

THE HIDDEN CIRCLE GAZETTE

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BUILDS

Monstrum vel Prodigium

BY LAURATWK — 2026-07-04



There's something magnetic about a place time forgot. The kind of silence that settles in crumbling walls and echoes down long-abandoned corridors. That's what drew me to *Monstrum vel Prodigium*, a rotting husk of a remote psychiatric asylum, swallowed by overgrowth and shadow.

THE ABANDONED ASYLUM

The Abandoned Asylum was built by *Marseline & Meduson*. It was not designed with a specific use in mind but simply as a place to escape, role-play or rest your avatar. The driving factor for the build was the abandoned ambience and the claustrophobic feel. The atmospheric music adds to this.

Meduson started building the room during covid in 2020, while he was in lockdown and had lot of free time. It slowly grew into its current shape.

There is no specific opening schedule for this room. The host intends the room to be a sort of flying dutchman in the sea of public rooms, suddenly appearing and disappearing. You just need to catch it at the right time.

I went alone. No one else was brave, or stupid, enough to join me. Although I did have the sense to make sure that *Emmy* was fully briefed on my plans, ready to send help should I not return on time.

The ground floor welcomed me like a corpse in a tuxedo: eerily pristine in places, deceptively calm. Nature had pushed through broken windows, vines curling around rusting bedframes. Paint peeled from the walls like dead skin. I passed abandoned wards, shattered lights dangling like nooses, and cells still bearing names scrawled in fading pen. A nurse's station stood frozen in time, paperwork scattered, as if its occupants had just vanished.

But deeper inside, the true decay began to show.



I found a communal shower room near the end of one corridor; a large, tiled space that reeked of mold and neglect. The drains were clogged with hair and something far blacker, more gelatinous. The ceiling was cracked and bleeding rust. Rows of rusted showerheads lined the walls like sentinels, still dripping, as if waiting for the next round of patients to shuffle in. The grime was so thick it clung to the soles of my boots. A stained straightjacket lay discarded in one corner like a shed skin.

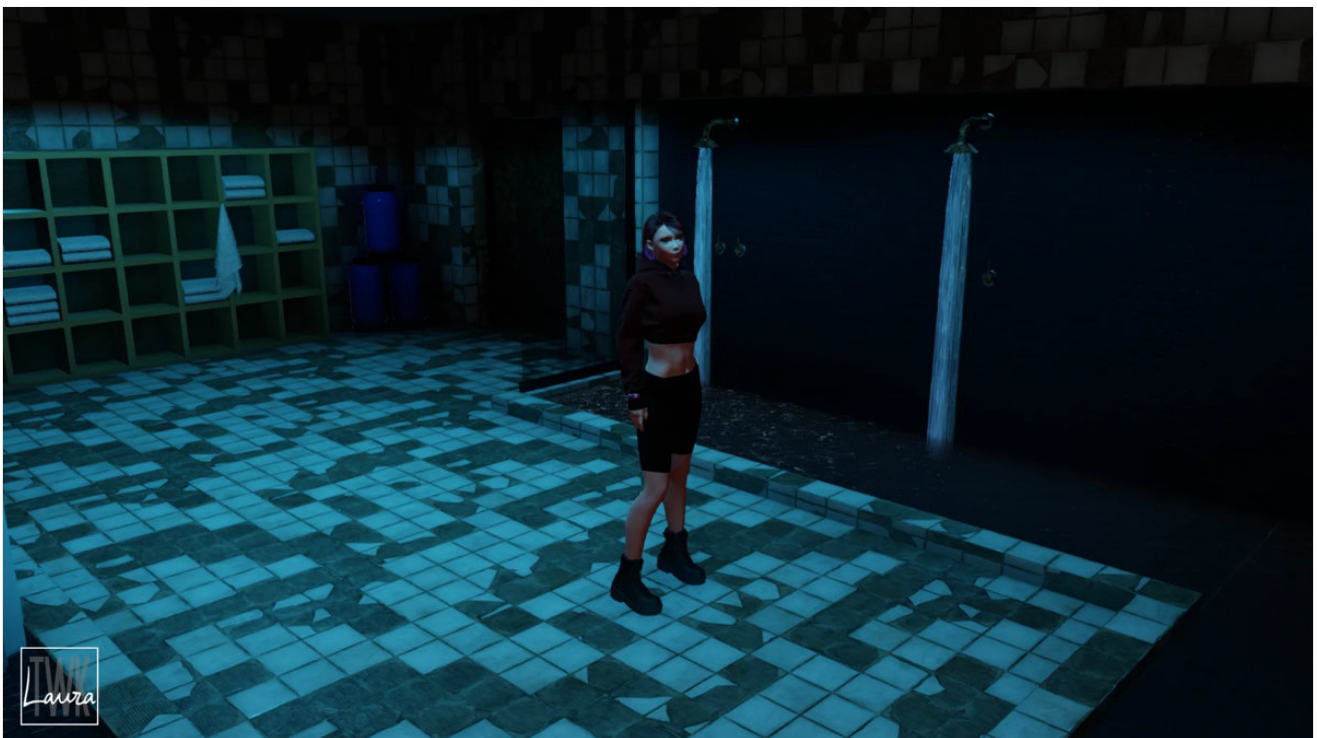
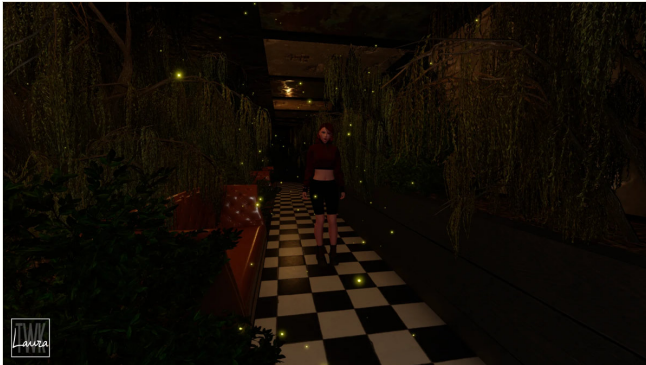
Next came the cafeteria.

The doors creaked open into a surreal time capsule. Tables still stood arranged in rows, many of them bearing trays with half-eaten meals, long since rotted into unrecognizable mush. Plastic cups filled with dried, cracked residue. One chair had been knocked over in a way that suggested a sudden departure, or a struggle. A calendar on the wall still read March 1987, though it was almost completely faded. The overhead fans had rusted in place, blades stopped mid-turn like they had been frozen by something unseen.

And then, strangely, I stumbled upon what must have once been the asylum's attempt at a therapeutic space: the vivarium.

It was tucked at the far end of the wing, the entrance overgrown with ivy that had broken straight through the glass roof. Inside, shattered enclosures lay strewn among overgrown ferns and vines that had claimed every inch of space. What was once a lush, curated greenhouse now felt like the heart of a jungle. Moss blanketed the floor, and the remnants of broken heat lamps swung gently from their cords. A sign still hung lopsided above the main path: *"Nature Heals."* I laughed under my breath. Nature had definitely taken over, but healing was far from what this place had seen.

It was quiet. Too quiet. But I kept going, descending into the first underground floor.



The first basement was colder. Damper. I found a stairwell sealed off with rusted wire mesh and a broken RESTRICTED WARD sign half-buried under dust. The air turned thick, like it didn't want me there.

The rooms on that level were different. Observation windows covered in claw-like scratches. Restraint chairs bolted to the floor, straps frayed but intact. Cabinets full of instruments that looked less like tools of medicine and more like implements of cruelty. I saw old files, patient records stamped *"EXPERIMENTAL SUBJECT"* in bold red ink. Notes about *"neural compliance trials," "electrochemical testing,"* and emotional erasure.

Some of the doors had been forced open. Others, still locked, hid things I could only guess at. I heard things down there. Scuttling. A low mechanical hum that didn't seem to come from anywhere.

And then I heard footsteps. Not mine.

Heavy. Uneven. Padded, but deliberate. Echoing faintly through the corridor ahead. I froze, torch dimmed, breath caught in my throat. Just around the corner, through a cracked door, I saw a figure move - slowly, shambling with a twitching gait, dragging one leg. Not a ghost. Not some hallucination. A man. Pale, barefoot, clad in nothing but tattoos covering his many surgical scars.

His head twitched as he sniffed the air like an animal. His face was ruined. Scarred, sunken, and hollow-eyed. A former inmate, clearly long abandoned, surviving in the rot like a ghost that had never left his cell. I stayed completely still, pressed against the wall behind an overturned gurney.



Eventually, he disappeared down another hallway, and I moved. Slow, silent, shaking. I took a different route, careful to avoid any noise. I didn't want to know what he would do if he saw me.

Once I was sure I was alone again, I stumbled across a morgue. The steel doors had rusted open. Inside, drawers lined the walls like filing cabinets for the dead. Several lay ajar, some still containing body bags that had half-decayed into sludge and bone. One had claw marks on the inside. A cold slab stood under a dangling light that flickered with every breath I took.

Beyond the morgue, I found several operating rooms; filthy, reeking, and chaotically disordered. Surgical lights hung askew, their bulbs shattered. Dried blood still stained the floors in arcs and smears. Tools had been left out mid-procedure, coated in rot. One table still had restraints fastened, and a cracked mirror above it offered a distorted view of what might once have been considered healing.

I moved on and that's when I found those rooms. There were several of them. Chains and shackles were mounted not just to the floor or walls, but to custom-built furniture, tables, angled platforms, even metal frames suspended from the ceiling. Most of the restraints were worn, some still locked in closed loops. At first, I thought they were just aggressive forms of patient control.

But the arrangement of the furniture, the placement of the restraints, the strange hooks and padded cuffs, none of it matched the usual medical containment setup. It was too calculated. Too deliberate. There were cameras hidden in the corners of the rooms, all aimed at the centre. A few had collapsed tripods with ancient, rotting reels of film. In one room, I found a cabinet full of soiled cloths, ropes, and items that made my skin crawl just to look at. The stench was still clinging to the air, old and sour, like the walls themselves remembered what had happened here.

This wasn't about treatment. Or containment. This was exploitation. I backed out of those rooms slowly, bile rising in my throat. I didn't want to breathe the same air any longer than I had to.



But, as strange as those rooms had been, the strangest of all was the Archives room.

I almost missed it, hidden behind a heavy wooden door with reinforced hinges. The second I stepped inside, the atmosphere changed. The air was dry... cleaner. The lights overhead buzzed dimly, somehow still working. Shelves lined the walls, meticulously organized. Folders, case files and reports: all intact. No graffiti, no broken furniture. It was as if this one room had been preserved, protected from the ruin all around it.

I pulled one file at random: a detailed record of a patient subjected to "*Identity Fragmentation Protocol*." Multiple surgeries. Multiple personalities induced. Zero follow-up care. Dozens more files revealed similar fates. Names crossed out, new ones scribbled in. Some documents were stamped with departmental insignias I didn't recognize, dated decades apart, as if whoever had run these programs had persisted long after the asylum officially shut down.

I spent far too long in that room, drawn in by the quiet horror of the paperwork. But I knew I couldn't stay. The silence didn't last forever. And the man in the halls... he hadn't gone far and I still had one more floor to explore.



The second basement wasn't like the other floors at all.

I expected more of the same: grime, cells, maybe a surgical theatre. But at the bottom of the final stairwell, past a collapsed barricade of file cabinets and broken warning signs, I found something else entirely: a vault door. Industrial. Set into the very stone, it looked like it belonged in a nuclear facility, not an asylum. Strangely, it had been left open.

Beyond it was no ordinary room. It was a cavern. An immense underground expanse carved deep into the earth, swallowing sound and light alike. The walls were rough stone, wet and glistening. Twisting catwalks spanned the void like spiderwebs, suspended over chasms of rusting machinery and massive pipes that pulsed faintly, as if still alive. I followed the path, my every footstep echoing into the abyss.

Containment rooms, around a dozen of them. Built from reinforced glass and steel, they looked less like cells and more like observation tanks. Some were cracked. Others were sealed tight. I peered into one, its contents obscured by condensation and grime. Then I made a mistake.

I stepped into one of the cells, just to look. The moment I crossed the threshold, the heavy door behind me swung shut with a deep clang that reverberated through my bones. I spun, heart hammering, and tried the handle. It wouldn't budge. Trapped.

Panic clawed at my throat. I banged on the walls, screamed into the empty chamber. Nothing. I searched frantically for hidden latches, secret releases, even weak points in the steel, but it was sealed, airtight and absolute.



I pulled out my phone. One bar. I tried to call Emmy, the one person who knew where I was. The line rang, but it was distorted, patchy. I couldn't tell if she picked up. I could only pray she'd get the message. That she'd come.

Hours passed. Or maybe it was minutes. Time slipped in that place like water through my fingers. As I curled up on the soiled bed, I started to imagine dying there. Alone. Unfound. Or worse; being found by whoever had set this trap, if it had been a trap. What if it was the man from the floor above? What if there was something else down here, something worse?

I was just beginning to give up, sliding down the wall into a miserable heap, when I heard movement outside. Footsteps on the catwalk. I froze, breath caught in my chest, unsure whether to call out or hide. And then, I heard a voice.

"Laura?"

It was Emmy. Emmy's voice. My heart leapt. I scrambled to the small hole in the wall and peered through. And there she was. Clad in her best Lara Croft outfit like it was just another cosplay adventure, ponytail swaying, flashlight raised. She looked like a damn action hero. And I could have cried from the sheer relief of seeing her.

I shouted her name, warning her to be careful, to watch for traps but my warnings were not heeded.

She found my cell, and then the sealed door. She spun the handle to release it. The door clicked, creaked, swung open with a screech. I barely had time to react before she stepped inside and the door slammed shut again behind her. We were both trapped now.

I slid down the wall, shaking, as the weight of it all hit me. Emmy rushed to the door, trying every method I had already tried. Her voice was calm, but I could see the fear in her eyes. And that broke me.

I dropped to my knees and sobbed. Not just because we were stuck, but because I'd brought someone else into the nightmare. I was no longer alone, but no someone else was trapped along side me. And, even as Emmy did her best to console me, I knew that somewhere deep in the tunnels around us... something was still listening.

