force the agents to involve the owner of the unit. He will do everything he can to NOT identify which unit is rented by Sarah Garrison.

Amber Broderick (29 yo Caucasian Female): Amber is a student of the human condition. Anyone attempting to bluff her must beat her Persuade of 44%. If they fail she KNOWS the agents have no authority and will openly demand a \$200 bribe. If paid she hands them the key card and says “30 minutes”. Amber will identify Garrison’s unit—for an additional \$50 dollars.

UNIT 31, THE STONE OF YOS

Any clerk key card can open Unit 31, which has a rolling garage-like door that rises easily with a tug. The Stone of Yos is the only significant object in the center of the room (along with a filthy sleeping bag and a bucket filled with urine cut with industrial cleaner).

There’s a Luck roll chance that the Stone of Yos is “active” — with Sarah inside of it — otherwise it is “dark”.

The Stone of Yos is a waist high, polished blob of obsidian stone which weighs about 350 pounds. When active, the stone catches the light in unusual ways, seeming to emit blue-green highlights where there should be none. When dark, it is completely black.

No one else may enter the stone when it is active. When touching the stone, a victim must make a POWx5 roll. Failure indicates 1 POW permanently lost (this can only happen once per victim). During this “drain” the victim must make a SAN roll (1/1D10). If they succeed, they see nothing, but feel a crazed wrenching of their consciousness; as if their POV was accelerated at speed across the surface of the Earth, before returning to their body. If they *fail*, they are overcome with otherworldly visions of space/time which lasts for minutes.

If the stone is unoccupied, touching it (costs 1 POW normally, once), inflicts 1/1D10 SAN loss — but this is suffered upon exit from the stone. Those watching see the victim instantly vanish into the stone, which, for a moment, glows blue-white, and then fades back to normal.

Inside, to the “operator” it feels as if they are in a diving suit. They are the Shadowman (see below) and may explore its abilities normally. When they wish to “leave”, they can exit instantly, and suffer whatever SAN loss they rolled upon entry.

Destroying the stone is as easy as striking it with a sledgehammer. Guns will have little effect. Anyone inside the stone when it is destroyed is lost forever; and the manifestations of the Shadowman cease. Those who know what this means regain 1/1D10 SAN.

RESEARCHING THE STONE OF YOS

Anyone with Occult of 40% or more, or Unnatural of 30% or more can find the Stone in a few minutes on the internet. It was located in Greece in 1946, sold at auction in 1951, and stolen from the Drake Field Museum in London in 1967. Since then, it has been reported missing.

The stone is linked to the same things as the Mark (see The Mark, above).

HER SCHEDULE

Garrison goes to a few all-night shops, cashes her pension check, and spends the money on junk food. She drives around in a rusted out Jeep Cherokee which is falling apart, and makes no bones about going to and from the storage location to her tiny walk-up on the lake; she doesn't believe she has anyone to hide from.

She spends little time in either her apartment or the storage facility, spending most of her time in the Stone of Yos.

THE SHADOWMAN

When Sarah Garrison "enters" the Stone of Yos, she vanishes into the stone and manifests in a shadowy, otherworldly form near to the Bernier's house (this location is random, and always begins at a reflective surface from which it "emerges"). When it moves fast, this creature appears as if dozens and dozens of humans were overlaid in movement in timelapse in a black bodysock, *swims* through the air as if it were water. Otherwise it looks like a shadow person in a black body sock.

When it holds still, it appears as an indistinct, human-sized shadow which looks *wrong* (1/1D4 SAN). Distances to it are difficult to judge when it is not moving, as if it is both two and three dimensional at the same time.

It has no eyes or orifices of any kind and is utterly silent. It can collapse into a mote of darkness at a moment's notice; like a shadow receding, and is nearly undetectable in this "hidden" form.

The Shadowman's plan— or that of Garrison— is to gain her daughter's trust, and then pull her into a reflective surface with her. Garrison has no idea what or why this compulsion has gripped her, but doing so, she feels, will solve all her problems.

Though this has not happened yet, and Garrison does not know it, if she *does not enter the stone at night*, the Shadowman will *still* manifest, though it will act much more primally, attempting to locate and drag one of the Bernier's into a reflective surface. If Garrison dies and the stone is not destroyed, this more animalistic version of the Shadowman will continue to hunt the Berniers.

STR 22, CON 30, DEX 13, INT As Operator, POW As Operator, CHA n/a
HP 26, WP As Operator, SAN As Operator

SAN LOSS: 1/1D4.

Attacks Per Turn: 1

*If there is no Operator, the INT is 7 and POW is 10.

OVERALL SKILLS AND ABILITIES

SKILLS: Jumping 45%, Climbing 75%, Unarmed Combat 55%, English 55%, ASL 55%, Driving 51%, Pistol 45%.

TRANSCENDENT: The Shadowman is immune to all physical attacks. Period.

SWIMMING: The Shadowman can move through the air as if it were water. It can swim upwards, drift down, and float indefinitely in space (0/1 SAN to watch for the first time). When it alights on a floor, it can move as a normal human, but always seems to be working against some sort of invisible force of resistance.

VANISH: In direct sunlight, or when hit with a high intensity illumination device, the Shadowman collapses into a tiny mote of shadow instantly, like a magic trick (costs 1/1D4 SAN the first time it is seen). It is very easy to assume it has teleported away. However, with a successful Search roll, this shadow is still visible as a tiny blob of impossible darkness — hitting it again with a direct light burst is enough to cause the creature to retreat to a Portal.

PORTALS: Any reflective surface of sufficient albedo can be used by the Shadowman as a portal for escape. The form must obey the proportions of the surface, so it must be of sufficient size as well (no leaping into a fork). Whenever it moves into this portal space, Sarah Garrison loses control of it, and must re engage the Stone of Yos to establish a new connection. It takes her 1D20 minutes to regain control, and move the Shadowman back to the Bernier house.

THE NAME: The creatures' chief vulnerability is the name of Yog-Sothoth, damage is dependent on the volume of the annunciation. Whispering the name is enough to inflict 1 HP damage on the creature. Saying it, 1D4 HP. Screaming it, 1D20 HP. If the Shadowman hits 0 HP, it is dismissed as if it had traveled through a Portal, though it may return. And you can bet anyone who knows that name will not see it coming a second time...