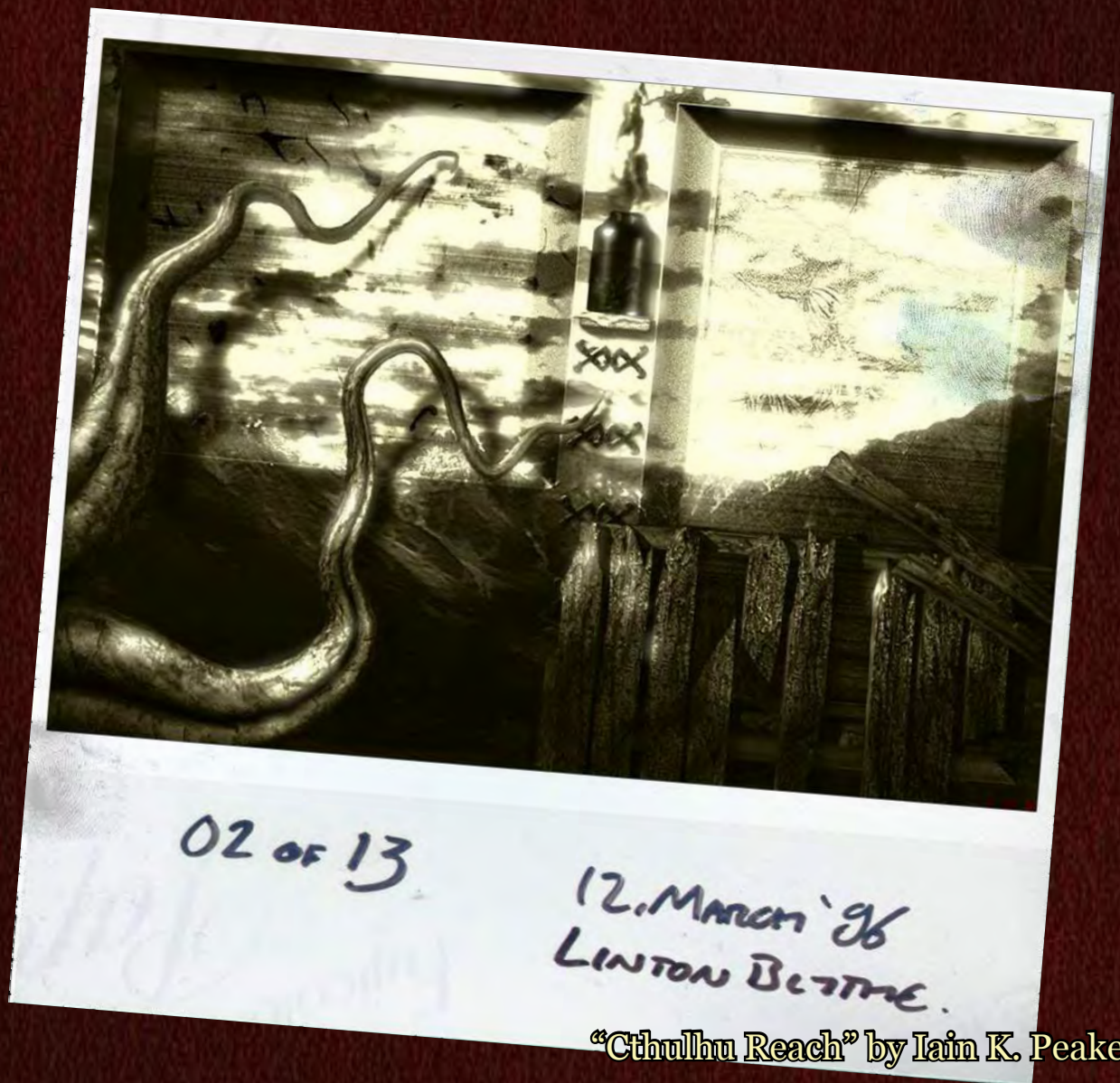


The Unbound Book

Call of Cthulhu Adventures in the
Roaring Twenties



The Unbound Book - Issue 0 August 2002.

The Unbound Book is an irregular magazine producing free adventures for Chaosium's Call of Cthulhu roleplaying game in the Roaring Twenties.

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Special Thanks: Must go to the wives and partners of all those involved in publishing this magazine, especially my wife Emma, who didn't complain once about the amount of time I spent on my computer.

To Chaz and Jan Engan (I spelt it right this time!- I hope), for writing the epic Beyond the Mountains of Madness and for answering all my questions.

To Woody, for running *Rise*, which in turn inspired this magazine.

To D-man, who, at a moments notice, wrote code and suggested solutions for the web site.

To Dan, Alan and Iain for allowing us to use their fantastic art. Also to Eyal for creating the coolest border art ever (and waiting a year to see it in all its glory!)

To Gary Sumpter for the words of encouragement.

And finally to Charlie, Lynn, Dustin and the rest of the crew of Chaosium for, firstly, allowing us the chance to publish this magazine and secondly, for keeping Call of Cthulhu alive.

Oh I almost forgot, thanks also to YOU for reading this magazine, we hope you enjoy it as much as we do!

Wolf © 2002 Dan Dionne



Pages from an Unbound Book

Welcome to the first of what I hope will be many issues of The Unbound Book. A year in the making, this magazine is the result of many peoples undying efforts and long tired nights. The result, I believe, has brought, **YOU**, a selection of adventures for, the most interesting roleplaying game on the market today.

This magazine will try and break new ground in the style of Call of Cthulhu adventuring, as well as stomping once again over the ideas and inspirations that make this game so great.

The Unbound Book came into existence one dark autumn night, after a friend of mine had run one of the most frightening and compelling horror adventures I had ever taken part in (this adventure - *The Rise of Xnaaki* appears as the first of our scenarios). Inspired, I wondered if anybody else would be keen to read and play this adventure and after a number of conversations with may different Cthulhu authorities the rest, as one might say, is history.

Issue Zero is a sample, testing in the waters of adventure writing. If this does well we hope to produce irregular issues (once every three or four months) filled with **your** adventures.

The Unbound Book is going to rely on submissions from its readers to survive. If you have an adventure or an idea for a scenario set in the 1920s why not drop us a line.

Thanks for reading and we hope you enjoy,

Marcus D. Bone

In this issue of The Unbound Book:

Set in a small town north of Arkham, *The Rise of Xnaaki* pits the characters against an ancient evil dwelling in Steeplin Lake. An introductory adventure into the world of Call of Cthulhu, it introduces the players to the horror that is the Great Old Ones.

Kingsport, City in the Mists. With an injured friend babbling of demons and a town beset by creatures beyond *His Wildest Dreams*, the investigators must find out what is happening to this quaint sea side town before it too late.

A fire, a death and a... werewolf? Can a murder be justified? Or will one man's quest for revenge lead to his own demise? The investigators are about to find out, when *What Goes Around...*

Note on Language

It is important to note that all grammar and language used in this magazine is New Zealand English.

The reason for this is simple, all those involved in creating The Unbound Book are New Zealand based. In future issues the language style of each adventure will be based on the authors country of origin. We do hope our foreign readers forgive any odd use of language.

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"Was in der Tat innerhalb des ungebundenen Buches liegt?"
 - What indeed lies inside The Unbound Book?

Resources

Due to size constraints The Unbound Book is unable to hold all extras we would like to bring our readers. But don't fret, on our website www.unboundbook.org, we have placed all those documents we weren't able to fit in this issue. These include:

d20 Conversion Notes - All the statistics and rules required for running all the adventures in this issue using the d20 system, including NPC stats, difficulties levels, experience rewards and much more.

Steeplin County - Maps and further information about Steeplin County, to help flesh out this new and exciting location. Includes players versions of all the maps.

Guide to Kingsport - The Kingsport book was published by Chaosium in the early 90s and is no longer in print. This resource gives those Keepers who are new to this setting maps and further information about the City of Mists.



'Helltrack' © 2002 Alan M. Clark

The Rise of Xnaaki

By Michael Wood

This adventure is based in Lovecraft country during the summer of 1920. The Investigators actions will initially focus on Arkham before moving north to the (non-Lovecraft) town of Steeplin.

The first act is rather linear and unless the Players go out of their way they can let the story unfold around them. At the conclusion of this first act the Players become isolated by the death of their employer, allowing for more creative role-playing during the second act.

Explaining to the players that the initial flow of the scenario is notably linear may help events unfold more smoothly, assisting in the long-term outcome of the game.

Authors Note

Those familiar with the Cthulhu Mythos will realise that Xnaaki (pronounced Zen-a-Key) is in fact a unique Great Old One. Based on Ramsey Campbell's 'Glaaki', (details of which are in the Call of Cthulhu rule book), it too uses Servants to achieve its goals. Xnaaki and Glaaki may or may not be of the same origin, perhaps having come into existence in a similar time and space.

The motivations for creating a unique Great Old One are three fold; first, Glaaki is located in the Severn Valley, while many campaigns are set in Lovecraft country (although there is no reason why, with a little work, this adventure could not be moved to another location); second, some players may have read 'The Inhabitant of the Lake' (Ramsey Campbell's fantastic Glaaki story); and finally as an example of how it is possible to use traditional Mythos entities in new ways.

Some background information, which is provided later in the adventure, describes Xnaaki's appearance and capabilities, while through out the scenario a great deal of background is given to the Xnaaki cult.

Introduction

The Investigators are called upon individually, during the business hours of Friday the 20th of August, 1920. The visitor is one Miles Booth, the butler of Henry DuPont.

The following is a narrative overview of what Booth has to say to the Investigators.

The man introduces himself as Mr Booth. He is well dressed, full figured, short and almost totally bald. He speaks with a faint English accent.

He is pleasant enough and it is obvious he wishes to speak with the character in private. Once alone he advises that a friend/acquaintance of the investigator has given him their name.

He gives them little chance for questions, apologizes for the abruptness and explains that he has very limited time. His employer (whom he leaves nameless) requires some assistance with a task that will encompass tomorrow and possibly Sunday as well. This assistance is simple; his employer has just arrived in town and has several business appointments to complete over the weekend. As such, he will be unable to attend an extremely

important auction and requires others to purchase an item on his behalf. The auction could be a time consuming affair, which Booth's employer does not wish to concern himself with. Booth also explains that the auction is of a high profile, and there is a need for anonymity.

If the characters agree, Booth continues.

Booth guarantees a fee of \$150, \$30 of which he hands each of them immediately. He also gives each a business card, (see Rise Handout 1) and asks that they are at the address on the card by 9am tomorrow. Then, as suddenly as he appeared, Booth leaves.

If the characters check the address it turns out to be one of a set of three plush apartments, which are only a year old. On the outside there is no clue as to their ownership, the windows are closed and the curtains drawn. Ringing the bell draws no response and a forced entry would NOT be advisable (if the characters do decide to break into any of the apartments they will quickly be apprehended by the police).

Defining ownership of the apartment is difficult, especially seeing that the Town Records Office is probably closed by the time the characters decide to investigate. If they do have access to any real estate information, the owners turn out to be "Arkham Art Specialists", which lists a Graeme Wilson as company director (a Head Office is also listed in New York). Although the players will have no way of learning more information, the company is actually a cover used by their would-be employer, Henry DuPont, and the New York address is nothing more than a mail forwarding service.

If the characters decide to investigate the auction, some general details are available at the University. A list of lots has been published, most of which is rather uninteresting art and foreign artefacts (nothing



of particular interest stands out). However it also states that all items can be viewed between 9 and 12 tomorrow morning.

DuPont's Apartment

The following is a narrative overview of the arrival of the Investigators at the address on the business card the next morning.

The apartments on Walnut Street are modern additions to this quiet back street. All three apartments share a secure lobby and are all of a similar design - the street frontage is new and attractive but nothing particularly excessive. The communal lobby has slate floors, mailbox access, a side table, coat stand and a rather bland painting, while the apartment doors are solid oak, with simple gold numbering.

The characters are not kept waiting long after ringing the bell, with Booth answering the door and ushering them inside. From the main hall stairs can be seen leading to the second floor, while behind Booth an open door leads to a dining room and a small kitchen.

Booth leads them to a study and offers each a seat amongst a variety of comfortable leather chairs and couches. The manservant remains standing and introduces those who are yet to be acquainted. After all the introductions are completed he excuses himself, leaving the room to give the characters a moment to talk amongst themselves.

Booth soon returns with a tray of hot coffee, placing it on a sideboard before offering each character a drink.

At 9:15 exactly another man enters the room, ending the polite, but awkward pleasantness. Younger than Booth, he is a stark pale figure with his slim frame dressed in a fine suit. Although his spectacles add a few years, most would hazard a guess that he is still in his late twenties.

With a surprisingly pleasant smile and quiet voice he begins.

"Good morning and may I introduce myself... My name is Henry DuPont, owner of the Steeplin County Mill."

He pauses for a moment. "As Miles here has already stated, I wish to employ you to purchase an item rather precious to me."

DuPont then explains the task at hand.

The group is to attend an auction being held by a group of foreign art collectors at the Miskatonic University Exhibit Museum. The majority of the works to be sold are of little value and interest to him, however he does require one item, the final auction piece, lot

number 27. This is an 18-inch statue made from finely crafted stone and inlaid metal. About 100 years old, it is worth approximately \$1500 and depicts Fredric DuPont, Henry's great grandfather. The statue is of obvious historical importance to the DuPont family and Henry is determined to purchase it.

Unfortunately neither Booth nor himself can attend the auction as it is necessary that they are not observed in Arkham. He explains that there is nothing sinister about this situation, simply that other parties must believe that both Henry and Booth are still at their estate in Steeplin county (a small area to the north-west of Arkham).

The other party Henry refers to will also have an agent at the auction who may bid for the statue. However Henry is aware that this person will have only \$2000 available, so he will ensure that the Investigators have \$3000.

As such the terms of employment are quite simple, the characters will out-bid this other agent (and any others) for the statue, while Booth and Henry return home unnoticed. The Investigators are then required to travel to Steeplin Valley by train (an eight hour trip) and from there on to the DuPont homestead to return the statue (and any remaining auction funds).

As the clock nears 11.30, Henry wraps up the conversation by shaking each Investigator with one hand and passes an envelope to them in the other, stating that upon the return of the statue they will each receive a similar amount. He then abruptly exits and leaves Booth to answer any questions the party may have.

In the envelope is a train ticket to Steeplin County, \$60 cash and the address of the DuPont estate. An additional envelope is handed to one of the characters. This contains the \$3000 dollars, in \$100 dollar bills, to be used at the auction.

Booth is pleasant enough, but cannot divulge much more in the way of information, other than advising the characters that the auction begins at 12 sharp.

A successful Persuade or Fasttalk roll however will have Booth disclose some or all of the following.

The Statue's Origins. Supposedly destroyed in a fire more nearly a century ago, Mr DuPont has only recently become aware that the statue was actually stolen and the fire used to cover up the theft. A discreet investigation has already confirmed that the current owner is not the thief.

The Cloak and Dagger routine. The original thieves of the statue are long gone, however Henry is worried about his company's board of directors. The DuPont's have owned and run the State's most successful lumber mill for more than a century, but with the recent passing of Henry's father, he believes

certain members of the company's board will soon try and take over the business. He has kept up the guise of illness for several months now, which has allowed them to leave their home under the notion of attending specialists, while they have worked to secure the Mill (he is in town ostensibly to finalise details with Arkham lawyers). The timing is critical as within the week Henry will move against the board and reclaim the company. The auction of the statue is perhaps not a coincidence as Henry knows an agent from the board will be present at the auction. He cannot, however, afford to let his deception slip at this crucial time and, as the Investigators have no connection to DuPont, are therefore perfect to acquire the statue on his behalf.

The Auction

The following should be made aware to the characters as they enter the auction.

The auction begins at twelve o'clock on the dot and at least one character needs to be registered to bid in by 11:45.

It is to be held in a small room on the first floor of the University Exhibit Museum, which itself is located on the corner opposite the Liberal Arts Building in West College Street.

About 25 people are present at the auction, most in small groups of two or three. These are typically scholars or art dealers interested in various items for a multitude of reasons.

Several auction staff are present to sign one of the characters in as a bidder (they allow only one person from each group to bid during the auction) and record the details of the groups bond (the cash the party has on hand).

If the characters arrive before 11:45 they will have time to view the statue, which sits in a dusty display case at one end of the auction room.

The effigy of Fredric DuPont is carved from a very dark stone and inlaid with a silvery metal. He has a sombre expression and carries a heavy tome under his left arm (a symbol on its cover is obscured). The other hand holds a large axe, the head of which rests beside his right leg. His left leg is raised, resting on a fallen tree – one you assume from the pose he has just chopped it down. Very faint symbols can be seen around the base of the statue, although through the murky display case few other details can be made out.

If the case is removed, or once the players have purchased the statue, the following additional description can be given. (Skill rolls may be necessary to make out some of the more interesting details).

The inlaid metal is silver with platinum bands worked into the surface of the base.

The stone is not identifiable, a type of marble or obsidian perhaps? Regardless it is a heavy and solid piece of worked rock.

Xnaaki Spells

During this adventure some of the adversaries have access to spells granted to them through their connection to Xnaaki.

Copy Image: This spell requires the target is alive (minimum 1 Hit Point) and restrained for the duration of a short ritual (10 minutes). It costs 1d6 Magic Points and 1d8 sanity, as well as 1d4 Hit Points at the conclusion of the spell. The caster and target cannot be of different races nor more than 4 points different in Size.

Once successfully completed the caster takes on the facial appearance of the target. The caster can retain the image for 2d3 hours and then must make a successful Luck roll for every hour there after to maintain the target's image. The caster must remain conscious to continue the spell, which will also fail if the caster takes more than 5 Hit points damage in one hit. Once the spell fails the caster's appearance returns to normal and both the caster and target take 1d4 damage.

Xnaaki Blindness Spell: The Blindness spell requires a Resistance Roll by the target, matching their POW versus the caster's POW (plus any additional magic points expended). The base cost for casting the spell is 2 Magic Points (and 1d6 Sanity), with an additional point for each additional target (plus any additional points added to the casters POW total for the resistance check).

Targets who fail their Resistance Roll, receive damage as per the percentage they failed by.

Failure of <10% = Blinded for 1d3 Combat rounds

Failure by 11 - 20% = 1d2 Damage + Blinded for 1d6 Combat rounds

Failure by 21 - 40% = 1d3 Damage + Blinded for 2d6 Combat rounds

Failure > 41% = 1d3+1 Damage + Blinded for 3d6 Combat rounds

This Blindness is more than simply a lack of vision, rather the targets are also subject to seeing horrible visions of Xnaaki. Additionally for every two rounds blinded (and conscious) the target loses one point of Sanity (to a maximum of 5). In addition each time a target fails a Resistance Roll they receive 1 point of Cthulhu Mythos skill from the visions they receive as a result.

If a target is blinded for more than 10 combat rounds they are knocked unconscious for 1d3 hours.

Small pale gems, sapphires, have been inlaid as eyes. The quality of the statue's craftsmanship is good even if Fredric's features are not very detailed, suggesting perhaps that the statue was sculpted quickly.

It weighs about 25-30lbs and is base heavy with a particularly solid feel. One would hazard a guess that if it were dropped it would chip rather than break or shatter.

There are four rows of symbols repeated around the base of the statue, each row pressed directly into a one inch platinum band.

After detailed examination it is revealed that there are in fact eight different symbols depicted, each of which is repeated many times on the four rows. Each symbol is about 1/2 an inch in size, and of similar looking shaped beetles or bugs (whether these are real insects or not cannot be discovered without weeks of research), but they do seem as if added for artistic rather than representative value.

The artisan mark on the bottom of the statue is, surprisingly, of an Arkham jeweller.

The auction starts quickly, and the first 20 items are bid on and sold after about an hour and a half. At this point the following should be read aloud:

As a successful bidder moves up to claim item 20, an older aristocratic type woman near you shrieks in terror.

This woman has discovered her miniature poodle is now little more than a carcass on a leash. Screaming she scrambles to the end of the row, jerking the leash which is still wrapped around her wrist, resulting in the bloody dog body flying up and onto the people behind her. Viewing this ghastly scene the characters should make Sanity Checks losing 0/1 points.

The death of the dog is the result of a spell cast by the leader of the rival party DuPont spoke about, Sheriff Wayne Coleburne. It is his plan to minimise the number of people present at the auction when the statue is finally offered.

The disruption takes about 20 minutes to clean up and as result of the mess only 6 other bidders remain in the auction room. These are; a group of 3 men who talk amongst themselves in hushed tones, a man and woman who seem to be having some kind of argument, and a man who sits alone near the back of the room.

The single man is Sheriff Coleburne.

SHERIFF WAYNE COLEBURNE, Steeplin Sheriff and Head Disciple of the Cult of Xnaaki, Age 38

STR	16	EDU	14	Know	70%
CON	14	POW	17	Luck	85%
SIZ	18	INT	16	Idea	70%
DEX	11	APP	12	HP	16
SAN	35				

Damage Bonus: +1d4

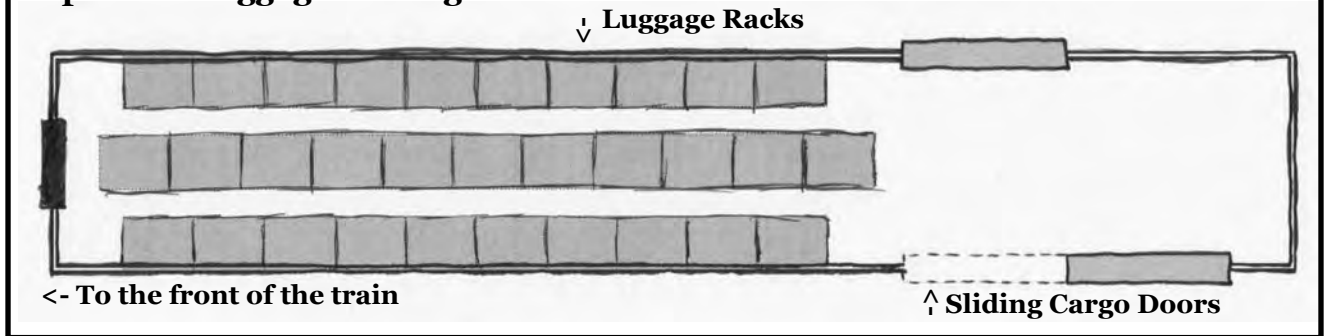
Weapons: *Fist*, 60%, damage 1d3+db

Flash Pouch, 45%, damage 1+1d6 rounds of blindness

.32 Revolver, 40%, damage 1d8

Skills: Accounting 20%, Bargain 40%, Cthulhu Mythos 20%, Credit Rating 20% (80% in Steeplin County), Fast Talk 60%, Law 85%, Library Use 20%, Listen 70%, Occult 50%,

Map of the Luggage Carriage



Persuade 70%, Pistol 40%, Psychology 60%,
Spot Hidden 70%, Fist 50%, Throw 45%.

Spells: *Xnaaki Blindness*, see the Xnaaki Spells sidebar.

Enthrall Victim, as per the Call of Cthulhu rules.

Mind Blast, as per the Call of Cthulhu rules.

Possessions: .32 pistol with 8 rounds of ammunition, 2 Flash Pouches, Sheriff's Badge and Handcuffs.

He is a large man, big enough to stand out in a crowd, with a strong, physically fit appearance. He wears tidy clothes, complimented with a heavy leather jacket. Beside him lays a small leather briefcase.

Characters rolling a successful Idea Roll will note that he has not bid on any other items at the auction.

The bidding for the last few items proceeds without further delay and at last the final item, the statue comes up for offer.

Only the Investigators and Sheriff Coleburne bid on the statue, which has an opening price of one thousand dollars. The Sheriff will bid in amounts of \$100 up to his limit of two thousand, which will mean, of course, that the characters will eventually out bid him. At the end of proceedings he is naturally unhappy at being unable to out bid the Investigators and storms out of the auction room.

If the characters decide to follow the Sheriff (they will need to leave at least one person behind to sign and pay for the statue), he is observed leaving the University grounds by car. He does not pay any attention to the Investigators unless stopped, at which he will avoid any question and try to leave as soon as possible.

Once Coleburne leaves the auction he travels to the Arkham Post Office to place a telephone call to his Deputy, who is located the train station on the lookout for Booth and DuPont. During this conversation the Sheriff advises his Deputy to follow the characters, surmising that they are heading to Steeplin and DuPont's estate. He then returns to his car and heads back to Steeplin County himself.

The Train Trip

At the conclusion of the auction the Investigators will no doubt head to the train station and board the next train to Steeplin County. The train they catch is a four-carriage steam locomotive, with 2 passenger carriages, a dining car (situated between the two passenger cars) and a luggage car (at the rear). The train is fairly quiet, with very few passengers on board, and as such, the characters will have little trouble in acquiring a cabin in either of the carriages.

As the train leaves Arkham, heading north, the scenery quickly turns to gentle hills that, while nice to look at are of no real interest to the group. For a period of the trip there is steady rain, but this passes by the time the train arrives at Newburyport. Here people get on and off, before the train pulls out of the station and heads northwest towards Steeplin and beyond.

At all times during the trip the dining carriage has between six and a dozen people seated in the lounge areas, although while dinner is being served (between 5:30pm and 7:00pm) there is a constant flow of people to and from the tables.

At some point after 7.00pm Booth contacts the characters by walking past their table (or seats) and dropping a note. Without a word he continues on towards the back of the train.

The note reads "*Meet in the luggage carriage in 5 minutes...trust no one but DuPont*"

It is dusk as the characters enter the luggage car. Here they find Booth at the far end of the carriage struggling with another man. The large freight doors are open on one side of the car and before the characters can intervene Booth is thrown out of the carriage into the murky sunset.

This man is the Sheriff's Deputy, Carl Grietski, who is after the statue. He will use his pistol to try and get it from the Investigators, or if they have hidden it, will take one of them hostage to guide him to it. If Carl is confronted he will use his flash pouch and attempt to recover the statue while the party is blinded.

If he does acquire the statue, the train will conveniently stop and he will head for a road. In this case the Investigators will have to pursue him on foot.

This confrontation is intended to help build the mysterious nature of the scenario - not kill the characters. Carl is little more than a bumbling idiot, although an armed one. Only foolishly gung-ho or particularly unlucky Investigators should be seriously injured during this encounter.

DEPUTY CARL GRIETSKI, Bumbling Disciple of Xnaaki, Age 28

STR	15	EDU	11	Know	55%
CON	14	POW	8	Luck	40%
SIZ	13	INT	8	Idea	40%
DEX	16	APP	13	HP	14
SAN	35				

Damage Bonus: +1d4

Weapons: *Fist*, 50%, damage 1d3+db

Flash Pouch, 45%, damage 1+1d6 rounds of blindness

.32 Revolver, 40%, damage 1d8

Skills: Bargain 40%, Cthulhu Mythos 15%, Credit Rating 15% (60% in Steeplin County), Fast Talk 50%, Law 75%, Library Use 20%, Listen 70%, Occult 20%, Persuade 50%, Spot Hidden 70%, Fist 50%, Pistol 40%, Throw 45%.

Possessions: .32 pistol with 16 rounds of ammunition, 1 Flash Pouch, Deputy Sheriff Badge

If the characters get a chance to examine Carl (or his body) at any point they can't help but notice a small tattoo/brand of a spiky beetle on his chest. This same symbol is one of the main characters on the base of the statue.

The Train Station

When the train eventually pulls into Steeplin Valley station it is nearing 11pm. With heavy cloud cover there is no sign of the moon, which leaves the small town in almost total darkness. It has rained recently but, despite this, the air is humid and muggy.

The train station itself is little more than a raised landing with a roof, a tiny office and a block of toilets.

Six other people get off the train with the party, although they are all met and in small groups disappear into the town. As the characters discuss their plan of action read the following:

You are all very surprised to encounter Booth at the train station. He is a little ragged but alive – bruises and cuts are visible on his arms and face and while he is still wearing his suit trousers, his shirt is torn and

he no longer has his jacket. As he walks towards you, you notice he may well have injured his legs or ribs, as his movement is stiff and slow.

Each player must make a Resistance Roll, using their Intelligence (INT) versus Booth's POW of 11 (although to minimise tipping off the players you may want take these rolls on their behalf). If any player succeeds they notice Booth appears to be more than just a little shaken up, although they can't quite put their finger on what is so unusual about him.

Booth explains he was able to make it to the road after being thrown from the train. He also states that, as was planned, another of DuPont's agents was trailing the train and picked him up. From that location the trip by car was actually quicker into town than the one taken by the train. If questioned in depth about any of the previous meetings between Booth and the party he is at a loss, but will beg off, blaming the fall from the train.

This man is in fact not Booth at all, but a Copy Imaged Servant of Xnaaki. The Double's goal is of course to acquire the statue before it can be delivered to DuPont. (If the group lost the statue to Deputy Carl, the Double Booth will still appear, but with the intention of killing the party).

If the Double is forced to drop the guise or a party member gets close to uncovering the truth an Idea Roll should be made. Success and they realise the man in front of them is not truly Booth (an immediate Sanity Roll of 1/1d4 is required by anyone revealing the truth). Failure and the character continues to have the feelings of singular unease about Booth.

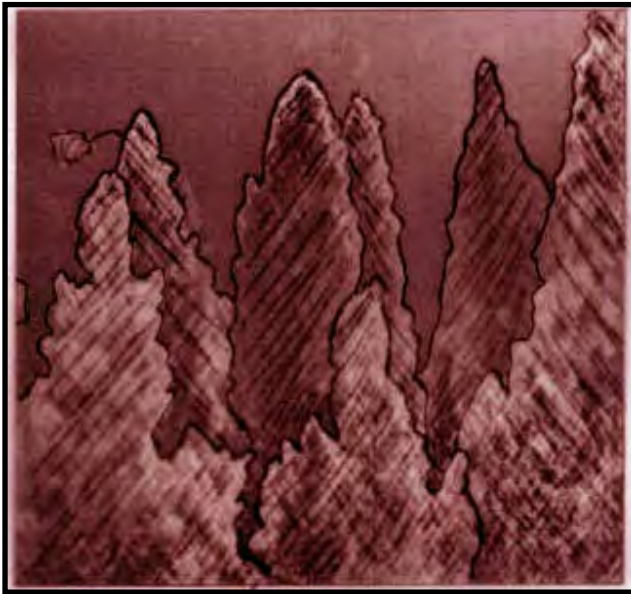
If the Booth Double fools the party, he says:

"We are still being pursued, the Deputy's master won't be so easy to overcome and we should leave immediately. I have a car in the lot behind us."

There is no sign of the 'agent' that helped 'Booth' in the lone Buick and if asked 'Booth' states that he has already gone, on his way to advise DuPont of the situation.

The Double then plans on getting the characters to drive up to the DuPont homestead (he claims he is too sore to drive). On the way he will use the spell Xnaaki Blindness to force them off the road before attempting to dispose of them.

If the Booth Double is forced to confront the group at the platform he will attempt to use the Enthral Victim spell before things get out of hand. Then, if he can get the statue, he will try and escape, possibly casting Xnaaki Blindness in an attempt to stun any pursuers.



BOOTH DOUBLE, Disguised Servant

STR 17 INT 13

CON 22 POW 17

SIZ 13 DEX 8

Move 5 (slow and disjointed)

HP 17 MP 14 (remaining)

Weapons: *Fist* 60%, damage 1d3+1d4db.

Dagger 40%, damage 1d6+1d4db+Poison
(POT = 10 The effects of render the victim unconscious for 1d4+1 hours)

Armour: none

Sanity Loss: 1/1d4 to discover Servants true identity,
1/1d8 to see a Servant of Xnaaki.

Spells: *Copy Image*, see the Xnaaki Spells sidebar
Xnaaki Blindness, see the Xnaaki Spells sidebar.

Enthrall Victim, as per the Call of Cthulhu rules.

Mind Blast, as per the Call of Cthulhu rules.

Steeplin Valley County

Assuming the party either take the car with Booth, or discover it parked in the station's lot (it's the only one there), they can continue onto the DuPont Estate.

Steeplin township has a population nearing 4000, although its main street is nothing in much to behold. It has eight or nine main blocks, with highlights including a police station, post office, library, two churches and a variety of general businesses. The towns back streets are mainly residential. Oddly there is not a single car seen on the streets, and only a minimum of street lighting. In fact, the only building seemingly occupied appears to be the town police station.

The DuPont estate is located up the valley, directly

off Steeplin Road, near the Mill. The road itself is well maintained up until the Mill (about 10 minutes drive), although the estate is another 15 minutes along a rough unsealed track.

DuPont's Estate

As you approach the estate you become aware that the cloud cover has thickened to make the night an almost impenetrable darkness. It seems as if a fog has drifted in masking everything more than 30 feet away. A chilling wind is blowing briskly in from the south but seems unable to move the blanket of cloud.

The DuPont homestead, a large two-story building, is deathly quiet as is the forest to the west of the estate.

There are no signs of disturbance outside the house, (unless by some chance the characters come across the down power lines - see below). If the characters do search the grounds before entering the manor a successful Spot Hidden roll reveals movement in one of the upstairs windows (although what exactly is moving can't be made out through the darkness and fog). Characters failing this roll instead get the eerie almost claustrophobic feeling of being watched.

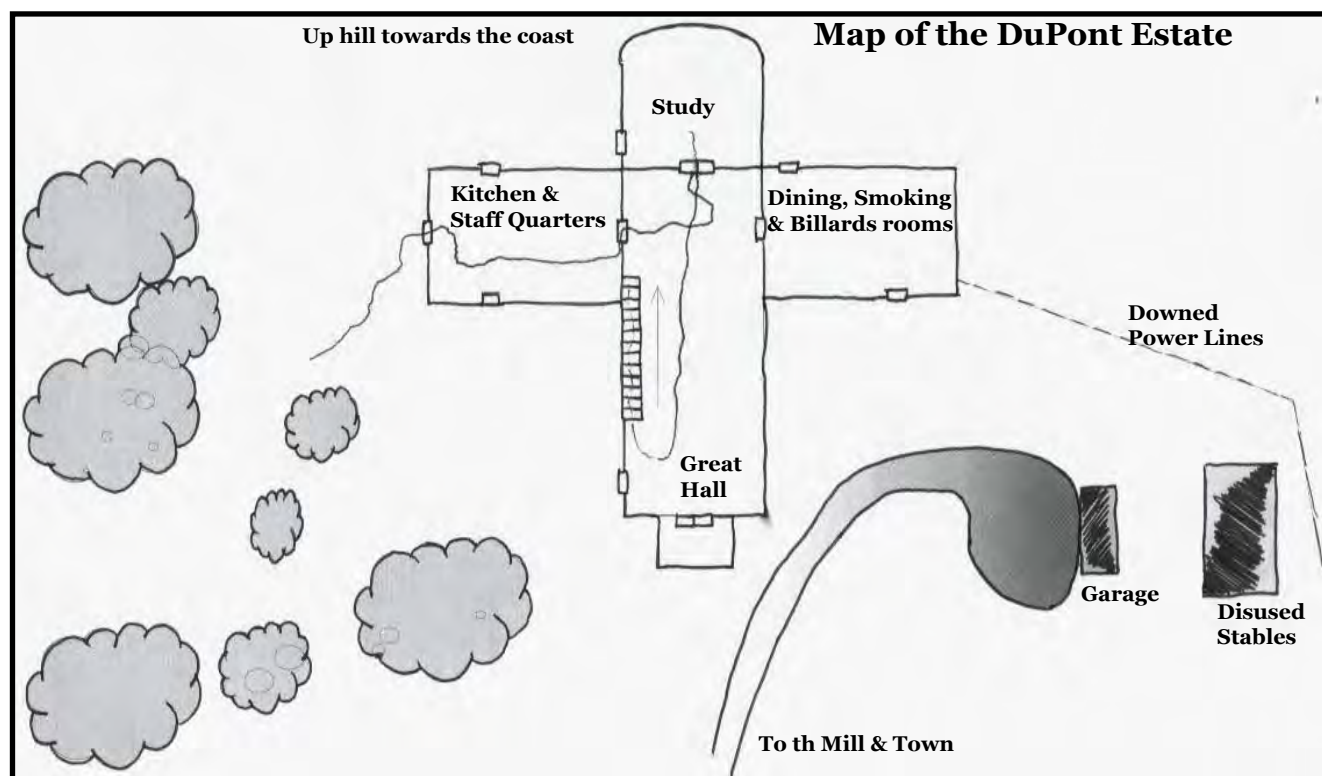
The Great Hall: It is most likely that the characters will enter the homestead through the main doors, which are not locked. Here they soon discover the first signs of trouble – the lack of power in the house (characters with no light sources are surely going to end up with bruised shins!)

The cause of the fault can be found easily enough - downed power lines, severed about 80 feet from the house.

The second sign of trouble is the large greasy footprints, which can be seen on the floor of the Great Hall, although if the Investigators are without a light source then a Spot Hidden Roll is required to notice them. These human-like prints have been made with some sort of black/green slime which reeks with odorous decay.

The prints lead upstairs, before petering out. They can however be followed back to where their owner, one of three Servants of Xnaaki, entered the homestead, through the West Wing (see the map for more details on where the footprints lead). This Servant is now upstairs in a confused state after an "incident" with DuPont.

East Wing: Characters searching the East Wing should make a Listen roll. Success and they hear movement on the floor above them. Apart from this noise there are no signs of disturbance in this part of the house with the Dining, Smoking and Billiard rooms have nothing of real interest in them.



West Wing: If searched the Investigators discover where the Servants of Xnaaki entered the building. The creatures have wandered into most of the rooms of this wing, leaving behind their tell-tale footprints throughout, although apart from these all the rooms are otherwise untouched.

UpStairs: Following the tracks upstairs becomes more difficult as they fade. The Servant upstairs is not hiding, but rather aimlessly wandering around after DuPont cast a spell on it. Currently in one of the East Wing bedrooms, it will not attack the party, rather once disturbed will attempt to flee, dropping DuPont's diary in the process (see The Diary of DuPont below for more details). If necessary the Servant will leap from a second story window to escape, and will only attack if cornered.

SERVANT OF XNAAKI, Enchanted and Confused Intruder

STR	12	INT	14
CON	22	POW	13
SIZ	13	DEX	3
Move	5 (slow and disjointed)		
HP	11	MP	8 (remaining)

Weapons: *Fist* 40%, damage 1d3+1d4db.
Dagger 40%, damage 1d6+1d4db.

Armour: none

Sanity Loss: 1/1d8 to see a Servant of Xnaaki.

Spells: *Xnaaki Blindness*, see the Xnaaki Spells sidebar.

The Study

Assuming the characters follow the footprints backwards through the house, they will be lead to the Study door, where they immediately notice a greasy hand print on the handle. Entry into this room from the Great Hall is difficult however, as a corpse of one of the Servants is lying against the other side. If a Strength Resistance Roll versus the corpses Size of 14 succeeds, the door can be forced open.

You wrench the door inwards with as much force as you can muster and after considerable effort it shifts suddenly and slides inwards.

It is immediately apparent what the obstruction is – a putrid skeletal corpse is slumped in the doorway. A large ragged hole has been blasted in its chest blackening what little flesh is left around the wound. The rest of the corpse is an unnatural greenish colour, its long fingers twisted as if suffering from some sort of hellish arthritis. It is naked, its withered genitals exposed.

As you watch, a little blood and a thick green fluid have drains from the wound into a sickly pool around the corpse.

All characters viewing the dead Servant should make a Sanity Check losing 1/1d4 Sanity. From the Great Hall, little can be seen in the Study – although it is obvious there has been some sort of serious disruption inside. Anyone stepping inside will immediately to see the following.

Stepping over the rancid pool around the corpse you enter the Study. A nauseating smell hangs in the air... death, blood and charred flesh. Glancing back you see the inside of the study doors are blackened and splattered with the innards of the corpse. Furniture, books and papers have been scattered violently around the room. Between you and a large desk is a second corpse, far more seriously damaged than the first, now little more than a charred skeleton. A faint stream of smoke still slowly drifts from its incinerated remains, although there is no sign as to what has inflicted the assault. It also has an unnatural appearance, too thin, too tall, too twisted to be human.

All players viewing the second Servant should make a Sanity Check or lose 1/1d2 Sanity.

Henry DuPont is also in the study, barely conscious, lying on the floor behind the desk. He is almost in an as bad a state as the two corpses, his left arm, from the elbow down, is missing and is bleeding heavily (he has applied a simple tourniquet with his jacket, but this has done little to stem the flow). He also has a cut scalp and a serious deep stab wound in his stomach. A number of cuts and scrapes are also about his body but are minor in comparison.

DuPont requires an immediate First Aid or Medical attention to prevent him from falling unconscious. A success stabilises him, but the medic will realise his wounds are most likely terminal – he has perhaps a few hours if not moved. The nearest hospital outside Steeplin is probably Concord, but if Dupont is moved he will shriek in agony and beg to be left where he is.

Beside DuPont is a handful of tattered and now bloody papers. This manuscript is in a spidery hand comprised of both English and Arabic text (they cannot be read without good light and a bit of concentration).

Even if the characters can't stabilise DuPont – he will speak to them for a moment before passing out. He is barely coherent and obviously in shock, a situation which Keepers can use to their advantage to avoid answering questions and to be generally mysterious.

It takes DuPont a moment or two to recognise who you are. He coughs a grim laugh before saying *"You made it, excellent. Do you have the statue?"*

Yes they have the statue. *"Thank god... at first light you must take it and this manuscript (he points to the papers beside him) and get out of Steeplin".*

No, they have lost the statue. *"Mother of god – whatever you do it must be recovered...before... before they are able to evoke its power and release the demon".*

DuPont insists there is another Servant in the homestead, stating it must be killed before he will talk

further.

Once the servant is stopped, DuPont will advise the characters they will be safe in the house, that the disciples of the demon are tonight performing rituals, a task that will take all night. DuPont is obviously weak and throughout the rest of the night he slips in and out of consciousness. When awake he rambles about the situation.

"Within the Statue is the 'Stone of Xnalku' – an item that can be used to evoke many different rites... The most sinister ritual will unleash a horrifying creature from its age old prison...The demon, Xnaaki, has been trapped in the Steeplin Lake for a millenium – banished by another of his kind an aeon ago... Xnaaki is weak now but if ever the stone and the beast are re-united ..." DuPont trails off.

"There are only a handful of madmen crazy enough to worship Xnaaki...the head disciple is the Sheriff of this very town...he has little in the way of followers... but with that damned stone... Xnaaki will invade the minds of all but the strongest".

"Destroying the stone is the only way to secure Xnaaki in its prison ...I only wish I could live to see it myself...a ritual is among these papers... to fail is to condemn the world".

Morning After

Whatever the group decide to do next, they should be aware that it is the middle of a dark foreboding night and any plans they concoct should wait until at least first light (Keepers should remind them of this - they are not supermen).

If the party still holds the statue, they can only watch as DuPont's condition gets worse and despite their best efforts he passes away painlessly shortly after 5am.

As per DuPont's advice, the best course of action would be to head into town at sunrise and from there make their way back to Arkham, manuscript in hand (To help facilitate this DuPont has a car in the garage). There is, of course, the possibility they may wish to do some investigating in Steeplin, in which case see **Steeplin County Investigation** below. Finally they may decide to confront the Sheriff and the cult directly (Keepers should discourage this option), although this is not the best course of action, considering the Sheriff's position, the lack of solid information and other avenues of investigation still open to the characters.

If the party doesn't have the statue they will need to steal it back from the Sheriff before heading out of town. DuPont will make a dramatic plea to the characters to recover the statue, pointing out that the

Sheriff will have it under lock and key (DuPont is able to provide an address for the Sheriff's home - he lives opposite the Mill on a small farm). He will also explain that Xnaaki can only be contacted on the new or full moon and with tonight being a full moon, the cult will have to wait at least two weeks before they can use the Stone of Xnalku. DuPont clings to life long enough to supply any required information before passing away.

Recovering the Statue

If, at any point of the adventure, the statue is stolen, it soon becomes apparent that it is the key to a successful conclusion to this investigation.

If the cult has acquired the statue it will be secured at the Sheriff's residence until the moon is right for the next ritual.

The farm is typical of many rural holdings, well maintained and private (it is surrounded by trees). It is less than a mile from the Mill and, at all times of the day, noise from the plant filters through the trees, giving the house and land an eerie feeling as if it is somehow disconnected from the real world.

The Sheriff is usually home between 6pm and 8:30am each day, and will otherwise be on duty at the Sheriff's office or on business around town. The house, a large single story ranch style home, is guarded during the day by his two dogs. The two dogs should be treated as Wolves (see the Call of Cthulhu Rulebook) and will fiercely defend the house. Note that gunfire outside the house will more than likely draw the attention of the nearby Mill workers.

There is little of interest inside the house and not surprisingly no evidence can be found linking the Sheriff to the cult. Once the house is searched however, a trap door can be found in the Study leading to a hidden basement.

This basement is little more than a single small room with dirt floor and walls. The only objects of interest in the room is a small shrine (on which the statue can be seen) and a puddle of muddy water next to it, where the recent rain has seeped in and formed a pool.

A Servant of Xnaaki protects the statue and is resting in this muddy pool. If the pool is disturbed, or if the characters move within a foot of the shrine, the Servant arises shrieking and attacks the nearest investigator.

SERVANT OF XNAAKI, Guardian of the Shrine

STR	17	INT	17
CON	30	POW	16
SIZ	13	DEX	5
Move	5 (slow and disjointed)		

HP 17 MP 16

Weapons: *Fist* 40%, damage 1d3+1d4db.

Armour: none

Sanity Loss: 1/1d8 to see a Servant of Xnaaki.

Spells: *Xnaaki Blindness*, see the Xnaaki Spells sidebar.

Mind Blast, as per the Call of Cthulhu rules.

Steeplin County Investigation

If the characters decide to do any investigation in Steeplin they will have access to the following information. However by lingering in town they will also risk drawing attention to themselves, especially if they are spotted on the street. If located, the Sheriff will attempt to arrest them and characters who get themselves caught are destined to become the next Servants of Xnaaki.

The Library. With a successful Library Use Roll a book on Steeplin's history can be found. In this there is some information about the design of the DuPont Statue and its maker.

Commissioned by Fredric DuPont and sculpted by Harvard Haywright, an Arkham jeweller, the book also mentions the symbols on the statue, apparently they refer to eight different Arabic religious rituals, although further details are not provided.

The library has no references to either Xnaaki or the stone of Xnalku.

The Mill. Mill workers and administrators happily talk about general Mill issues and their dislike for DuPont. Almost everyone is of the opinion that he is trying to run the town into the ground and might even be responsible for some of the town's missing persons.

The Steeplin Express. The local paper is the only place with any real records about people who have gone missing in the area (apart from these reports the Sheriff has carefully covered his tracks). In total there have been 14 missing persons in the last eight years, all in or around Steeplin Lake.

Time Marches On

The smartest approach is to leave Steeplin and return to Arkham to investigate the diary and manuscript. However during the next two weeks the following events occur:

The death of DuPont, Booth, Deputy Carl and anyone else makes headlines, even as far south as Arkham.

If the characters do not lay low Coleburne will have

agents locate them and attempt to get the statue from them (these agents will be similar to Deputy Carl in ability).

Two days after the events in Steeplin the DuPont homestead is burnt to the ground. DuPont's funeral, scheduled for a week after the fateful evening, goes ahead despite the arson. DuPont's next of kin arrive from England soon afterwards and by the time the characters return to the valley, plans are already under way to sell the Mill.

Interpreting the manuscript pages takes four or five days of study (see Investigation of the Artifacts below) and should allow for injured characters to regain a few Hit Points.

Investigation of the Artifacts

The Diary of DuPont

Approximately 90 pages in length, it is not what one would call a conventional diary, rather it discusses the DuPont family lineage and history. (See the **The Diary of DuPont** sidebar).

The Manuscript Pages

The seven pages making up the manuscript are in physically poor condition. Written in a combination of English and Arabic the handwriting is in a particularly erratic style, using a dark red and suspiciously blood-like ink. The pages are stiff and inflexible as if made of some sort of treated fabric or hide.

Skimming the Manuscript. It is obvious that the author is a madman as the manuscript often jumps between English and Arabic, frequently mid-sentence. There are references to many different cults, religions and Great Old Ones in the text, but more specifically, several different rituals or spells can be made out.

Origins of the Manuscript Pages. Any further investigation into the origins of the text requires an adequate library (such as the Restricted Section of the Miskatonic University library) and a successful Library Use roll.

The pages are from the Book of Al Arkmar'b, which is about 500 years old. Essentially this text is a poor translation of several rituals and spells written by an even older Arabic madman. The full book is supposed to cover a variety of Mythos subjects, although the pages on hand specifically refer to Xnaaki, its Servants and several related rituals. According to the few tomes that make reference to the Book of Al Arkmar'b, only one copy of this manuscript exists.

A further Library Use Roll can be made to research the cults, disciples and history of Xnaaki.

A cult existed in 1050ad that had made reference to the worship of 'The Banished' evil god - many details of which fit the description of Xnaaki. This

The Diary of DuPont

1750. Fredric DuPont is born to Martha and Alfred DuPont in the colony of New York.

1780. At age 30, Fredric travels to the Middle East and opens a successful trading business. About this time his parents die and he is left the family fortune.

1790. Fredric becomes involved in the establishment of a gentlemen club, primarily to assist in his trading. This club however has a much more sinister heart.

1800. Fredric begins preparations to return to America as tension amongst the club's more powerful members builds.

1801. The cult is disbanded and Fredric leaves for Washington D.C. with the leader of the cult.

1802. DuPont arrives home in America without the cult leader is dead (although the Stone of Xnalku, the cult's most powerful artifact is now in his possession).

1809. Fredric has spends 7 years traveling with the Stone of Xnalku as his guide, finally settling in the Steeplin Valley.

1810. Construction begins on the DuPont mill.

1811. The Church of Xnaaki is established.

1812. The Church is closed to keep the Mill workers happy.

1815. DuPont marries and turns over a new leaf, abandoning his pursuit of Xnaaki. The statue is made to hide the Stone of Xnalku.

1821. Fredric has his first and only child, Robert.

1826. Fredric DuPont dies in hunting accident.

1842. Robert comes of age and takes ownership of the DuPont Mill.

1844. Robert marries.

1847. The statue and a few other items of jewelry are stolen from the DuPont estate and a fire is used to cover the theft. The thieves sell the stolen items on foreign black markets.

1855. Mathew DuPont is born.

1885. Mathew marries and takes ownership of the Mill. The same year Robert dies.

1889. Henry DuPont is born.

1910. The manuscript pages are discovered by a Steeplin town deputy. With the script he reforms the cult which slowly grows in numbers and influence.

1916. Mathew is killed by the cult when he refuses to join.

1917. Henry takes ownership of the DuPont Mill and quickly learns the truth behind his fathers death.

1918. Henry begins researching a way to stop the cult and destroy Xnaaki. He also begins to plan the relocation of the Mill and the local population away from the Lake.

1919. The Stone of Xnalku is located and Henry arranges for its sale in Arkham. Closing the mill is proving more difficult than initially planned.

1920. The cult begins to fight the move, as does the Mill's board, although for very different reasons. The stone arrives in Arkham ahead of schedule.

The last entry in the dairy is on the 1st of August, in which Henry states heplans to hire a number of 'trustworthy souls' to acquire the statue...

cult led by an Arab was based in England's Severn Valley. No further details are given, although the cults destruction is later mentioned as taking place after locals claimed a demon had visited them in their sleep.

In 1790ad more evidence of a Xnaaki cult is recorded, this time in Egypt. Again its members are said to have disappeared suddenly.

A reference can be found concerning the Steeplin Valley and a 'Church of Xnaaki'. Opened in 1811, it is described as a place of free worship until, with the influx of Christian workers to the area forced it was forced to close its doors. Further details on what was worshipped in the church are not mentioned, although suggestions are made that one Fredric DuPont, a town father, was actively involved in the worship there.

Rituals in the Manuscript Pages. There are four rituals scattered amongst the pages of the manuscript, each of which must be translated and studied. Each spell or ritual takes approximately a day to translate, read and absorb. (See the **Rituals from the Manuscript** sidebar).

On the seventh page of the text is the beginning of a very different spell and, although the opening sentences are in English, the spell itself is actually written in an Arabic code. Both a successful Arabic and Mathematics rolls are required to crack this code, although if translated the reader discovers that the ritual is incomplete, instead hinting that it is for opening a gateway or a portal to another 'world'. No more can be learned without the other pages from the manuscript - which of course are not present.

During the translation of the manuscript the group will no doubt uncover that the rituals can only be enacted on a night with either a new or full moon. A quick calculation can be made to discover that when the adventure began it was a new moon, meaning that even after spending a week translating the rituals, they may have several more days to wait before attempting to raise Xnaaki. This is of course is a convenient opportunity to acquire weapons and formulate a plan of attack.

The Statue

Before DuPont died he would have advised the party that the Stone of Xnalku is in the statue, so before they will be able to perform the final ritual, the Bain of Xnalku, they will need to free it.

It is possible to take it to the jewellery store where it was made, Haywrights in Arkham. Also there is the possibility that they will investigate at the jewellers for further clues.

The original sculptor is long dead (the statue being made over a hundred years ago) but his son Avery

Rituals from the Manuscript

Call of Xnaaki

Language: English

Cost: Nil

Required Casting Time: 3 mins

A successful English roll is required to read and understand this ritual. The Call of Xnaaki is a simple chant, which, when cast under a full or new moon at midnight on the shores of Xnaaki's prison, calls forth the Great One from its slumber. Xnaaki will surface in approximately 5 minutes.

Restrain Xnaaki Servant

Language: English & Arabic

Cost: 0 - 2 Magic Points

Requires Casting Time: 1 Combat Round

Spell Duration: 1 hour

Requires one read English roll (to understand the ritual purpose) and a further read Arabic roll to complete the translation. This spell restrains all Servants of Xnaaki from coming with 5 feet of the caster, although the it has no effect Xnaaki nor his mortal worshippers.

Veil of Azif

Language: English & Arabic

Cost: 1d6+1 Magic Points*

Requires Casting Time: 2 -3 mins

Spell Duration: 3d6 mins

Requires one read English roll (to understand the ritual purpose) and a further read Arabic roll to complete the translation. When invoked the casters vision is masked, as if they are in a heavy thick fog (all attacks and actions should take this into account). The most important function of this spell is to allow the caster the option of expending Magic Points instead San for sanity loss.

*Sanity cost is only for the first casting, additional castings only cost 1 Sanity.

Bain of Xnalku

Language: English & Arabic

Cost: 1 Magic Point

Requires Casting Time: 1 Combat Round

Requires one read English roll (to understand the ritual purpose) and a further read Arabic roll to complete the translation. This spell allows the caster to destroy the Stone of Xnalku by making a POW Resistance Roll versus the POW Xnaaki. Multiple casters can combine POW scores to make a single resistance check against Xnaaki. Failure just enrages Xnaaki further, success results in the stone being destroyed and Xnaaki being banished back to prison... forever?

Haywright (now in his 70s) now runs the Jewellery store and has records of the statue. These confirm the general design of the piece and mention that there is an oval stone at its center.

If requested, Haywright can cut free the Stone of Xnalku, or alternatively the statue may simply be smashed to pieces. Either way the stone is unharmed.

The Stone of Xnalku

The stone is small enough to fit into the palm of your hand but weighs much more than your'd expect from a rock of this size. Its black surface is covered with faint weaving ridges, each one tainted with a subtle crimson streak.

The Veil of Azif. When seen under the veil, the stone has a much more alien appearance.

The stone appears to shift and move, the ridges turn into tiny tentacles that dart about in random directions. It has an unnatural glow and seems to emit a whimpering groan, as if it were some lame animal.

Calm Before the Storm

The characters should now have learnt three important facts:

That Xnaaki is trapped in Steeplin Lake and cannot escape without the stone of Xnalku.

That there appears to be only one way to destroy the stone – the Bain of Xnalku ritual.

The ritual must be carried out in the presence of Xnaaki.

At this stage they have two options – hide the stone or destroy it and Xnaaki.

If the characters decide to hide the stone they will discover that it has an uncanny way of being found. This option should be discouraged, in fact DuPont himself has advised against it. If they still persist with this option, further attacks by disciples of Xnaaki

should eventually either, change their minds or kill them outright.

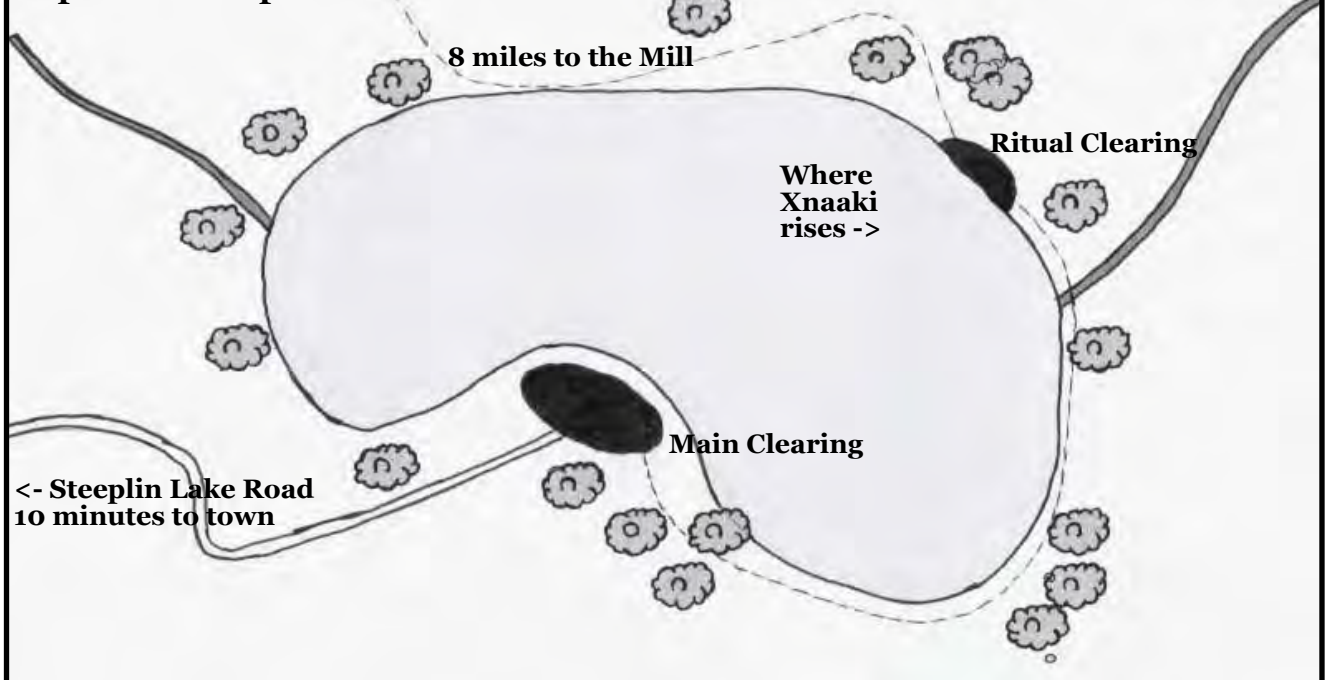
The smarter course of action is to destroy the stone. To do this all characters should learn the rituals (or at least the last three) if they hope to destroy the stone. For those who do not have skill to read Arabic, it can be translated for them, and a Read/Write English Roll made instead, although this is with a 10% penalty.

Deciding how to deal with Xnaaki and his Servants should be a simple enough decision – kill the Servants and banish Xnaaki. They can keep the Servants at bay with the Restrain ritual and the Bain of Xnalku will stop the Great Old One. The disciples, however, pose a different type of threat, one which the characters will have to think carefully about. Characters killing the disciples in cold blood or without provocation risk losing sanity.

No matter how much the characters plan and regardless of how well they deal with the Servants and disciples – Xnaaki is still a Great Old One. Its horror, magnitude and total alienness should not be down played. Most normal humans encountering Xnaaki would not only lose their minds but also their lives. The key to the climax of the scenario is in exposing the characters to the horror of Xnaaki without having them being pointless slaughtered. (Of course reckless or foolish players should be treated by the Keeper as appetisers for the Great Old One.)

Let the players hack n' slash the Servants and struggle with the disciples but most importantly they should come away with the feeling that they have not defeat Xnaaki, but rather having simply escaped it alive.

Map of the Steeplin Lake



Steeplin Lake

The characters can enter Steeplin County by train or car, however as they will need to travel undetected and also make their way to the lake, a car would be advisable.

The lake is about 10 minutes drive east of the town, on a road that arcs gently northwards. At this point the lake is only about 8 miles from the Mill.

The climatic conclusion will probably unfold by itself, the Keeper should not need to spend too much time setting the scene as either the characters will rush the ritual and try to raise Xnaaki before the cult arrives or will wait to ambush them. A few basic points to remember are.

The ritual 'Call of Xnaaki' will only work under a full or new moon.

The disciples meet every full and new moon at the ritual clearing, although the characters may or may not be aware of this.

After the 'Call of Xnaaki' ritual is completed it takes several minutes for the Great Old One to rise.

How Xnaaki and his minions react to the attack can vary greatly depending on how the Keeper wishes to treat them., while the number of protagonists depends on the size and combat skills of the party. The Author recommends that in addition to the Sheriff and the eventual arrival of Xnaaki, a good guide is two cultists and/or one Servant per party member.

Once darkness falls the cultist gather in the ritual clearing in preparation for the evening ahead. Up until midnight they enact chants and rituals, worshipping Xnaaki and speaking of the time it will rise eternal and bestow gifts upon all those who follow.

Unless the characters make a point of being seen they will not be noticed observing the cultists ceremonies.

Midnight at the Shores of the Prison

At midnight the characters are able start the ritual which will raise Xnaaki. This requires chants and actions of it's own, which quite possibly could attract the cultists attention.

Once the ritual is completed, Xnaaki begins to rise . From the bottom of the lake bubbles of air escape and soon a dark shape can be seen nearing the surface. This takes about 5 minutes and if not already alerted, the arrival of Xnaaki soon gets the cultists attention.

Once to the surface of the lake Xnaaki makes its way to the characters location.

Through the darkness you hear the creature, a

Xnaaki

Advanced Description Xnaaki's slimy dripping body is bulberous in shape and loosely cylindrical, 6 to 7 feet wide and at least 40 feet long. It moves on a belly of tentacles, each approximately 6 in length. Its massive gapping mouth is filled with row upon row of wriggling tentacle like teeth.

Origins of Xnaaki. The details concerning the origins of Xnaaki should remain hidden. Similarities to Glaaki can be made but one can never know the truth behind either.

Cult of Xnaaki. Those mad or foolish enough to worship Xnaaki will be rewarded for their efforts, usually in the form of a horrifyingly gratuitous death! However those with an understanding of the ways of the Great Olds, such as Sheriff Coleburne, are able to face Xnaaki and receive gifts from the Great One. Xnaaki imparts knowledge of other races, worlds and times and infrequently spells. Those mad and patient enough could easily uncover many of the world's great secrets in the service of this ancient entity.

Creating Xnaaki Servants. Unlike Glaaki, Xnaaki is not well suited to mental control or attacks. It commands its undead servants only after they have had one of its tentacles imbedded in them. After a normal tentacle attack, when Xnaaki has its victim firmly in its grasp it can shoot 1d4 smaller tentacles into them. Each of these tentacles does 1d4 damage, with any those doing only 1 or 2 points failing to attach (falling to the ground to wither and die). Tentacles doing 3 or 4 points damage successfully borrow into the victim. If the damage done to the victims in the ritual kills them, then they soon after rise again as a Servant of Xnaaki. Victims surviving this ordeal become living channels for the will of Xnaaki, although in day to day life they remain of their own free will .

TYPICAL SERVANT OF XNAAKI, The Will of Xnaaki

STR	17	INT	12
CON	24	POW	13
SIZ	13	DEX	6
Move	5 (slow and disjointed)		
HP	15		

Weapons: *Fist* 40%, damage 1d3+1d4db.

Armour: none

Sanity Loss: 1/1d8 to see a Servant of Xnaaki.

grumbling howl, punctuated with piercing alien shrieks. The ground vibrates and the sound of foliage splintering and shrubs being crushed reaches your ears. It appears suddenly, almost as if it were some horrifyingly animated train – moving towards you on a mass of writhing tentacles rather than wheels. Its segmented body is shiny and black, its otherworldly appearance is an unbelievable sight. The head of the creature is simply a black pit – a mouth perhaps - but you cannot bring yourself to look for long. As it raises its first segments from the ground, towering 10 feet

into the air – tentacles lash out in all directions.

XNAAKI, Great Old One

STR 32 INT 26
CON 65 POW 28
SIZ 60 DEX 10

Move 7 (Centipede like on hundreds of squirming tentacles)

HP 65 (each tentacle has 8 hit points)
MP 16

Weapons: *Tentacles*, 80%, damage 1d8+3d6db, Xnaaki's tentacles combine to act as one attack per turn. Xnaaki will focus this attack on the closest target. (This can include any disciple or Servant if close enough).

Devour, 50%, damage 6d10 (per round). The Devour attack requires the target to have received a successful tentacle attack in previous round. A successful devour attack sees the target swallowed whole.

Armour: 25 points Xnaaki's Body is soft and slimy, but amazingly resilient to damage. Each of Xnaaki's tentacles has only 2 points of armour however.

Sanity Loss: 1d10/1d20. The darkness and prior understanding of the horror that is Xnaaki assists the characters in withstanding this terrifying entity.

Spells: *Xnaaki Blindness*, see the Xnaaki Spells sidebar.

Mind Blast, as per CoC manual.

Enthrall Victim, as per CoC manual.

Once Xnaaki reaches the lake side its Servants awaken to its call. These reside in the mud at the bottom of lake during the daylight hours and now rise from the dirt and slime around the characters feet.

The following are options that a Keeper may wish to keep in mind while the combat between the characters and Xnaaki takes place.

Xnaaki. Xnaaki is enraged at being summoned in the presence of the Stone of Xnalku and will use physical rather than magical forms of attack. Reaching out with massed tentacles it drags all that it grabs into its maw. Having shrubs, cultists and Servants disappearing into that black pit of a mouth will frighten the players as much as the sheer size and weight of the creature.

Most attacks the characters will inflict on the Great Old One will focus on the tentacles, so go ahead and let them blast away at these slimy ropes as the damage will do little to effect Xnaaki.

'The Veil of Azif.' This ritual can mask the characters vision but it should also be treated as an advantage to the followers of Xnaaki. For example the veil

makes the undead appear as nothing more than dark shadows, while the living are vibrant and easily visible. This means the characters will naturally focus on the cultists leaving the Servants free to act.

'Restrain Xnaaki Servant'. Once cast the Servants cannot attack the characters but they can still try to distract them.

'The Stone of Xnalku'. Xnaaki and his Servants are drawn to the stone and will focus their attention on the character holding it.

'The Bain of Xnalku Ritual'. Regardless of how the previous rituals are enacted, the casting of the final ritual should be dramatic. The clashing of minds – Xnaaki versus the characters, haunting flashes of other worlds, lives and horrors blind the characters as they face Xnaaki. The Veil of Azif does little to shield them from the alien and evil force that approximates the horrifying mind of a Great Old One.

CULTIST OF XNAAKI, Disciples of a Hidden God

	STR	CON	SIZ	DEX	INT	POW	DB	HP
1)	17	12	12	14	8	7	+1D4	12
2)	16	14	16	8	12	12	+1D4	15
3)	18	13	16	13	12	8	+1D6	16
4)	15	18	17	12	11	9	+1D4	17
5)	17	14	16	16	10	10	+1D6	16
6)	16	15	15	17	7	14	+1D4	16

Conclusion

After Xnaaki is banished its Servants collapse, their tentative link to the realm of the living severed. As for the cultists, they lose heart once their master is defeated although, if he is still alive, Sheriff Coleburne is further enraged and will attack the characters with a renewed fury.

The Cultists. Any surviving cultists will give up after Xnaaki is gone and the Sheriff is defeated. They will blame most of their acts on Coleburne, saying he was responsible for leading them astray.

The survivors are from all walks of life, but most are from the older, more respected families from the valley, and as such prison means little to them after they lose their standing in the tight community.

As for any dead cultists and the Servants bodies, the inevitable investigation will be confusing and complicated. Unless the players are sloppy they should not have any trouble avoiding any repercussions. The key to staying below the radar is simple – don't leave any evidence behind.

The Journal and the Manuscript. These pose

interesting questions. Have the party discovered the beginning of the fifth ritual? Do the group hand over the manuscript to the Miskatonic University and form a relationship with a scholar there? Or do they hide the manuscript to ensure it doesn't fall into the wrong hands?

To protect themselves, the Diary of DuPont should be destroyed or at least securely hidden. The manuscript on the other hand holds a potential evil, but does not implicate the characters in any way. The players decision on how to deal with these papers is a perfect opportunity to open up further adventures.

Steeplin County. The town itself will return to normal after the events of August 1920. Xnaaki remains hidden in the lake but is now trapped permanently... or so we hope.

Booth. If he wasn't discovered earlier, his body is found by the Rail authorities not too far from the train tracks. Apparently having survived the fall from the train, he has died under even more mysterious circumstances. Bound, with his throat cut, he is drained of all his blood. A spiked beetle has been drawn on his chest!

Rewards. Each character receives 1d20 Sanity (plus any extra for good roleplaying etc) in knowing that they have stopped an ancient and terrible evil. Xnaaki still resides in the lake, but with luck and foresight it can never again ... **Rise!** 📖

On the Unbound Website

The Rise of Xnaaki

- D20 Stats for The Rise of Xnaaki
- A Players Guide to Steeplin Valley
- Maps of Steeplin Valley and Township!

Visit the Unbound Book Website @
www.unboundbook.org



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His Wildest Dreams

A Call of Cthulhu Adventure set
in Kingsport, January 1925

By Mark Chiddicks

(Note: To play this scenario it is suggested the Keeper has access to both the Dreamlands and Kingsport supplements for Call of Cthulhu. In the absence of the Kingsport book, another city can be substituted with a little effort, although some background information has been provided on the Resources page of The Unbound Book website [www.unboundbook.org]).

Keeper's Background

When Jonathan Nash died he left his tottering Georgian home on Church Street, Kingsport, to his Bostonian nephew, Allen. Allen was shocked at the dilapidated state his eccentric, reclusive uncle had left the place in, but realised its potential value if it was 'done up' and decided to do it himself, as a weekend project.

A month or so into the job, Allen happened upon a secret compartment in his uncle's former bedroom – the only room that appeared 'lived in'. In this compartment he discovered three items of interest: a bag containing several bottles of a strong sedative, an oddly shaped Crystal on a metal stand and a journal.

In this journal, Jonathan told how he had stolen the Crystal from a Chinese Sorcerer when travelling in the East and how he had discovered its incredible power. If a man sleeps with the Crystal beside his bed, he is transported in his dreams to a marvellous land of wonders - a land where a man of strong will can become whatever he desires and go where it is even possible to cheat physical death. It was clear that over the years Jonathan spent more and more of his time in this world, using sedatives to prolong his sleep. This seems to have had severe effects on Jonathan's health and sanity, and indeed, near the end of his life the journal became totally incoherent.

Jonathan died, hit by a car, on a rare trip outside his house to buy food, and as such lost his chance of immortality in the land of Dream.

Allen was fascinated and decided to sleep with the Crystal on his nightstand. That night he discovered the Dreamlands – entering the Enchanted Wood through a magical cave of the same substance as the Dream Crystal. That first evening he became enchanted, and indeed, addicted.

Taking a six month sabbatical from his job as a librarian at Harvard, he moved into the house on Church Street where he could dream in peace. But after a few weeks he had an accident – seemingly minor but with terrible ramifications.

Venturing into parts of the Dreamlands his placid uncle never found, Allen, a veteran of the Great War with a much darker imagination, disturbed a hungry Gug. Fleeing headlong from the beast he woke with a start and leaped from his bed, knocking the Crystal to the floor, and cracking it.

He was terrified he had ruined it and immediately took a sedative to test its power. He was relieved to find the Dreamlands were still accessible, but what he did not realise was that the crack had altered the Crystal's structure in one significant way – now it worked BOTH WAYS.

Since that night, a week ago, every time Allen uses the Crystal

something crosses into the Waking World – appearing randomly within a quarter of a mile of the house and staying in Kingsport for a random period of time before being snatched back to its own dimension.

These Dream creatures are often harmless, but sometimes terrible and it is an encounter with these terrible things that brings our heroes into the adventure.

Introduction – The Cloudbeast

It is a chill winter evening in Kingsport. This town can be a forlorn place out of season, now tourism is its lifeblood. In the middle of winter there are few tourists and most of the local artistic community is out of town. Freezing fogs roll in from the sea on most nights, reducing visibility to a few feet. On this particular night however, there is not fog, but clouds hang heavily overhead.

The Investigators are visiting the Congregational Hospital in Central Hill where a mutual friend, Dr Curtis Newman, is recovering from burns suffered in last night's terrible fire which gutted his church and killed five parishioners. Newman has specifically asked for the Investigators to visit him.

Dr Newman is, sadly, in a wretched state. Heavily dosed with morphine for the pain of his burns, he hardly recognises his friends, but in a lucid moment he moans that a 'demon' attacked his Church, burning up through the floor and trapping half the congregation. It was a miracle God spared him and he must warn everyone that demons are real.

If asked to describe the demon, he will break down, unless a Persuade or Psychoanalysis roll is made, in which case he manages a reasonable description of the front third of a 10ft long Fireworm of Parg. No doubt the PCs will leave, believing the shock to have been too much for their friend.

As they exit the hospital and walk towards their car or cars, the heavens open and heavy rain starts to pour. If a Spot Hidden roll is made, one of them glances up at the clouds, and sees a horror!

Immediately above the car park the clouds are roiling and twisting as if they were alive. The very clouds themselves seem to be shaping into great pseudopods, which are even now reaching down towards you!

A sanity loss of 1/1d6 is appropriate, before any declaration of intent.

If the Beast is not noticed, the first they know of it is when a great misty tentacle snakes down and attacks a nurse who is running into the Hospital, a newspaper held over her head. If it is seen, the Beast attacks the Investigators instead.

Prelude - The Creatures of Dream

Before the Investigators are involved with the case the following creatures have travelled over from the Dreamlands.

Tuesday 13/01/25. Being of Ib - wanders Central Hill Cemetery in terror. Seen by the wino, Davy Harris.

Wednesday 14/01/25. Wenelian - wrecks Kingsport Public Library, seen by nobody.

Thursday 15/01/25. 5 Zoogs scuttle around Central Hill, killing cats – 8 cats die horribly, several witnesses see 'wild wolverine' or similar creatures.

Friday 16/01/25. Butterfly Dragon appears in Hubert Davis' apartment in Robbin's Apartments and deafens him. Nobody believes his story, but the doctor is mystified. Davis is in the Congregational Hospital undergoing tests.

Saturday 17/01/25. Small Fireworm of Parg - appears in the basement of the First Unitarian Church and burns it down during evening service. 5 die, 3 badly burned survivors, including the Pastor, claim a 'Worm Demon from Hell' came up through the floor.

Sunday 18/01/25. The Cloudbeast Attacks – see below.

If the nurse is attacked, the attack is automatically successful as she is pulled up screaming, into the clouds, never to be seen again. In this case, the sanity loss is 1/1d10 instead!

There is no earthly weapon capable of harming a Cloudbeast. If a victim resists its attempts to absorb them, the Beast drops him, doing 2d6 damage. Apart from that the only thing to do is to run back inside the Hospital. Heroic Investigators might, of course, wish to aid the nurse, who is still running across the car park. If they fail to do so, further sanity rolls are appropriate.

Once indoors, the Investigators are safe and the Cloudbeast flies off across Central Hill, snatching away a further three poor souls before it vanishes. Now they have personally witnessed such a horror, the Investigators will surely realise something must be done!

CLOUDBEAST, Vaporous Predator

STR	N/A	INT	3
CON	40	POW	10
SIZ	80	DEX	14
Move	4 floating		
HP	60		

Weapons: Bite 40%, damage 1d3+8 – resist POW+SIZ vs damage or be absorbed, and add to SIZ.

Vaporous Tentacle 25%, drags to mouth and adds 1d6 to bite damage, next round.

Armour: None, regenerates 8HP per round.

Sanity Loss: 1/1d6 to see a Cloudbeast

The Next Day

The Investigators are likely to have ended the previous evening talking to skeptical policemen and may well have decided to stay the night, even if that was not their original plan. At this time of year all the guesthouses have rooms and are willing to open up late at night to get some much needed custom. A Kingsport tourist brochure will be in any room the Investigators may rent.

In the morning, the town is in a panic – everyone has heard rumours of the horror that came from the skies last night, even if few saw it and many give the tales little credence.

Apart from themselves, the Investigators encounter nobody else who actually witnessed the Beast, but everyone knows of it second or third hand.

Nonetheless, the Kingsport Chronicle splashes the story across the front page of its late edition. Reference in the story to “The latest in a series of bizarre occurrences” should lead the Investigators, non-natives of the town, to visit the newspaper or at least seek out back copies at the library.

If the Investigators have not stayed the night in Kingsport, they will see a copy of the Chronicle elsewhere at a later point in the day. If they don't return to Kingsport before nightfall, they will not witness Julian St Jerome's firing (see below), but St Jerome will not start to investigate until the next day, giving them a chance to meet him before his disappearance. In this case, insert an extra, non-deadly sending into the adventure before the Leng Spider – a gigantic moth flying above the rooftops, for example.

The Kingsport Chronicle

The previous night's events are reported thus:

“IT CAME FROM ABOVE” – Bizarre disappearances terrorise Kingsport. Several witnesses claim ‘Demon from the sky’ took their friends.

The story is credited to Julian St Jerome, the paper's most imaginative reporter (a man, indeed, made of the same material as the Investigators themselves).

When the Investigators arrive at the Chronicle, however, they discover the editor, Stanley Carter, in the midst of firing St Jerome. They overhear something about “a sensationalist idiot, printing unsubstantiated

rumour, fit only for a New York scandal sheet or a Penny Dreadful!”

Either St Jerome or Carter will tell the Investigators that St Jerome had told the print room to change the front page of the second edition at the last moment, claiming, falsely that Carter (who was at breakfast) had approved it.

If asked directly about ‘strange occurrences’, Carter will call it ‘nonsense’ and ask the Investigators to stop wasting his time, though he will give access to back issues if requested by anyone who seems even vaguely respectable.

St Jerome, on the other hand, freshly out of work, will be only too happy to discuss his theory with willing listeners and will suggest they retire to a nearby café to talk about it.

If the Investigators don't talk to St Jerome before he leaves the Chronicle, Carter will give them his address in Mother Gamble's Boarding House (home, incidentally to an insane young occultist, Malcolm Veidt, who could become involved if Investigators are indiscreet – he'd love to own the Dream Crystal, and could even learn to *control* its sendings!).

JULIAN St JEROME, Sensationalist, Age 26

STR	12	EDU	13	Know	65%
CON	12	POW	14	Luck	70%
SIZ	13	INT	15	Idea	65%
DEX	12	APP	15	HP	13
				SAN	70

Damage Bonus: +1d4

Weapons: None

Skills: Accounting 20%, Bargain 40%, Credit Rating



10%, Fast Talk 80%, Law 25%, Library Use 50%, Listen 70%, Occult 10%, Persuade 66%, Photography 40%, Psychology 50%, Spot Hidden 60%, Fist 60%.

Back Issues

Not all of the events of the last week have made the paper, but the following stories may be noticed:

Thursday: *Public Library Ransacked by Intruder.* No witnesses, nothing taken, police unsure of how intruder got in or out, but many bookshelves and desks turned over and much damage done - "An appalling sign of the philistinic age in which we live"

Friday: *Wild Animal At Large in Kingsport - Keep Your Pet Indoors!* Eight cats slaughtered in a single night. Several witnesses described a creature that 'may have been a wolverine'. Local Animal Control warn Kingsport residents to keep their cats indoors while they hunt for the creature. "Whatever this beast is, it kills for sport, not food."

Sunday: *Fire Guts Unitarian Church. Five Parishioners Die, Pastor Injured.* The story makes no mention of eyewitness accounts of the 'demon's' attack, and suggests an electrical fault started the fire which burned in the basement, where old prayer books and the like were stored, for some time before erupting into the main building. "A great tragedy for Kingsport, and surely a test of all our faith."

Carter added editorial gloss to the first and third stories, but all three were in fact written by St Jerome. Now he has calmed down, the editor admits St Jerome is a 'fine writer', but his search for sensation in every story is just unsuitable for a paper like the Chronicle.

Interviewing St Jerome

Julian St Jerome is keen to discuss his ideas, provided



of course, none of the Investigators are journalists. In that case, he will be suspicious they intend to steal his story, and he must be 'Persuaded' to co-operate.

Assuming he is willing to talk, and wherever the interview happens, Julian proves to be an affable, intelligent young man, though possessing a somewhat wild imagination. Depending on the experience of the Investigators this may be viewed as a good or bad thing:

"There's something going on in Central Hill," explains St Jerome. "This week I have reported on four different stories, all with some kind of strange angle to them, all within a few hundred yards of the Central Hill Cemetery."

"I don't know if you've been reading the paper, but apart from that story last night, which got me fired, there was a fire at the Unitarian Church on Saturday - I have witness accounts that talk about a Demon, if you can believe that; then there was a weird occurrence in the middle of the week where something ripped apart 8 cats in a couple of hours - the story Carter printed suggested a wolverine, but again, witnesses told me otherwise."

"Then back on Wednesday night there was some weird sort of break-in at the Library - except nobody BROKE in. The place was locked up tight as a drum and someone or something got in and trashed the place. I got a look at it and it was like a chimpanzee or something had run riot in there for the whole night - one hell of a mess!"

"I tried to convince Carter that there's a pattern, but he won't even listen - says I've got a 'wild imagination, not commensurate with my standing as member of the Press.' I guess he's right; I shouldn't be working for a small-minded small-town rag like the Chronicle."

"Anyway," he says, finally drawing breath, "how can I help you - or maybe you can help me, eh?"

St Jerome knows the following information, all of which can also be uncovered by the Investigators with intelligent questioning:

He interviewed several survivors of the fire, those uninjured described smoke suddenly rising from the floorboards followed seconds later by an eruption of flame near the front of the aisle. He interviewed one of the burned survivors, Martha Franks, who told him a 'Great scaly Demon' came from the hole and devoured three men. Only Dr Newman kept his head and was able to get her and another woman to safety through the vestry, despite being badly burned in saving her. The other survivor, Rebecca Smith, was too ill to talk, and the pastor was unwilling to talk to him. A fireman told him the dead men were 'burned to a crisp' by an

'extreme heat', which mystified him.

Three witnesses of the cat killer described the creature. The 'wolverine' description comes from Carter accepting the least detailed and least outlandish. One old lady said the thing which killed her 'Pussy' had a face made of tentacles, like an octopus, and the remaining witness, who saw only the hind quarters of the thing (which were, indeed, wolverine-like) swears he heard the creature *giggling* as it scuttled away from his dead pet. The deceased felines appeared to have been 'broken' rather than savaged, judging from the two St Jerome was shown.

The Librarian told him there was a 'strange, electric smell' in the air when she entered her wrecked library. In St Jerome's opinion that damage was like one would expect from a wild animal, rather than a man, although no sign of tooth or claw damage was visible.

A wino, Davy Harris, approached him when he was exploring the graveyard for clues and offered him a 'story' for \$5. St Jerome offered him \$2, and Harris told him that on Tuesday night he saw a 'strange little guy' creeping around the graves – he swears it wasn't human, having big eyes and ears, 'like some kinda bush-baby'. Harris said when he saw this creature he fled, and so did the creature, which seemed as scared as he did – no evidence of it was apparent when St Jerome searched the graveyard.

Last night's events were described to him by three witnesses; a couple who saw their dining companion snatched into the clouds and a man, currently hospitalised with a broken leg, who claimed the 'cloud' picked him up and dropped him 30ft to the ground. Apart from the witnessed disappearance, and the nurse (if she was taken), three other people who were out that night have been reported missing! In at least one case screams were heard from the next street, but nothing was seen.

St Jerome sums up that all of these events happened 'close by' the Graveyard. He is sure they have some common cause and he would welcome help in searching it out. He would love to see Carter's face when a big city paper printed the story the Chronicle thought 'too outlandish' to pursue! He'd be willing to give 50% of whatever he could sell the story for to the Investigators if they helped him break it! (Pit Bargain vs. Bargain to improve the deal, if required).

Further Investigations

St Jerome suggests he should interview the occupants of all the houses overlooking the graveyard, and that the Investigators pursue their own lines of research. He suggests meeting for dinner at The Sea's Harvest Restaurant in South Shore at 8pm to compare notes.

If asked, he gives the names and addresses of all the witnesses mentioned in the conversation, since the Investigators may be able to find out something he missed.

The following may present themselves as possible avenues of research:

Re-interviewing the witnesses. This is a mostly fruitless exercise, since St Jerome is a skilled interviewer who learned nearly all worth knowing. However, a couple of significant points will occur. Firstly, the wino, Davy Harris proves elusive. Nobody who the Investigators might ask knows him, and he is nowhere to be found (for today, at least). Secondly, any attempt to visit one of the burned survivors in the hospital leads to the encounter with Hubert Davis, detailed below. Visiting Dr. Newman again proves pointless, as he is under heavy sedation.

Library Research. Kingsport Library is 'Closed for Repairs', after the Wenelian wrecked the place. Any journey out of town to another library proves fruitless, unless the restricted collection at Miskatonic can be accessed, in which case see below.

Cthulhu Mythos Research. No Dream Lore tomes are available to the Investigators, but either a Cthulhu Mythos Knowledge roll, or a Research roll in a Mythos tome (halved in each case) will reveal the common thread amongst the things has been seen so far is Dream. Apparently, through some sorcerous methods, creatures from another dimension, usually accessible only through Dreams, are crossing into the Waking World.

Local Historians. Although usually a very intelligent course of action, in this case interviewing such people as Aaron Hart at the Historical Society, or old Danny Houghton at the Mariner's Home will cause only confusion. Hart is senile anyway, but records at the society and the memories of older residents will contain clues to such things as the Kingsport Cult, the wreck of the Hellene and the Strange High House in the Mist. Of these, only the latter may be of use in this scenario.

Exploring the Graveyard. A Spot Hidden roll discovers a tomb with a forced door within which Davy Harris' sleeping place and a collection of empty bottles can be found. Harris will not be found here until late that night, since he is elsewhere in town begging for food. No sign of anything supernatural or suspicious can be found anywhere in the Cemetery, unless the Investigators have met Solomon Oakes – in which case, see below for more details.

The Strange High House in the Mist. If the Investigators choose to visit this place, then they may (20%) encounter William Bain. Bain will listen with interest to any tales of strange creatures and will

visibly pale. He assumes, wrongly, that his activities have opened the rift between Dream and reality and will ask the visitors to leave, while he meditates on a course of action. A Psychology roll reveals that he feels guilty and, if pressed, he admits he thinks he may be to blame. He promises no more such 'visitations' and the next evening, the lightning destroys the House. At this point, a Keeper with access to the Kingsport Guidebook could insert the scenario, 'The House on the Edge'. Within this dream the sendings have stopped, but on awaking from it they continue.

Visiting the Sites of the Sendings. There is little to be learned from visiting the various places where the Dream creatures have manifested. The Unitarian Church is a hole full of burned timbers – suggestive of an accelerant to anyone with a knowledge of such things. Kingsport Library is closed and if entered looks much as has been described, and all that can be found in investigating the cat slayer is a man from Animal Control scratching his head at some muddy footprints that seem to match no known native predator (Zoology roll – they match no known animal on Earth!).

Whatever the Investigators choose to do, they have until 8pm, at which point they are due to meet St Jerome at Kingsport's finest restaurant – they really need time to dress for dinner as well!

Hubert Davis

On any second visit to the Congregational Hospital, the Investigators may overhear the following conversation between a pair of passing doctors:

"I think it's psychosomatic – we've done all the tests and there is no physical reason for the hearing loss."

"Possibly, but I've never known a psychosomatic loss so total."

"I agree, but the man claims to have seen a dragon – I



think that's a pretty clear sign of psychosis."

"A dragon?"

"That's what he says – 'a dragon the size of a cat', if you please. It appeared in his apartment out of thin air, and when he tried to touch it, it breathed vapours on him and he went deaf. Then it vanished."

"I see what you mean about psychosis!"

"He even claims to have photographed it!"

At this the doctors walk off chuckling, but investigator curiosity is likely to be piqued.

If the Investigators are able to both discover the identity of this patient and gain access to either Doctor or Davis' medical notes, they can learn the full story of Hubert's encounter with the Butterfly Dragon.

Being a shutterbug, Davis took a single, rather underexposed photograph of the creature. He has the film in his coat pocket and will ask the Investigators to get it developed for him.

The photograph is clear enough for the creature to be identified by anyone who knows what a Butterfly Dragon is, but not clear enough to be accepted by the authorities as anything other than a rather bizarre fake.

St Jerome's Fate

After a fruitless couple of hours, Julian St Jerome knocks on the door of Allen Nash's house, which proves a fatal mistake. Nash, who is now sleeping from early evening until lunchtime, has just awoken from a particularly terrible trip to the peak of Thok and his fragile sanity is almost broken. The combination of his bleak outlook on life and the damage to the Dream Crystal has resulted in his dream life spiralling into darker and more deranged fantasies.

When the dishevelled, wide-eyed Nash opens the door, St Jerome is instantly suspicious. Charming his way inside the house (an event witnessed by Davy Harris who is crouching in the Cemetery, having just awoken himself from his latest bender), the reporter starts to explain the situation to Nash. Nash realises, when the Cloudbeast is described, that the Crystal has become a two-way gate. Desperate that he not lose his chance at immortality, he grabs a poker and launches a frenzied attack on the reporter, breaking his skull open and falling into true insanity.

Now Nash is truly mad, his dreams will be the most obscene nightmares, and tonight's will be the first in a series of truly awful 'visitors'!

Meanwhile, Julian St Jerome's corpse lies in the living room of Nash's house – Nash is too far-gone to even

bother hiding it.

That Evening

The Investigators wait for St Jerome at the restaurant, but he does not show up, or answer his phone. Whenever they decide to give up and return to town will coincide with the latest, and worst, manifestation of the damaged Dream Crystal.

As the Investigators drive up High Street towards Central Hill, they come across a nightmare scene. Ahead of them a cab has driven into a great web spanning the street where it is trapped like a great mechanical fly, its engine still running. As the occupants try to clamber clear, they are caught on the web, and as a number of stunned witnesses watch uselessly from the street, a gigantic purple spider moves across the web towards them!

This is a great Leng Spider, and it is hungry. Right now the only people likely to do anything to help are the Investigators, everyone else is either failing Sanity rolls, running away or staring uselessly.

The Spider will not leave its web unless it takes more than 10 points of damage, in which case it will leave its prey to pursue its attacker. Luckily for everybody, this particular Spider knows no spells.

LENG SPIDER, Web-Spinning Horror

STR	35	INT	7
CON	20	POW	14
SIZ	40	DEX	17
Move	6/8 in web		
HP	35		

Weapons: *Bite* 40%, damage 1d6+3d6+poison – POT = 40 (20 damage, 10 if resisted).

Web 60%, Entangle with STR 20, Range 10yds.

Armour: 6 points of Chitin

Sanity Loss: 1/1d10 to see a Leng Spider.

If the Spider proves too much for the Investigators, it vanishes at just the moment when they seem utterly doomed. It would be a shame to kill them just yet.

When the Spider vanishes, which it does a few seconds after being killed if not before, it does so by suddenly shimmering and blinking out of existence. Any victim in its jaws (i.e. hit the previous round) vanishes with it.

The web is left behind. It proves tough and resilient, drying up in 24 hours at which point it can be chopped apart. It burns only at blast furnace temperatures! This is one phenomenon even Carter cannot ignore, and from now on the Chronicle starts to report sanitised versions of all the more public manifestations of

Dream.

Reaction In Kingsport

Chief Crane and his small force of officers are not equipped to handle such an invasion from beyond, and apart from cordoning off the area where the web is, do little else. Sensible Investigators may urge curfews or even the calling for outside aid, but Crane is indecisive for at least 24 hours.

What he does after that depends upon the nature of the next evening's sending. If it results in injury, death or damage to public property, he consults with the Mayor then he calls on Lt Commander Maddern at the Coast Guard Station for assistance. Kingsport is a town which values its individuality, and in which nothing is considered more of an insult than to suggest it is simply the 'seaside suburb' of Arkham. As a result the impulse of Civic Authority in the town is to handle this problem without calling on the Arkham Police Department.

Chief Crane also persuades the Mayor to call a public meeting at Talbot Hall, where he announces Kingsport's intention to deal with the current crisis without calling on its larger neighbour. There will be a dusk to dawn curfew in the Central Hill area along with nightly patrols by armed Coast Guard men, each patrol to have one of the Kingsport police force accompanying them.

At the same time, experts in 'this kind of thing' are to be contacted for assistance. In this case, however, progress is far too slow to prevent the sendings culminating in the appearance of the Dhole, which will kill several of the Coast Guard men along with many of the local residents. This will cost Mayor Hoag the next election!

If the Investigators approach the police, Mayor or Coast Guard claiming to be such 'experts' (and seem convincing) then they will be given all official help necessary to complete their investigations, including access to the damaged library.

If they do access the library, a Library Use roll will uncover the story of the Kingsport Cult, which proves to be a most unfortunate red herring (unless of course they have already crossed paths with Mr Oakes!) After one more fatality, people will start to leave Kingsport on 'visits to relatives' and the like – a most sensible course of action.

Resident Dreamers

A number of Kingsport's residents are experienced Dreamers and as such may recognise the sendings as creatures from the Lands of Dream they know so well.

Of these, the three most significant are William Bain, Basil Elton and Robert Carlton.

Bain's reaction has already been discussed, and Basil Elton, out at the North Point Light is unlikely to hear about the events in town in time to react to them (though he certainly would like to chat about them at a later date).

Robert Carlton, however, might react in such a way as to bring him to the attention of the Investigators. He does not know the Dreamlands are anything other than a product of his own imagination, and should he realise that creatures from his dreams are invading the city, he will be driven temporally insane. This insanity is characterised by an acute hypnophobia and a fascination with the Central Hill area. He will walk the streets at night, downing strong coffee from a vacuum flask. As soon as he discovers the sendings are continuing despite his refusal to sleep, he will throw himself in the harbour, in a desperate attempt to 'wake up' and be fished out two days later.

Searching For Julian

The best way to solve this mystery is to trace Julian St Jerome. Until this is done, nightmare creatures from the Dreamlands will appear nightly in Central Hill. Use the following table to generate a random creature, and choose a suitable place for it to wreak mayhem:

1d2 Minions of Karakal

A Moonbeast

1d4 Ghosts (indoors, somewhere dark)

A hungry Gug

A pair of Wamps

1d3 Nightgaunts

Some suggested locations for subsequent sendings are as follows:

The Crawford Intermediate School, empty at night except for a pair of elderly cleaners – they could be found dead in the morning.

Masonic Lodge, a monster appearing at a meeting could kill a number of the town's leading lights.

Kingsport Rest Home, a creature appearing here would cause chaos amongst the senile and cantankerous residents.

Harbour Place Hotel, a City Father could die in the George Washington suite, along with his mistress, leading to a scandal.

The Congregational Church, a minion of Karakal appearing during evensong would be considered a second Demonic appearance.

If Nash is not stopped within seven more days, a Dhole will appear in the cemetery and destroy most of Central

Hill, including Nash's House. Nash and some 200 other people will be killed and many more sent mad before the Dhole vanishes, taking the Dream Crystal with it and dooming the Investigators to failure.

If this happens because they gave up and fled, Sanity losses of 1d20 are appropriate to signify the enormous guilt they will feel. If they are still in town, seeing the Dhole will be punishment enough!

To find Julian, the obvious course of action is to do what he did and start to question the occupants of all houses overlooking the Cemetery.

Before he met Nash, St Jerome had worked his way from the North end of Hill Circle around the cemetery in an anti-clockwise direction. Whether or not the occupants of a given house remember him depends on where exactly the house is. About 80% of the houses are occupied when the Investigators call, and 80% of the occupants in the area St Jerome visited saw him the previous day. None of them had been able to tell him anything.

At some point during this exercise, a Spot Hidden roll should be attempted. A success notices a scruffily dressed man, obviously a transient, watching from amongst the graves. The possibility that this is Davy Harris, who proved elusive the previous day, should present itself. Approaching him is not easy though, he knows the cemetery very well and is nervous of strangers. If the Investigators do manage to get to talk to him, they are certain to mention St Jerome. When they do so, he reacts at once:

"I see him, I see him yesterday! You give me \$5 and I'll show you. Yes I will." Investigators can get the



information for as little as \$2, as St Jerome did earlier in the week. He leads them across the cemetery to the graves overlooking Church St, and points at Nash's house. "That's where he went. I see him go in there, yesterday and I think I'll wait for him, and maybe he'll give me a dollar. He didn't come out though. I waited till dark and he never came out."

If asked who lives in the house, Harris says he doesn't know, though it used to be this skinny old man who hardly came out. If asked about the being he saw the previous week, he'll direct the Investigators to the part of the graveyard where he saw it, but nothing can be found.

Nash's house is on Church St, halfway along the cemetery. It is a somewhat run-down Georgian house, in a shabbier state than its neighbours, none of which are exactly palatial. All the curtains are drawn, and if watched at night the only light comes from an upstairs window – and even that is a faint, flickering purplish glow (the Crystal).

The neighbours on either side, both elderly, know that 'Old Mr Nash' died a while back, and his 'young nephew from Boston' inherited the house. He came up a few times, saying he was going to fix the place up, then a few weeks back he came to stay. Unlike his previous visits, they have heard no noise of hammering from the house, and they have hardly seen him. Indeed he seems to rarely leave the house, and certainly keeps to himself. To the aged denizens of Church St, this makes him a most agreeable neighbour.

The neighbour to the left remembers St Jerome calling the previous day, the neighbour to the right does not, and significantly claims to have spent the afternoon sitting in her parlour, knitting.

If the Investigators consult newspaper files for a report of the death of 'Old Mr Nash' they discover he died in September, run down by a car on High Street, and his only living relative is listed as Allen Nash of Boston.

If they choose to do some research into Allen, all they are likely to discover is that he is a Librarian at the Widener at Harvard, currently on a six month sabbatical, ostensibly to restore the house he inherited from a distant uncle in Kingsport.

At this point the Investigators should have a pretty clear idea of where St Jerome disappeared. They are, of course free to call the police. If they do this, the police end up seizing the Crystal and the Journal as evidence, and Nash ends up in Danvers Asylum. Within a month, Captain James Blair, the moody moocher of the Kingsport Police Department, has read the journal, stolen the Crystal and started the whole horrible cycle all over again from his lodgings in a seedy Prospect Hill boarding House. Calling in the cops should never result in a satisfactory conclusion in

Call of Cthulhu!

Solomon Oakes

At 306 Summit St lives the evil cultist Solomon Oakes. St Jerome never called on him, but the Investigators might. He will answer the door, but is dismissive of questions unless his curiosity is piqued by any mention of the supernatural. In such a case he becomes overly keen to hear more, which should be a warning sign to sensible Investigators. His neighbours won't answer questions about him unless Investigators are particularly persuasive, in which case they will mention his frequent wanderings of the Cemetery at night and their general suspicions of him being 'unwholesome'.

Once alerted to supernatural events, Oakes will start to investigate the situation, and each day has a percentage chance equal to his INT (16%) of tracing the source, in which case he will slay the sleeping Nash and take the Crystal, ending the Dream sendings for a while at least.

If the Investigators start to suspect Oakes, they could end up chasing a particularly dangerous wild goose!

If asked about Oakes, Davy Harris goes pale and says he knows of him, but always avoids him if he sees him in the Cemetery. Oakes disappears into a particular tomb, to which he has a key, and often does not emerge for hours. He can direct the Investigators to the tomb, which has the barely readable legend "Solomon Oakes" and contains an entrance to the tunnels below. What they find there is outside the scope of this scenario.

Harris seems to be holding something back, however, and a Persuade roll or a bribe is needed to get him to admit that he once (about two months ago) saw Oakes take a fellow transient, a young man called 'Marty', into his house. Marty never came out.

Confronting Nash

The events of the final confrontation with Nash depend wholly on whether he is awake or asleep when the Investigators arrive at his house. He has reached the point where he is sleeping 18 hours a day (with chemical assistance), from around 6pm until mid-day. When awake, he spends 90% of his time at home, writing in the journal, eating cold food out of cans and so on, and the other 10% out on minor errands.

This means there are three possible situations when the Investigators arrive:

Nash is out of the house (10%, if between mid-day and 6pm).

Nash is present, and awake (90%, if between mid-day and 6pm).

Nash is asleep and dreaming (100% between 6pm and mid-day).

If asleep, knocking at the door will not wake him up under any circumstances, so the Investigators must either break in, or come back later.

If Nash is absent, the Investigators may break in, and will find St Jerome's body. The Crystal and Journal are hidden in the secret compartment. In this case, upon his arrest, Nash will say nothing. The 'sendings' will cease, but nothing has been explained, and the Investigators will be left with an uncomfortable feeling that the case is not really solved.

If Nash is present and awake, he will be unfriendly to visitors and try to force them to leave. If they insist on entering, he will direct them to the study, and when they see St Jerome's corpse, he will attack in a frenzy using the same poker that killed the reporter. If he is killed, the Journal and Crystal will be found in his bedroom.

If Nash is asleep, he will not wake unless shaken (in which case he is extremely hostile and grabs for a kitchen knife under the bed). The Crystal sits on the bed stand, pulsing with an unearthly light, and the journal sits open on the floor. In this case, the sendings can be stopped by killing Nash or smashing the Crystal. Killing the sleeping Nash costs 1/1d4 Sanity.

The house itself shows signs that Nash has been working on his renovation project, but this appears to have been abandoned. The room in which St Jerome lies dead is part way through being re-wallpapered, but the paste has dried in the bucket.

ALLEN NASH, Insane Dreamer, Age 30

STR	14	EDU	15	Know	75%
CON	9	POW	16	Luck	80%
SIZ	14	INT	14	Idea	70%
DEX	13	APP	12	HP	12
				SAN	0

Damage Bonus: +1d4

Weapons: Poker, Kitchen Knife, Skillet etc. all at base skill.

Skills: Cthulhu Mythos 10%, Dreaming 80%, Dreamlore 30%, Library Use 80% (spends a lot of time in the Great Library of the Dreamlands)

Destroying the Dream Crystal

The Dream Crystal is fragile, and can be smashed with a hard blow against something solid. Doing so, however, triggers one last sending. The creature appears in Nash's room and attacks at once. In this case it does not disappear until slain.

Destroying the Crystal while Nash sleeps traps his spirit in a very bad part of the Dreamlands, leaving

Nash's Belongings

The two significant items in Nash's room are the Dream Crystal and the Dream journal, which his uncle began and he has continued. If these items are hidden, then they will only be found if the Investigators specifically search for a secret compartment and make a halved Spot Hidden roll.

Dream Crystal. An asymmetric white Crystal about 8 inches high, supported by an ornate silver stand. All those sleeping within 5 feet of it enter the Dreamlands through the Crystal Cavern, and gain an initial Dreaming skill equal to their POWx3. This Crystal is badly cracked, which causes the arrival of Dream Creatures in the waking world while it is in use. This is useless as a means of following Nash, however, since his great skill in Dreaming enables him to travel quickly to the more nightmarish parts of that realm, where anyone sleeping beside him will not be able to follow.

Dream Journal of The Nash Family. This book was started by Jonathan and continued by Allen, and describes their travels in the Land of Dream. Allen's travels and adventures become steadily more horrific, hence the SAN loss and Cthulhu Mythos Knowledge found within.

Language: English; Sanity Loss: 1D3/1D6; time the read - 4 weeks; Cthulhu Mythos Knowledge +3; Dreamlore +15.

Spells: Lace Curtains of Hish, Passing Unseen, Eviscerator (All Dreamlands only).

him a catatonic husk. He is not immortal though, and will die in the Dreamlands when his body dies - a matter of only 1 or 2 years with him in such a state.

Destroying the Crystal while Nash is awake sends him into an uncontrollable homicidal frenzy from which his shattered mind will never recover. During this frenzy he gains an effective 2 extra points of STR and CON at the cost of 10% from all combat skills.

Keeping the Dream Crystal

If Nash is not killed, but merely overpowered and the Investigators choose to keep and even use the Crystal, Nash is far more manageable. However he will immediately start planning to escape and return for his property. This situation will result in Nash being sent to Danvers Asylum and escaping in 1d3 months to come back for his Crystal. Even if it has been destroyed by then, he won't know and will still come after it.

If Nash is dead, the Investigators are free to take the Crystal. Using it, however, creates the same dangers Nash faced.

To some extent, the problem with the Crystal is connected, as Bain would guess, to the weak barrier

between the worlds created by the presence of the Strange High House. Consequently, the sendings the damaged Crystal causes are less frequent outside of Kingsport. If the Crystal is used anywhere outside of the town, the chance of a sending equals 50% minus the user's POW. Each dreamer sharing the Crystal has a chance of triggering a sending, though only one will occur per use, no matter how many dreamers sharing there are.

A user also has a chance equal to their POW, as a percentage of mastering the Crystal's ability to create sendings, and gets to roll on this once per month of constant use. Once mastered, a specific creature can be summoned (though not bound or in any way controlled) at the cost of 1 MP per point of POW the creature has. If the dreamer exceeds his Magic Points in attempting this, his sleep becomes dreamless and he cannot enter the Dreamlands again until he has recovered at least half of his MP total.

Apart from the nightly sendings, using the Crystal is addictive. Each use requires a Sanity roll. If the user fails he loses 1 SAN and gains 2d6% to his chance of addiction (which starts at zero). The Keeper should keep a secret note of this Addiction percentage and each night the owner chooses not to use the Crystal must roll over their addiction score to resist the urge to use it anyway. Any attempt to smash the Crystal or give it away also requires the Addiction roll be failed first.

Any visits to the land of Dream should be role-played in detail between the Keeper and the Player – creating a series of small Dream adventures for this purpose is well worthwhile.

There is no way to prevent the Dream creatures from appearing, although they always do so within half a mile of the Crystal, which makes its use in isolated places relatively safe – the creatures will not approach the Crystal itself willingly, so the Dreamer himself is safe.

Every time using the Crystal results in a creature appearing and causing harm, a Sanity roll is required, for a loss of 1/1d3. It should be obvious the moral thing to do is to destroy the Crystal.

Rewards For Success

The Sanity gain for completing this adventure is variable, depending on the conclusion played out.

If Nash is stopped, but the Crystal is never found and the puzzle is left unsolved, a mere 1d4 SAN should be gained. This applies in the case of calling in the police.

If Nash is killed when helpless, and the Crystal destroyed, 1d6+1 SAN should be gained.

If Nash is either killed in self-defence or not at all, and the Crystal is taken, 1d8+2 SAN should be gained.

If Nash is either killed in self-defence or not at all, and the Crystal is destroyed, 1d10+3 SAN should be gained.


If the Crystal is taken, but destroyed at a later date, 1D3 additional SAN should be gained by whoever chooses to destroy it.

If a third party ends up in possession of the Crystal, a SAN loss of 1/1D6 is appropriate when the sendings start again.

Bringing an end to the second wave of sendings should result in half of the SAN gain listed above, since they were preventable.

The presence of Julian St Jerome's corpse in Nash's house should protect the Investigators from any ramifications for his death.

It is very unlikely that the Investigators will attempt to get the bizarre story into print – Stanley Carter at the Chronicle will certainly not consider it, although he does dedicate the next issue to St Jerome, and prints a rather touching obituary.

Within a year, even those sendings that were witnessed by multiple people, and resulted in widespread death and destruction have been relegated to the status of urban legends. In Lovecraft Country, it is surprising how quickly the ripples fade and the pond calms once more. 

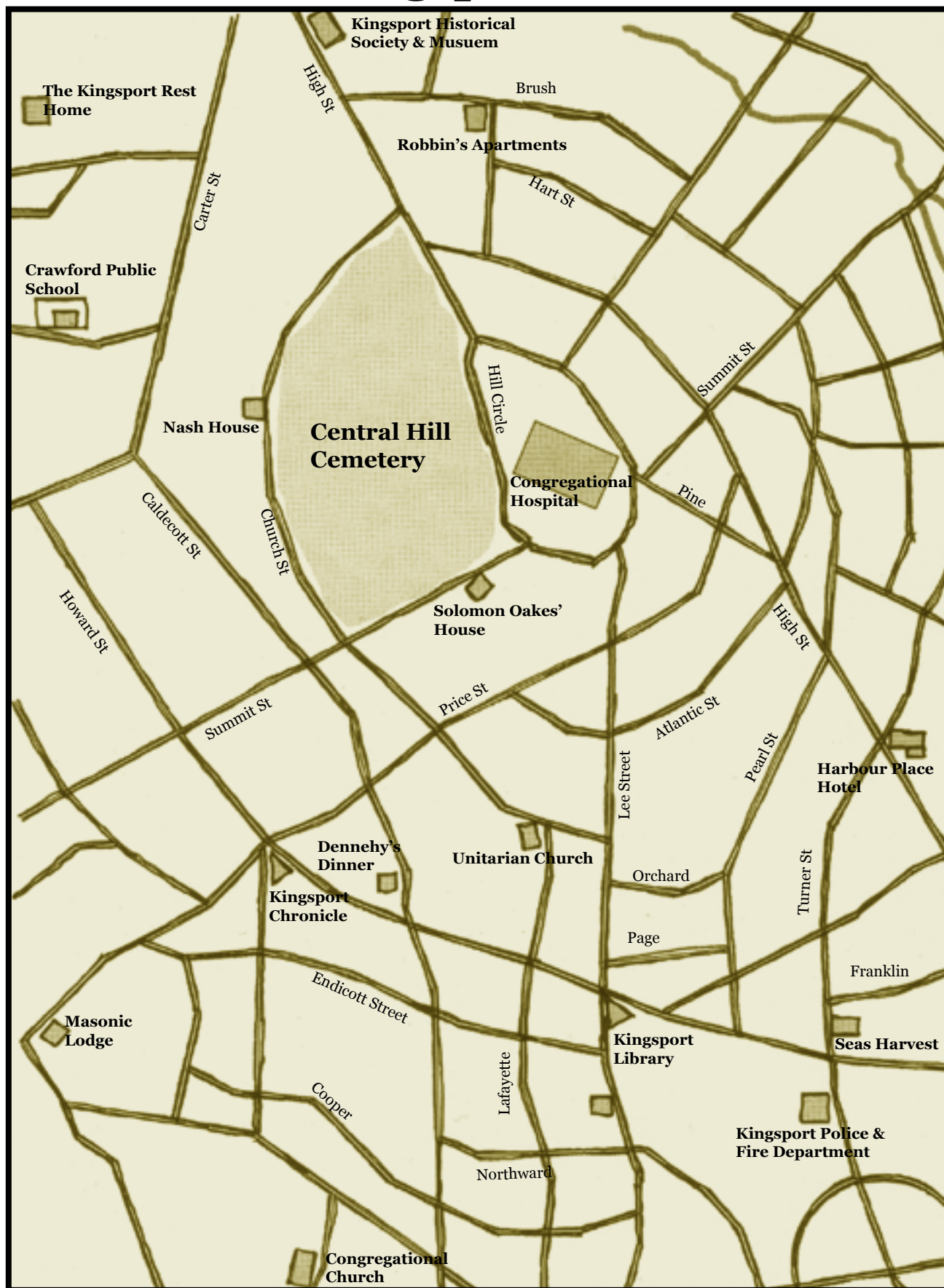
On the Unbound Website

His Wildest Dreams

- D20 Stats for His Wildest Dreams
- Overview Map of Kingsport
- A Players Guide to Kingsport
- Player and Keepers Maps of Central Hill

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Central Hill, Kingsport 1925 (Keepers Map)





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What Goes Around...

A Non-Mythos Adventure in
Lovecraft's Arkham

By *Marcus D. Bone*

What Goes Around... is a short non-mythos adventure designed to be played in one session by one or two relatively inexperienced Investigators (although more can be easily accommodated). Although nominally based in Lovecraft's Arkham during the winter of 1921, it can, with very little work, be situated in any small town during any time period.

The entire adventure should only take one game day, depending, of course, on the characters actions. During this time the characters may well be faced with a moral dilemma, in which they will not want to take sides, however it is important the Keeper emphasises the need for the characters to react quickly to the situation to achieve the best outcome.

Keeper's Background

John Burton, owner of Arkham's finest jewellery store, used to love his wife, and he supposes that at sometime in the past she may have loved him. Tonight, however he knows the marriage is no more and he plans on ensuring she is out of his life forever...

When John Burton and Valerie Haywright married it looked as if both were getting what they most wanted in life. John was to become heir of Haywright's, Arkham's most prestigious jewellery store, and Valerie was to gain herself the man she needed to get her into high society. But if this was their only goal in the marriage, both were be horribly disappointed.

John quickly learnt that his father-in-law was a tyrant, whose control of the purse strings and the business was almost draconian. Not that John was ever really around to be effected by Avery Haywright's financial policy, as he was regularly travelling at his father-in-laws behest, always on the look out for the cheapest raw materials. In Valerie's case, shortly after their marriage she discovered her husband was no more suited for fame or high society than she herself was. To make matters worse despite her goading, John seemed unwilling to even try and better himself.

When Old man Haywright passed away a year ago John hoped he would be free to run the business as he wished. However as he quickly discovered his wife's demands filled the void left by the old man. Valerie became more and more demanding of him and it seemed as if nothing he did was ever good enough.

It was about this time, during one of his many trips to New York, John met and fell in love with Joanne Carter, a secretary from Manhattan. Unable to leave Valerie - all the money was either invested in the store or closely guarded by his wife - John began plotting his salvation.

As his plans formulated, John left on a buying trip to Vladivostok in Russia (a voyage which had been arranged by Old man Haywright shortly before his death). It was during his long days on the ocean that he set on a plan to rid himself of Valerie and the legacy of the Haywrights once and for all.

But one small purchase in an ancient city set in motion a chain of events which were to change John Burton's life forever. Travelling to a meeting one brisk morning he chanced across a street vendor selling estate jewellery. Professionally interested, he stopped to review the goods and discovered a most beautiful necklace,

one that, the seller insisted, had attached an ancient and obscure legend. Immediately he knew he must purchase it, not for his wife, but rather for Joanne - a symbol his new life with her.

Last week John returned from his long trip away to find his luggage had arrived at his Arkham home shortly before him. Before he had a chance to hide the necklace, the gift had been discovered and claimed by Valerie.

John Burton is now more determined than ever to rid himself of his wife and at last be with his true love in New York.

Involving the Investigators

The opening events of the adventure take place just prior to dawn on West Main Street, Arkham, outside Haywright's Fine Jewellery store (located at 227 - between Ace Alarms and Lock-Safes and E Parrington Gunsmiths). What the characters are doing in this area at the time is left up to the individual Keeper, although it is important they are the first people on the scene to witness the destruction of the jewellery store.

A Fiery Beginning

Shortly before dawn a huge explosion shatters the peace in the early morning streets of Arkham, as Haywright's Fine Jewellery store is consumed in a massive ball of fiery destruction. The characters, in the area for whatever reason, are the first on the scene.

"By the time you reach Haywright's Fine Jewellery it is already well ablaze. The roof has exploded outwards, covering the street with brick and tile. Flames rise high into the air consuming the inside of the building frightfully quickly. As bricks begin to burst and glass shatters, you hope to God no one is inside."

The characters are unable to get too close to the burning building due to an intense heat and flying debris. A successful Idea roll will lead the Investigators to realise this fire is being fed by some flammable source - most obviously natural gas (heating gas).

"The flames seem to rise in intensity and quickly threaten the businesses next to the fiery convocation. Although some local residents have appeared on the street, most are barely dressed and seem stunned and unmanned for the events unfolding around them."

Fortunately Haywright's is located in a light commercial district and, although it is near residential buildings, the fire will not have long enough to do any substantial damage to any other structure. If the characters do not summon the Arkham Fire Department, they will nevertheless soon hear the distant ringing of brass

Guides of the Dead

Standing over 6 feet tall and covered head to foot in dark grey fur, the Sons of Veles (or Volos, a little remember God) are known as the guides of the dead. In Russia, stories of the Sons are used to frighten young children at bedtime and to ensure those who wish to misbehave are kept in line. Resembling the fictional Werewolf, they might well be the basis of that myth.

Whether or not these creatures are actually the sons of a God is up for debate, although what is known is that they are bound to a piece of jewellery or personal item until the owner's death, at which point they emerge and lead the soul to the underworld.

Leading the spirit of the deceased to a better place is just half of the Son's task; the other is to exact revenge on any killer of the wearer. In this task it is relentless, tracking down the murderer with unmatched ferocity. Active only at night, during daylight hours it returns to its original realm.

A Son, although 'hurt' by mundane weapons regenerates all damage done to it quickly. One can even be 'killed' only to return the next night to exact its revenge. Perhaps the most frightening part of the Sons of Veles legend involves it hunting down and killing any other mortals which happen to witness it when it stalks its prey. Those hunted by the creature learn of their fate by its howling as it closes in on them, a noise which only they can hear.

bells as fire trucks converge on the blaze.

There is not much for the characters to do during this time, except watch the fire and thank their lucky stars they were not near the building when it first exploded. However before too many curious locals or the Fire Department arrives a Spot Hidden roll should be attempted by all Investigators present at the blaze. If successful read the following:

"The flames roll and lick higher, changing shades of red as they consume everything they touch. For a moment it looks as if they might almost be alive...in fact, as you watch the blaze it becomes obvious, as impossible as that seems, someone or something is inside the building. Yes... as you watch intently you are positive you can make out something ALIVE in the fire"

In the flames something is indeed alive, and angry.

A Son of Veles (see the **Guides of the Dead** side bar) which is now free. Until the death of Valerie Burton (who has perished in the blaze) it resided in her necklace (coincidentally the same necklace she had found in John's luggage after his return from Russia). These creatures are known in Russia as the guides of the dead or the bringers of justice, stalking those who have murdered the owner of their resting place (in this case the necklace).

Shortly after appearing in the flames the Son makes its way out from the store and heads towards the Old Wooded Graveyard. It is easy enough to follow and will not concern itself with the characters unless they get in its way. Viewing this huge creature requires a Sanity check costing 1/1d8.

SON OF VELES, Guide of the Dead

STR	20	INT	10
CON	22	POW	17
SIZ	18	DEX	18
Move	9		
HP	20		

Weapons: *Claws* 70%, damage 1d6+1d6db.

Bite 40%, damage 1d8+1d6db

Armour: None but can only be damaged with enchanted weapons, or with a flaming stake to the heart (see the rest of the adventure). Regenerates hit points at a rate of 1 per turn, or 5 per round once under zero.

Sanity Loss: 1/1d8

If the characters do not confront the Son it lopes across the cemetery as dawn breaks. As the light creeps across the ground the characters witness an amazing sight. Where the rays of the sun strikes the creature, it becomes opaque, almost totally see through. As the sky lightens, the Son, who continues to cross the cemetery, slowly but surely vanishes, until, once bathed in full sunlight, cannot be seen at all.

If the characters confront the Son, the dawn should reach it before they are able to do too much damage to each other. If the characters go to the spot where the Son was last seen, nothing can be found. It is as if it had never really existed at all, like some sort of figment of their imaginations. The Son has, in fact, returned to its realm of existence, eagerly awaiting dusk to complete its task.

The Investigators are now working against a clock they don't even know exists if they are to have any chance of defeating the Son of Veles and saving their own lives.

After the Fire

Once all the excitement has abated the characters can return to the scene of the fire. There are a number of facts which they may or may not be able to discover about the events they have just witnessed.

It is however vitally important the characters discover the documents which describe the necklace (the casket in which the Son of Veles was imprisoned) and some of the legends which surround the Veles myth. Although these are nominally the jewellery store safe (the only item to survive the fire relatively intact) they can be

discovered at any point of the adventure. (See **The Documents** below).

Once the fire has been fully extinguished (about an hour after the first fire engine arrives) the following can be discovered:

Damage. The building is in ruins, the initial explosion and the subsequent fire blew the roof off the store and destroyed many of its walls. As a result, Haywright's Fine Jewellers is now not much more than a shell.

The scene has been cordoned off at both ends of West Main Street, with police officers questioning those who witnessed the blaze.

Although some furniture and internal wall structures have survived, albeit as wet, blackened and charred icons of destruction, only two items of any real interest can be found, a body and the safe.

What the Police know. The police will quickly piece together a number of facts about the explosion.

While the fire may or may not have been deliberately lit, natural gas was most definitely the propellant (the Fire Department states that they turned the gas off when first reaching the scene).

At this point in time it is not being treated as arson,

What really happened last night?

The body in the shop is that of Valerie Burton, burnt now beyond all recognition, the victim of her husband's plot to free himself from the insignificant life he now leads.

Early that morning John Burton had awoken his wife with a start, stating he thought he might not have turned off the gas at the store. Berated by his wife for such a stupid act, they both arose from bed, dressed and drove down to Haywright's Fine Jewellery.

Once inside John set his plan into action, apologising to his wife for obviously making a mistake, who berated him again this time for getting them out of bed, he left her standing in the shop area while he made his way into the back room. Here he flicked off the main lights, yelled that it must be a fuse, and made his way to the fuse box.

The old fuse box was already a disaster waiting to happen. Flicking off the mains, John exposed some of the lighting wires, before reinstating the power. One simple twist of the gas mains and all was set.

Valerie, still waiting for the return of the lights, heard the click of the back door closing followed by the roar of a familiar car engine. Calling out to John, she got no response and after a few moments, she made her way into the back room angrily trying to get a response from her husband. Reaching the light switch she flicked it on. The gas and one random spark did the rest.

but rather as an unfortunate accident.

The witnesses (except perhaps the Investigators) have nothing to tell, most arriving long after the blaze began.

Discovery of a body. If the characters gain access to the site they will discover a tarpaulin over the remains of an unidentified victim of the fire (although if John Burton has already visited the scene, the police can make a fair assumption it is his wife Valerie). A police officer is always present, watching the body until it is removed shortly after 12.

If any of the characters are game enough to examine the body a Sanity loss of 0/1d4 results in seeing the twisted charred corpse of Valerie Burton. The smell alone is enough to make the character retch and the police officer watching over the body is almost physically sick at the sight of it.

Nothing can be found on the body, but it is obvious the victim was fully clothed at the time of the explosion.

The Safe. This is the only object to survive the fire intact. A man high four by four-foot steel safe, it will be forced open during the initial investigation by the police. While nothing of interest is discovered inside, all the precious raw materials and jewellery pieces are moved to the police station (to be passed on once the insurance investigation begins).

There are also a number of legal and informational documents inside, most of which are receipts, orders or other jewellery related notes. There is however a number of curious and seemingly out of place documents here as well.

The Documents in the Safe

These papers are vital to future of the characters. Not only do they describe what the Investigators saw earlier that morning, they also explain why and, how it is here and more importantly, how to stop it.

Where the characters discover these papers is left up to the Keepers' discretion, although nominally they are present in the safe at Haywright's Fine Jewellers until



they are either taken by John or placed to one side by the police as unimportant. If the characters cannot get access to the scene of the fire the best suggestion is for them to be found early on while scoping out **Haywright House** (see below). If this is not possible the Keeper can allow the characters to observe the documents being placed in a police car outside the cordoned off area before mentioning that they are left unattended while the driver goes back to collect more.

A good Keeper should have no trouble getting the documents to the players no matter what the circumstance.

The documents are a note, a letter and a parchment, all relating to John's recent trip to Vladivostok in Far Eastern Russia. (See **Around Handouts 1** through **3**).

The letter of travel arrangements - Around Handout 1. This letter is about five months old and was received by John (with other documents no longer attached) from the Dormantry Travel Bureau in New York. John had actually planned on throwing out this letter with the rest of the scraps he had brought back from Russia, but somehow it ended up in the safe with some of the more important documentation from the trip.

Page from a journal - Around Handout 2. This yellowed and torn page looks as if they once formed part of someone's personal journal. Although impossible to date, one could hazard a guess that it is at least a hundred years old. Written using an older style of Russian grammar it takes two hours and a Read/Write Russian roll to translate (although it is more likely the characters will take this and the other Russian note, see below, to a translator).

The Trinket text - Around Handout 3. This is nothing more than a scrap of paper, on which is written a few simple words of modern Russian (a successful Read/Write Russian will translate it).

Learning More about the Documents

Finding out more information about the documents found in the safe is a relatively easy task. Those in Russian can be translated by anyone with a decent skill in Read/Write Russian and, although it is unlikely one of the characters will have this skill, a translator can be easily tracked down at the Miskatonic University Modern Languages Department (Russian is currently being taught by Dr Nicholai Stolpa). More about the travel itinerary can be found out by ringing the sender.

Dormantry Travel Bureau. Owned and run by Peter Dormantry this company specialises in Eastern European travel (which is still a rarity in the 1920s).

Based in New York, they cater for upper or business class travellers who wish to not only to get where they are going safely, but also with a bit of style.

If any of the Investigators contact the company directly, all inquiries are put through to Peter, who is in his late 50s and has a heavy Polish accent. Peter will not give out any information unless the characters can convince him of the importance of their call or contact him in some official capacity.

If the Investigators do get him to talk, he will actually have only very little to say about Mr Burton, except that he is a fairly regular customer (once every year or so he would organise business trips to Russia or other parts of Eastern Europe) with the last trip to Vladivostok about four months ago. John had rung not more than a week ago to say that he had returned safely and had enjoyed his trip. Peter will wrap up the conversation by stating he hopes to be able to fulfil Mr Burton's travel needs for many more years to come.

The Translated Trinket Text. Any good translator can almost immediately translate the Trinket text. They will explain it is actually a quote from a very famous book on Russian Folklore. It reads:

The Sons of Veles are the guardians of the soul, Guides in the after life. To touch their resting place is to ensure your safe passage to God.

Born from their Father's love of all that is good in the world. They reside in small trinkets awaiting the passing of their owner to help them leave the mortal coil.

The translator believes there is a copy or two of this same book in the Miskatonic University Library. It is called **The Darkness of the North: Stories from Russian Folklore** and was written at the turn of the century by a well-known Russian scholar, Sergi Romantov.

If possible the translator will also volunteer further information about Veles (a character with Read/Write Russian skill will also know this with a successful History roll), who was also known as Volos, a Russian god, whose worship extends back into the earliest of written records. Originally he is the god of music, art, poetry and animals. But later was also considered the god of flocks and herds and, because he was depicted with horns, of death and the Underworld.

As a note to the Keeper Veles/Volos was really worshipped in Russia and a search of the Internet for folklore or other mythology sites could help flesh out any questions the characters might have about this god.

Translating the page of the journal. This is a much more difficult proposition, as the style and grammar of the writing is quite old. (For an example

of this see Mallory's *Mort de Arthur* - or the legend of King Arthur which, while in English, is difficult to read due to the style of language used. This is a good way of explaining to players why Mythos books take so long to read).

It takes about two hours to get a readable translation out of the document (See **Around Handout 4**), at which point the translator, although dismissing the 'journal' as just a piece of fiction is never the less intrigued as to where the characters have got such an old and obviously important piece of Russian literature.

Although he can't date it, telling from the style of the text it is at least four hundred years old! The translator won't pressure the characters but will request that such an item would best be served in a Library or Museum.

Perhaps the most important things to come out of this journal page are:

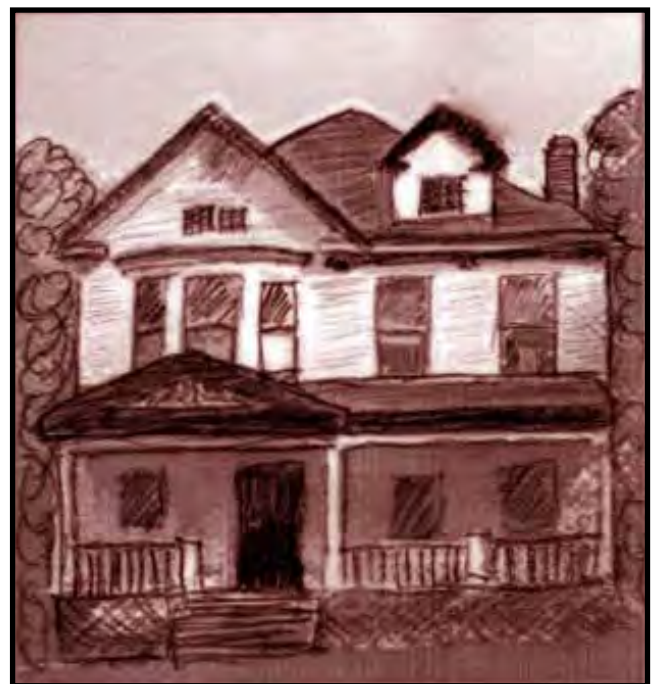
A Son of Veles is a vicious killer who tracks down those who have killed the wearer of its 'trinket'.

It kills all mortals who get in its way, or who witness it.

What is not so obvious is that it comes after dark and only those marked by the Son can hear its howls. Nevertheless this page should act as a warning to the characters that they have witnessed a relentless killer.

Darkness of the North

The Miskatonic University Library does indeed have copies of this book and, most surprisingly from the Investigators point of view, they are held on the regular



stacks of that building.

A successful Library Use roll will enable the characters to locate the book and find the passages relating to the Sons of Veles. (See **Around Handout 5**).

These pages are the characters key to understanding and defeating the Son of Veles - before it starts hunting them down as well.

The story of the Woodsman defeating the Son of Veles holds the three key points needed for a successful conclusion to the character's investigation:

Sons are invisible during the daylight; so even if the characters have defeated the creature the chances are it will return tonight at dusk.

A Son is stunned by seeing its own reflection, although why this is so is not explained.

While stunned it can be killed by driving a flaming arrow (a stake or any other wooden implement will also work) into its heart.

If the characters have already visited the Haywright House and encountered Mrs McTighe, they will be able to work out who the murderer is and therefore who the Son is tracking.

Haywright House

John and Valerie received Haywright House as part of their inheritance. A two-storey villa situated on a large piece of land at 219 West Miskatonic Ave, it is an example of early 1840s Arkham architecture, with extensive use of high stud ceilings and gabled roofing typical of the era of its construction.

Old Man Haywright, although frugal, decorated the interior with many interesting (but mundane) pieces of art, most of which still remain. The majority of the everyday furniture is old restored antique pieces, not because Haywright was too cheap to purchase anything new, but rather as a result of his hobby - carpentry and woodturning (his lathe and other tools now reside in an unused shed at the back of the section, collecting dust).

Since taking possession of the house, just over a year ago, John and Valerie have done little to the building or the land on which it stands. Although the Haywright House is not a manor by any stretch of the imagination, it is situated on a large property typical of Arkham's upper-middle class. The section in the front is private and enclosed by a large well-groomed hedge, while the back yard (which is the size of a normal Arkham city property) is lush with trees and gardens. Two utility sheds and a garage are also located near the rear of the section.

Front Garden and Porch: The front of the Haywright House is neat and tidy, the hedges have all

recently been trimmed and the garden weeded. If it is after 10am, the mail has been delivered, but consists of nothing more than bills and statements. There is nothing of real interest here to any Investigators, until they reach the front porch, at which point they will notice a bouquet of flowers with a note attached.

Valerie, John

Have just heard about the fire! Hope all well and safe!

Eric and Melissa

This is from family friends, who are as yet unaware of Valerie's demise. If tracked down Eric and his wife Melissa have nothing to add to the investigation, rather than stating their concern about the well being of the Burtons.

Backyard, Garage and Sheds: The backyard is just as tidy as the front, with weeded gardens and low cut grass. A number of flowerbeds are showing the first signs of life in the spring.

The garage is locked at all times but once opened is tidy and clean inside. A car, a new Chevrolet 490 Touring, is only present when John is in the house. Nothing much else is in here except a few tools, stored art and antiques (Old Man Haywright's tastes weren't always matched by his heirs).

The larger of the two sheds is used to store gardening equipment (trowels, spades, shovels and hoes are all lined up nicely against the walls), while in one corner firewood is neatly stacked. The smaller shed is full of Old Man Haywright's carpentry and woodturning equipment. Dusty, but in useable condition this has sat in here since John and Valerie took ownership of the house. A number of unfinished pieces of furniture are also present.

Down Stairs: This consists of a Sunroom, Dining Room, Kitchen and Family Lounge. In general this floor is very tidy, with the floors clean and the rooms spotless, the only things that will be out of place depends on what time of the day the Investigators enter the house. If it is between 9am and 6pm they will discover three packed bags near the front door. If examined these bags contain just mens clothing and other personal items. It seems however as if someone is prepared for a long trip away (there is enough changes of clothing to last many weeks). If the characters arrive after 6pm the bags are still there, however in the front room a number of sympathy notes and bunches of flowers have been dumped. All the notes are unread, including any the characters might have left, and if opened all express sympathy over the destruction of Haywrights. These are from the Burton's friends and neighbours and none mention anything about Valerie's death.



Everything else is as one would expect to find in a house of the Burton's standing - the kitchen well stocked, plenty of liquor in the alcohol cabinet etc.

Upstairs: The second story of the house is much like the first, clean and tidy throughout. This floor consists of four bedrooms of various sizes and a small study/workroom.

Of all the bedrooms only the master looks as if it is lived in, the others all have that slightly empty look of guest rooms. In the master bedroom, a large range of clothing, both mens and women's can be found, also there are a number of personal items displayed around the room, including many jewellery and art pieces. If the bedside tables are searched, a .32 pistol with a box of 25 rounds will be found along with a licence for the weapon (for personal defence). John Burton is napping in this room from about 6 to 7pm (before the Son arrives at dusk).

The study/workroom is the only other room that looks as if it is used. This contains a large desk (which has good lighting situated around it) and a filing cabinet. The files contain a number of tax, legal and personal documents most pertaining to the running of Haywright's Fine Jewellery. If examined and a successful Accounting roll is made, it will be revealed that not only are the Burtons in a strong financial position (Haywright's business is booming as of late - the late Avery's aim of purchasing cheap and selling expensive has certainly paid off), there is also a number of large life insurance policies on both Valerie and John. If the desk is searched a number of jewellery tools and other jewellery maintenance equipment is found.

A Day in the Life of John Burton

The following is a description of what John does during the day following the murder of his wife and the destruction of the store. This should help the Keeper determine where he is, if and when the Investigators start to try and find him.

Shortly after leaving his wife at Haywright's Fine Jewellery store, John watches the destruction of his shop before returning home to await the inevitable fall out. About 6.30am he receives a visit from Luther Hardin, Arkham's Chief of Detectives, and two officers. Hardin explains the situation to John, who then reveals that "his wife awoke early this morning, and unable to sleep said that she would go to the store early and prepare for the days work ahead". When the fact that a body has been discovered in the store is mentioned, John breaks down in tears (only some of which is acting).

John and the police then visit the sight of the burnt out building and John is asked a few more questions, most of which he answers honestly - yes the shop was insured, and yes his wife often came down early to ensure everything was secured on the premises etc.

While Hardin is a little suspicious of John, mainly due to the odd events surrounding the fire and death of Valerie, he leaves the jeweller to his own devices for the rest of the day.

Again John returned home, this time to pack for his trip to New York. Between then and 10am the phone rings a number of times (friends who have seen/heard of the fire and reporters trying to get further information - no one at this time knows of Valerie's death) but he doesn't answer (nor does he respond to any visitors at his door).

Shortly after 10am John heads out to visit both his lawyer and insurance company, foolishly leaving a New York Hotel as his forwarding address with both (if John does somehow make it to New York, the police will eventually track him down and arrest him for the murder of his wife).

After 1pm John is at a bit of a loose end, he doesn't want to go home (and be forced to deal with media and/or friends) so instead he takes a drive west to Aylesbury. During this drive, he gets the first pangs of guilt over the murder of his wife, although by the time he returns, at 6 that evening, he has fully justified his actions to himself.

After returning home, he collects his mail and any flowers/notes awaiting him and dumps them in the front room unread. At this point he is tempted to immediately leave for New York, but since it has already been a long day he retires to his room to rest for a few hours.

Unless otherwise disturbed John Burton is found dead the next morning, torn to pieces at the foot of the staircase.

Mrs McTighe

Julia McTighe has always been a go-getter and neighbourhood personality (some would call her a busybody) and has become even more so since the death of her husband. Speaking with a southern drawl, even though she is in her early seventies and has lived in Arkham for almost 40 years, Mrs McTighe is willing to talk to most people about most things.

Living next door to the Haywrights for more than half her life she is probably the leading authority on their family. Julia holds the key to why events have unfolded the way they have, and even has a discarded letter to back her story up.

Mrs McTighe will intercept the characters if they are skulking around Haywright House and, as a fiercely independent woman, will even approach them if they have broken into the Burton's home (as long as they don't wander around brandishing weapons of course). Julia has learnt of the fire earlier in the morning (as does most of Arkham) and will initially suspect the Investigators of being plain clothed police officers and/or reporters.

If she can be convinced of the characters good intentions (whether they have good intention or not is another question entirely) she has this to say:

About John and Valerie Burton. *"You don't live next to a family for forty some years and not learn about their dirty laundry...ya know? John and Valerie been having their troubles ever since they hitched up, or so said old Avery, and since they buried that old coot in the ground they have been going at it like cats and dogs. Or should I say SHE has," Julia spits out the word 'She'.*

"That's right, Valerie is a mean hearted woman. Got the worse bits of her old pa and ma, God rest their souls. Never satisfied with what poor John gives her. She accuses him of all sorts of things, none of which, to mah knowledge, is true."

"All I can say is, from what I hear through the walls, is I'm surprised that he don't leave her... but then again if he dida that then he'd lose the store then eh." She laughs, "Not much good that did him, coose it gone now."

Valerie's inheritance. *"That right... it all belongs to Valerie, old man Avery told me once he'd never leave anything to that dopey son-in-law of his, he didn't know what his daughter saw in the man".*

The Fire. *"Oh yesa, I heard about that, but then ain't*

everyone? Bit of a doozey from whats I keep hearing... why you know anything more?"

If the characters are aware Valerie is dead and they tell Mrs McTighe, she will immediately go and get the letter (see below).

However if the characters do not tell her of the death, but convince Julia of their need to know more information she will say:

"Well I kinda guess there is something you oughta know then..." Julia trails off, as if weighing up her options.

"You just wait here a moment anda... I'll get something you'll want to see" With that she totters off, disappearing into her house next door.

This gives the characters a few moments to talk before Mrs McTighe returns with a piece of paper in hand.

To My Dearest Love...

The piece of paper Julia hands the characters is a letter, crumpled and botched as if previously wet. She is almost reluctant to hand it to them.

Julia McTighe hands you the dirty and crushed piece of paper saying, "Don't think bad of him, he is a nice man, if a bit foolish...Valerie doesn't love him, and now after the fire... this could be his only chance for happiness".

If asked how it came into her possession Julia explains she found it in her garden a week ago. Originally she thought it was just a piece of rubbish but on closer examination discovered it to be much more interesting. She had planned on quietly returning it to John, but had yet to have a chance.

If she is now aware of Valerie's death, Julia insists the information goes to the police (she doesn't honestly think John killed her, - he is just too well tempered and quiet to do that - but knows that to withhold evidence is an offence).

The letter itself is a bit of a mess, but can be made out easily enough. **(See Around Handout 1).**

The contents are pretty well self-explanatory and, if taken to the police, John Burton will become suspect number one.

Following up Joanne. With no address or contact details on the letter it is rather difficult to track down Joanne in any short period of time. However any investigation into the girl will reveal that Joanne Carter is a secretary for DeBeers of New York (a diamond mining company based in South Africa). Neither her nor her family are rich, nor does any evidence (bar the letter) lend support to the fact that she and John have

a relationship.

If Joanne is approached she denies knowing John Burton, although in reality she is aware his marriage is the key to his income and will do nothing to jeopardise this.

Other Avenues of Investigation

If the characters decide to ask around town about Burtons or Avery Haywright, they will soon discover most locals know of them.

It was hard for people to forget Old Man Haywright, even though he has been dead and buried in Christchurch Cemetery for over a year. He was a cantankerous old coot, with an opinion on everything. He would have run for mayor in his younger days, but he was smart enough to know that no one would have voted for him. His jewellery however was unsurpassed in quality and his reputation extended from New York City to Augusta in Maine. No one knew of his dislike for his son-in-law, but to be honest no one would have been surprised to learn of the fact.

Most people will have little to say about John, except that he is a quiet, dry man. Professionally he has a good reputation for quick and excellent work sold at an acceptable price (Haywright's has always been top draw jewellery and their prices reflect that).

Valerie Burton on the other gets an opinion out of every one, either you like her or you don't. She sat on almost every citizen board run by the council and a

few others besides. She has a reputation for ensuring things get done, for better or worse! Those that agreed with her attitudes and thoughts became firm friends, while those that didn't were sworn enemies.

As for the Burtons as a couple, most people know, or records can be found of their marriage 12 years ago. They met at a Miskatonic University Dinner party (even back then Valerie was know for her strong will - head of the University Temperance Union) and had an immediate attraction to each other. Shortly afterwards, with Valerie graduating with a degree in Liberal Studies, they announced their engagement and were married within the year. John, who had completed his apprenticeship a year earlier, came to work with Avery Haywright at the store.

Of the people in Arkham that call the Burton's friends, most are upper or upper-middle class, and will not talk to anyone other than the police about them. As it is, most are unaware of the disharmony in the relationship - Valerie made sure of that.

Those who really know John and Valerie best are their employees. Like many of the upper-middle class of the time, the Burtons employ a number of people to clean and maintain the house on a part time basis (gone are the days of live-in housekeepers). With a little polite questioning the following people can be found.

Betty Wright: An Afro-American woman who works as a part time cook for the Burtons. She likes Mr Burton, and can attest to Mrs Burton's wild temper. Betty can relate stories about the many times Valerie has made a mountain out of a molehill when it came to



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minor decisions in the house.

Argus Whately: Of the untainted Arkham Whatelys. Argus, who is now in his early sixties, is employed to help Valerie maintain the impressive Haywright House garden. A farmer by trade, Argus has recently left his farm to his 'young'ins' and had originally planned to retire in town. He found, however, that he was not yet ready for a sedentary life and as such enjoys helping out around the gardens of others in the town.

If questioned about the Burtons he will say he really only knows Mrs Burton, Mr Burton did not have much to do with the garden. However Argus will say the Burton's bad temper was not all one way, relating an incident where he witnessed John trample a bed of prize roses after a particularly loud argument with his wife.

Other household staff: Most other staff work only on a causal or temporary basis, mainly through one of Arkham's cleaning agencies. If any are tracked down, they will all have stories to tell about Mrs Burton ranting like a mad women over some insignificant event or incident. Most really don't mind if they never work at the Haywright House ever again.

Jewellers at Haywrights: The Burtons employ two other Jewellers at the store, both of whom will be rather distraught upon hearing the news that their place of employment has just burnt down.

Lawrence Cabot, now in his late 50s, has worked all his life at Haywright's. Not much liking either Valerie (her temper) nor John (his approach is too laid back - when compared to Avery Haywright), he is more than willing to say the Burtons fought like cats and dogs, with Valerie winning most of their arguments. He sees Valerie as a pain in the neck, always trying to get her own way, regardless of whether she is right or not and John not being man enough to stand up to her. Lawrence often cops abuse from Valerie, as he is left in charge of the day-to-day running of the store whenever John is out of town. However it is this authority, which he would not get anywhere else, that keeps him from leaving Haywright's.

Karl West, 18, is an apprentice and has been working for the Burtons for just over a year. He has nothing but good things to say about John - he listens to Karl's comments and takes time to train him. He has, however, witnessed on many occasions the swift temper of Valerie, so much so he is now frightened of her. Karl also dislikes Lawrence, although this is because the old hand believes in the more 'traditional' way of training apprentices.

An Evening of Fire, Fur and Not Much Fun

By the time the evening arrives the characters should have gathered enough evidence to understand what is going on.

If they haven't, the next day the papers will detail the discovery of the grizzly remains of one John Burton in his own home. The next night however the characters will all get a visit from an angry and vengeful Son of Veles, as it tracks down those who have seen it stalking its original prey.

It is anticipated the characters will arrive prior to dusk on that first, but with John already in the house. Burton resists all attempts to get him to leave and it is highly likely he will believe somehow the Investigators know of the murder.

If pushed or threatened in any way John will a) try and get the gun which is in the bedroom upstairs and/or b) make his way to the car and off to New York (with his bags if possible).

John isn't a cold-blooded killer (he justifies killing his wife as a form of self-defence) but he will defend himself and is not against firing a few warning shots if someone gets too close.

JOHN BURTON, Arkham Jeweller, Age 32

STR	10	EDU	16	Know	80%
CON	12	POW	9	Luck	45%
SIZ	13	INT	15	Idea	75%
DEX	16	APP	12	HP	13
SAN	32 (after killing his wife)				

Damage Bonus: +0

Weapons: *Fist*, 50%, damage 1d3+db

.32 Revolver, 30%, damage 1d8

Skills: Acting 50%, Accounting 60%, Art (Jewellery) 70%, Bargain 80%, Credit Rating 30%(80% in Arkham), Fast Talk 30%, Library Use 20%, Listen 30%, Pistol 30%, Psychology 60%, Spot Hidden 70%, Fist 50%, Throw 45%.

Once dusk settles over the city a successful Listen roll allows an Investigator to hear a distant howl (unless, of course they haven't seen the Son, in which case they cannot hear the creature). Over the next 5 minutes the howl gets closer and a Sanity check is need by all those hearing the Sons approach (0/1).

Before long the Son appears, this also requires a Sanity check, even if the Investigators have seen the creature previously (the maximum loss for seeing a Son of Veles is a total of 8 points - see 'Getting Used to Awfulness' under the Sanity Rules section of the Rule book). It immediately attacks John who, stunned and shocked, fires an ineffectual round at the beast, before it probably cuts him down in one turn (unless, of course, the characters can somehow intervene).

Until John is killed the Son will focus all its attention on him, this should allow the characters time to set up anything they require to defeat the creature. Once John is killed however the Son will immediately turn on the closest Investigator.

The Son can be stunned by showing it its own reflection, this has the same effect as stunning the beast (see 'Stunning' under the Rules and Skills section of the Call of Cthulhu Rule book). The creature can only be stunned once a day in this way, as it will try and avert its eyes if tricked into looking at a mirror again.

To defeat the Son of Veles, its heart must be pierced with flaming wood. How the characters arrange to do this is up to them, although any object hitting the creature's chest will only puncture the heart if an Impale is rolled (depending of course on the individual party's stats and how the Keeper sees the adventure panning out).

If enough mundane damage is done to 'kill' the Son, it collapses to the ground, regenerating hit points back at 5 per round until above half, at which point it will leap up and continue its attack. (Of course in such a state a 'dead' Son is much easier to vanquish).

Hopefully this gives a lot of scope for a Keeper to develop a fluid yet interesting combat situation - with the Son chasing John or one of the characters, while the rest try and impale the beast with the wood.

Once the Son of Veles is vanquished it drops to the ground howling in pain, striking out at anyone close enough to hit. Hearing its death throes costs 0/1 Sanity.

As it passes away in front of the characters its face contorts, with the image of the beasts last victim appearing over the wolf-like muzzle. This sight costs 1/1d4 Sanity, although if the Son's last victim was one of the Investigators this cost could increase. If John survives, the creature's face becomes that of an old man, with dark rustic features (no-one recognises him).

Moments later the human faced Son begins to fade, until eventually nothing but the characters wounds remain to prove it ever existed at all.

Conclusion

During this adventure the characters may or may not have a moral dilemma on their hands. John Burton did indeed kill his wife, although if he survives, states he had no other choice, she had treated him no better than a dog.

The Investigators may think the retribution handed out by the Son of Veles is deserved enough to allow the 'murder' of Burton to go ahead, even though they

might be aware it is only a matter of time before the Son comes after them also.

If the characters decide to involve the police in the matter, they will only be believed if they have the love letter from Mrs McTighe. If this is the case, Harden will have the evidence he needs to confirm his suspicions, and will immediately try and locate John Burton. If he is arrested prior to the return of the Son, the result will not be a pretty sight, as all of the officers stationed at the jail, along with John are found dead the next morning.

Having John arrested after stopping the Son of Veles has little if any effect on this adventure, although it may help the players consciences.


In the end there is no right or wrong conclusion to the adventure, although the Sanity gains handed out do reflect the actions they took to keep deaths to a minimum.

If the Investigators defeat the Son of Veles and keep John alive (regardless of whether he stands trial for the death of Valerie), each earns 1d12 Sanity.

If the Investigators defeat the Son of Veles, but John dies, while they are trying to protect him, each earns 1d8 Sanity only.

If the Investigators defeat the Son of Veles, but do not even try to save John, they only receive 1d4 Sanity.

If the police arrested John for the murder of Valerie. Regardless of the outcome after this point the characters will only receive 1d4 Sanity. However for every innocent person that dies - the Son has no compunction killing all in its way to get to John - the Investigators must lose one point of Sanity.

In the end both John and Valerie probably got what they deserved for not respecting each other as people. It's just another case of what goes around... comes around! 

On the Unbound Website

What Goes Around...

- D20 Stats for What Goes Around...

Visit the Unbound Book Website @
www.unboundbook.org

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Around 2 - Page from a journal

Arkham Art Specialists
>>Dealers of Antiquities & Fine Art<<



1/43 Walnut Street,
Arkham, MA
New England

Rise 1 - Booth Business Card

сорок пятьсот шесть шестна-дцать ты я
шестьсот семь семнадцать шестьдесят
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Around 3 - The Trinket text

Handouts

The following Handouts are to be used with the adventures as labelled.

Due to space restrictions some handouts may need to be enlarged before use.

Around 6 - Burton Loveletter

Joanne,

Am I never to be free of the legacy of my Father in Law.
His name hangs above my door as an ever-present omen of my failures.

If only I could break her hold on the money I would leave at once and
come to you in New York.

But there seems little chance of that. Why she is much worse than her
father ever was.

My Joanne I love you so much and it is with a sad heart that I must
say that I had to give her the necklace. She found it in my luggage
on my return.

Christ! Is not even a mans own portage sacred!

I have to rid myself of her and gain the inheritance...

Soon my love soon.

John

... and as night fell we could hear it coming, Veles the guide of the dead. It's arrival proved only that one of us was the killer of the Cossack girl.

This was the proof, if the guide came then we could not deny that one of us had gone back and had killed her. Revenge for the deaths of our own children.

It came like lightening to the house, a sundering apart the braced door. Its eyes like black pools of chaos it searched for the killer. Jacques... Why did he do it!

And yet for all his begging it did no good as Veles ripped him in two. And nor did we stop him, no, for none desired to be guided as well...

But then it turned on Demtri and Varese, why oh why!! It seemed that all those who witnessed it became souls it desired.

And then was my turn. Unable to stop the beast I to was dead... I awoke at dawn a week later to the discover of Cossacks had found my shattered body, and saved by life.

Yet although I healed in time it took me seasons to walk, forever cursed never to forget the Son of Veles... ever!

Around 1 - The letter of travel arrangements

Around 4 - Translated Journal



Dormantry Travel Bureau

5310 West 81ST Street, Lower Manhattan, NY
Specialising in East European Travel since 1897.

Dear Mr Burton,

Please find enclosed your travel itinerary.

Be aware that your Liner leaves pending last tide on the noted dated.

Unfortunately we are unable to yet confirm the name of the Liner on which you will completed your return voyage, although we will advise you of this on arrival in Vladivostok.

We wish your journey is a pleasant and safe one, and do hope you find Russia an exciting and wondrous country.

Yours Sincerely,

Peter Domantry

Peter Domantry,

Travel Manager - Dormantry Travel Bureau

Around 5 - Darkness of the North**Extracts from "The Darkness of the North: Stories from Russian Folk lore"**

by Sergi Romantov

The Sons of Volos, The Guides of Death, The Guardians of the Soul, The Bringers of Revenge. The Sons of Veles are known by all these names, and yet the people of Russia do not fear them. Many of the old stories tell of the deeds of men that would go unpunished. How the Slavs killed the Cossack and the Magyar slaughtered the Chechens or how woman and children were rode down by horses or burnt in their homes.

But at the same time all knew that with the passing of these men's lives they would at last pay for their sins. Not of course by any mortal means, but instead to Veles the God of the Underworld, who, as punishment for their crimes would not allow them to sleep eternal. Yet Veles hated the chaos man wrought on each other, and wished they instead danced or sang, made merry or made love. Above all he loved animals and those that treated flocks and herds with the respect they deserved - for was it not the herds that fed man.

As a reward to those men and women who cherished his creatures he gave them a gift, a stone, in which resided a Son of Veles. This stone although precious in life, was more so in death, as on the passing of the physical the Son that resided within awoke and guided the departed to the loving arms of Veles, safe from those evil souls that still tried so hard to reach the underworld. Unfortunately today these stones are long gone, vanished like those that worshipped Veles.

The Sons of Veles. Large and immensely strong they were said to have guided the dead in the form of a wolf. Invisible during the day they always return at night to complete their one and only task. In all the stories that speaks of them there is but one that tells of a Son of Veles being stopped from completing it's task.

That tale speaks of a evil man on his deathbed who, by some vicious deed, had acquired a Stone of Veles. Now a local Woodsman learnt of this crime against Veles and prayed to the God for guidance. Veles, being a loving and caring God, heard these prayers and came to the Woodsman, who in turn explained what had happened. Upon hearing this Veles was full of sorrow, for although he did not wish for the evil man to enter the underworld he knew his Son would not be stopped from fulfilling his task, even if his father wished it. The Woodsman then asked if nothing could defeat a Son of Veles and the God cried out in sadness. Yes, he did know of a way of defeating his Son but he loved him almost as much as he loved mankind so was loathed to tell.

Yet Veles, the God, had little choice, an evil soul could not enter the underworld without balance and peace being lost in the world, and so with tears in his eyes told the Woodsman the secrets of his own Son's demise.

That night as the evil man died the Woodsman lay in wait. And as the Son of Veles arose from his slumber the Woodsman did as the God bid. Big and fearsome although the Son was the Woodsman challenged him. With prism of mirrors he dared to show the Son its true reflection. Stunned then, the Woodsman raised his bow and lit the head of one of his arrows. Taking aim not to miss the Woodsman let fly, striking the Son in the heart. And how did the Son cry out, its task could not be completed.

As it fled back to the arms of his father, it vowed that from that day forth its brothers would hunt to the ends of the earth those that harmed the bearers of their stones, so never again would a Son fail in its task.

And Veles wept.