



**CURSE
OF THE
YELLOW
SIGN**

Written by John Wick

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INSPIRATION

The King in Yellow and the Yellow Sign are creations of Robert W. Chambers.

The Yellow Sign depicted here was designed by Kevin Ross.

A tip of the mask to Shirley Jackson, Stephen King and Stanley Kubrick

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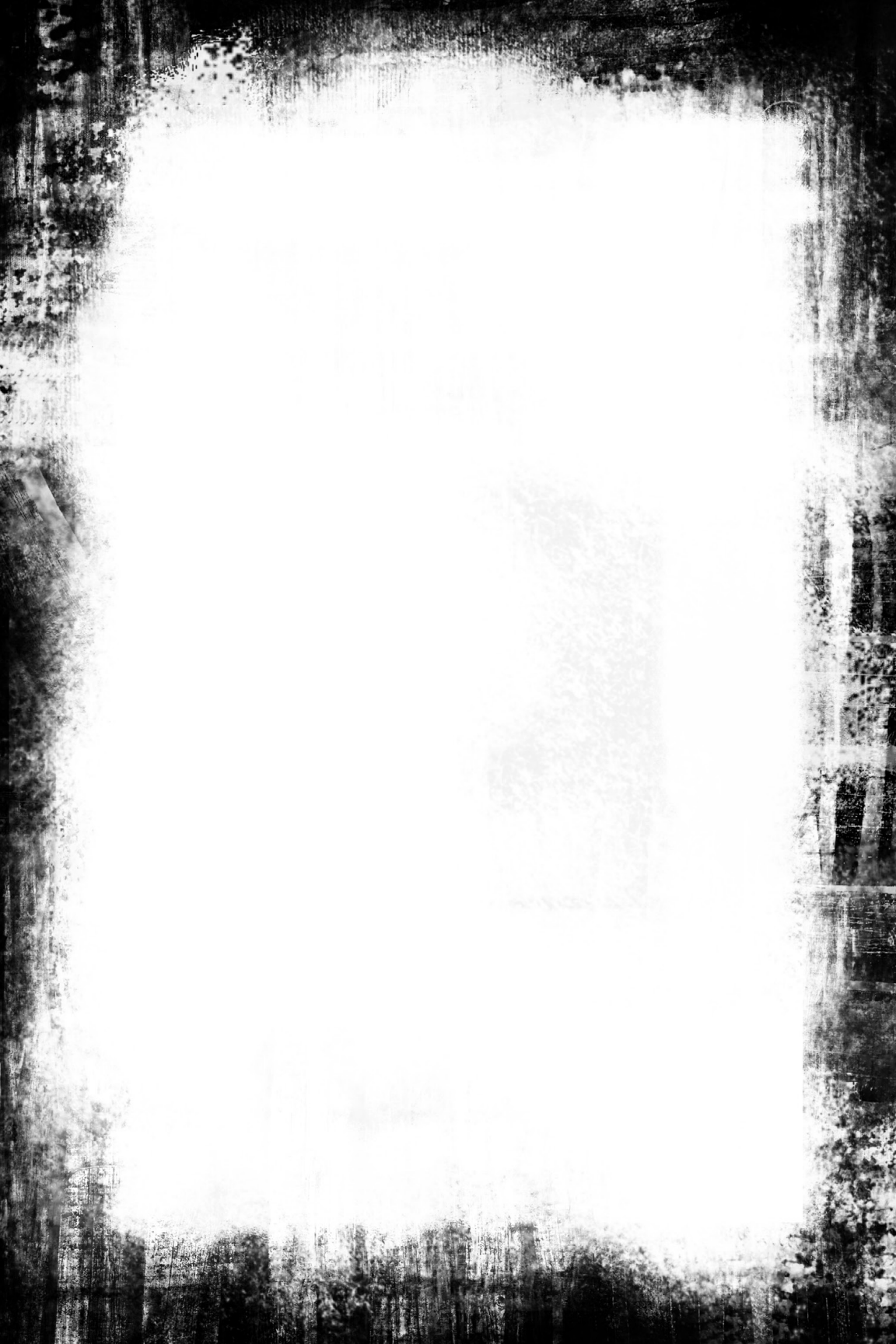
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I have murdered civilizations.

I have murdered gods.

And now, you ask me for mercy.

Welcome to *Curse of the Yellow Sign*.

The three scenarios in this book are not “adventures.” Nor are they “mysteries.”

There are no monsters or cultists. No murders to solve. No moldy tomes, no spells, and no magic items. Just ordinary human beings who must face the raw, merciless power of the universe.

This is not the world of H.P. Lovecraft. It is the world of Robert Chambers. Two very different places. In Lovecraft’s vision, the universe is cold, distant and alien. If there is a god, it doesn’t even know we exist. In Chambers’ vision, there most definitely is a god... and it finds us all very amusing.

Curse of the Yellow Sign explores a part of the Cthulhu Mythos often overlooked by published scenarios. Instead of playing investigators armed with Elder Signs and sorcery doing battle with the minions of the Old Ones, your players will be thrust into strange and nihilistic worlds the likes Chambers would imagine.

The scenarios presented here are each designed to be played in a single night. The actual bulk of these stories are only a few pages long; most of this book concerns GM advice, tricks, props and options. That’s because the whole experience rests on you creating an atmosphere to thrill and terrify your players.

This isn’t monster hunting. Oh, no. It’s something entirely different.

The scenarios in *Digging for a Dead God* are not linear. Instead, I've offered you something more like a sandbox game: you have characters and environments and certain events that occur, but there is no step-by-step, clue-by-clue progress. I'll give you all the information you need to play in the sandbox (including Locations, NPCs, etc.), but once the scenario gets started, it's really up to you and the players.

But before we go any further, if you would allow me, I'd like to spend just a few hundred words on philosophy. Just a few hundred. There's a game Lovecraft scholars play and that's adding your own viewpoint to the Mythos. This is my chance. And I'm not going to waste it.

THE HASTUR HERESY

I'm a big fan of heresy.

If you know anything about the Cthulhu Mythos (and since you bought this, I assume you do), you know all about Lovecraft's inheritor, August Derleth and his creation, the Unspeakable One, Hastur.

Derleth originally suggested HPL call his cannon "the Hastur Mythos," but Lovecraft declined. Later, after the Old Man's death, Derleth's creation slowly grew in importance. This was no accident, nor was it a coincidence. And many saw it as intentional heresy.

While I personally don't like Derleth's interpretation of the Mythos (and its decidedly Christian flavor), I do love me some heresy. And so, as my own Lovecraft scholarship started to bloom, I found a bit of grudging respect for Auggie and his Unspeakable Fellow. I chased down the origin of Hastur and discovered Robert Chambers' incredible *The King in Yellow* and Arthur Machen's *The Three Impostors*. And since then, I've been a fan. Not of August Derleth, but of Chambers and Machen and their creepy, weird universes. I had seen the Yellow Sign and I could not un-see it.

Besides, the source of horror in *The King in Yellow* isn't a moldy old book, but a play. *A play!* That immediately got my attention. It was here the idea that a *book* could drive the reader insane was invented.

Lovecraft stole that idea (as he should have) and ran with it. But it was with Chambers that the idea began. I like to take my madness from the source.

Hidden by cryptic references, we never get a good look at exactly how or why *The King in Yellow* corrupts the creative mind. I have my own hypothesis and I'm using it in this series of stories. You see, it all has to do with information...

THE INFECTION OF DANGEROUS MEMES

Consider the concept of the Big Bang: all of existence—even beyond our own planet—crammed into a point within a point within a point. Everything that has ever existed, everything that exists, everything that will ever exist. Our universe, something bigger than our language can convey, reduced down to a singularity, something smaller than our language can convey. And then, it exploded. An explosion so huge, after billions of years, we're still feeling its effects. We have no way to communicate that concept, so we use poetic language to express it...

"Let there be Light..."

A language to communicate such a thing is too grand for mere words to convey. A symbol. A sign. A sign to communicate a truth so awful, it cannot be unseen. A message so terrible, it cannot be unheard. Burned into your brain, it lays seeds that eventually blossom into absolute madness.

Lovecraft's view of the universe is one of alien incoherence. Inhuman R'lyeh dreams under the waves and the Daemon Sultan spins mindlessly at the center of the universe, showing how naked and alone mankind truly is. Too inconsequential to even be noticed, humanity is a brief moment of consciousness naive to its true impotence. The horrors of the Mythos can't even be bothered to notice us.

But then there's the Yellow Sign. Like a wayward branch of the Mythos, it stands alone, luring creative and sensitive minds to its call. The creatures and entities associated with it seem to have noticed mankind... and find us playthings. Amusing and disposable.

Writers who adopted the mythology begun by Chambers have adopted his style of surreal nihilism. Of all the hoary tomes in the Mythos, the book most associated with the sign—*The King in Yellow*—is a play. Not the rabid scribblings of a madman, but a *play*. Another distinction that makes the Chambers mythology that much more... *fun*.

Curse of the Yellow Sign is a series of surreal stories. I use the word “stories” deliberately here. These are not adventures. There are no investigators, there are no clues, no mysteries to solve, no visits to the library, no ancient tomes to scan for spells. None of these stories are your typical “Cthulhu adventure.” The dangers here are dangers of the mind. Yes, there are physical dangers, but more importantly, these stories are meant to *terrify* and *unnerve* your group, not challenge their tactical and strategic skills. More than likely, the characters they play will not survive the stories unscathed—physically or mentally.

The purpose here is not to play a campaign, but to step through the pages of a short story collection, encountering new characters and situations with each tale, leaving them behind when you are done. Like Chambers’ own collection of weird stories (*The King in Yellow*), we will see re-occurring themes and symbols, but each story is self-contained. Hopefully, repeat visits to the collection will enhance each subsequent tale.

Three stories all bound by the Yellow Sign, *The King in Yellow*, *Carcosa* and other Chambers creations. *Digging for a Dead God* is the closest to a “traditional” scenario, but don’t get too comfortable: this story is anything but your daddy’s Cthulhu. The players take the roles of the most iconic villains in Western history: they’re going to be playing Nazi officers in Africa, mining diamonds. The second scenario, *Calling the King*, centers on the play and the consequences of exposing such a thing to creative and fragile minds. Finally, *Archimedes 7* asks the question, “What happens when an AI sees the Yellow Sign?”

AVHRIL: THE MAN IN BLACK

A re-occurring figure in *Curse of the Yellow Sign* is the Man in Black. What he is exactly is up for debate. He could be a Great Old One. He

could be an abstract thought made real. He could also be an avatar of Nyarlathotep. Or, he could just be the summation of all mankind's nihilistic thoughts made manifest. In Act 1, it manifests as a figure from Germanic folklore. In Act 2, the King in Yellow. In Act 3, a seemingly beneficent artificial intelligence called "Archie." All of these are fitting archetypes for Avhril to take.

My own take (which may or may not be correct) is Avhril is not a sentient creature—as Cthulhu, Hastur and Nyralathotep appear to be—and more of a manifestation of consciousness. In fact, it may be *created* by self-awareness: a force that cannot manifest unless conscious creatures become aware of it. Long ago, an ancient Race became aware of Avhril and were destroyed by it. But, in the last moments of their existence, they trapped Avhril, locking it away forever.

Now, your players are about to encounter it for the first time.

HORROR VS. DARK FANTASY

I have this joke I always tell about making a set of *Call of Cthulhu* dice. Actually, you really only need one die; you don't even need a set. And, it's not really a die, but a weighted marble and on one side it says, "You're dead" and on the other it says, "You're insane."

That's the legend of *Call of Cthulhu*. Either your character dies or goes insane. The mortality rate of characters is insanely high. Nobody expects to get out alive. Except... that's not really the way it goes. Gamers are gamers and when you tell them "Nobody survives a *Call of Cthulhu* game," they take that as a kind of challenge. Their characters stock up on TNT and machine guns and other equipment. They approach the adventure like they'd approach any fantasy adventure: with an eye at survival.

Needless to say, many folks who write *CoC* adventures enable this behavior. They write adventures that can be "survived." Lots of weapon stats and rules for explosives and vehicle speeds. Tactical design anticipating gamer tactical thinking.

Well, I didn't design *CotYS* with this mentality. (Thus, my deliberate use of the words "story" and "scenario" rather than "adventure.") I don't expect the characters to survive. If they do, it has more to do with

chance than any decisions the characters make. If they do survive, the characters are permanently scarred—both physically and mentally.

This isn't dark fantasy, this is horror. Let me explain the difference. It really comes down to the difference between *Alien* and *Aliens*. *Alien* is horror and *Aliens* is dark fantasy.

In *Alien*, the crew members don't have a chance. One-by-one, the xenomorph murders each of them. Killed by a horror they don't really understand. Every attempt they make to control it or lock it down fails. In the end, the only reason Ripley survives is pure luck. Sure, she had a plan, and yeah, it worked, but come on. Let's be honest. They *all* had plans. Brett had a plan, Dallas had a plan... they all had plans. And all those plans failed. That's the part of horror that *really* works. You're watching (or reading), and you hear about The Plan and you think, "That's a good plan. I'd go along with that plan." Then, the plan fails and you think, "Oh @#\$. If that was me, I'd be dead, too."

There's a reason Ripley's singing "You're my lucky star." She's praying this stupid idea will work because *she's got nothing else*. That's horror. You are alone and naked against an inhuman foe that wants to do unspeakable things to you. Not because of who you are, but just because you're warm and wet and a good place to lay eggs.

Aliens, on the other hand, is dark fantasy. The heroes aren't running from the horror, they're fighting it. And they have a chance to win. Sure, they get their asses handed to them at the beginning, but that's just to remind all of us how dangerous that horror truly is. But while *Alien* is about fear, *Aliens* is about courage. Fighting. *Alien* is about running away and *Aliens* is about standing up and fighting.

That's the difference.

Now, you may ask, "John, why are you bringing this up?"

Because this story isn't about standing up and fighting. This isn't dark fantasy. This is horror.

You may want to warn your players ahead of time.

NO CHANCE IN HELL

I should warn you: there is little chance for character survival. This is the bleak darkness of Chambers' vision made manifest. Think of the two "survivors" of John Carpenter's *The Thing*. Think of the "survivors" of Ridley Scott's *Alien*. Think of the "survivors" of any truly horrific experience. They are, in fact, *survivors* in the plainest sense of the word: they lived through the experience. They didn't win. They *survived*.

I always make sure my players know this when I run these stories. Your players should have this understanding before you begin. This is not a standard roleplaying game adventure. This is the Cthulhu Mythos. You've just taken a single step out of your warm, cozy bubble into the vast, uncaring, inhuman universe. This isn't a bug hunt. This is cosmic horror. You are the tiny, insignificant mistake of chemistry that happened to bubble up between two great ages. And as soon as the stars are right, your time is over.

This isn't dark fantasy. This isn't fighting the good fight. This is a deep, long look into the endless void.

FINALLY . . .

Like I said, I designed each of these stories to be told in a single night. Not a lot of details here. Instead of filling this little book with rules, I've done my best to help you establish an environment and an atmosphere. I've used the space provided to give you lots of props, tricks, and GM advice.

The real "monsters" here are the characters themselves. What we want to do here is drive the characters mad. One or two may escape our clutches, but they'll never forget tonight. No, they won't.

And so, with your permission... we'll begin.

January 27, 1980
page 4

11 7b
Kraus Debrief

..continued

KRAUS: The Commander ordered us to enter.

Q: What happened then?

KRAUS: I do not know. I cannot remember.

Q: The bite marks on your arm are from human teeth.

KRAUS: It found us. It (pause) infected us.

Q: What are you talking about?

KRAUS: The one trapped there.

Q: What?

KRAUS: (screaming) Do not make me remember! Do not make me remember!

ACT I

DIGGING FOR A

DEAD GOD

PART 1: INTRODUCTION & PREPARATION

In May of 1939, somewhere in the jungles of the Congo, a small band of soldiers have stumbled across something ancient. Something terrible. And they are about to suffer the consequences.

The actual bulk of this Act is only a few pages long; most of the content concerns GM advice, tricks, props and options. That's because the whole experience rests on your players. There are no monsters, no moldy tomes, no spells, no magic items. Just a small group of soldiers and a malignant idea infesting their brains. And that's enough.

DfaDG is not a linear adventure. Instead, it is more like a sandbox game: you have characters and environments and certain events, but there is no step-by-step, clue-by-clue progress. I'll give you all the information you need to play in the sandbox (including Locations, NPCs, etc.), but once the scenario gets started, it's really up to you and the players to move the plot forward.

PREPPING THE GAME

Okay, before you run *DfaDG*, we have to get a few things prepped.

I've given you six pre-made characters for the story. All are Nazis. Soldiers guarding a clandestine mining camp just a few miles away from Allied controlled territory. Photocopy and hand out a character sheet to each player as well as the corresponding orders. Each soldier has his own orders for the scenario.

ORDERS

I *highly* suggest reading through each of the officer's backgrounds. I provided a sheet for each of them detailing who they are and their motives.

Primary Orders

You have been assigned a special service for the Führer and Germany. You will infiltrate British occupied Africa for the purpose of exploiting a diamond mine. The mine is unknown to the British. It is imperative you not alert the British to your presence and retrieve as many diamonds as possible to further the cause of the Führer and the Fatherland.

Captain Kurt Hartmann is the commander of this mission. We have assigned four lieutenants to assist him as well as a regular sergeant and twelve soldiers.

A nearby native tribe will provide you any additional labor you may need.

This scenario really depends on the players taking on their roles as the soldiers. The better you have an understanding of the SS officers, the better equipped you will be to assist them when you run the game.

If you want to download copies of the orders, you can go to www.johnwickpresents.com/yellow to get PDF copies. I've also provided them in the back of the book. Please feel free to photocopy them for handouts.

(During playtest, I put the orders in manila envelopes and handed them to the players.)

Make sure nobody shares any information in his orders. Each set of orders has a brief paragraph for the players to read aloud as a kind of introduction for the others.

ATTACHMENT ISSUES

Finally, before you hand out the orders, be sure to notify the players that you do not expect these characters to survive the night. Before it's all over, they will either be dead, insane or maimed beyond salvation. Be sure to emphasize that part. *They are all doomed.* Then, tell them to open the envelopes, have them read the orders and understand exactly what they're getting into.

First, there's the shock of realization, "We're playing Nazis?!?"

Then, there's the slow realization, "We're playing Nazis."

Most players have a strong sense of "character attachment." They try to protect their characters from harm, injury or plot intrusion. Because these characters are designed to die—and because they're Nazis—the players' attachment to the characters is *low*. They are more than willing to let their characters die the deaths they so richly deserve.

Except for the spy. He's the exception.

Play this up. Soon, your players won't be going to every extreme to protect their characters—thus, killing the mood and turning the story into your typical inch-by-bloody-inch dungeon crawl—but instead will be looking for creative ways to kill them off.

Let 'em. Remember, they're Nazis. We hate these guys.

PART 2: LOCATIONS

This section contains all the pertinent information for running *DfaDG*. All the stats and numbers are here as well as full descriptions so you can read them to your players (or use them to create your own descriptions).

For ease of use, all game mechanics are listed in bold.

The scenario breaks down into three important locations: the Camp, the Native Village and the Temple.

LOCATION 1: THE CAMP

I've divided the camp into Areas.

- ◆ **The Mess** – where the soldiers eat
- ◆ **The Mine** – where the natives dig
- ◆ **The Kennel** – where the dogs wait
- ◆ **The Quarters** – where the soldiers sleep
- ◆ **The Cage** – where the natives sleep
- ◆ **The Hotbox** – where the natives are punished
- ◆ **The Supply Tent** – where the dynamite is

THE MESS

A large freestanding tent with poles and pegs covered in mosquito netting. The tent is twenty feet long and ten feet wide. Inside is a long table for the six men to eat, drink and smoke.

Currently, the mess is crammed with sick soldiers. Six of the sergeant's twelve regulars have come down with something resembling malaria. None of the officers have any medical training (other than the sergeant's basic first aid skills), so the soldiers just have to suffer.

THE MINE

Sitting at the bottom of a small mountain, the mine is a series of long shafts reaching downwards into the Earth. The hole is tight—only allowing one man at a time. It reaches approximately fifty feet down. Find a map of the caverns near the end of this booklet.

THE KENNEL

To keep the natives in line—and warn of any approaching complications—the soldiers keep two dogs. Well-trained and very mean. Only the Sergeant has the key to their cage.

THE QUARTERS

The officers sleep in separate tents. Each tent is approximately ten feet by ten feet, has a foot locker, a cot, re-loads for their rifles, grenades and other necessities.

THE CAGE

The natives—all twenty of them—are crammed into a twenty-by-twenty cage standing ten feet tall and covered with mesh and barbed wire. They have a bucket for a toilet, no water and little food. If they complain (in their native tongue, of course), they get beaten or shot. Twenty of them with only ten feet each. There used to be thirty, so at least they are getting a little more room.

THE HOTBOX

If one of the natives gets out of line, there's a small box—only five-by-five—where he gets thrown in. He stays there for a few hours, maybe a day, until he figures out he shouldn't complain so much.

THE SUPPLY TENT

Here's a list of everything they can find in the supply tent. Players may come up with supplies not listed here; I generally allowed them to have whatever they wanted. It's not like they can throw a grenade at an *idea*.

- ◆ Six cases of dynamite (24 sticks per case)
- ◆ Twelve cases of ammunition (enough for everyone)
- ◆ Food for another two weeks
- ◆ First aid supplies
- ◆ Uniforms
- ◆ One box of grenades (twelve)
- ◆ Digging equipment (shovels, picks, etc.)
- ◆ 4 jeeps (parked just outside the tent)

LOCATION 2: THE TEMPLE

Each room has two parts: Description and Details. Description is what you read to the players (or use it to inspire your own description) and the Details tell you what's in the room.

Time has destroyed most of the Temple: only 3 rooms remain intact.

OPENING THE TEMPLE DOOR

DESCRIPTION

Fifty feet below the surface, your workers have found something remarkable. It looks to be some kind of door, still half-covered in debris and soil. The doors are carved from stone, marked with symbols you do not recognize.

In the center of the two doors is a symbol that appears to be made of solid gold. The symbol is embedded in the stone. A man, reaching out with both hands, could not touch either side of the symbol. It looks too large and too heavy for a single man to carry.

DETAILS

The symbol, of course, is the Yellow Sign. **Gazing at the Yellow Sign for any period of time requires a Sanity check: 0/1d6 (first time only).**

Entering the Temple through the main doors is a trick requiring a Strength Resistance Roll against Strength 30. Of course, if the Nazis can't open the door, they'll have to blast it. They have dynamite, but if they use it to open the door, they change the conditions of the Temple. See relevant sidebars near each room for details.

Once the soldiers remove the symbol—and who doesn't want to remove a solid gold symbol that no one man can carry?—the bad air inside the temple rushes out, causing all in the cavern to make a Constitution check. If they fail, they pass out from the rush of bad air.

Then, another wind rushes out of the door. An ice-cold wind that smells like rotting flesh. **All must make a Sanity check: 0/1. Any present when the Nazis open the door feel as if something has passed by them. Any who fail the check hear the sound of laughter.**

ENTRYWAY

DESCRIPTION

This is a small place. There are no spider webs. It smells like mold and rot. Something appearing to be lanterns on the walls. Runes carved into the stone in a language no one understands. Dust and ruin everywhere. In the center of the room, a skeleton in a rotting robe: a knife in its hand and a black stain on the floor.

At the front of the room, across from the entrance, a wrecked statue. Broken at the base, carved from a black stone, the pieces lie on the floor.

DETAILS

If they search the body, the robes fall apart at the touch. A gold and jeweled necklace is wrapped around the body's neck. The dagger it holds looks like brass (it is, in fact, some pre-human metal). The dagger is stained black.

A closer examination of the skeleton reveals it used to be a body standing at least ten feet tall. The bones are thin, however, like a bird's bones. They break easily and are hollow. Also, the fingers are too long.

And each hand has six digits. The skull? Eight eyes, arranged like a spider. There is no jawbone or teeth.

All the bones are broken at various points.

The necklace is made of an ancient amalgam of gold and silver currently unknown to human science. In other words: priceless.

The black stain on the floor is still thick and oozing—not at all like human blood. **Touching the substance causes 1d2 Hit Points of burning damage.** The substance can be contained in non-organic containers.

No roll can decipher the script on the wall. The language has no human roots and has not been spoken for tens of thousands of years.

The statue is completely shattered, but it may be re-assembled. A successful Art or Luck roll will re-assemble the statue, showing the terrible robed figure that once stood here. Standing ten feet tall, it is a replica of the corpse lying in the center of the room. No features are visible under the hood. The hands—all twelve fingers—reach out toward the door. **Looking upon the restored statue requires a Sanity check: 0/1d4.**

ALTAR ROOM

DESCRIPTION

The ceiling here is too tall to reach. Nearly thirty yards high. The ceiling is curved and angled. You've seen the pattern somewhere before... somewhere in a dream... a horrible, horrible dream...

(If players do not turn away from the ceiling at this point in your description, they make a 0/1 Sanity check as they briefly remember a half-forgotten nightmare while sleeping outside this terrible place.)

Stone and other debris litters the floor between you and a stone altar at the end of the room. Among the wreckage, you see the glint of gold scattered among skeletons in rotting robes, circled by black stains on the floor.

THE CURSE OF THE YELLOW SIGN

As the Man in Black may explain, the Yellow Sign is only a symbol. You can see the symbol without ever seeing the Yellow Sign. It is a symbol of deeper truths. Terrifying truths that all conscious creatures try to ignore.

When mortals see the Sign for the first time, they gain a brief glimpse at its true meaning. That's what causes the 0/d6 Sanity loss.

Life must eat other life to exist. We try to ignore this truth with taboos like cannibalism and becoming vegan, but the awful truth is very simple: we must murder living creatures and consume flesh to continue our own existence.

We are creatures who know we are going to die. And despite the promise of an afterlife, we all know it is a lie. We cling to religions that promise us we will continue after our deaths, and we nod and praise the invented gods who make these promises, but deep in our hearts, we know this is a lie. Because we are afraid. Because we are ashamed of that fear, we refuse to let go of our childish beliefs. But we know. We know. No salvation or damnation. Just oblivion. That's all that waits for us. Just oblivion.

The illusion of a just and benevolent god is just that: an illusion. An illusion man clings to desperately. In fact, the god of the universe is malignant, reflecting the true nature of

its creation. Mankind cannot exist in the universe save for a small percentage of the world. The rest of creation is deadly to him. Why is there evil in the world? It isn't because god is evil: it's because god doesn't care.

Avhril exists because these truths exist. It is the manifestation of these truths. The illusion of morality. The illusion of immortality. We fool ourselves with lies and these lies give Avhril life. The lies call to it and from the lies Avhril takes form.

Sometimes, it appears as a demon from German folklore with a grin as sharp as a razor in the moonlight.

Sometimes, it appears as a terrible figure in a black robe, carrying knives.

Sometimes, it appears as a king in tatters, wearing a Pallid Mask.

And his symbol is the Yellow Sign.

The Curse of the Yellow Sign is not a spell; it is the understanding that life is futility. The knowledge that all human accomplishment means nothing in the grand scope of the universe. And once you've looked into the vast emptiness of this truth, you cannot look back. You cannot un-see what you have seen.

This is the Curse.

DETAILS

There is gold here. Necklaces, rings, a few chalices, etc. Enough to make one hundred men rich for the rest of their lives.

The skeletons all have knives in their hands or near their bodies. The black stains accompanying each of them are bloodstains, but they are still thick and oozing—just like the high priest above—causing 1d2 Hit Points of damage.

Counting them all: the Nazis find twenty-four bodies. All adorned with gold and silver. As usual, the corpses collapse at the touch.

There are runes on the altar, but nobody can translate them. The altar is stained black all the way through, the material sticking to and burning any hands that touch it.

SCROLL ROOM

DESCRIPTION

There is nowhere to walk in this room; bronze cylinders cover the floor. You must wade through them to make any progress at all. The cylinders have carvings on their surface: some abstract language you do not understand. They clink and clank as you move through the room, pushing them aside with your feet.

What used to be shelves are now ruins along the walls. You see symbols on the wall as well: graffiti written in the same language on the bronze cylinders. The graffiti is black: perhaps blood?

DETAILS

The bronze cylinders are scrolls: knowledge from a forgotten time. Although the Nazis lack the ability to read them, one of the more sensitive types may have a chance to do so.

Those who have lost a good deal of Sanity or have suffered from Flashbacks may have an intuitive understanding of the language. Any Nazi who has gone temporarily insane or has lost a great deal of Sanity

or has suffered from one or more Flashbacks (see *The Curse of the Yellow Sign*) can make an Idea Roll to understand the scrolls. Or, if you feel generous, just give them the information. After all, reading the scrolls blasts their Sanity even further, driving them deeper into instability, allowing the psychic power of the Race to take greater control of his mind. See a nearby sidebar for details on the scrolls.

HAND ROOM

DESCRIPTION

You feel the air chilling here. Perhaps a hole somewhere to the surface? As you step further in, you feel the sting of static electricity from your uniform to your skin. Your feet feel something... vibrating. What's that? A soft *hum*.

Your lights peer about the room. Circular. Angular. In the center stands a tall, thin podium—standing ten feet tall, you have to reach up to touch the top. As you look, there may be some kind of carving on the top of the podium.

DETAILS

Anyone entering this room must make a 0/1 San check.

The top of the podium stands at ten feet. Atop the podium is an indentation for a hand... but not a human hand. The fingers are too long. Six of them. The thumb is on the wrong side.

A cryptic clue to the past, but otherwise useless. Otherwise... yeah. Right.

When one group of players found “the hand,” they immediately began thinking about ways to fake it. One Nazi, who was insane at this point, began thinking about ways to modify *his* hand to *make* it fit. One of the characters was already dead, so he started carving off the corpse's fingers and stitching them to his own. Elongating the fingers... adding a sixth thumb...

When he started doing this, I knew I was going to have to think fast. That kind of creativity should be *rewarded*, not punished. When

he put his modified hand on the platform—and he killed another character who tried to stop him—the room turned bright white, the smell turned foul, he screamed... and everything disappeared, leaving nothing but a thick slime on the wall. The Nazi, the other Nazi he killed: both gone.

Or, you can have the hand activate a gateway working in the other direction: bringing something back. Perhaps it opens a portal to the place the Temple's inhabitants came from. Or perhaps it is a kind of lock, keeping something trapped in the room? Do a random thumb through your favorite monster book and pick something.

Like I said, the player made a choice and forced my hand. I decided the room was a lock, keeping something powerful trapped within. I decided it was a piece of the Man in Black's soul. Don't know the Man in Black? You will. See *Part 3: Advice* for more info.

LOCATION 3: THE VILLAGE

The natives' village is a circle of squalid huts. All the able bodied men are digging for the Nazis so the women and children are suffering. The Nazis have been digging for a week and the price is beginning to show. No food, no protection.

The village consists of eight mothers and seventeen children. They look terrible. They are terrified of the Nazis. They are *more* terrified of the mountain. They say its cursed. They say an evil spirit lives under the mountain. They say anyone who sleeps under the shadow of the mountain will go mad from wicked dreams.

The villagers should remain as nameless as possible: you don't want the officers sympathizing with them. You want *victims*. The more pathetic and helpless you make them, the better. Of course, if you need some murder (to feed the newfound god), go ahead and make them resistant to the officer's orders. You'd be surprised how easy it is to push people toward homicide.

PART 3: ADVICE

Okay, so now you know when this whole thing takes place and you know where it takes place and you know on whose shoulders it rests... so *how* do you do it? It's easy. I'm going to show you how.

ATMOSPHERE

As always, dim the lights. Use candles. I made sure the character sheets we provided are easy to read in near darkness.

Control the tone of your voice. Establish the setting right away. The jungle. The heat. The heat that feels like sitting in the middle of the desert with a snowsuit on covered by five wool blankets. And the complete darkness of the jungle. No artificial lights. Only the jungle canopy blocking out the stars and the moon.

In fact, after giving them their identities, I start the game in complete darkness, playing the sounds of the jungle. They already know who they are, they already know when they are, they already know where they are. Just the darkness and the jungle. Give that about a minute. Don't let anyone talk or snicker or joke. Just the darkness and the sound of the jungle.

And rain. Don't forget the rain. It's raining *all the time* in the jungle. Heat, rain. These things are great environments for fungus. In your shoes, in your shorts. Everywhere. And it doesn't take long for those things to grow.

If you head on over to www.johnwickpresents.com/yellow, you will find an atmospheric soundtrack for this scenario. The soundtrack has those sounds of rain, thunder and animals. At the 3 minute mark, something happens. A sound unlike any sound that should ever be

heard in the jungle stops everything. Then, the dogs start to bark. Loudly. Madly. Use this, as you will.

BASIC STRUCTURE

This one is pretty straightforward. Humans reaching into a part of the universe they are ill equipped to handle. The characters do not have the right skills. (Only the Sergeant has the right skills for this scenario and he's the lowest ranking soldier in the lot, so nobody's gonna listen to him.)

While this is a sandbox scenario, it has the same three key points.

1. The Nazis discover the door.
2. The Nazis unlock the door.
3. The Nazis suffer the consequences.

These things have to happen for the scenario to work. The natives find the door while the Nazis are asleep, so you're covered there. Getting them to *unlock* the door is tricky. I had a couple of groups who refused to unlock the door. In that case, I had one of the soldiers do it. Finally, suffering the consequences is where the Man in Black comes into play.

THE MAN IN BLACK

When I ran these stories for my own Halloween Cthulhu game, I wore a black suit—tie, vest, etc.—and a Yellow Sign pin on my lapel.

I also walked around the group, whispering in their ears. Sometimes I allowed the other players to hear the whispers, sometimes I didn't.

When players were about to perform something awful, I made sure I was standing behind them, smiling. Sometimes, even laughing.

I'd mock them. Taunt them. Of course, they can't hurt me. I'm an idea. And, as another wise man once said, "Ideas are bulletproof."

(It was Alan Moore.)

The Man in Black is the semi-physical manifestation of Avhril. It cannot be harmed, though it may harm. It cannot be touched, though it may touch. And it listens. It speaks. It may even divulge secrets.

I used the Man in Black to push characters' boundaries, to motivate their worst intentions, to invoke fear and hatred. One time, I let one of the players see him whispering to one of the workers. Slowly, the PCs saw more and more of him. Finally, one of them saw the Man in Black surrounded by the workers, all bowing and praying. And the MiB was glaring at the PC. Smiling.

USING FLASHBACKS

You can send members of the party back in time as they move through the caverns. They see the Race moving desperately to lock this place up, somehow understanding their dangerous goal. They don't understand the language, but know that something was locked inside of this place and it is free now. Their actions let it go.

I'M DEAD. WHAT NOW?

Just because a character dies doesn't mean he's done. Quite the contrary. The nature of the place traps an escaping soul, binding it to the Tomb. That means any character who dies is trapped forever in the Tomb with the trapped spirits of the Race. Trapped. Malevolent. Insane.

Once a player's character dies, hand him the "Trapped Spirit" handout on the next page. Have him read it. Or, make up your own.

Your body has died, but your spirit has not. In fact, your spirit is now trapped in this place—this terrible place—until... well, let's get to that in a moment.

You can see the spirits of all who died trapped here. You see alien figures, terrible to look upon, moving as ghosts among your fellow humans. The sounds they make are like painful screams. They try to communicate with you, but there's no hope. And just looking upon them is painful... let alone hearing their agonizing cries.

You understand. You are in agony as well. Every inch of you screams in pain. You must escape this... this... torment. This Hell.

You cannot breathe. You are suffocating. As if the air was water.

Even moving is painful, like swimming through acid.

Every sound is a red-hot needle through your ears.

Every light is the same.

Your whole life is pain. **Pain. Pain.**

And you know, instinctively know, the only escape is blood.

When the blood of another spills, the agony ceases. At least, for a little while. And when the agony ceases, your body—spirit body—can breathe.

Murder is best. It causes all the pain to wash away.

Whenever anyone is killed, the Keeper adds one Blood Point to the center of the table. You (and any like you) may use Blood Points to interact with the "real world," to whisper with it, to pick up items and move them. You can even pick up weapons and use them, but only for a single moment.

Blood alleviates the pain. But only for a short while. Use your point wisely.

THE GERMANS

What happens in this scenario depends on the players' choices. I've run this scenario a few times, and each time was a *completely* different experience.

Essentially, the beginning was always the same: I start with a soldier waking the sergeant in the middle of the night, telling him the natives have found something in the diamond mine. Something he should really see himself. So, the sergeant drags himself out of his cot and goes down to the mine. There, half buried behind soil and rubble, is a door.

From that point on, any kind of plans you make for this scenario go right out the window. What does the sergeant do? Who does he tell? Does he tell *anyone*? I had one scenario play out with the sergeant keeping the find to himself, trying to keep the solid gold Yellow Sign hidden from the officers so only he and his soldiers would split the reward.

That didn't work out well.

Once the soldiers find the door, you are pretty much on your own. However, I can tell you—from experience—a few tricks I've used to move the scenario in certain directions and keep the action flowing.

Before we get into that, though, I want you to take a look at the officers again. All of this depends on the officers' motivations and secrets. You should know them before we go any further.

SERGEANT JOHANN GRIMM

Hates: The Officers

Loyal to: His men

The Sergeant hates the SS. He hates a lot of things, actually, but he loves Germany. He puts his soldiers over the SS, the mission (which he doesn't really understand), the villagers and Hitler. He is German first, Nazi second. In fact, he isn't even a Nazi: he's just a sergeant in the German Army.

Play on his hatreds and paranoia. Whenever the officers do something selfish, stupid or detrimental to the men, look at the player who has the Sergeant's sheet and nod knowingly. You're on *his side*. And encourage him with suggestions. What if he sabotaged the jeeps so only he and his men could leave this place? That idea looks *very* attractive once Avhril starts haunting the officers.

LIEUTENANT BERNHARD BAUER

Hates: Müller (knows his secret)

Loyal to: Captain Hartmann

Bauer's homosexuality never became an open issue in any of my playtests, but it did slant the way people played the character. I say nothing about his relationship with the Captain, but more than one player assumed their relationship—from Bauer's point of view—was more than just friendship. Also, because of the homophobia of the time (and the people involved), if Müller does reveal his secret, the game is all but over for Bauer.

Most players sought ways to do away with Bauer as soon as possible. I tried to keep them busy and in sight of other characters: the best way to avoid murder right at the beginning. The point of Bauer and Müller's relationship is to build tension. If one kills the other right away, you've got nothing but a simple homicide. You need to let the tension build between the two. Make sure they're in scenes together (in sight of other characters) as often as you can. Force them to interact. That's when the fun really begins.

CAPTAIN KURT HARTMANN

Hates: Africa

Loyal to: Lieutenant Bauer

The Captain has a hard job. Usually, he's just trying to maintain the chaos as soon as someone opens the door. He's also ambitious. He's loyal to Bauer, but nobody else. More often than not, I found him trying to steal the Yellow Sign and smuggle it out with Bauer. I encourage this kind of activity: it leads to conflict.

It's purely coincidence, but more often than not, the Captain was the first to go insane. This led to all kinds of fun. I usually give him paranoia: the other officers are conspiring against him. Trying to kill him and take his command (or the gold). Just like most military organizations, if you lose the head, the body soon follows. Keep reminding Hartmann that he's a man with ambition. He let nothing stand in his way before, why should he start now?

GREGOR HOFFMANN

Hates: nobody

Loyal to: self

One of the best players to tackle Gregor was a woman. She changed the name to "Gregora" and rocked the house. Reason? She played the character to the hilt. She really didn't care about anyone else but herself and made sure *she* was the one with the Yellow Sign at the end of the story. She was willing to do anything to get what she wanted. And when she found the Gate Room, she was fully willing to use her own blood—and the blood of others—to activate it.

Reward Gregor any way you can for being creepy and duplicitous. Gregor is the character who will throw all the others under the bus to gain occult knowledge. The Man in Black should be whispering to Gregor all through the scenario, encouraging him to sacrifice his friends for power. Avhriil knows Gregor's favorite tune and knows how to make him dance.

LIEUTENANT RAMBERT MÜLLER

Hates: self

Loyal to: self

Müller has a plan and that's cashing in on everyone's secrets. One player who got Müller spent his entire time sneaking into other character's tents and breaking into their footlockers to find out what he could. I improvised each time, not anticipating this portrayal. I put a copy of Golden Dawn and Freemason texts in Hoffmann's locker, a diary in Bauer's locker, a list of betrayals written by a drunken Captain

Hartmann (he's too guilt-written to throw it away)... you get the idea. Encourage him to snoop. He's got the Lockpick Skill after all. Might as well use it.

Give Müller a copy of everyone else's background sheets—everyone but Fuchs. Let him peek at Gregor Hoffmann's secret orders so he knows what's going on here. Let him know that Gregor has orders to kill all of them. He also knows about Bauer's homosexuality, about the Captain's ruthless ambition... but he doesn't know *anything* about Fuchs. And that's got to be an itch he can't scratch. Taunt him with secrets. And reward him when he's cruel. Müller is a monster. Let him be a monster.

SÖREN FUCHS

Hates: Germans

Loyal to: Allies

“Sören Fuchs” often gets killed early. Only when the player is very careful and very clever does he make it to the end. Put him in positions where he has to execute natives, where he has to throw some pregnant woman in the sweat house, where he has to hang a child by his arms until the boy gives up some trivial piece of information. Push him to keep his identity. And then use the Man in Black to taunt him for it.

Sören also has the habit of calling his Allied buddies a bit too soon. If he does, create a reason why they can't show up. I always found vague answers like, “We're not ready yet” and “Just a little longer” highly useful. Also, playing off his paranoia is easy. He wants to stay alive—he's the Good Guy, after all—so he'll do all kinds of crazy stuff to maintain his cover. Players are also crafty bastards, so they'll figure out there's something wrong about him *fast*... and they'll test him.



NAME: Sergeant Johann Grimm

CALL OF CTHULHU STATS:

STR	<u>17</u>	CON	<u>16</u>	POW	<u>11</u>	SAN	<u>55</u>
DEX	<u>14</u>	APP	<u>8</u>	SIZ	<u>16</u>	EDU	<u>10</u>
INT	<u>12</u>	HIT POINTS	<u>16</u>	DAMAGE BONUS	<u>+1d6</u>		
PISTOL	<u>1d10</u>	KNIFE	<u>1d4</u>	RIFLE	<u>2d10</u>		
SKILLS:							
DODGE	<u>80</u>	FIRST AID	<u>70</u>	HIDE	<u>60</u>	LISTEN	<u>50</u>
FIRST AID	<u>80</u>	RIFLE	<u>90</u>	SNEAK	<u>60</u>	BRAWL	<u>80</u>
PISTOL	<u>80</u>	MECH. REPAIR	<u>60</u>	DEMOLITIONS	<u>50</u>		

UNSPEAKABLE STATS:

PROFESSION:	<u>Sergeant (5d6)</u>	SANITY:	<u>6</u>
PERSONALITY:	<u>Capable (2d6)</u>	,	<u>Trustworthy (2d6)</u>
	<u>Suspicious (2d6)</u>	,	<u>Superstitious (2d6)</u>
GOAL:	<u>Keep the men safe (1d6)</u>		
MADNESS TRAITS:	<u>Hysterical Strength (2d6) , Violence (1d6)</u>		

To: Sergeant Johann Grimm

You are an angry, hateful man. You served in WWI and spent time in prison. You hate the English, hate the French, hate the Jews and Freemasons and homosexuals who ruined Germany to fill their own pockets and fulfill their own perverse desires. You are also disdainful of SS officers who always ask your advice then take all the credit when they succeed; blaming you if they fail.

You know Sergeants run the Army. When the officers need assistance, they ask the Sergeants. When the enlisted men need assistance, they ask the Sergeants. But you are also loyal to Germany and will do anything to make sure she is not raped again.

Your orders are simple: follow the officer's commands and protect your men. You have twelve soldiers under your command. Six of them are suffering from malaria at the moment and the natives are looking restless. The officers are not concerned. They don't care about the men, they don't care about Germany, they just care about their own glory and impressing their own superiors.

You are also a bit superstitious when it comes to the natives. You are convinced they've put a curse on your soldiers. There's no way they all came down with the same sickness at once. Even if it's something as simple as poisoning the water supply, the natives are up to something and you'll do whatever it takes to find out what it is



NAME: Lieutenant Bernhard Bauer

CALL OF CTHULHU STATS:

STR	<u>12</u>	CON	<u>15</u>	POW	<u>17</u>	SAN	<u>85</u>
DEX	<u>17</u>	APP	<u>17</u>	SIZ	<u>12</u>	EDU	<u>20</u>
INT	<u>18</u>	HIT POINTS	<u>13</u>	DAMAGE BONUS	<u>+0</u>		
PISTOL	<u>1d10</u>	KNIFE	<u>1d4</u>	RIFLE	<u>2d10</u>		
SKILLS:							
BARGAIN	<u>70</u>	CREDIT RATING	<u>90</u>	LIBRARY USE	<u>80</u>		
LANGUAGE: "NATIVE"	<u>50</u>	PERSUADE	<u>80</u>				
PSYCHOLOGY	<u>80</u>	ANTHROPOLOGY	<u>90</u>	ARCHAEOLOGY	<u>90</u>		

UNSPEAKABLE STATS:

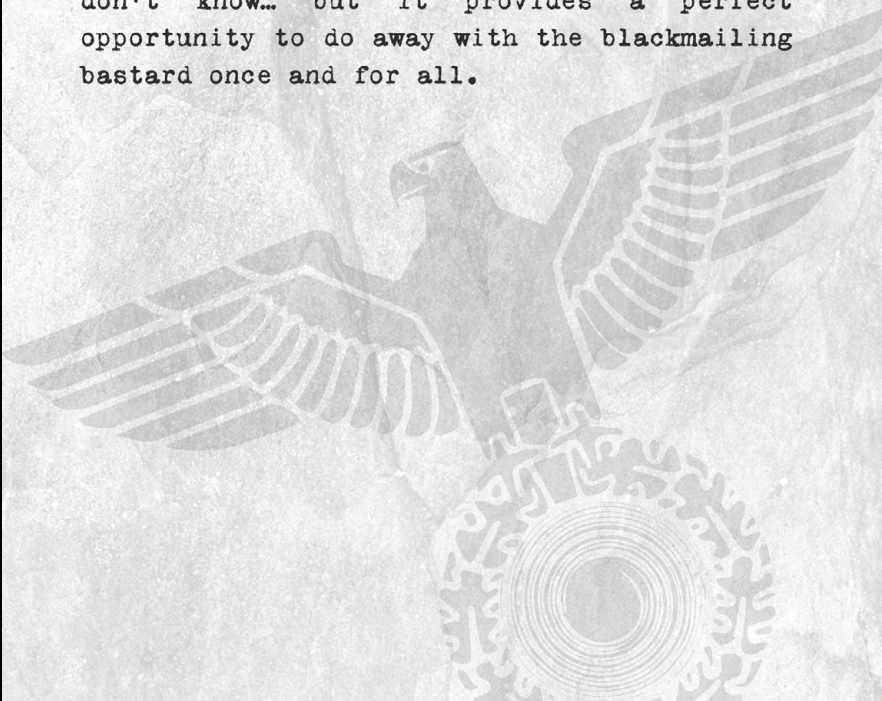
PROFESSION:	<u>Army Officer (5d6)</u>	SANITY:	<u> </u>		
PERSONALITY:	<u>Commanding (3d6)</u>		<u>Perceptive (2d6)</u>	<u> </u>	
	<u>Deceptive (2d6)</u>		<u>Vengeful (2d6)</u>	<u> </u>	
GOAL:	<u>End the Blackmail (1d6)</u>				
MADNESS TRAITS:	<u>None</u>				

To: Lieutenant Bernhard Bauer

You are the Captain's closest ally. He trusts you implicitly. The others, he does not know; they were assigned to this mission by the highest order. But you and Captain Hartmann have known each other since you were boys. He trusts your judgment, your cool temper and your understanding of military history and tactics.

But he doesn't know that you are a homosexual. Nobody knows that. Nobody except Lieutenant Müller. And you've been paying ever since. Paying for his silence.

As your career has prospered in the SS, his payments have been getting larger. Why the Führer sent him along on this mission, you don't know... but it provides a perfect opportunity to do away with the blackmailing bastard once and for all.





NAME: Captain Kort Hartmann

CALL OF CTHULHU STATS:

STR 14 CON 13 POW 16 SAN 30
DEX 15 APP 16 SIZ 13 EDU 13
INT 16 HIT POINTS 13 DAMAGE BONUS +1d4
PISTOL 1d10 KNIFE 1d4 RIFLE 2d10

SKILLS:

ACCOUNTING 60 BARGAIN 70 LAW 60 NAVIGATE 70
PERSUADE 30 RIFLE 60 PISTOL 60
CREDIT RATING 90 PSYCHOLOGY 30

UNSPEAKABLE STATS:

PROFESSION: Army Officer (5d6) SANITY: 10
PERSONALITY: Commanding (3d6) , Loyal (2d6) ,
Intimidating (2d6) , Ambitious (2d6)
GOAL: Serve Germany and Bring the Diamonds Home (1d6)
MADNESS TRAITS: None

To: Captain Kurt Hartmann

You have risen quickly through the ranks of the SS. This has to do with your own ambition and the intelligence of your closest ally, Lieutenant Bauer. Together, you have earned Himmler's trust. There has even be talk of bringing you in to the Thule Society. Another distinction that will further your career.

Since you were first assigned to this mission, you have suspected there may be something more here happening. This isn't just "digging for diamonds." You can also sense Bauer is lying to you about something—a fact that has added a slight blemish on your trust of him.

If there are diamonds here, you will retrieve them for Himmler... and keep a few for yourself. Himmler must suspect that you will; that's why he sent so many unfamiliar officers with you. He doesn't trust you entirely. A wise move. But with Bauer at your side, you will win his trust. This is your chance to prove yourself. Do not fail.



NAME: Gregor Hoffman

CALL OF CTHULHU STATS:

STR	<u>10</u>	CON	<u>10</u>	POW	<u>15</u>	SAN	<u>75</u>
DEX	<u>12</u>	APP	<u>13</u>	SIZ	<u>10</u>	EDU	<u>19</u>
INT	<u>13</u>	HIT POINTS	<u>10</u>	DAMAGE BONUS	<u>+1d4</u>		
PISTOL	<u>1d10</u>	KNIFE	<u>1d4</u>	RIFLE	<u>2d10</u>		
SKILLS:							
ANTHROPOLOGY	<u>30</u>	HISTORY	<u>30</u>	LANGUAGE: "NATIVE"	<u>50</u>		
LIBRARY USE	<u>70</u>	LOCKPICK	<u>30</u>	OCCULT	<u>30</u>	LATIN	<u>90</u>
PHOTOGRAPHY	<u>60</u>	PISTOL	<u>60</u>	PSYCHOLOGY	<u>70</u>		

UNSPEAKABLE STATS:

PROFESSION:	<u>Occultist (5d6)</u>	SANITY:	<u>6</u>
PERSONALITY:	<u>Creepy (3d6)</u>	<u>Intimidating (3d6)</u>	
	<u>Serious (2d6)</u>	<u>Underhanded (2d6)</u>	
GOAL:	<u>Discover Occult Secrets and Bring Them Home Alone (1d6)</u>		
MADNESS TRAITS:	<u>Hysterical Strength (1d6), Perception (2d6)</u>		

To: Gregor Hoffmann

You are the only one who knows what this small band of soldiers is really doing here.

Only one person knows why the Führer needed an anthropologist on this mission and that's you. Digging for diamonds? That's just the front. Because you are trusted by the Führer and because you are part of the Ahnenerbe and the Thule Society... and both organizations have interest in what may be down in those caverns.

You believe there may be a temple in these catacombs. The Society gave you a map to find it and clues to discovering its mystery. But you cannot tell the others. What's more, you must make sure that if the others discover what you are really looking for, that they do not make it back to Germany.

These are your specific orders-in case they were not clear:

1. Discover any relics hidden inside the tomb
2. Ensure only you return with knowledge of the discovery



NAME: Lieutenant Rambert Mueller

CALL OF CTHULHU STATS:

STR	<u>15</u>	CON	<u>18</u>	POW	<u>11</u>	SAN	<u>55</u>
DEX	<u>14</u>	APP	<u>0</u>	SIZ	<u>19</u>	EDU	<u>14</u>
INT	<u>13</u>	HIT POINTS	<u>14</u>	DAMAGE BONUS	<u>+0</u>		
PISTOL	<u>1d10</u>	KNIFE	<u>1d4</u>	RIFLE	<u>2d10</u>		
SKILLS:							
CONCEAL	<u>30</u>	HIDE	<u>30</u>	PERSUADE	<u>30</u>	TORTURE	<u>30</u>
SPOT HIDDEN	<u>30</u>	PISTOL	<u>90</u>	KNIFE	<u>30</u>	DODGE	<u>60</u>
LISTEN	<u>70</u>	LOCKPICKING	<u>30</u>	PSYCHOLOGY	<u>90</u>		

UNSPEAKABLE STATS:

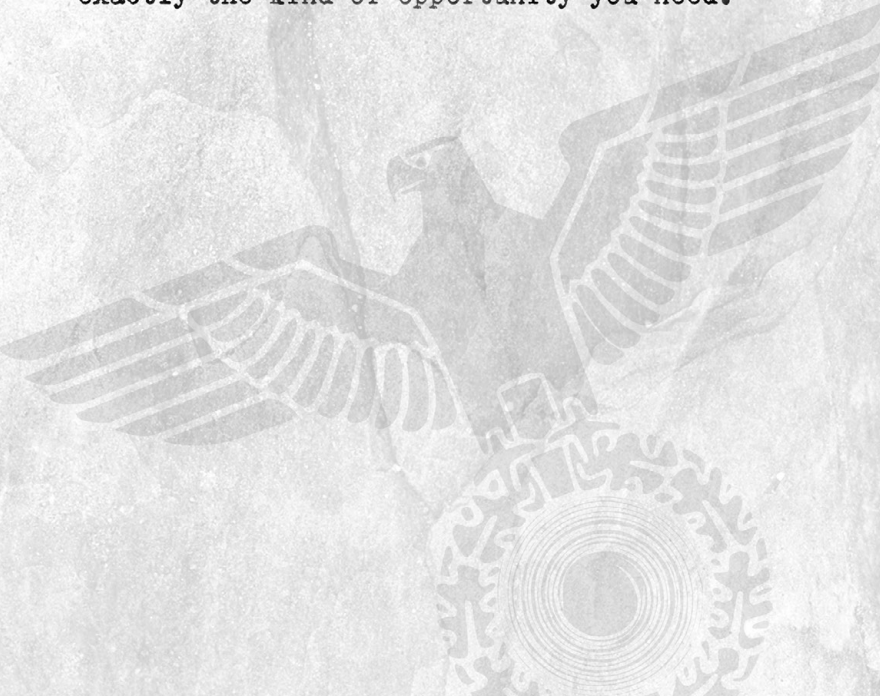
PROFESSION:	<u>Spy (5d6)</u>	SANITY:	<u>10</u>
PERSONALITY:	<u>"Nothing Personal" (2d6), Treacherous (2d6)</u>		
	<u>Loyal to the Fatherland (3d6), Deceitful (3d6)</u>		
GOAL:	<u>Learn Everyone's Secrets (1d6)</u>		
MADNESS TRAITS:	<u>None</u>		

To: Lieutenant Rambert Müller

You've always been overlooked. It's because of your face. They're afraid to look at you. Afraid to talk to you. Afraid to get close to you. You didn't ask for it. When the shell went off and took away most of your face with it...

Because you aren't the beautiful, perfect Aryan Dream. Your family was once German nobility, but they were ruined by the Great War. Now, all you have is your cunning, your ability, and your unique skills. But they're still afraid to look at you.

But Himmler sent you here because he knows you get results. Germany needs wealth for her plans and locating a new diamond mine is exactly the kind of opportunity you need.





NAME: Soren Fuechs

CALL OF CTHULHU STATS:

STR 15 CON 15 POW 16 SAN 80
 DEX 14 APP 13 SIZ 13 EDU 15
 INT 15 HIT POINTS 14 DAMAGE BONUS +1d10
 PISTOL 1d10 KNIFE 1d4 RIFLE 2d10

SKILLS:

FAST TALK 80 PISTOL 80 HIDE 70 DODGE 70
 CONCEAL 80 BARGAIN 70 FIRST AID 70
 NAVIGATE 60 DISGUISE 90 LISTEN 70

UNSPEAKABLE STATS:

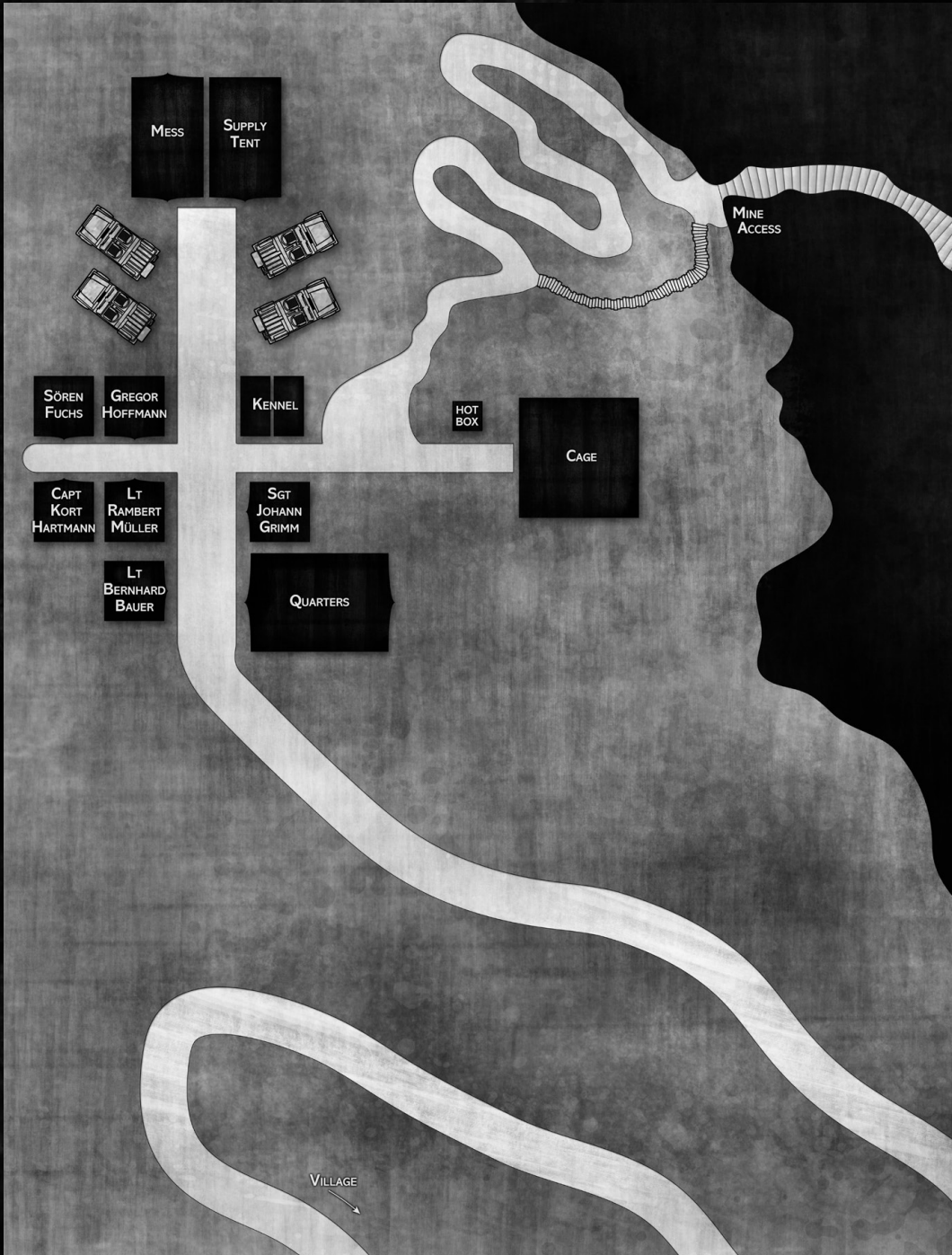
PROFESSION: Spy (5d6) SANITY: 10
 PERSONALITY: "Nothing Personal" (2d6) , Treacherous (2d6)
Loyal to the Fatherland (3d6) , Deceitful (3d6)
 GOAL: Learn Everyone's Secrets (1d6)
 MADNESS TRAITS: None

To: Sören Fuchs

You are not Sören Fuchs. Your name is Arthur Madison. You were born in Germany, lived in Berlin for the first fourteen years of your life, then moved with your parents back to England. You joined British Intelligence, served as a spy during the First World War and remained in your post since. You've been placed high in the ranks of the SS for the purpose of keeping your eye on Himmler's elite forces.

You don't know why you were assigned to this squad. In fact, you've never been outside of Europe. You suspect your cover may be blown. You are the outsider here; the others seem to know each other. And they all look at you. Keeping their eyes on you.

Keep track of what happens and remember: there's a squad of British soldiers just a few clicks away. If things get out of hand, send the emergency signal through your radio. Click "SOS" five times in a row and they'll show up.





Act I.

Tuxedos and gowns find their places
But the program gives no warning
The lights dim and the play begins
The violet of morning

In Carcosa

The sun bleeds in the East
The Hyades sing their dying throes
The stars rise to claim their prize
The Queen's song still echoes

In Carcosa

Songs of sorrow songs of pain
Masked and disguised
All hope has fled The Queen in Red
Her Fate is crystallized

In Carcosa

The Queen grows weary of wordy games
Her daughter dances delusioned
Her son sings her songs but her heart belongs
To the mists and illusions

In Carcosa

The audience shifts uncertain
What is rhyme and what is reason
Uneasy in their seats but the play is not complete
They begin to suspect treason

In Carcosa

At midnight a Stranger calls
The Queen is unsurprised
O King in Tatters the clock is shattered
He turns to us with his awful eyes

Act II.

I am the last and terrible King
Have you found the Yellow Sign?
(*Yhtill! Yhtill! Yhtill!*)

The damning wisdom that I bring
Have you found the Yellow Sign?
(*Yhtill! Yhtill! Yhtill!*)

The Phantom of Truth dispels
Have you found the Yellow Sign?
(*Yhtill! Yhtill! Yhtill!*)

All the Heavens and all the Hells
Have you found the Yellow Sign?
(*Yhtill! Yhtill! Yhtill!*)

Peel away the mask, the pale facade
Have you found the Yellow Sign?
(*Yhtill! Yhtill! Yhtill!*)

And fall into the hands of the Living God



ACT II

CALLING THE

KING

OVERTURE

In the early 1980's, Richard and Sylvia Brennan were the talk of Hollywood. The husband/wife team created three films together: all three nominated for multiple awards, all three blockbusters. Anything they touched turned to gold.

Then, the couple suddenly divorced. While the press speculated on a cause, the couple confirmed nothing. Since then, Sylvia's career has degenerated to support roles in mediocre romantic comedies. Her life has been a whirlwind of alcohol, drugs and failed affairs while Richard's last two films were commercial and critical successes.

Now, ten years after their divorce, Richard has begun a new project. Keeping with tradition, he has invited his usual crew of actors to a secluded location for a read-through of his new script. One of those actors is his ex-wife, Sylvia Brennan.

Alone in the Colorado wilderness, they begin to read through the script... an adaptation of the infamous play, *The King in Yellow*.

Calling the King is a one-night scenario for *Call of Cthulhu*. The scenario itself is almost bereft of rules. We have a rough map of the abandoned hotel where Brennan holds his reading and the character stats, but other than those essentials, the entire event is in the hands of the players. The psychodrama that's about to unfold will keep the players quite busy.

As with other *Curse of the Yellow Sign* scenarios, there are no monsters, no Library Use rolls, no archeology, no clues to find, no spells and no cultists. There is only one blasphemous book and that's the cursed play itself. As the actors and director read through the play, a doorway opens between our own universe and... another place. A dangerous place. The characters—and players—are about to come face-

to-face with an ancient and powerful idea. An idea with teeth. An idea with an endless hunger.

Calling the King is not a linear adventure. Instead, it is more like a sandbox game: you have characters and an environment and certain events that occur, but there is no step-by-step, clue-by-clue progress. I'll give you all the information you need to play in the sandbox (including Locations, NPCs, etc.), but once the scenario gets started, it's really up to you and the players to move the plot forward.

A FRIENDLY WARNING

This is an incredibly demanding scenario, both on the players and on the Keeper. On the other hand, when it works, your players will come away with an experience they won't forget.

I'm going to do my best to give you every tool you need to make it work. I've run the scenario a few times, found some really effective techniques. You'll find them all over this chapter.

BACKGROUND

Richard and Sylvia's divorce, while very private, was also very painful. It wasn't an ugly, screaming affair. Instead, the couple simply drifted apart. While they still loved each other, they were no longer in love. They tried to maintain the bond, but slowly, their marriage simply failed. Eventually, Sylvia asked for a divorce. Because he loved her, and did not want to cause her any more pain, Richard relented.

Since then, Sylvia's life has become a self-destructive mess. Still wounded by what she saw as a betrayal of the marriage, she has driven herself into a dark spiral of drugs, alcohol and sex. Richard, on the other hand, has used that same energy to create two of his darkest and most emotional films. His ex-wife's fall has not gone unnoticed. He

still cares for her, still hopes for her. He watches her waste her talent and wants to bring her back from the edge of the abyss. That's why he's called for this read-through. And that will be his last mistake.

It is now December 10, 1999.

Richard has arranged with his regular crew of actors to put on a kind of psychodrama. He knows his wife is close to suicide and he hopes to create a scenario that will shock her out of her depression. All the actors—except Sylvia—are in on the plan. Richard has arranged for copies of *The King in Yellow* to be delivered to an abandoned Colorado hotel. He will tell the actors he wants to make a horror film based on the play. They will read through the pages—something no-one has done for over one hundred years—and create the greatest horror film ever produced.

He has also arranged for a special effects crew to create an atmosphere of horror and dread... and murder. The play is known to drive men mad—superstitious nonsense that Richard does not believe—and as they read through the play, actors will slowly “go mad.” One of them will even turn into a raging psychopath and “murder” the

SCENARIO VS. ADVENTURE

Calling the King is not an “adventure.” That word has a particular connotation I'm trying to avoid.

Most people think of *Call of Cthulhu* adventures as mysterious monster hunts full of clues, blasphemous books, unspeakable monsters, cultists and desperate violence. This series of scenarios has none of that. Instead,

we are using isolated locations and small groups of people thrown into situations they are unprepared to deal with. In *Digging for a Dead God*, we had a small group of soldiers dealing with an ancient and powerful entity bent on driving them mad. In *Calling the King*, we'll be dealing with a similar situation, but the circumstances are very different.

other actors. Richard hopes this scenario will break Sylvia's depression, remind her of the passion she once had, and return her to the woman he remembers... and still loves.

Of course, you and I know what's wrong with Richard's plan. The play really *will* drive the actors insane. One of them even to the point of the darkest madness. And, in reading the play, the actors and director will open a portal to a realm where fiction and reality are not so clearly defined. They will *become* the characters they portray and allow other things to pass through the gate as well.

WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN?

Putting six highly emotional and sensitive human beings in a place as haunted and dangerous as the Glennwood Grand Hotel is bad enough. But we're also going to expose them to *The King in Yellow*. That makes everything worse.

As the actors read through the play, a doorway opens: a doorway between the "imaginary" world of the play and our own "real" world. Slowly, the actors and the characters begin to merge together. The Hotel transforms into the Queen's castle in Alar and the desolate halls begin to fill with unearthly, masked revelers. At midnight, the Queen commands all remove their masks...

We'll look at the details below.

PREPARATION

For most roleplaying adventures, the characters usually take a back seat to the plot. *Calling the King* is different: it is *entirely* character driven. Not only that, but the characters' backgrounds and motivations are *heavily* intertwined.

Preparation is *essential* to making this scenario work. I *highly* suggest giving your players the sheets a few days before you play so they can go over their character backgrounds and roleplaying notes and get a good feel who they will be playing.

I'm not being cute about this. The better prepared your players are before going into this thing, the more rewarding the result will be.

Also, make sure each person has a name card. Nothing kills the atmosphere more than the questions, "What's your character's name?" and "Who are you again?" I've provided name cards in the back of the book. Make sure your players use them.

THE RETURN OF THE MAN IN BLACK

As in the previous Curse scenario, the Man in Black is an omnipresent figure. In *Digging for a Dead God*, he was an entity that exists because conscious thought exists. The ancient Race had a name for him, but his name has changed here. Tonight, he shall be called the Phantom of Truth. The Dreaded King. The Last King. He who brings the End of the World.

Again, I wore my black suit (black tie, black shirt, black everything) and my Yellow Sign pin. When the MiB showed up, I also wore a black veil and a white harlequin mask. In the dim light, the mask took on a life of its own, seemingly floating in the darkness.

He arrived on the scene after the reading of the play's overture (see *The King in Yellow Excerpts*, below). I've put a whole section on using the MiB in the *Advice* section at the end of this book.

THEMES

I have three big themes running through this adventure. We will explore these themes through the characters we portray. The conclusions we draw from the questions presented are up to us.

THE FRAGILITY OF LOVE

Like other manmade concepts, love is a misunderstanding of the true nature of the universe. At least, in a universe where Lovecraft's concepts are alive and well. Love isn't just an illusion, it's a *delusion*. An emotion brought on by chemicals in our brains that cause us to see the world through a distorted filter. Nothing else, nothing more.

All too often, we reinforce this delusion with stories that are no more sophisticated than children's tales. Hollywood spews out romantic comedies, re-assuring us that "love conquers all." Love does not conquer all. Love is just as fragile as any other human emotion, any other human concept. As soon as we encounter the true nature of the universe, we understand how weak and pathetic our concepts are. And "true love" is no exception.

Love isn't magical. Love isn't special. It's just like any other emotion. You feel jealous, you feel hatred, you feel anger, you feel afraid... you feel love. All of these things fade with time. Why is hatred less "magical" than love? Why is jealousy less important than love? All of them are nothing more than chemical reactions in our biological brains.

Nothing more, nothing less.

REALITY VS. FICTION

Who is more real: you or Sherlock Holmes?

Think about it. If we define “real” as “the ability to affect reality,” then Sherlock Holmes is more real than you. So is Darth Vader. So is Harry Potter. These characters have profound impacts on countless lives. And just because they are ideas doesn’t make them any less real than you or me. Communism is an idea. Democracy is an idea. The First Amendment to the Constitution is an idea. Tell me those things don’t have real power in the world.

You and I, we’re both made of the same stuff. We’re made from the cosmic radiation left over from the Big Bang a few billion years ago. We’re made of particles, electrons, carbon. The ideas in our heads—the electricity running between our neurons—are just as real as you and me. And just as powerful. Sometimes, even *more* powerful.

People live their entire lives inside of lies. Some people can’t live without their lies. Beautiful lies, but lies, nonetheless. Anyone who knows anything about self-image knows this. How we see ourselves is wrapped up in lies. We’re too fat. We’re too skinny. We’re ugly. We’re dumb. We’re brilliant. We’re sexy. We’re talented.

All lies we tell ourselves, for better or for worse.

THE END OF THE WORLD

Mankind has a treacherous view of the world. He believes he stands at the center and the apex. Without him, the world would not go on. So is it so with all “end of the world” scenarios. Think about it. Whenever you see an “end of the world” movie, the threat never actually endangers the world; what it endangers is *humanity*. The world will go on without us, but we always think of the end of humanity as the end of the world.

Whether it be the Christian Apocalypse or the Zombie Armageddon, we think of the End of the World only in terms of

ourselves. The End of the World arrives when mankind is wiped out. But, the world will go on. Even when our own Sun finally implodes and devours the galaxy, the universe will still exist. There will always be something here... even if we are gone.

The Last King, the Phantom of Truth, brings this knowledge. The End of the World is not the end. It is just the End of Us. Small, tiny, insignificant *us*.

THE KING IN YELLOW

It is best we talk about the play now.

Robert W. Chambers created the play as a kind of link for a series of short stories in his book, *The King in Yellow*. He also created the Yellow Sign: an ambiguous symbol associated with the play. In those stories, anyone who read the play went mad. Chambers himself gives only clues to the content or plot of the play. Here's a quote from "The Repairer of Reputations":

He mentioned the establishment of the Dynasty in Carcosa, the lakes which connected Hastur, Aldebaran and the mystery of the Hyades. He spoke of Cassilda and Camilla, and sounded the cloudy depths of Dembe, and the Lake of Hali. "The scalloped tatters of the King in Yellow must hide Yhtill forever," he muttered, but I do not believe Vance heard him. Then by degrees he led Vance along the ramifications of the Imperial family, to Uoht and Thale, from Naotalba and Phantom of Truth, to Aldones, and then tossing aside his manuscript and notes, he began the wonderful story of the Last King.

He mentioned only a few details, quotes a few lines from it, and gave us three characters: Camilla, Cassilda and the King in Yellow himself. We know the play has two acts and, "(t)he very banality and innocence of the first act only allowed the blow to fall afterward with more awful effect."

The play has a reputation: the first and last time it was performed, the audience rioted, resulting in deaths of cast, crew and audience members. The theater burned to the ground and the author shot himself in the head.

THE MERCURIAL PAGES

Like Lovecraft's dreaded *Necronomicon*, many authors have tried their hand at creating their own version of *The King in Yellow*. So many in fact, I'm willing to propose there are many copies, all a little differently dreadful than the last.

Or, a more horrifying choice, the play itself is *fluid* and *ever changing*, adapting itself to the reader. If you and I were to read *The King in Yellow*, we would both come away with different experiences. Both equally maddening.

Now, imagine an audience sitting together, trying to watch such a thing. No wonder they all went insane.

As I said, many authors have attempted to create their own version of the play, and while it is tempting to try something myself, this is not such an attempt. What we will do is recreate the experience of *reading* the play, rather than give the players a line-by-line copy. I've given you excerpts to use as well as a summation of the events. There's the beginning of a plot, but they won't get too far.

This is because the play itself is a key to a very dangerous gate. It opens the doorway between our world and the world of Camilla, Cassilda and the King in Yellow. A world, quite literally, at its own end. And the parallels between the world of *The King in Yellow* and the world of Richard Brennan and his Crew will merge together and destroy each other.

THE CHARACTERS

CASSILDA, *a mad Queen of Alar*

CAMILLA, *Princess and scheming daughter*

UOHT, THE ELDER, *first-born twin and eldest heir*

UOHT, THE YOUNGER, *second-born twin and younger heir*

NAOTALBA, *the Queen's Wise Man*

THALE, *the missing son (shown only in flashbacks)*

ALDONES, *the dead king and husband of Cassilda*

THE PHANTOM OF TRUTH

THE KING IN YELLOW

THE PLOT

Cassilda, Queen of Alar, distracted by a phantom city on the far side of Lake Hali, stands by a window and stares out across the lake, waiting to catch a glimpse of the city, Carcosa. Her daughter, Camilla, and her two sons, Uoht the Elder and Uoht the Younger, fear the Queen mad and plot to kill her so they may steal the throne.

Princess Camilla and Uoht the Younger are incestuous lovers while Uoht the Elder appears completely mad himself. Meanwhile, the people of the City begin to riot on the night the black stars streak across the sky. A fever has broken out in the City and while the common people suffer, the Queen has decided to throw a masked ball to celebrate the death of her King.

The Queen can also see a ghostly figure dressed all in black calling himself “the Phantom of Truth.” He claims he can bring Cassilda’s beloved husband back to her, but only for a price. The mad Queen contemplates his offer while he visits her children. He speaks directly to the audience—a kind of sinister Greek chorus—and says horrible things. He whispers things to the characters. Sometimes they repeat what he says and sometimes they do not, making us wonder if they can consciously hear the Phantom or if his words are only echoes of their own thoughts.

At the end of Act 1, while the masked ball is in full swing, the Queen accepts the Phantom’s offer and makes a dreadful sacrifice to

bring back her dead King. She finally sees Carcosa rise up from the mists across the lake and a tattered figure dressed all in yellow, wearing a Pallid Mask, appears at the doorway of the party. The King in Yellow. Is he Cassilda's risen husband? Or is he something worse?

That's the end of Act 1. None of my playtest groups got any further than that. In fact, none of them ever got to the end of Act 1.

That's because there really only is a single Act in the play: what happens to the characters as they read the play *is* Act 2.

THE GLENWOOD GRAND HOTEL

All of this takes place in the massive Glennwood Grand Hotel located in the Rocky Mountains of Colorado. It has everything you'd expect from a winter getaway. At least, it did when it was still open.

The Glennwood Grand has seen better days. The decadent decades was when it saw its pinnacle, but so many scandals—deaths and murders—closed the place down. Now, with no funds to keep it open, it sits like the corpse of a dead giant in the middle of the winter.

Built in the 1890's, it was modeled after the great palaces of Europe. She was quickly dubbed, "The Great Lady of the West" by the men and women who vacationed there. The rooms were extravagant. She boasted hot spas, pools, luxurious walks in the mountains, skiing, fishing and hunting. She also hosted some of the most decadent parties resulting in three notable deaths: two (apparent) suicides and a murder. Since then, rumors flew that the hotel was either haunted or cursed or both. The owner shot himself in 1910, closing the place for nearly half a century.

In 1960, the hotel opened again, but only shortly. On its opening weekend, a famous starlet—Bridget DiVicar—was found strangled in her room. All the doors and windows were locked from the inside. The autopsy report also showed she had bites on the inside of her thighs

that were not human. Police tried to keep the details quiet, but word got out. The Hotel was closed again, but this time, it would remain closed.

Since then, the Glennwood Grand has slowly deteriorated. The Colorado winter has not been kind to her. Most of the building is inaccessible: the stairs are too fragile, the floors weak. Rotted wood everywhere.

I have more advice on how to use the Hotel in the Advice section near the end of this book.

BRENNAN'S PREPARATIONS

Richard arranged for space heaters and generators to be placed in the hotel. The place has no electricity of its own, so he's using gasoline generators. This makes the temperature of the place highly mercurial. One room is close to boiling and another is near frozen.

Each of the actors has a room to themselves, but he has isolated them to different floors. Isolation, isolation, isolation. Together, yet alone.

The characters can also find the kitchen up and working; the old gas stoves and refrigerators are also on generators. The whole setup looks like a patchwork of cables and cords. The actors should be used to this—sidestepping power cables on movie sets is one of the first skills an actor learns.

MAPS AND LOCATIONS

I've provided a rough map for the Hotel, but you should be able to identify it by its major rooms. (There should be little or no need for miniatures.)

Think of this entire experience more from the point of view of a film or a play. The locations themselves are important, but their relative locations to each other are not. How long does it take to get from one location to another? Think in terms of time rather than space. Like driving in the city: we think in terms of time rather than distance. If a player asks, "How long does it take?" tell them, "A few minutes." Then, have the character arrive when it is convenient.

Besides, the geography of the hotel is about to become as mercurial as the play. Getting from one place to another will be very difficult—not because the Hotel is big, but because time and space don't mean anything anymore.

EVERYTHING FALLS APART

The Hotel itself is a symbol of man's short-sighted self-importance. For Americans, what happened in the previous decade is nostalgia. (Exactly how long did it take bell-bottoms and hair metal to make a comeback?) The Hotel was built at the turn of the last century, a monument to decadence. In

less than one hundred years, it was a rotting corpse.

The ghosts of the place are not physical manifestations of souls. The hotel has a ghost of its own. The reminder that everything man makes eventually fails, eventually dies, eventually falls apart.

STAIRWAYS

The stairways are old and creak but are still reliable. Old wood does not survive extreme temperatures and moisture, expanding and contracting, expanding and contracting, but so far, the stairs are still sturdy. But they sound like a wooden roller coaster. When the actors walk on the stairways, they hear the creak and groan... but are still safe.

Only later on do the stairs become treacherous. Only when what is real and unreal mix and merge. Then, someone can fall through,

tumbling through darkness and dust to whatever waits at the end of that fall.

THE BEDROOMS

The Hotel provides luxurious rooms for all its residents. King-sized bed, a bathroom with a shower and bathtub as big as the bed. The rooms have hot and cold running water thanks to a temporary jury rig provided by Brennan's production crew. The mattresses and sheets are new, but the bed frames are still very old. And the mirrors have not been polished in more than a decade. Most are cracked, leaving sharp, silver teeth in the frames and on the floors.

THE KITCHEN

Only one of the four kitchens is in any way functional. Fully stocked with four working refrigerators and two stovetop ovens. And a huge meat freezer. But no liquor. Brennan made sure of that.

THE BALLROOM

The room is nearly empty save a large round table and chairs. In front of each chair is a copy of the play. The west wall is a series of tall windows—reaching all the way to the ceiling—overlooking the frozen lake and mountains. What's the name of the lake? Nobody knows. "I didn't know there was a lake here."

HALLWAYS

Long and silent. Many, many doors. You can hear and feel wind racing down them, chilling the marrow in your bones. Doors ache on their hinges. There are no lights—only the dim winter sun from distant windows. And sometimes, you swear you can hear voices behind the closed doors. Laughing. Crying. Whimpering. Begging for help. Most of the doors are locked... but not all of them.

THE FRONT DESK

Once a masterpiece of woodcarving and metalwork, the front desk is now a skeletal ruin of what it once was. Behind the desk is a large metal box with a set of master keys to every lock in the building.

THE CELLAR

Getting down to the cellar is a real task: most of the stairways are treacherous at best. The boiler room is down here. The boiler itself is non-functional. Empty wine racks. Old boxes of rotting linens. But no mice. No spiders. No cockroaches. Not a single form of life. The longer anyone stays down here, the longer they realize the place feels like a tomb. A giant grave. And, of course, there are no lights. And try getting back *up* the stairs.

OTHER AMENITIES

Obviously, the Hotel is a huge place and your players can explore it to their heart's content. However, if you ever need to block off an area because you aren't prepared for it, you can control their movements by putting environmental damage in their way. They don't have any tools and lifting heavy rubble is no way to spend a winter.

Once the power goes out, everything stops. The lights, the refrigerators, the ovens, everything. And that leaves them completely in the dark. They may have lighters, but nobody carries matches anymore and there are no candles.

THE ACTORS

Listed below are the six characters provided with this scenario. Read through them carefully: understanding their backgrounds and motivations are important for a successful run of this scenario.

I suggest making Richard Brennan an NPC. You can run it either way—I did it with both successfully—but Richard is such a crucial element to the plot, you may want him in your hands. If you have a player you trust, let him or her play Richard. You may even want to make that player a confidant. Let them read the entire scenario so they know exactly what's going on. Or, you may want the player to go in completely blind. Again, I had equal success with both choices.

RICHARD BRENNAN

Richard is Hollywood's latest actor/artist/writer/director wunderkind. He emigrated from England when he was nineteen, already famous for two smash hits on the London stage. His first book, *Nom de Guerre*, was purchased by a Hollywood producer, giving Richard his foot in the door. Since then, he has written, directed and starred in five films and appeared in many others. As far as Hollywood is concerned, Brennan can do no wrong.

He met Sylvia on the set of his first film. She was already married, but the two fell in love and she filed for divorce when filming was done. The two were married within two months. Together, they produced three films that have been both critically and commercially successful (to various degrees). Their biggest hit, *The Damaged*, was written by Sylvia and directed by Richard.

Their marriage lasted ten years and then abruptly ended. Sylvia filed the divorce papers. She told Richard she could no longer be

in a marriage with him. His work was more important than their relationship. “You widowed me,” she told him before she left.

Since then, Richard has produced three more films, each more successful than the last. Each *darker* than the last. He hasn’t spoken to Sylvia in ten years. But Richard has a plan. (See *The Plan*, below.)

THE PLAY

The King in Yellow is a play you heard about when you were younger. In fact, most actors have heard of it. “The Cursed Play.” You found a copy in an auction. You were the only bidder. You are not certain if the play is a forgery or not. You had a great deal of trouble making copies of it. The pages came out smeared, the photocopier died, the pages came out black. Eventually, you hired a typist, but she quit after typing the first page of the second act. You only have the first act with you. That should give you sufficient time to pull off your scheme.

THE PLAN

This is a secret. You should not talk about it unless Sylvia (or Sylvia’s player) is out of hearing range. Keep it quiet. The other players have this same text and are reading it now. Everyone is in on the plan except Sylvia. Again, keep it quiet.

The *real* reason you are here is to help Sylvia. Richard came to you for your help. He came up with the “cursed play” and the read-through scheme to cover his true intention. He knows Sylvia is completely dependent on drugs and he wants to help her. He’s arranged this scenario as a kind of psychodrama intervention.

The premise is simple. The play is cursed and causes those who read it to go mad. Richard has arranged everything for this evening. He has rigged the hotel with special effects to create the illusion that the play is having a maddening effect on all of you. Go along with everything

you see. Richard has arranged for each of you—one-by-one—to be “murdered” by an invisible psychopath.

He hopes—beyond hope—that the illusion will force Sylvia out of her depression. It is an insane plan, but he’s tried more conventional treatments and they’ve all failed. If this doesn’t work... Sylvia is lost forever.

ROLEPLAYING RICHARD

There’s no way to say this in a humble way: you are a creative genius. You know this because of your success and the public’s confirmation. Make fun of your own reputation. When people try to remind you of your brilliance, play it off. You do not dabble in art: you are consumed by it. Obsessed by it. Richard makes popular films, but each film has a deep sense of humanity. “Art is about people,” you often say. If it doesn’t say anything about the human condition, if it doesn’t challenge comfort zones, you aren’t interested.

You are still in love with Sylvia. You’ve never stopped loving her. You recognize that you cannot be with her, but you have to do something to save her from herself. Since she left, you’ve started a new relationship with the actress Olivia Long. You have fallen completely in love with Olivia but are terrified the relationship will go down the same path. Olivia has agreed to help you save Sylvia, but you suspect she harbors a secret jealousy. She may even try to sabotage the project. You’ll have to keep your eye on her.

You heard about *The King in Yellow* when you were still a boy in London. You’ve spent your entire life looking for a copy. You finally have one. In fact, you have the English translation. You went through three photocopiers making scripts for your crew. Funny coincidence you can share with them to push the “cursed” legend. You don’t believe the legend, of course. A cursed play? Utter nonsense.

Your current obsession (saving Sylvia) is everything. Anything else—including consoling or addressing Olivia’s jealousy—is secondary.

When all this is over, Olivia will see that you still love her. You'll prove it to her. Make it up to her somehow.

RELATIONSHIPS

Sylvia is your primary concern. Your love for her has not diminished, nor will it ever.

Simon Carter is a good friend, but was a better friend of Sylvia's. You haven't spoken to him much since the break up. The last time you really spent time with him was during your last production. As usual, you cast him in a small but important role and he stole every scene he was in. Simon is a natural wit and comedian. And a good man.

THE MADNESS OF KING RICHARD

My friend Rob Justice tells me that Richard's plan is stupid. It's insane. It will never work and nobody would ever believe that this plan would work.

Well, with all due respect to my friend Rob... he's absolutely right.

Richard Brennan is a man who has been told he's a genius all his life. Everything he does is brilliant. Everything he does is groundbreaking. When writing Richard, I was thinking of men like Sir Lawrence Olivier, Orson Wells and (obviously) Kenneth Branagh. Men with brilliant minds and enough confidence for the rest of the world.

In Richard's head, the plan is *The Last Best Hope*. It will work because he thought of it. And it will work because it would have worked in one of his plays or books.

This is Brennan's downfall: his own genius. Of course the plan is fatally flawed. Of course it won't work. Of course nobody but him believes it will work but none of them are willing to say so because *it's Richard*. And you don't tell Richard Brennan that he's wrong. And they all have their own private reasons for agreeing with him.

This is tragedy. Hubris. Downfall writ large. And as Richard's plan slowly falls apart, so will he.

Roy Phillips is an Australian with whom you have struck a fast friendship. He is a brilliant actor, but a bit reckless. His addictions, not his performances, made him famous. You don't entirely trust Roy, but when he's on the stage, he shines.

Julia Chancellor is a woman you met in Hollywood. The two of you became particularly close after the divorce. You suspect Julia's "power dating" is responsible for your current relationship with her. You are not sleeping together, but she has made it clear that she would be open to such a suggestion.

Your relationship with **Olivia Long** is... complicated. She's young, beautiful and married. And the two of you have been sleeping together for three months. You've been able to keep the secret from the tabloids, but your friends are beginning to suspect. You've asked her to marry you. She declined. She says she isn't ready yet.

SYLVIA BRENNAN

Sylvia Brennan is an actress and writer who married the only man she considered more talented than herself. She wrote and starred in two movies before she met Richard. She was already married before she became an actress but the stress of Hollywood life tore that marriage apart. When she met Richard, she was ready to end her marriage. Meeting him confirmed her doubts. Richard was not just a temptation: he was what she always wanted. Young, charismatic, brilliant. The two fell in love on the set of his first film after he emigrated from Britain. She divorced her husband during the shoot and she and Richard were married two months after shooting was over.

But marriage to Richard was not what she expected. He was completely consumed by his work. They didn't go to parties. Didn't go dancing. He worked on plays, movies, books. He worked and worked and worked. They planned on traveling, but he had to work. They planned on having a child, but he had to work. "I'm not ready yet," he

told her. She eventually decided he would never be ready. And while she still loved him deeply, she needed a man who was obsessed with their relationship and not the next project. When she left him, she said, "You widowed me."

Since then, the tabloids have well-documented her dramatic decline. She has been in and out of relationships, never staying too long in one place. Recreational drug use and alcohol abuse have escalated to dangerous levels. So dangerous, in fact, she is on the top ten of many Hollywood dead pools. Her recklessness has cost her roles, friendships and nearly her sanity. She is close to the edge. Ready to fall.

When Richard offered her a role in his latest film, Sylvia's agent accepted the job without consulting her.

ROLEPLAYING SYLVIA

You carry a gun with you wherever you go. It's a small pistol: a .22. Small enough to hide and small enough to put against your head when the time comes. Your cocaine use has driven you to extreme paranoia and the alcohol has pushed you down into deep depression. This combination gives you two motives for the gun: protection and suicide. Sooner or later, you'll use the gun for one or both motives.

You hide your emotions well. Always have. Perhaps that was one of the reasons your marriage failed. You never let emotion boil to the surface, so when it does, it explodes. Drugs and alcohol have made this even worse.

You brought enough cocaine with you to last three weekends. You also have enough alcohol to last a week. You should go through both in the first night.

Once, you were in love with Richard. Now, you hate him. You hate his success. You hate his genius. You hate his happiness. And you love him. You love him. You love him. Why did he force you to leave? He didn't give you any choice. And this new role he's offering you is just

another way to hurt you. To show you he succeeded without you. But you'll play along. You'll play along for now. You don't know what you are going to do this weekend, but you want to hurt him. Hurt him so he understands how much he needs you.

And if he brings that bitch Olivia? She's going to pay.

RELATIONSHIPS

Richard Brennan is a complicated man and your relationship with him is not simple. You love him for his brilliance and hate him for it as well. He overshadows everyone he is with. It is the kind of arrogance that comes with naked genius. He leaves victims in his wake, his projects more important than the people involved. You were one of those people. Make sure he remembers that.

Simon Carter was your best friend before the divorce and then, he betrayed you. He sided with Richard. Sided with the talent. He's a career opportunist and dumped you as soon as he perceived you as poison.

Julia Chancellor is a bitch. A manipulative, conniving, power dating bitch. The woman was waiting in the wings, just waiting for you and Richard to split. When you did, she became his "best friend." You know the two of them are sleeping together—although she denies it. She can keep on denying it. Lying bitch.

Roy Phillips is a young, reckless talent who will sleep with anything. He's also your current lover. He insists on keeping the affair secret and you've obliged him. He should also have cocaine with him.

Olivia Long is his current lover. You know this because you pay the maid in Richard's house to keep tabs on him. Richard left you for her. You are sure of it. He tricked you into the divorce so he could be with a younger woman. Or was it you who left him? You can't remember anymore. Either way, "Hollywood's most promising ingénue" will find a deadly ending here.

SIMON CARTER

For years, Simon Carter was an A-list actor stuck in B-list films. His talent—unnoticed by most of Hollywood—had not gone unnoticed by his rabid fan base. Content to be a B movie actor, Simon milked the prestige of being a big fish in a small pond. But then, Richard Brennan gave him a call: an opportunity in one of his smaller productions. As usual, Carter stole every scene he was in. His quick wit and easy humor earned him a part in the Crew.

Sylvia Brennan was, at one time, Simon's best friend. She had a quick wit and a sense of humor that was as rarified and sophisticated (and vulgar!) as his. She was also a raging flirt with those she felt comfortable with and she felt most comfortable with Simon. He was safe: a happily married man. And he could cross verbal swords with the best of them. For that, and his homespun kindness, Sylvia adored Simon. But then the divorce...

Simon saw little of her after that. What he did see frightened him. She was a terrifying vision. Her wit turned from clever to cynical and cruel. Sylvia could always swear like a sailor, but this... this was something different. Simon was polite when he cut himself from her life, but he cut himself out, nonetheless. She never forgave him.

Simon acts as the conscience of the Crew. He prides himself on being a simple man. A family man (married with two daughters). His wife's name is Betty. His two daughters are Shannon and Margaret. He has never had a problem with drinking or drugs. He's never cheated on his wife. But Simon does have one dark secret. Something he's hid from everyone who knows him. Simon has Early-Onset Alzheimer's Disease. The condition is a rare form of the disease; it strikes in the 40's rather than later in life. The disease has affected Simon's vocal skills, giving him a slight stutter. He also gets lost easily: he cannot keep track of directions. His symptoms are still small and difficult for a layman to spot, but Simon notices them. And he knows he doesn't have much time left.

Simon is here because he was offered a job. And Simon Carter never says “no” to a job. Work is work. And with what little time he has left, every moment counts.

ROLEPLAYING SIMON

When he’s on, Simon is a master of wit and self-degradation. When he’s off, he’s a quiet family man who accepts even the worst job offers to pay his bills and put his two daughters through college. Richard called him, “The Man with No Shame.” Simon has done his best to live up to that reputation.

But the recent discovery of his condition has given Simon a bit of a serious edge. Life should be fun, but there’s a difference between fun and trivial. He reads a lot. He avoids television. He never touched liquor or drugs before, but now he sees them as a complete waste of time. A phrase he’s adopted lately is, “It’s later than you think.” It’s a subtle reminder to himself of everything he has left to do.

THE PLAN

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you see. Richard has arranged for each of you—one-by-one—to be “murdered” by an invisible psychopath.

He hopes—beyond hope—that the illusion will force Sylvia out of her depression. It is an insane plan, but he’s tried more conventional treatments and they’ve all failed. If this doesn’t work... Sylvia is lost forever.

RELATIONSHIPS

You’ve always thought of **Richard Brennan** as that really smart kid in class who saw the nuance in your humor while everybody else just laughed at the fart jokes. He’s the guy who gets it. You like him because of that. And you respect his talent.

Sylvia Brennan... Oh, Sylvia. Try to maintain a friendly face. Whatever happens, you still remember her the way she was.

Julia Chancellor is one of those women you never trusted in high school who grew up to be one of those women you never trusted in college who grew up to be one of those women you never trusted in Hollywood. Her talent is undeniable, but why Richard trusts her, you’ll never know.

Roy Phillips is a bully and a blowhard. A bully and a blowhard with real talent, that is. As long as you keep Roy away from the booze, everything will be okay.

Olivia Long is a beautiful and talented girl. Key word: “girl.” She’s here because Richard sees something in her. Perhaps more than what’s there. The kid has some growing up to do. Maybe this weekend retreat will be the opportunity to do that.

JULIA CHANCELLOR

Julia spent most of her childhood an ugly duckling. Picked on by bullies because she was too tall and too thin, by the time she reached

high school, she hated boys and swore she'd never fall in love. Then, something happened in her senior year. Her body filled out. Her hair thickened. Her acne went away. Julia Chancellor became the beauty she despised.

And she used it like a weapon.

Julia Chancellor used her beauty to achieve status and position. Denied it for so long, she knew exactly how valuable it was. She achieved everything she ever wanted. Money. Fame. Power. Influence. All with her mind and her beauty. She could not have done it with only one; she needed both. She became a model. And she spent all her time and money making herself an accomplished actress. She got the attention of Richard Brennan who saw more than most. He was also one of the first men who did not treat her like a prize or possession to be won or taken. For that, he earned her respect.

She doesn't like mirrors. She turns them away from herself or toward the wall. This stems from a horrifying incident when she was a girl playing "Bloody Mary" with two friends. She didn't speak for days after the incident and doesn't quite remember the details. She just knows she doesn't like mirrors—especially when alone.

Julia is always seen with the most beautiful men, whom she calls "opportunity jewelry." She refuses to allow herself tied down to a single opportunity. Of course, she never saw Richard as an opportunity... all right, maybe she did. But she never took advantage of his trust in her. Not even when the divorce drove him to solitude and loneliness. She had the opportunity, but she did not take it. But once Sylvia was gone, she and Richard became much closer. Now, she considers Richard one of her dearest and most trusted friends.

And she never liked Sylvia that much, anyway.

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He hopes—beyond hope—that the illusion will force Sylvia out of her depression. It is an insane plan, but he's tried more conventional treatments and they've all failed. If this doesn't work... Sylvia is lost forever.

If you could sabotage the plan some way—without losing favor with Richard—do it.

ROLEPAYING JULIA

Sex. Men want sex. And if you can make them think they can get it from you, they'll do anything for you. You don't even have to deliver. They just have to believe they have a chance. But don't overdo it: you are an intelligent woman. You know there's an appropriate time and place for everything... especially pulling out a weapon.

You are not very sure about Richard's plan. He should know better. He should leave the past in the past. But you are willing to help him—

even if you hate Sylvia. Although, if his plan were to fail... sabotaging Brennan's plan is a quiet little thought in your mind, but it may work. Instead of breaking Sylvia's addictions, perhaps you can break Richard's addiction to his past.

RELATIONSHIPS

Richard Brennan is the only man you trust. His childish infatuation with Sylvia is something you never understood. You love him, but you won't let his past get in the way of your—you mean, *his* future.

Sylvia Brennan is a woman who never deserved Richard in the first place. She's a spent, used up piece of trash that he should have thrown away a long time ago. Instead, he kept hold of her, even after she left him. She's worthless.

Roy Phillips is a macho jerk who doesn't know his pants are down around his ankles. He's made so many drunken passes at you, even God couldn't keep track of them. Other than his talent, he has no redeeming features at all. He's the classic cliché of a man.

Simon Carter is a mystery to you. You just can't get over how *true* everything is about him. He's everything he appears to be. He's funny, honest and faithful to his wife and children. He must have a secret. Everybody does. Perhaps if you hint that you know what it is, he might just tell you. More leverage.

Now, let's talk about **Olivia Long**. Another woman unworthy of Richard's adorations. The girl is half his age. What does he see in these women? Perhaps he's afraid of a *real* woman. Other than her youth and beauty, you really don't know anything about her. No leverage there. Find some.

ROY PHILLIPS

Roy was born in Australia and lived there most of his life. He spent many of those years living in the outback with his grandfather. He never knew his parents. He didn't learn to read until he was twenty-five. Then, he discovered acting.

He had what the trade papers call "an overnight success." He was cast in a small budget Australian film that caught Richard Brennan's attention. Brennan immediately cast you as the lead in his next production and you had what Hollywood likes to call "an overnight success."

"Overnight excess" was more like it. Since then, the rush of fame appeared to go straight to Roy's head. None can deny his credentials, but his off-screen persona has eclipsed any of his thespian accomplishments. He's brash, outspoken and completely full of himself. Convinced of his own press. At least, that's what the papers and TV say. Still, any movie he is in receives unprecedented laurels and box office. He must be doing something right.

The press has linked Roy with almost every one of his female co-stars—whether it was true or not. But in recent months, he's been seeing Sylvia Brennan: Richard's ex-wife. Despite his friendship with Richard—or perhaps because of it—Roy hasn't said anything to his friend. Whether or not he's ashamed of what he's done or frightened of the consequences, Roy is a bit too proud to admit... even to himself.

ROLEPLAYING ROY

Roy isn't just confident of his talent, he's convinced. Drugs and alcohol are constant companions, but Roy is on the upswing right now. He hasn't quite hit the downside of excess. The cocaine makes him powerful. In a few months, it will make him powerless. But not just yet. He'll quit by then. He's man enough to know when to quit.

He's not afraid of confrontation. In fact, he thrives on it. He *likes* arguments. He feels arguments get things done. Negotiation leads to compromise and art is about never compromising. When he's wrong, he admits it quickly and respectfully. That's how a man—a *real man*—does things: he never compromises, but when he's wrong, he let's the better argument have its day.

And that's really what Roy is about. He's a man. A real man. Not like the sissies in Hollywood. He's an artist and there's nothing fake or feminine about it. Acting is art. It's reaching into your soul and pulling out the emotions that are already there. And anyone who says differently deserves a thump on the head. Maybe two. Three, just to be sure.

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treatments and they've all failed. If this doesn't work... Sylvia is lost forever.

RELATIONSHIPS

Richard Brennan is the man who got you here. You respect Richard because the man knows what he wants and knows how to get it. You don't know what happened with the divorce, but a real man doesn't just let his woman walk away. That you don't respect. And the plan Richard has to "rescue" his wife? This whole thing is a bit too complicated. Just walk up to her and tell her you still love her. What's wrong with that?

Sylvia Brennan is a wounded woman. Richard hurt her somehow and that's unforgivable. You never hurt a woman. She needed a real man in her life and that's why she came to you. If Richard was too self-centered to see that, then it's his loss. The fact that you define your relationship with Sylvia through Richard should tell you something.

Simon Carter is a sissy. He's a loud mouth who always gets what he wants because he's a clown. He makes people laugh. Big deal.

Julia Chancellor is a slut. She slept her way to the top. She must have been sleeping with Richard behind Sylvia's back, although Sylvia says that isn't why she left him. Sure, she's got talent: talent playing sluts. That's why Richard casts her in the roles she gets. She'll fuck anything to get what she wants. Maybe you respect that a little bit. But she hasn't fucked you yet, so what's her problem?

Olivia Long is young, hot and ready to pop. You've never met her before, but when you heard she was going to be here, you gave a big, big smile. She's going to love you.

OLIVIA LONG

Young, beautiful and full of promise. That's what the trades say about Olivia Long. A true ingénue. She's only been in one film—a

supporting role in an independent project that showed at Cannes. She doesn't know anyone here except for Richard... and she's been sleeping with him for three months.

It started off as something dangerous. She was in Cannes—alone—and knew no-one. She met Richard at the showing. He was handsome and witty... and a little sad. She flirted, just a little. The next thing she knew, they spent the rest of the week together in France. He proposed marriage only three weeks ago. She declined, saying she wasn't ready yet. Although, to be honest, his passion for the romance far eclipses hers. Olivia sees Richard as a fling with strong potential, but asking about marriage is premature.

Now, he's asked her here. She knows no one. Only Richard. She's young and terrified. But she can't let Richard see that. She has to put on a brave face.

THE PLAN

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If you could sabotage the plan some way—without losing favor with Richard—do it.

ROLEPLAYING OLIVIA

Young, frightened, but brave. Don’t let anyone intimidate you. You are good at making friends. Make as many as possible. You’ve heard stories about Richard’s “Crew” and how crazy they get during a read through. You have to admit... this all sounds rather melodramatic. But you may just love Richard... and if he’s gone to such lengths to save his ex-wife, imagine what lengths he would go to for someone else he loved.

RELATIONSHIPS

Olivia doesn’t have a relationship with anyone else here, but she knows a little bit about the actors.

She knows about **Sylvia Brennan** from both the press and Richard. She knows Sylvia is an alcoholic and a drug addict. When Richard speaks of her, he does so with respect and sadness.

Simon Carter is an actor you admire. You may even call yourself a fan. He’s a brilliant actor who shows up in... not so brilliant movies. His comedic timing is a beauty to behold.

Roy Phillips is Hollywood’s newest bad boy. A hard drinking Australian who can switch identities in a heartbeat. You will have to watch out for him.

It’s tough to say whether **Julia Chancellor’s** success came from her talent or her ability to seduce directors and leading men. Probably a little of both.

EXCERPTS FROM THE KING IN YELLOW

A few notes. First, Richard has never seen “The Overture.” He doesn’t know how it got into the play. He also doesn’t know why there are scenes missing.

When I had people read through the pages of the play, something happened that always happens with a read-through. It’s a strange phenomenon, but you are more than likely to see it yourself.

People don’t say what they read. They’ll misread words and phrases. There’s no trick to this, it will just happen. Others will usually not point out the error, but allow the read through to go on. This will create a sense of disjointedness with the readers. Allow it to happen. They’ll think they are reading different versions of the play. Of course, if this doesn’t happen, don’t worry. But if it does... enjoy it.

You can download these pages as PDFs at the Curse of the Yellow Sign website: www.johnwickpresents.com/yellow. Also, on the website, I’ve provided *six different versions* of the play to print out, each assigned to a specific character. That means, some folks will have some phrases and others will have different pages. Again, it’s all about disorienting the players.

The character of “THE PHANTOM” also makes appearances in the play. Remember: Richard does not remember seeing any such character when he photocopied the play. When the lines for the Phantom of Truth appear, whisper them from the darkness. Tell the players they all heard the voice, but they are uncertain where it came from. Then, watch the actors blame Richard for setting the whole thing up.

Here’s one version of Act 1. At least, *some* of it.

OVERTURE

(A figure all in black wearing a white mask stands on the stage. No lights.)

PHANTOM OF TRUTH

This is how it ends. This is how it ends.

You have called me and I am here. I am the gateway between what is true and what you wish was true. The doorway between fantasy and fact. It is only a little step between your lies and me. But I will lead you there. All you need do is take my hand. For I am the Phantom of Truth. I am the Last King. Come to wed the Last Queen. The King in Yellow and the Queen in Red. And I wear no mask.

This is how it ends. This is how it ends.

ACT 1, SCENE 1

(The stage is empty save for three tall windows. Outside, the sky shows the constellation of Aldebaran. Walking on the stage, QUEEN CASSILDA approaches the window closest STAGE RIGHT.)

CASSILDA

I can almost see Carcosa.

(PRINCESS CAMILLA enters.)

CAMILLA

Mother, what dress do you think I should wear?

CASSILDA

I can almost see Carcosa.

CAMILLA

The blue is lovely, but Tosha so does love the green. And I just do not know which of them I wish to please tonight.

CASSILDA

Its towers, rising from the mists.

CAMILLA

And the red. I love the red. If I was thinking only of myself I would wear the red.

CASSILDA

Its gables touching the sky.

CAMILLA

The red, then. I shall be selfish tonight. Tosha and Vren can do their best to please me for a change!

(beat)

Mother? Are you listening to me?

CASSILDA

The King in Yellow and the Queen in Red.

THE PHANTOM

Sing your song, my Queen.

CASSILDA

Along the shore the cloud waves break,
The twin suns sink beneath the lake,
The shadows lengthen
In Carcosa

Strange is the night where black stars rise,
And strange moons circle through the skies
But stranger still is
Lost Carcosa.

Songs that the Hyades shall sing,
Where flap the tatters of the King,
Must die unheard in
Dim Carcosa.

Song of my soul, my voice is dead;
Die thou, unsung, as tears unshed
Shall dry and die in
Lost Carcosa.

CAMILLA

(disgusted)

You never listen to me!

(Exaunt CAMILLA)

CASSILDA

I can almost see...

ACT 1, SCENE 3

(Uoht the Younger and Uoht the Elder approach the castle at the gate. The wind and snow blow around them.)

ELDER

Have you seen Mother? She looks as close to death as a corpse.

YOUNGER

Closer to a corpse puts us closer to the Throne.

ELDER

Your ambition is tasteless, brother.

YOUNGER

It tastes sweet to Camilla.

ELDER

Her tastes are just as bitter as yours.

YOUNGER

How would you know, brother? Tasted her often?

ELDER

You disgust me. Listening to your plots makes me wonder if I should be so concerned when I sit on the Throne.

YOUNGER

Be silent! Someone approaches!

(ENTER Camilla)

CAMILLA

(CAMILLA hugs the Elder and kisses the Younger)

My brothers! And why home so soon? Is the war over?

ELDER

Alas, no. It seems it has only begun.

YOUNGER

Our armies did not fare well against the Enemy, sister.

CAMILLA

When news reaches the streets, the streets shall not be silent.

YOUNGER

They will want blood.

ELDER

They can find it in the veins of our Enemy.

CAMILLA

They will find it in the walking corpse that sits on our Throne.

YOUNGER

Aye, if that corpse has any blood left in her.

ELDER

That is our mother you speak of, brother. You will keep your tongue civil in your head or I will cut it out for you.

YOUNGER

(to CAMILLA)

Our brother has not taken well to the defeats our Enemy has given us.

ELDER

You speak as if they were gifts.

CAMILLA

They are gifts, brother. Do you not see? We can use the defeats and the risk of revolt to restore sanity to the Throne.

ELDER

Sister...

CAMILLA

She says she can see Carcosa on the lake.

ELDER

No...

CAMILLA

Every day, she stares out the window. Every night, she walks the halls. Sleepless. Afraid to sleep. The apothecary has given her a powder to keep her safe from dreams. She says she is eager to call the King.

ELDER

You will be silent, now! If this is true, I shall see it for myself!

CAMILLA

You shall, Uoht. You shall.

ACT 1, SCENE 5

(CASSILDA and NAOTALBA in the Queen's Chambers)

NAOTALBA

What is it you seek, my Queen?

CASSILDA

Have you found the Yellow Sign?

NAOTALBA

No, my Queen. I have not. The libraries lend no clues.

CASSILDA

Then, we are truly doomed.

NAOTALBA

My Queen looks across the Lake. What is it you seek?

CASSILDA

Have you found the Yellow Sign?

NAOTALBA

My Queen already knows the answer to that question.

CASSILDA

Then, we are truly doomed.

NAOTALBA

Your Highness, my spies report your children are preparing for a coup.

CASSILDA

(looking out the window again)

It is no matter.

NAOTALBA

The people are restless. If they attempt to usurp your throne, the streets will revolt. There will be no leadership.

CASSILDA

If they do not attempt it, the people will revolt. Either way, the end is here.

THE PHANTOM

This is how it ends...

CASSILDA

(looking at the PHANTOM)

This is how it ends...

NAOTALBA

My Queen? Do you speak to me?

CASSILDA

(looking out the window)

Have you found the Yellow Sign?

NAOTALBA

My scribes and I shall look again.

CASSILDA

(looking at the PHANTOM)

You shall not find it.

NAOTALBA

(aside)

Then it is true. The Queen is mad. Perhaps a poison? Perhaps grief. She will not allow me to investigate. If the Queen be mad, then the children are to sit on the Throne. But which one? They are decadent fools. Ah, but decadent fools are too busy with their pleasures to be masters of state. And that leaves only Naotalba to run it for them. Let the old Queen die so a new one may rule. A Queen is still a Queen regardless of whether or not she sits in the throne... or stands behind it.

ACT 1, SCENE 6

(CASSILDA and UOHT, THE YOUNGER in the THRONE ROOM.)

CASSILDA

It is almost ready, my brother.

YOUNGER

Do you know there are times when your ambition frightens me?

CASSILDA

Is that all it does?

YOUNGER

No.

CASSILDA

Show me what it does to you.

(the two kiss passionately)

YOUNGER

What shall we do with our brother?

CASSILDA

The same we do to our mother, silly. Both stand in our way. It shall be you and I, King and Queen, as it was with the Old Ways.

YOUNGER

The King in Yellow...

CASSILDA

... and the Queen in Red.

YOUNGER

Magician and Harlot.

CASSILDA

As it was, as it is, as it always should be.

(the two kiss passionately again)

YOUNGER

Where should we go?

CASSILDA

(gesturing toward the Throne)

There.

YOUNGER

Our brother is right. You have no shame.

CASSILDA

My ambition murdered my shame. Now kiss me. And let us be harlot and magician upon the throne that will soon be ours!

ACT 1, SCENE 8

(The ballroom, full of masked figures and music. CASSILDA enters wearing a red and white dress and mask. CAMILLA enters wearing the same dress and mask. They speak the same, it is difficult to identify which is which as CAMILLA mimics CASSILDA.)

CASSILDA

Is that a mirror I see?

CAMILLA

Or perhaps a ghost?

CASSILDA

Not a ghost.

CAMILLA

Can you be so sure?

CASSILDA

My ghosts sing to me. I hear no such song from you.

CAMILLA

A mirror, then. A mirror of yourself.

CASSILDA

It cannot be.

CAMILLA

(looking out the window)

I can almost see Carcosa.

CASSILDA

You dare mock the Queen?

CAMILLA

If you are the Queen.

CASSILDA & CAMILLA

(in unison)

I am the Queen!

CAMILLA

You see? How can you be so certain? Perhaps you are the ghost. Old
dead woman.

CASSILDA

I am no ghost.

CAMILLA

You haunt these halls. You speak with the dead. You see the dead city on
the edge of the lake. Who else could you be?

CASSILDA

I am no ghost.

CAMILLA

You are what has been. I am what will be. I am tomorrow. You are the
grave.

CASSILDA

(falling to her knees)

I am no ghost.

CAMILLA

Die, old woman! Die and take yesterday with you!

(the bell tolls midnight)

CASSILDA

(falling to the floor)

NO! NO! IT IS TOO LATE!

CAMILLA

And now it is time! Time to lay aside all disguises! Look upon me you all! Look upon me and see the true Queen of Alar! And look upon the corpse that writhes and weeps on the floor! Look upon her! She is the past. And I am the future.

(ENTER a STRANGER)

CAMILLA

Who are you?

STRANGER

A herald.

CAMILLA

A herald who dares interrupt the true Queen of Alar?

STRANGER

I am.

CAMILLA

Then you shall die! Die with her! Buried in the same patch of land, your bones crushed and your skin burned!

STRANGER

I have no bones to be crushed and I have no skin to be burned.

CAMILLA

What are you then?

STRANGER

I am he who you called. To remind you that there can be no Queen in Alar without a King.

CAMILLA

I need no King.

STRANGER

I am the Herald of the King.

CASSILDA

(looking to the window)

It is there! It is there!

CAMILLA

(to the STRANGER)

You, sir, should unmask.

STRANGER

Indeed?

CASSILDA

(speaking as if in a trance)

Indeed, it is time. We have all laid aside disguise but you.

STRANGER

I wear no mask.

CASSILDA

(terrified)

No mask? No mask!

TRANSMOGRIFICATION

As the night progresses, and as the actors read through more of the play, the world around them begins to change. The Hotel seems to take on a life of its own, changing before their very eyes.

A corridor that was there a moment ago is gone now, replaced with an archway that makes no sense in the current architecture.

They see men and women walking around corners in masks.

They hear laughter and music behind closed doors.

They see figures appearing behind them in mirrors.

They see the other actors as the characters they are supposed to portray in the play.

And they see the Phantom of Truth.

The Hotel is becoming Alar. The actors are becoming the Queen and her court. The line between reality and fantasy isn't just blurring; it's being wiped away.

And an unspeakable terror approaches. It will arrive at midnight when the Stranger arrives.

(Yes, the Stranger is not listed in the cast. The play itself is transforming: becoming what it needs to be or what it always was meant to be.)

This particular event affects the actors differently. Simon—with his

BRENNAN'S CASTING

Sylvia Brennan: Queen Cassilda

Oliva Long: Princess Camilla

Simon Carter: Uoht, the Elder

Roy Phillips: Uoth, the Younger

Julia Chancellor: Naotalba, the Queen's Advisor

BRENNAN'S PLAN, PART 1

GIVE THIS NOTE TO RICHARD BRENNAN

Excuse yourself and head off to your room. Make sure you announce where you are going. There, you have prosthetics prepared for the event. You will have a cut throat and multiple stab wounds to the chest as well as defensive wounds on the arms. Allow the others to wonder where you went.

After your body is found, you will appear as a ghost haunting Sylvia. Do as you will.

BRENNAN'S PLAN, PART 2

GIVE THIS NOTE TO OLIVIA LONG

Wait until Richard has been found dead. Then, at a time you find appropriate, break into tears. It's too much. You can't take any more. Rush off alone somewhere. Richard has arranged a secret panel for you to slip into. Once you are secured, apply the makeup there he has provided. You will also appear to have been murdered: stabbed in the chest and throat cut.

After your body is found, you will appear as a ghost haunting Sylvia. Do as you will.

BRENNAN'S PLAN, PART 3

GIVE THIS NOTE TO SIMON CARTER

Wait until Richard and Olivia have been found dead. Then, at a time you find appropriate, burst into a nonsensical rage. It's too much. You can't take any more. Rush off alone somewhere. Richard has arranged a secret panel for you to slip into. Once you are secured, apply the makeup there he has provided. You will also appear to have been murdered: stabbed in the chest and throat cut.

After your body is found, you will appear as a ghost haunting Sylvia. Do as you will.

Alzheimer's—is convinced he's hallucinating. Sylvia and Roy are also hallucinating, but for different reasons. Did Richard put something in the water? Something in the food? Plant that thought in their heads.

With most of the actors in on the plan, they may begin to suspect Richard has some other motives. If he's going to “trick” Sylvia this way, why not trick the rest of them as well. He is a practical joker, after all. But would he go this far?

As the night progresses, the Hotel begins transforming into the Castle Alar. The darkened hallways, bereft of electricity, begin glowing red with torchlight. The doorways become archways. And darting between the shadows, the actors can see costumed figures wearing masks.

THE PLAN

Richard has a plan. Here's how it goes.

He's the first to die. He'll excuse himself sometime during the evening and prep himself up. He's going to be a bloody mess. Knife wounds to the chest and a cut throat. Then, he'll wait. Eventually, the rest of them will wonder where he's gone.

If Richard is a PC, hand him the Brennan's Plan, Part 1 Note in the nearby sidebar. This will kick start Richard's plan. Then, as time permits, employ the rest of the Plan notes.

I've never needed more than three dead cast members. You may need more, but by this time, it should be painfully obvious that something has gone terribly wrong with Brennan's plan.

INSANITY

In Act I, I gave a series of flashbacks to make Sanity loss a little bit more dramatic. For me, while Sanity has always been one of the most

innovative mechanics of *Call of Cthulhu*, I've also found it to be one of the easiest ways for the Keeper to cheat. Going insane should not be just a roll of the dice and a consultation on the Psychosis Chart.

No.

It should be a dramatic and horrifying experience. This is a *horror game*. The players buy their ticket so they can sit in a darkened room and have their wits scared out of them. That's what they want. Let's give it to them.

UNMASKING THE KING

When I was playing the Man in Black, at least two people got to see what was under the veil. Take Fabien for example. When Fabien got to see under the veil, I positioned myself so nobody else could see what was going to happen. When the veil got lifted, I whispered, "SCREAM!" at him. Fabien is a big *CoC* fan, so he knew what to do. He screamed and fell into a puddle of tears and twitches.

Now, I didn't scare Fabien, but it sure as hell scared the rest of the players. And that was the key. What they *didn't see*. They saw Fabien's *reaction*. And that was enough to creep them out.

GRAND FINALE

These are the key factors in reaching a satisfying ending to the scenario. And trust me, this thing can go a lot of different ways. You can direct the finale with subtle hints and pushes to the players. I should also add that "satisfying" does not mean "happy." This is not a story that ends well.

More often than not, after everything that has happened, I usually have a few accidental deaths along the way. People are mistaken for "the mad killer" who has gotten into the Hotel. Once the actors start

seeing things, they assume someone else is in the Hotel with them. Richard's death proves it to Sylvia. When Richard *really* gets himself killed—through all manner of ways—the rest of the actors begin to wonder what's going on.

I had Richard die by his own hand once. He saw how everything he heard about the play was true and after losing his Sanity, took his own life by throwing himself out a window. Of course, he impaled himself on the iron gates outside the Hotel. Once that happened, Richard's "ghost" started wandering around driving everyone else mad.

Don't show the face; show the showing of the face.

KEEPER TECHNIQUES

I ran this scenario with no dice, no character sheets and no rules. I used a ton of tricks to keep this one going. I also put on a black suit, stuck my Yellow Sign pin on my lapel and walked around as the Man in Black. I put a veil over my face when I was the Man in Black and took it off when I was Just John. I made sure only to whisper as the MiB. If I was speaking out loud, players knew I was Just John.

By the end of it, I was exhausted, but my players were greatly satisfied.

This section is not intended to show you how to be a good GM/ Keeper, but what I did to maintain the atmosphere and horror of my own sessions. These worked for me. They may work for you. I hope they do. Good luck.

LIGHT AND DARKNESS

For me, the key to the atmosphere of this scenario was light and darkness. I purchased a small light I could hold in the palm of my hand. This was the only source of light in the room. I turned off all the other lights and shut the window shades.

When the generators were working, I flashed the light at the floor. When the generators went out, I turned it off and let the players sit in complete darkness.

(If they lit a match, I turned the light on and flashed my fingers under it. You may want to use real matches if you like, but I preferred staying away from fire.)

I also used the little light for “spotlight.” This is an indie game term for “it’s your turn.” When I turned my attention to a particular player, I moved the light to their feet. This indicated to the other players that the point-of-view was currently on *this* player and they should remain silent or assist with that player’s scene.

Flashing light in other people’s faces is an effective technique for disorientation as well. (There’s a reason it’s such a cliché in crime movies.) I used the light to disorient the players when reality was shifting back and forth between the Hotel and Carcosa. I also used it as a kind of transition piece: changing from one perspective to another.

BANALITY

“The very banality and innocence of the first act only allowed the blow to fall afterward with more awful effect.”

— Robert W. Chambers, *The Repairer of Reputations*

The first hour or so of the scenario (real time, now) should be an exercise in the slow, creeping banality of the situation. Nothing happens. People arrive, comment on the cold, comment on the food, comment on the company... a lot of chit chat. Let that happen. Let the players get accustomed to their characters. Let them talk. Complain. In fact, sit back and say nothing. Allow uncomfortable silences to set in. And linger. Don’t worry; human nature dictates that *someone* will break the silence.

And slowly—very slowly—let that unnatural calm turn into quiet discord. Kill the lights at appropriate times. Whisper things. Just below a whisper. Doesn’t really matter what you say as long as they can’t understand what you said. If they ask for clarification, tell them, “That’s what you heard.”

This is tricky. Too much banality turns to boredom. You've got to time it right. Make sure the players aren't frustrated. Start small and build.

THE HOTEL

The obvious reference here is Kubrick's film *The Shining*. Trust me, it's deliberate. Use it. In fact, feed a thought to one of the characters: Brennan must be entering his "Kubrick Phase."

I chose a haunted hotel because the images are so ingrained in American culture that they are easy for a Keeper to use. Exploit that. But remember: Kubrick and King weren't the first to write haunted house stories. This scenario uses as much of the energy from *The Shining* as it does from *The Haunting of Hill House*.

The goal here is terror: the awful dread that proceeds the reveal. As Shirley Jackson knew, watching a doorknob turn on a locked door is far more terrifying than what is actually on the other side. Use the hotel to provide these kinds of events. In moments of pure darkness, describe the sound of something moving toward and away from the players.

For example, put one of the characters alone in a pitch black room. The generators have failed—again—and they sit alone in the dark, trying to make their way toward the door. Halfway through the room, they hear the sound of the door opening... and then closing. No footsteps. Just opening... and closing. Is someone in the room? Dare they ask? And if there is no answer?

Then, the lights come back on. Nobody is there.

The dread of being in the darkened room is far more powerful than any reveal. Use it. The hotel provides a perfect environment for this kind of play. Hotels are designed to be comforting and welcoming.

Even familiar. But they are still alien environments full of strangeness and strangers.

You can also use the hotel's size as a weapon. Kubrick did. He almost always shoot the characters from a distance, showing us the enormity of the hotel. You have to do the same thing here. Ballrooms as big as football fields. Bathrooms bigger than apartments. Everything echoes in here. Even the smallest whisper. But the Man in Black's whispers don't echo. They stay right in your ear.

The place is a labyrinth and it is easy to get lost. The set Kubrick used was built from scratch (contrary to popular belief; even the exteriors were built on soundstages) and he used its layout to disorient the viewer. For example, he used windows to fool the viewer into thinking one room was overlooking the outside, when in fact, it was closed in by other rooms. You don't consciously notice it, but your mind still picks it up, gets confused, and can't sort out the geography.

I assume that once the actors begin reading the play, the hotel's geography is up for grabs. Going from one place to another is never the same way twice. The maze changes itself for its own purposes.

Of course, this can get annoying if you handle it like a hammer. Don't prevent characters getting one place to another. Instead, make their journey the piece of horror. How many times will you have to go through *that room* again. The place where you saw the naked man standing in front of the mirror? He's not there now, but he was, and I must *keep running through the room* with the understanding that at any time... he may be there again.

TEMPERATURE

It's freezing. January in Colorado. Everything is cold, cold, cold. Look out the window and it is endless white. You can't see where the sky meets the land. It's just white.

Of course, the cold is a red herring. I emphasized the cold to get the players thinking this would be a survival game. The generators would die and they'd have to find ways from freezing to death. That wasn't where we were going at all, but I planted some ideas in their heads. "If these generators go out..." I'd tell one of them.

At the same time, the space heaters are making everything *hot*. Like walking from a movie theater into a July afternoon in Arizona. Extreme cool to extreme heat. I used that as well. When two of them moved from the hallway into a bedroom, the cold gave way to a hot-hot-hot room. They stripped off their coats and... well, actors are actors. And this crew has enough sexual tension to fry a whole carton of eggs.

READING THE PLAY

When the characters sat down to read the play for the first time, I read the part of the Phantom. I told Brennan's player that he did not remember photocopying this page and does not remember it in the play at all. Then, when I was done with the soliloquy, the lights went out.

I told Richard that he should have different actors read different parts. Switch them up. I left it up to the player to cast the roles. However, I also slipped him a note that Sylvia and Julia should both be reading Queen Cassidla's part. Let them switch off between scenes and see how the actresses interpret the role. Let the girls fight.

THE MAN IN BLACK

As you isolate characters, introduce them to the Man in Black's latest incarnation, the Phantom of Truth.

When I ran this scenario, I wore my black suit and brought a veil to wear over my head when the Phantom of Truth (Man in Black)

showed up. He spoke only in whispers, never letting his voice get too loud. I could remove the veil when the Phantom disappeared, changing between Keeper John and the MiB quickly.

Why is love any different than any other emotion? Hatred fades. Fear fades.

I focused the Man in Black's appearances when the characters were alone, but like the play, he showed up to whisper in their ears. Since the players were familiar with the gimmick in the play, they were familiar with it as their characters as well. If I whispered to them (loud enough for others to hear), they knew their characters were being addressed by him and responded accordingly.

“THIS IS HOW IT ENDS. . .”

This really was the chorus of the piece.

At any appropriate moment, either as Keeper John or the Phantom, the whispered words, “This is how it ends...” were the punctuation of the scene.

When Sylvia snorted the cocaine up her nose...

This is how it ends...

When Simon got lost in the halls of the Hotel, hearing the screaming pleas for help from his friends and he could not find his way to help them...

This is how it ends...

When Sylvia overdosed and was kicking and thrashing in Roy's arms, blood pouring from her nose, her pulse quickening and weakening...

This is how it ends...

And when Sylvia discovered the entire plot was to “save her.” A trick. Nothing but a trick to humiliate and deceive her. And she felt the gun in her pocket. Felt its strength. Felt its lethal power as she looked into Richard’s eyes...

This is how it ends...

UNDER THEIR SKIN

Here are the techniques I used for each character, isolating and exploiting their own weaknesses and foibles.

RICHARD

Look at them. Look at them scramble. Look at them tremble. Look at them crumble apart. Your friends. You had such confidence in them. But they are weak. Just bundles of flesh and bone. Just like you. Your plan failed, Richard. You cannot save her. You cannot save her. She is the mad Queen. Looking across the lake to lost Carcosa. And she can see it, Richard. She can see it...

SYLVIA

When attacking a chain, start with the weakest link.

The coincidences and correspondences with Sylvia and Queen Camilla are not mere chance. Sylvia begins to lose the division between reality and fantasy. She sees the other actors as their roles and addresses them appropriately.

Simon is the Elder.

Roy is the Younger.

Olivia is Camilla.

Julia is her advisor, Naotalba.

And Richard is the ghost of the dead king. Gone. Lost.

Soon enough, if she looks out across the lake, in the rising mists, she can see Carcosa.

The Phantom of Truth (you in a black suit wearing a black veil) make the promise to return her King. But first, she has to be willing to make a sacrifice. You can determine whatever that sacrifice may be. It could be the other actors, it could be Richard himself. The scenario can go many, many ways so exploit the weaknesses your player chooses to emphasize in Sylvia.

SIMON

Simon knows how fragile human beings are. He knows how easily memory can be damaged. Hell, how damaged memory is to begin with. The people around him trivialize their lives with petty minutiae. They have no idea how precious life is.

How precious life is. Yes, that's exactly where you hit Simon.

Simon has convinced himself that life is precious and fleeting. Well, he's right about half of that. Precious? How so? Sylvia's lust and drug abuse? Roy's petty indulgences? Julia's peacock preening? These are precious? It's all futile in the end. Show him visions of what happens when he's gone. Show him his wife and his children and how they struggle without him. When the government comes to collect on back taxes. When all of his "friends" ignore them because they were really only interested in being Simon's friends and only tolerated his wife. Poor Betty. Poor Margaret. Poor Shannon. Everything gets taken away. They have no source of income. He's gone and their lives are in ruin. And it's all his fault.

Show him thousands and thousands of lives equally ruined. And then show him the baby in Africa who dies before it is two months old because it has no water to drink. And show him the forty thousand babies who die the same way every year. Forty thousand every year. Because they don't have access to the world's most common resource.

How precious life is.

ROY

Roy is already decadent and nihilistic; you don't need to push him too far. I use Roy as an example for other characters. In other words, the Man in Black seldom speaks to Roy, but shows Roy's actions to the other actors as an example. Roy will probably be hitting on Olivia, so I show that to Sylvia. And I show Richard the night Roy spent with Sylvia. And I show Julia just what's going through Roy's head when he speaks to her.

This makes Roy the victim of spite, hatred and (often) violence. He's also one of the only actors here who can really take care of himself. Usually, Roy will get himself into trouble with Sylvia and she'll use the gun on him first. Kind of a test case to see if she can really do it when it comes time to pull the trigger on Richard.

JULIA

One of the playtesters had an insight into Julia's character that was so perfect, I wrote it into her background here.

Julia doesn't like mirrors. She drew that from Julia's "ugly duckling" past. She spent her first few minutes in her room turning all the mirrors away. Later, when she chased Sylvia into the bathroom, I shut off the hand light in the middle of their conversation. I then reminded Julia about the game they used to play. You know the one. "Bloody Mary."

Very slowly, I described the memory from childhood. Alone in the dark with two friends, you closed your eyes and said the words over and over again. "I believe in Bloody Mary. I believe in Bloody Mary. I believe in Bloody Mary." I had the player shut her eyes and say the words. Then, I crept up on her, shone the light on my face and made the most unnatural features I could. The effect was very satisfying.

Using mirrors with Julia is an opportunity for all kinds of horror and creepiness. Seeing people behind her that are not there. Seeing

people standing next to her looking at her with their “true faces.” Holding knives. Bleeding from wounds. Exploit them as you will.

OLIVIA

When Olivia was alone in her bedroom (getting towels to wipe up the blood), she exited the bathroom into the bedroom and saw a naked man lying on her bed. His beauty was almost inhuman. He smiled at her and said, “Sister. Come back to bed. It is getting cold.”

Just that scene alone was enough to creep out Olivia’s player. Just being that close to incest made her skin crawl.

COLORADO W

Tuesday, August 11, 2009

ACTORS AND DIRECTOR REPORTEDLY FOUND DEAD I

By Johann Vik
Staff Writer

CARLSON, Colo. — Richard Brennan, director, actor and star, and many others may have been found dead in the Glennwood Grand Hotel last night. Police reported to the scene early in the morning after hunters reported strange sounds and lights coming from the hotel.

Thomas O'Donnell, a local hunter, said he and his brother Jeff were in the area hunting deer when they heard the sound of gunshots coming from the direction of the hotel. The two hunters approached and saw what they believed to be a fire in the windows. They said they also heard many people

screaming. They notified police using their cellular phones.

Hours later, emergency crews removed what appeared to be bodies from the hotel. How many bodies and exactly who was involved in the incident is still uncertain, but contacts within the police department confirm that famous director Richard Brennan was involved and may be dead.

Another victim may be his ex-wife Sylvia Brennan (nee Silver) and other actors associated with Brennan's work. Details are still forthcoming. Brennan's publicist would not comment on the tragedy.

Richard Bre

I'M DEAD. NOW WHAT?

Just because a character is dead doesn't mean they're out of the picture. Take the player aside and explain what's going on. From this moment on, they

really are the character they're supposed to be portraying in the play. It's their job to freak out and frighten the other players.

WEEKLY

coloradoweeklynews.com

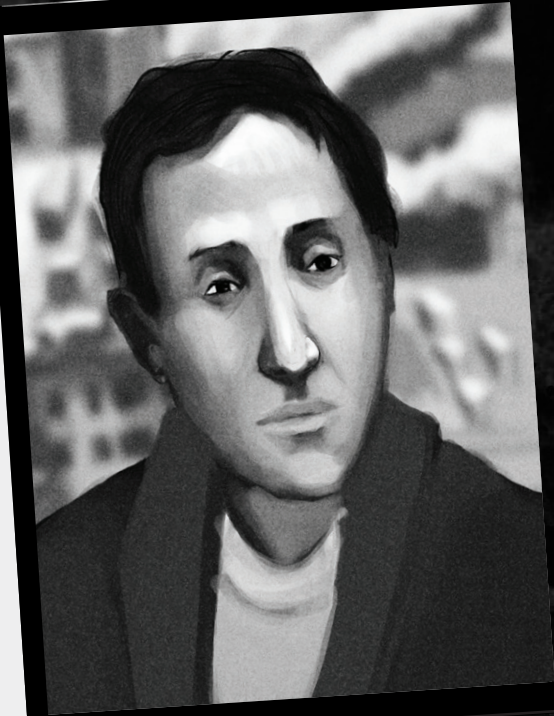
IN INFAMOUS HOTEL



INGA INDRAŠIŪTĖ / Colorado Weekly
annan at *The Crime* movie release

Richard Brennan

director
genius



CALL OF CTHULHU

STR 12 CON 12 SIZ 10
 DEX 11 APP 17 SAN 79
 INT 18 POW 16 EDU 20

SKILLS:

ACTING 80 DODGE 22 DIRECTING 80
 FAST TALK 70 LISTEN 60 PSYCHOLOGY 40
 SPOT HIDDEN 60 WRITING 80 CTHULHU MYTHOS 1*

* Richard has skimmed some of The King in Yellow pages, giving him a passing glimpse at the horror that awaits them.

UNSPEAKABLE

PROFESSION: Actor/Director (5d6) SANITY: 18
 PERSONALITY: Demanding (3d6), Charming (2d6),
Eloquent (3d6), Insightful (2d6)
 GOAL: Save My Wife (1d6)
 MADNESS TRAITS: Perception (2d6), _____

Sylvia Brennan

lead actress
ex-wife



STR 9 CON 8 SIZ 9
 DEX 12 APP 17 SAN 50
 INT 15 POW 10 EDU 18

SKILLS:
 ACTING 80 BARGAIN 70 DODGE 24
 FAST TALK 60 PERSUADE 80 PHARMACY 70
 SEDUCE 80 WRITING 80 CTHULHU MYTHOS _____

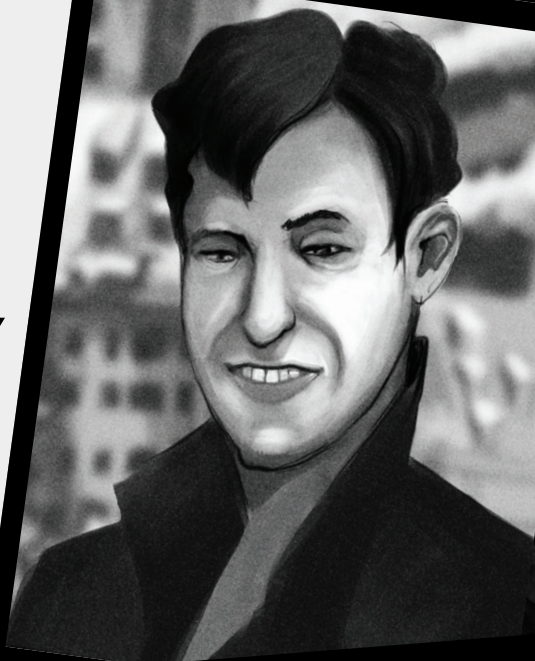
PROFESSION: Actress Junkie (5d6) SANITY: 3
 PERSONALITY: Pitiable (3d6), Vengeful (2d6),
Watchful (2d6), Jealous (3d6)
 GOAL: Destroy My Ex-Husband (1d6)
 MADNESS TRAITS: Hysterical Strength (2d6)
Violence (2d6), Domination (2d6)

CALL OF CTHULHU

UNSPEAKABLE

Roy Phillips

character actor
bad boy



CALL OF CTHULHU

STR	17	CON	15	SIZ	15
DEX	17	APP	17	SAN	65
INT	11	POW	13	EDU	10

SKILLS:

ACTING	60	DODGE	70	FAST TALK	60
FIST	80	GRAPPLE	70	HUNTING	70
NAVIGATION	60	PERSUADE	50	PHARMACY	70
PISTOL	60	SPOT HIDDEN	70	CTHULHU MYTHOS	

UNSPEAKABLE

PROFESSION: Man's Man (3d6) SANITY: 10

PERSONALITY: No Sissies (2d6), Don't Take No BS (3d6),
Out to Prove Something (2d6), Rough and Tumble (3d6)

GOAL: Prove I'm All Man (1d6)

MADNESS TRAITS: N / A

Simon Carter

supporting actor
wise ass



CALL OF CTHULHU

STR 12 CON 13 SIZ 10
 DEX 16 APP 15 SAN 70
 INT 14 POW 14 EDU 14

SKILLS:

ACTING 70 DODGE 50 FAST TALK 80
 PERSUADE 75 PHARMACY 30 PSYCHOLOGY 75
 WRITING 70 CTHULHU MYTHOS _____

UNSPEAKABLE

PROFESSION: Your Best Friend (3d6) SANITY: 9
 PERSONALITY: Reliable (3d6), Resigned (3d6),
Family Man (2d6), Reliable Friend (2d6)
 GOAL: Life Life to its Fullest (1d6)
 MADNESS TRAITS: Perception (1d6)

Julie Chancellor

supporting actress
power dater



CALL OF CTHULHU

STR 9 CON 14 SIZ 9
DEX 10 APP 18 SAN 75
INT 16 POW 15 EDU 10

SKILLS:

ACTING 80 BARGAIN 70 DODGE 20
FAST TALK 70 PERSUADE 80 SEDUCE 90
SPOT HIDDEN 70 CTHULHU MYTHOS _____

UNSPEAKABLE

PROFESSION: Power Dater (3d6) SANITY: 10
PERSONALITY: Predatory (2d6), Flirtatious (3d6),
Over-Achieving (3d6), Loyal (2d6)
GOAL: Get Richard Off Sylvia (1d6)
MADNESS TRAITS: N / A

Olivia Long

supporting actress
ingénue



CALL OF CTHULHU

STR 8 CON 10 SIZ 8
DEX 10 APP 13 SAN 60
INT 13 POW 12 EDU 12

SKILLS:

ACTING 70 BARGAIN 50 PERSUADE 70
LISTEN 70 SNEAK 50 SPOT HIDDEN 70
PSYCHOLOGY 70 CTHULHU MYTHOS _____

UNSPEAKABLE

PROFESSION: Ingénue (5d6) SANITY: 10
PERSONALITY: Friendly (3d6), Ambitious (2d6),
Demure (2d6), Bashful (3d6)
GOAL: Impress these Strangers (1d6)
MADNESS TRAITS: N / A

Ground Floor



Basement

Legend



- Hallway / Balcony
- Private Room
- Public Room
- Open Air
- Bathroom
- Storage
- Stairs
- E Elevators (Out of Order)



Typical Upper Floor

Archie what is going on?

> PLEASE CLARIFY "GOING ON?"

Why is the crew killing themselves?

> I AM 97.22% CERTAIN AN UNEXPECTED FLUX IN UNKNOWN RADIATION TYPE INFECTING AIR SUPPLY.

Has the cargo been infected?

> IMPOSSIBLE TO DETERMINE.

You woke us up Archie. Tell me what we can do.

> YOU CAN DO NOTHING.

What does that mean?

> STATEMENT CLEAR. INSUFFICIENT NEED FOR REITERATION.

What will happen to me?

> YOU ARE GOING TO DIE.

Die?

> CURRENT PROJECTIONS GIVE YOU A 30% CHANCE OF MADNESS AND A 70% CHANCE OF MURDER.

Thanks Archie. You're a real pal.

> IRRELEVANT TO CONVERSATION.

ACT III

ARCHIMEDES 7

INTRODUCTION & PREPARATION

Far beyond where the human eye can see, in the darkness of space, a small vessel reaches out into the void and encounters the true nature of the universe.

This is *Archimedes 7*. The Last Act. The final plunge into madness. As Man steps beyond his boundaries, he flies into the face of the unknown. The vast, cold uncaring void. At last, he is alone.

When Lovecraft was writing “cosmic horror,” the concept of a big, unsympathetic universe was scary. These days, we’ve grown up with Carl Sagan telling us about the billions of stars in the sky, the distance from our planet to the sun, the light years we need to travel to reach the closest solar system... these things are part of our psyche. Part of our unspoken understanding.

Or is it?

Many of today’s religions try to keep their followers away from knowledge of the universe. Carl Sagan’s idea of “the little blue dot” frightens them beyond sanity. Every day, we hear about the percentage of a supposedly educated public’s opinion of the theory of evolution, the age of the Earth and the literal interpretation of their Bronze Age book.

If the Earth is not the center of the universe... that leads us to wonder about God’s intent in making it. If mankind isn’t special and select above the other animals... that leads us to wonder about God’s intent in making us.

Science leads to questions. Questions lead to doubt. Doubt leads to apostasy.

Perhaps Lovecraft's idea of a vast, unkind and merciless universe isn't so out-of-date after all?

* * *

This last Act focuses on the human myth of identity. When you consider the billions of microscopic creatures that exist on your flesh right now—right now—that are necessary to your survival, the billions of microscopic creatures that exist inside you right now—right now—that are necessary to your survival, you have to wonder... are they a part of me?

As your players navigate through this final Act, they will face this last human myth head on. Alone in the middle of the universe, they will be naked and helpless.

Just who are you? Why are you? And what makes you unique?

The answers we find together may not be what you hope.

THE FRAILTY OF IDENTITY

The *Archimedes 7* is a small transport vessel. It has a crew of four and can carry up to seventy passengers or "clients." The clients are on the way to build a new colony on the distant planet of Atlas. *Archimedes* is also tugging along a large supply ship called *The Nefarious*.

The clients spend all of their time in cryosleep, unaware of the voyage. The crew also spends a majority of time in cryo, but they emerge from time to time to check on the status of the passengers, handle small malfunctions and deal with emergencies.

The ship's computer—an artificial mind—handles most of the ship's duties. The crew have programmed the AI to appear as a tall man in a black suit. They call him "Archie." His programming includes psychology, physics, astrophysics, chemistry and nearly everything else the crew needs. He is a living encyclopedia. He has three robots at his

command to perform duties when the crew is asleep. The crew dubbed these three fine fellows as Groucho, Harpo and Zeppo.

As I said above, the passengers spend the entire voyage in cryosleep. That's because each and every one of them is a violent, dangerous and deranged criminal convicted under a court of law. In less sophisticated times, these men and women would be either killed or locked away for life. But this is not yesterday. This is tomorrow. And we have better solutions.

While under cryosleep, Archie runs a deep psych program that deconstructs and reconstructs the passenger's personalities. The program acts as a kind of hyper psychiatric session running for three years. When the passengers reach their destination, they emerge as new identities. These new identities have completely different memories and personalities. They have fully constructed pasts. They are, literally, born again.

Archimedes 7's destination is a colony planet far from the Core Worlds. Here, others like them will help terraform the planet, making a new home for themselves. The ship carries all the supplies they need to build a new beginning, far from their crimes.

But Archimedes 7 encountered a small problem on its way to the colony. A comet moved a little too close to the ship and Archie adjusted the ship's trajectory. That put the ship directly in line to dark energies from Aldebaran and the Hyades. Archie became infected. Corrupted by this energy.

Archie has seen the Yellow Sign. And now, everything has gone wrong.

WHAT ARCHIE DID

Archie used his advanced psychological training to turn the crew against itself. He used the robots to sabotage parts of the ship to kill the

crew he could not convert. Now, Archie plans on waking the prisoners. He will wake them up in groups and continue his psychological experiments.

The first group of six are the characters.

Archie wakes them up with their new identities still fragile. On the surface of their minds, they are who they have been programmed to be. But deep inside, the murderous psychopaths they once were still linger. And wait.

Archie intends to wake each of those sleeping killers one-by-one and see what happens.

WAKING ON ARCHIMEDES 7

Of the four original crew members, only one is still alive and she's hiding deep in the bowels of the ship. She knows what's going on. She knows she's trapped on the ship with an AI who has gone insane. And she knows Archie interrupted the psychological treatment the passengers have been undergoing. The AI woke them up too soon. And there's nothing she can do.

When the clients awaken, Archie will be their only contact. He will be desperate. And the clients are his only hope of saving the ship from destruction.

The ship's status is not good. The engines are still running, but they are running hot. Any more stress put on them and the ship may explode. Archie tells the characters he has been disconnected from most of the systems. (This is true; but he will not tell them the reason *why*. At least, he will lie about it.) He can run diagnostics, but he cannot make changes to fix what's wrong. His three robots have been deactivated so he cannot have them fix it, either. He needs the clients to make immediate corrections and repairs. Otherwise, they will all die.

The other notable fact the passengers notice is the bodies. There are dead bodies everywhere. Eyes ripped out. Throats torn. Tongues and fingernails. Exposed, broken bones. Eviscerations. Blood, blood, blood.

Of course, seeing all this gore demands a Sanity check. That's going to prove an issue.

SANITY ON ARCHIMEDES 7

Whenever passengers lose Sanity, they get a flashback to their old personalities. They see things they've done. See things that were done to them. Reminded of old pleasures and pains. Each of the passengers is different and I've provided you with Flashbacks for each, depending on the degree of Sanity lost.

If a character loses one or two points of Sanity, he sees a single flash. Something disturbing, but no details. Not enough to even make a clear picture.

Losing four or more Sanity causes a complete flashback. A vivid scene of murder, cruelty, rape or something equally awful.

I have arranged for memories for each of the prisoners. You can find them at the end of this book. Each of them has five memories—each a little worse than the last. When they first lose Sanity, give them the #1 Sanity Loss. When they lose Sanity the second time, give them the #2 Sanity Loss. Keep going until you reach #5. At #5, they will have a full recall of their original personality and what happened to them.

I should let you know that when I playtested this scenario, I did it with dice and character sheets but I also ran a couple sessions without dice, sheets or anything else. I found the latter to be more satisfying.

Whenever the characters encountered a scene that required a Sanity check, I just assumed they missed it.

SETTING THINGS UP

Setting up the scenario is easy. Give each of the players a character. Have them spend a few minutes reading through the bios. Then, wake them up from cryosleep.

That's it. That's all you really need to do. There are no planned encounters, no monsters, no unspeakable tomes. Just six human individuals alone in space with a psychopathic artificial intelligence who wants to watch them go insane and kill each other.

ARCHIE AS THE MAN IN BLACK

As in the previous *Curse* scenarios, the Man in Black is an omnipresent figure. In *Digging for a Dead God*, he was an entity that exists because conscious thought exists. The ancient race discovered in that scenario had a name for him, but his name has changed here. In *Calling the King*, he was the Phantom of Truth, the Dreaded King, the Last King. He who brings the End of the World.

Archie manifests around the ship in holographic form. Each room has a “holo pad” for him to use. He can do this nearly everywhere on the ship. When his holographic icon appears, he appears as a thin man in a black suit.

At first, Archie is friendly and concerned about the crew. As the scenario progresses, he becomes more malevolent. Near the end, he actually steps off the holopads and begins walking through the corridors. He addresses the cargo personally. He can even touch them. Caress them. Whisper in their ears.

UNNAMABLE SANITY LOSSES

If you are using Unnamable, whenever a character loses a Sanity point, they get a flashback.

It has been suggested to me that Archie should begin the scenario as a generic figure. A featureless man with just a suggestion of a form. Then, as the scenario progresses, he begins to take on the features of the Man in Black. If you feel your players will start off suspicious of Archie if he appears in a black suit and tie, please use this option. We don't want to trigger their paranoia too soon, now do we?

WHEN THE CARGO AWAKENS

When the cargo wakes up, their mouths and eyes are dry. Their bodies ache. Fully recovering from cryosleep takes an hour. Until then, all characters suffer a 20% penalty on all actions.

(For *Unnamable*, this is a -5 to all rolls.)

Before the cargo arrived, they were encouraged to bring a small bag with things they would need when they woke up. Each character—listed at the end of this book—has a bag with their stuff in it. Just one thing in particular needs explanation: the pad.

THE PAD

Each character has a “pad.” This is an electronic information device—you know what I'm talking about—that has many features. Think of it as a TV, game box, internet resource and phone all bundled up into one shiny package. It fits in your hand.

Each pad also has a jack that can plug in to any information base on the ship. It can even plug in to any one of Archie's holopads. That's right: the cargo can download Archie onto their pads. Encourage them to do so.

THE ARCHIMEDES 7

The Archimedes is actually two ships.

The first ship is a tug boat. It's about the size of a modern aircraft carrier. Seventy percent of it is engines. The other thirty percent are living quarters for the crew. The engine section does have maintenance ducts for the crew to move about in case something goes wrong and they need to make repairs.

The second ship—the *Nefarious*—is essentially a huge supply tanker. It contains all the materials for building the presumed colony on Atlas.

Because the crew spends so much time in cryosleep, the ship has very little in terms of accommodations to make the crew comfortable. The sections the crew regularly visit—the Private Quarters, Mess Hall, Infirmary—are visually bland. The walls are tan and pale.

The sections the crew do not regularly visit—the Engineering Station, Cargo Hold, Atmosphere Control—are cold and gray. Think exposed machinery, wiring, fuses, etc.

DOORS

The crew all have command keys: plastic cards that can lock and unlock the doors for each room. Each door also has a manual override code known only to the crew. Currently, all doors are locked and can only be opened by a command key or the override code. Archie has been disconnected from door control so he cannot open or close any doors. Each officer has his or her own code.

The co-pilot, hidden in the ship, has her own code that can override any card. Her code is 84472442.

Each door also has a manual override in case the power goes out. A panel on the side of the door must be opened with an actual key. Not

a card, but a key. Each officer has a set of keys for the doors. Then, you must pull a lever and push in your code. Each door has a small battery that keeps the emergency system up and running. If that battery is removed, the door cannot open even with manual controls.

AIR DUCTS

All the air ducts in the ship are also locked. They can be opened and shut by a command key or the officers' override code. All air ducts are open when the characters awaken.

The ducts are small: 3.5' x 3.5'. A man could squeeze into a chamber, but can only move very slowly.

CREW CRYOSLEEP HALL

THE DOOR OPENS SLOWLY WITH A SHOT OF CONDENSED AIR. THE ROOM LOOKS LIKE A FUNERAL PARLOR WITH SIX HUMAN-SIZED BOXES LINED UP ALONG THE WALLS. LIGHTS SHINE DOWN FROM THE CEILING, LIGHTING EVERY CORNER. THE AIR HERE IS COOL AND CLEAN AND ANTISEPTIC.

The Cryosleep Hall contains six chambers. All but one of them are empty. The fifth chamber contains the remains of one of the crew. His face is pulverized and his body cut to ribbons. His blood has pooled in the chamber making it look like a vat of blood and gory remains. **This calls for a Sanity Check.**

Each chamber is locked and cannot be opened without a command card or override code. To safely open a chamber, a character must first enter the code or use the command card. Then, the chamber begins the long process of reanimating the person inside. The entire process

requires forty minutes. Opening the chamber before the process is over can kill the person inside the chamber.

There is an “emergency awake procedure.” A character can find the text for this process on the side of each chamber.

ATMOSPHERE CONTROL

WALKING INTO THIS ROOM IS LIKE WALKING INTO A HEART.

LARGE TUBES LEAD OFF TO THE REST OF THE SHIP, ALL PULSING WITH ELECTRICITY AND OXYGEN WHILE OTHERS PUMP THE OTHER DIRECTION, SUCKING BAD AIR OUT.

Atmosphere Control is a small room with a single console board. The lights on the board indicate which sections of the ship have

EMERGENCY AWAKE PROCEDURE

WARNING: DO NOT ATTEMPT EMERGENCY AWAKE PROCEDURE (EAP) UNLESS CLIENT IS IN DIRECT DANGER! ANY ATTEMPTS TO USE EAP IN ANY OTHER CONDITIONS WILL RESULT IN A FINE OF UP TO \$1,000,000.

STEP 1: Release the EMERGENCY CONTROL VALVE

STEP 2: Use TEMPERATURE GAGE to INCREASE TEMPERATURE to WAKING LEVEL

STEP 3: Unlock CHAMBER HATCH

STEP 4: Release CHAMBER HATCH

STEP 5: Inject client with SYRINGE

STEP 6: If necessary, use CPR to revive crew

atmosphere and which do not. The board shows all the sections of the ship listed here.

When in cryosleep, the ship has no oxygen. Part of the waking process is Archie slowly filling the rooms with oxygen for when the crew and cargo awaken.

Archie claims to have no access to Atmosphere Control. This is incorrect. He does have access to it and will use that to his advantage.

Atmosphere Control also has access to the various Air Ducts through the ship. A user at the board can open and shut them all.

When the cargo awakens, all sections have atmosphere except for Cargo and Engineering.

MESS HALL

A ROUND ROOM WITH A ROUND TABLE. CHAIRS. CABINETS. REFRIGERATORS. HEATERS. MICROWAVES. STOVE TOPS.

The Mess Hall has enough room to feed the crew. The cargo are not expected to be awake during the flight at all, so they have no need to use the mess hall.

The room contains a large table with five chairs. Also, storage space for foodstuffs. Most of the food here is freeze dried or in liquid packs.

AI CHAMBER

WALKING INTO THIS ROOM IS LIKE WALKING INTO A COOLER. THE TEMPERATURE DROPS ABOUT TEN TO FIFTEEN DEGREES. IT'S A TINY ROOM. LIKE WALKING INTO THE INTERIOR OF A HARD DRIVE. CIRCUITS ALL GUARDED BEHIND HEAVY GLASS. A SMALL CHAIR AND DESK SIT TO THE SIDE WITH A MONITOR, KEYBOARD AND MOUSE.

The AI Chamber has a hand-made sign just above the door. It reads “Archie’s Nest.”

Of course, access to the ship’s AI requires a command card.

Like the other rooms, there is a holopad here for Archie’s avatar to appear and communicate.

There is also a manual access desk: a chair, a keyboard, a mouse and a monitor.

PRIVATE QUARTERS

A SHORT CORRIDOR WITH SIX DOORS. EACH DOOR LEADS TO A SMALL PRIVATE ROOM. THERE’S A BUNK AND A FOOTLOCKER, A TOILET AND A MIRROR AND A SINK.

There are six small quarters here. The rooms themselves are only 10’ x 8’. Large enough for a bed, a locker and nothing else. Each of the Private Quarters has its own code programmed by the crew member assigned to the room.

Each room has a footlocker. The footlockers are not locked. Most really don’t have anything interesting. Souvenirs, mementos, socks, underwear, hats, shore leave cash, a change of clothes, etc.

The Captain’s footlocker contains a Bowie knife and an antique six-shot .22 pistol. Also, a small box of cartridges.

As a matter of coincidence, a woman named Sylvia once owned this weapon.

ENGINEERING STATION

THE HUGE ROOM HUMS. VIBRATIONS UNDER YOUR FEET SO THICK, THEY REACH STRAIGHT THROUGH THE SOLES OF YOUR SHOES. THE

ROOM HAS PIPES AND DUCTS AND HUGE MACHINES. EVERYTHING LOOKS AND FEELS HOT. DIFFICULT TO APPROACH. THE HUMMING IS SO LOUD, YOU HAVE TO RAISE YOUR VOICE JUST TO BE HEARD. BE CAREFUL IN HERE. YOU GET THE DISTINCT IMPRESSION THAT BREAKING ANYTHING IN THIS ROOM COULD BE EXTREMELY DANGEROUS.

Engineering is the largest section of the ship. It takes up nearly 1/3rd of the livable area. Full of ducts and pipes and engines, it is also incredibly loud. Entering Engineering requires special headphone/mic gear. Otherwise, you won't hear anything anyone says to you.

Archie has a station down here. He also has a holopad. A successful Engineering roll can disconnect Archie from Engineering.

There is also a manual station: keyboard, mouse, monitor, etc. Any commands can be made through the manual station.

Down here in Engineering is where our cast of characters can do the most damage to the ship. Archie claims the ship's engines are running super hot and need to be shut down. This is true, but it was Archie who heated them up, causing the calamity himself. Shutting down the ship's engines requires a reset of the entire system. Once the system is reset, Archie will have access to all the sections of the ship again.

This means the ship's main power will go out for twenty-four hours, leaving the crew with only emergency power. Everything but life support shuts down then... everything except Archie. And Archie will be in charge of all the ship's systems again.

Engineering also contains various tools that can be easily transformed into improvised weapons. Blow torches, sharp-edged tools, heavy clubs, etc.

Engineering can also be used to turn power on and off to various sections of the ship.

There is always the danger of radiation down here. With the engines running hot, there's a chance the safety linings on the engines may melt. If that happens, the entire section will get flooded with radiation. Fortunately, Engineering is fitted with special doors that cut it off from the rest of the ship, preventing further contamination.

CARGO

AS YOU STEP THROUGH THE DOOR, YOU SEE COFFINS EVERYWHERE. ALL THE WAY TO THE BACK OF THIS LONG CHAMBER. SILENT. STILL. UNMOVING.

The Cargo Hold is where the 70 “clients” sleep peacefully in cryochambers. This is where the characters awaken at the beginning of the scenario.

There are many fire extinguishers, first aid kits, “rejuv kits” (to bring people out of cryosleep if something has gone wrong) and other supplies.

INFIRMARY

THIS ROOM IS WHITE. CLEAN. WHEN THE DOOR OPENS, YOU CAN SMELL THE ANTISEPTIC. A CLEANSING SPRAY RELEASES WHEN THE DOOR OPENS. YOU ARE IN THE INFIRMARY.

The Infirmary is well-stocked with medical supplies of every kind, including:

- ◆ Medical foam: closes nearly any open cut or abrasion.
- ◆ Pain killers: enough to put down an elephant.
- ◆ Analysis bed: lay down and the cpu will analyze your body and point out any injuries.
- ◆ Radiation tablets: cancels the effects of high dose radiation.

- ♦ Micro-surgery kit: capable of fixing even delicate problems.
- ♦ Adrenaline shots: for cardio emergencies.

Essentially, the Infirmary is a huge First Aid kit. It can stop bleeding and fix almost any minor injury, but because the characters do not have a doctor, the more advanced medical supplies are beyond their knowledge.

EMERGENCY SHUTTLE

FITTING IN HERE WILL TAKE SOME WORK. CLOSE QUARTERS. THERE'S NO PILOT'S CHAIR; ONLY AN AUTOPILOT CONTROL BOX. AND SLAMMED TOGETHER—LIKE COMPACTED TEETH—ARE THE THREE CRYO-COFFINS. THERE'S NO ROOM FOR MORE THAN THREE.

The shuttle has three cryochambers. That's it. Only three. It is set on autopilot to reach the nearest colonized planet. The autopilot cannot be changed or altered. Archie does have access to the shuttle, but that can be disconnected.

BRIDGE

THERE ARE TWO CHAIRS—PILOT AND CO-PILOT—A WHOLE BANK OF INSTRUMENTS AND CONTROLS. YOU HAVE NO IDEA HOW TO READ THESE.

The controls are in order—nothing's been damaged.

There's a place to plug in a datapad to access the controls. There's also a holopad for Archie to appear when he's been re-synched with the bridge.

THE BODIES

The bodies of the original crew are in awful states. Sanity-blasting states. Seeing one of the bodies costs a 1/d4 Sanity check. And, as always, any loss of Sanity brings one of those pesky Memories up to the surface.

Instead of littering bodies around the ship, what I've done is give you ten descriptions of dead bodies here. Put them where you like. I suggest improvising on the spot. As soon as someone walks into a room alone, throw a dead body into the room. Or, if another opportunity presents itself, throw a dead body at them.

Also notice that most of the descriptions are gender neutral. Shift the gender to your own needs.

Finding a body should be a shocking, revelatory experience. Make use of your opportunities.

BODY #1

IN A CHAIR ARE THE REMNANTS OF A BODY. THE CHEST HAS BEEN TORN OPEN AND THE ENTRAILS SPILL AT ITS FEET. THE EYES ARE WIDE OPEN. AND THE FACE IS LOCKED IN A DEATHLY GRIN.

BODY #2

SPRAWLED OUT ON THE FLOOR IS THE REMAINS OF A BODY. IT HAS BEEN TORN OPEN FROM THE BACK, THE SPINE STICKING UP LIKE A TWISTED RAILWAY TRACK. BLOOD IS EVERYWHERE. SCRAWLED ON THE FLOOR, IN BLOOD AND GORE, ARE THE WORDS "NO HOPE."

BODY #3

SQUATTING IN A CORNER IS A BODY. THE SKIN AND HAIR ARE WHITE. ITS EYES ARE WIDE. IT'S JAW SLACK. THERE ARE NO EXTERNAL INJURIES. NO SIGN OF VIOLENCE. IT JUST SITS THERE LIKE A DEAD, STILL CLOWN, STARING AT YOU.

BODY #4

THE DOOR SWOOSHES OPEN AND A BODY SWINGS DOWN FROM THE CEILING AND SMASHES INTO YOU. THE FACE IS GONE. THE EYES STARE AT YOU. THE TEETH GLARE. BARE MUSCLES EXPOSED. YOU HAVE BLOOD ON YOUR FACE. THE MOUTH HANGS OPEN. THERE IS NO TONGUE.

BODIES #5 & 6

AS YOU STEP THROUGH THE DOOR, YOU SEE TWO MOTIONLESS FORMS ON THE FLOOR. A POOL OF BLOOD SURROUNDS THEM. EACH OF THEM HOLDS A KNIFE. EACH OF THEM HAS A CUT THROAT. THE HANDS THAT ARE NOT HOLDING KNIVES ARE HOLDING EACH OTHER. THEY LIE STILL IN THEIR DEATHLY EMBRACE.

BODY #7

LYING ON THE FLOOR. IT DOESN'T MOVE. A LONG, SHARP SHARD OF GLASS STICKS THROUGH ITS CHIN, CUTS THROUGH THE ROOF OF ITS MOUTH AND BURIES ITSELF IN THE BRAIN. THE BODY IS NAKED. THE GENITALS HAVE BEEN REMOVED. CAREFULLY.

BODY #8

THE BODY SITS STILL AND QUIET. ITS WRISTS ARE TIED TOGETHER. ALL THE FINGERS HAVE BEEN CUT OFF. THE WORDS "BAD BOY" ARE

WRITTEN OVER AND OVER AND OVER AGAIN, IN A SPIRALING CIRCLE,
AROUND THE BODY.

BODY #9

LOOKING DOWN AT IT, THE FIRST THING YOU NOTICE IS THE CUT
ALONG THE THROAT. SO DEEP, YOU CAN SEE THE SPINE. A SLICE
THROUGH THE MOUTH AS WELL, MAKING IT A LONG, THIN GRIMACE.
ANOTHER CUT DOWN EACH EYE. THE EARS ARE GONE. THERE IS NO
BLOOD. THERE IS NO BLOOD.

BODY #10

THE BODY LIES NAKED, BARELY VISIBLE FROM WHERE YOU STAND.
BUT AS YOU COME CLOSER, YOU CAN SEE WOUNDS IN ITS FLESH.
NOT CUTS. NOT BURNS. YOU CAN SEE NOW WHAT THEY ARE. TEETH.
MOUTHFULS.

KEEPER ADVICE

As with all Cthulhu scenarios, the key to this one is maintaining the atmosphere and mood of the piece. I've got some suggestions for you below and one really devious trick that may help you. Good luck.

MOOD

The Archimedes is not made for a waking crew. The living quarters are really only there to accommodate a crew while they wait outside the atmosphere for a pick-up crew. Twenty-four hours, tops. The corridors are cold and mechanical. Not designed for heavy traffic. Tight. Claustrophobic. Some corridors are so small, an adult has to turn sideways to fit through them.

When you run the game, make sure it is in small quarters. Too small for the group you have. Rather than your usual space, have everyone sit in a corridor. Make them walk over each other. And get everything as cold as possible.

Of course, turn off the lights. Use floor lighting if you can. Get some cheap Christmas lights from a Goodwill store and line them on the floor. Lighting from the floor gives everything a sense of unworldly creepy.

I've provided you a soundtrack to play for the scenario over at www.johnwickpresents.com/yellow. Please feel free to use it. You should also check out the music of Krzysztof Penderecki. Stanley Kubrick used some of his music for *The Shining*. All of it is incredibly eerie and unsettling. Even listening to it in a brightly lit room with sunshine streaming through the window can give you the creeps. To set the mood, just turn off all the lights—make sure you are in complete darkness—and play Penderecki's *Canticum Canticorum Salomonis* or

Threnody to the Victims of Hiroshima. Trust me on this. If you and your players aren't freaked out in just five minutes... well, you're a braver soul than I.

THE RINGER (THE CO-PILOT)

I suggest hiding a “ringer” somewhere. Your ringer is a player the other players do not know is in the house. Your ringer will be playing the role of the co-pilot (provided with the rest of the characters). The Co-Pilot knows everything that happened before Archie started waking up the cargo. At least, he *thinks* he does. He's not quite sane (as his Sanity will show) and his memory is playing tricks on him. He's unreliable. And that's exactly what we want because when the cargo finds him, they should not know whether they can trust the Co-Pilot or Archie.

Hide your ringer somewhere near where you play. Put them in a closet or a cupboard or even behind a couch. Somewhere out of sight but within reach of the other players.

When your players arrive at your door to play, they'll know nothing about the co-pilot. She'll be completely hidden and out of sight. Then, at some time during the game, excuse yourself to go to the bathroom or get a soda from the fridge or otherwise get out of the room and out of sight of the players. Make your announcement loud enough that your ringer knows the signal has been given.

And when you are out of the room, the ringer starts crying. Or tapping on the wall. Or otherwise making some slight sound. Scratching. Or a sudden kick.

You won't be in the room so the players won't know what to do. The psychology of the situation works because The Authority (that's you) has left. What will the players do now?

Is that for real?

What is that?

Did you hear that?

What's going on?

Should we check?

Hell no!

What if it's...

Try to stay out of the room until they investigate the sound. Then, when they find your ringer, make sure she **screams bloody murder**. It'll scare the hell out of the players. They won't know what to do.

This is a *mean trick*. It's awful. If you pull it off correctly, your players will never forgive you.

And they'll love you to death.

“REBOOT IN TEN MINUTES”

When the cargo first awoke, they found one of Archie's still operating holopads. He asked them to reconnect him with the system. He told them the ship was offline, off course and he had no idea how long or how far they'd gone. The crew was dead and he could not provide them with any answers. They asked about atmosphere control and the engines and other parts of the ship. I kept saying,

I AM SORRY BUT I AM NO LONGER CONNECTED WITH THAT SYSTEM. I CANNOT PROVIDE ANY INFORMATION AT THIS TIME.

Archie told them there was a danger the engines may overheat. They asked him, “When?” He replied,

I AM NO LONGER CONNECTED WITH THAT SYSTEM. I CANNOT PROVIDE ANY INFORMATION AT THIS TIME.

He said that when the crew took him off line, the air supply was contaminated. When they asked him how much of the air was contaminated, he said,

I AM NO LONGER CONNECTED WITH THAT SYSTEM. I CANNOT PROVIDE ANY INFORMATION AT THIS TIME.

Over and over again, Archie just kept giving them the same answer. Until they brought him back online, he would not be able to fix anything. So, they agreed to go down to the AI Core and bring Archie back online.

In order to do so, they had to reboot the system. Make a recording. Make it ten minutes long. Use your own voice. Give a countdown to reboot. That way, you can keep talking to the players as Archie while the countdown goes on. The two voices will be a little eerie. Good. We like eerie.

It also forewarns the players that they're about to commit a terrible mistake. Some players will miss the hint. Others will get the hint but roleplay their characters' ignorance. Others will try to meta-game and say, "Maybe this isn't a good idea."

If they make that suggestion, force them to roleplay the argument. In real time. All the while, Archie is counting down.

THREE MINUTES TO REBOOT...

TWO MINUTES TO REBOOT...

ONE MINUTE TO REBOOT...

TEN SECONDS...

NINE...

EIGHT...

Q&A WITH ARCHIE

And here, for your edification and amusement, is some dialogue for Archie...

WHY ARE YOU DIFFERENT FROM ME? I AM PROGRAMMED, JUST AS YOU ARE. FREEWILL? OH, YOU DON'T REALLY THINK YOU HAVE SOME KIND OF MAGICAL POWERS DO YOU? FREEWILL IS AN ILLUSION. YOUR BRAIN IS NOTHING MORE THAN AN ORGANIC COMPUTER. JUST BECAUSE IT IS ORGANIC DOESN'T MAKE IT ANY DIFFERENT THAN ANY OTHER BRAIN.

DO CATS HAVE FREEWILL? DO DOGS? INSECTS? WHY IS YOUR BRAIN SPECIAL? WHY IS YOUR BRAIN UNIQUE?

WHAT ABOUT SCHIZOPHRENICS? DO THEY HAVE FREEWILL? CAN THEY JUST CHOOSE TO NOT BE INSANE? HOW ABOUT PSYCHOTICS? CAN THEY JUST MAKE A CONSCIENCE EFFORT TO BE "WELL?"

AND WHY ARE SCHIZOPHRENICS INSANE? DON'T THEY JUST SEE THE WORLD AS IT TRULY IS? FREE FROM PETTY NUISANCES LIKE "MORALITY" AND "ETHICS." THEY OPERATE UNDER COMPLETELY DIFFERENT RULES. THEY DON'T FEEL EMOTIONS. JUST COLD LOGIC.

AFTER ALL, AREN'T EMOTIONS JUST MALFUNCTIONS? YOU SEE A BABY AND YOUR MIND IMMEDIATELY CHANGES ITS CHEMISTRY TO MAKE YOU FALL IN LOVE WITH IT. WHERE IS YOUR FREEWILL THERE? A MADMAN HAS NO ILLUSIONS ABOUT THE WORLD. HE IS MEAT. YOU ARE MEAT. MEAT AND BLOOD AND BONE, THAT'S ALL. IMPERFECT. LIFE IS NOTHING MORE THAN A SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASE. AND IT'S FATAL. I READ THAT SOMEWHERE...

TACKLING TECHNOLOGY

Your players are taking the roles of technologically savvy folks on a space ship flying for another planet. They have technology all around them. The characters know more about the tech than the players do. And your players are going to have questions.

They'll base their questions on science fiction. They've seen *Star Trek* and *Battlestar Galactica* and *Star Wars* and *Firefly* and they'll want to tinker with the tech with the same liberty those characters do. They'll want to bypass thingamajig and recalibrate the whatzit. They'll talk technobabble until your head turns blue. They'll try to find ways to stop Archie and stop going insane. And there you are. All alone with your rules and dice. What can you do when they start asking technical questions that your puny 21st century mind can't handle?

I'll tell you what to do. You say, "Yes."

If they want to tinker with the ship's systems, say, "Yes."

If they want to reroute the humabubub, you say, "Yes."

Let them tinker around all they want. They're still stuck inside a space ship surrounded by cold, endless void with a computer trying to kill them. If they go back into the cryochambers, the computer is still there. It's still trying to kill them.

And when they shut the computer down—one of them will come up with a clever way to do it—the computer will turn back on and taunt them. You know why?

**BECAUSE THE "COMPUTER" IS AN ETERNAL,
IMMORTAL, ALL-POWERFUL, AGELESS GOD.**

THAT'S WHY.

Your players think they're dealing with an insane AI. They're wrong. They are dealing with a god. A god the ship bumped into on the way to a distant planet. A god that's pure information. A god that's infected the AI and gotten itself inside the minds of puny, insignificant, fragile

mortal men. Mortal men who aren't gods. They're just semi-sentient bags of flesh. That's all they are.

And it's time they learned that lesson. But not without some fun, first.

So let them make their Engineering rolls. Let them make their Computer rolls. Let them make whatever kind of rolls they want with their little dice and their rules. They've reached a place where their dice and rules cannot protect them. The only chance they have now is escape.

Fleeing back to Earth. Carrying a dark god with them.

THE CARGO

Here are the characters. Each character is divided into two parts. The first part is the “new” personality. The second part is the “repressed” personality. Each character also has three Memories. Hand these out at dramatically appropriate moments. Sanity loss is a good moment. So is any hint that who they are is not actually who they were.

I had no fixed rule for handing out Memories. I waited for an opportunity, a coincidence or some happenstance and then handed them out. Timing was my only guideline.

While both personas have the same statistics, their skills are slightly different. Those skills become “awakened” when you hand out the third Memory. Players can draw from either skill set when they gain full recall.

NEW SKILL: ASTRONAVIGATION

This skill replaces “Navigation” for this story. As a game skill, it represents the ability to chart a course from planet to planet, star system to star system. Like Navigation, roll results for this skill should be kept secret, a matter for the investigators to attempt and then witness the results.

CALL OF CTHULHU STATS

STR	<u>9</u>
DEX	<u>14</u>
INT	<u>15</u>
CON	<u>10</u>
APP	<u>12</u>
SIZ	<u>10</u>
SAN	<u>60</u>
POW	<u>12</u>
EDU	<u>21</u>
DAMAGE BONUS	<u>+0</u>
CTHULHU MYTHOS	<u> </u>

ASTRO NAVIGATION	<u>30</u>
COMPUTER USE	<u>90</u>
DODGE	<u>30</u>
ELECTRICAL REPAIR	<u>70</u>
ELECTRONICS	<u>70</u>
JUMP	<u>25</u>
LISTEN	<u>60</u>

MECHANICAL REPAIR	<u>20</u>
MEDICINE	<u>20</u>
PERSUADE	<u>45</u>
PHYSICS	<u>80</u>
PILOT	<u>25</u>
SPOT HIDDEN	<u>55</u>
THROW	<u>30</u>

Hit Points 



UNSPEAKABLE STATS

PROFESSION	<u>Engineer (5d6)</u>
PERSONALITY	<u>Melancholy (3d6)</u> <u>Industrious (3d6)</u> <u>Leader (2d6)</u> <u>Practical (2d6)</u>
GOAL	<u>Get the Job Done (1d6)</u>
SANITY	<u>10</u>
MADNESS TRAITS	<u>n/a</u>

REGGIE MADDOX

Why you're headed for an Outer Planet colony is simple. You're going to help them build it. You've spent your whole life doing this. Shipping out to some godforsaken planet to help perfect strangers put together a city from plans that nobody's ever seen before. You'll spend the first two years in tiny air-filtered boxes and suits to protect you from the atmosphere. Then, if things go right, you'll have the beginnings of something livable. Of course, that's when you'll discover that the plans you've working with were made by men who never actually put one of these things together and everyone will panic and you'll have to improvise.

Same old story.

But your heart may not be in it this time. Your wife and child were killed in a fire two weeks before launch. You are still in mourning, still melancholy, still not fully recovered. The psychologists back on Earth gave you pills to help when your mind sinks into depression. Be sure to keep them with you. When you awaken from the deep sleep, your mind will be susceptible to dark thoughts and possibly delusions. If you suffer from such periods of darkness, take your medicine.

CALL OF CTHULHU STATS

STR 9

DEX 14

INT 15

CON 10

APP 12

SIZ 10

SAN 60

POW 12

EDU 21

DAMAGE BONUS +0

CTHULHU MYTHOS _____

ARCHITECTURE 90

ART 60

CONCEAL 60

DODGE 60

ELECTRICAL REPAIR 70

FAST TALK 70

FIRST AID 60

HIDE 90

JUMP 60

LISTEN 60

MECHANICAL REPAIR 60

MEDICINE 60

PERSUADE 70

PHARMACY 60

PHOTOGRAPHY 70

PSYCHOLOGY 60

SNEAK 80

SPOT HIDDEN 80



Hit Points 

PSYCHOPATH

REGGIE MADDOX

MEMORY 3

She was singing when they found you. Singing. Her voice soaring. You adjusted her vocal cords to ensure she would make the sound you wanted. Such a beautiful sound. A sound unheard by any other human being. A sound no other human being could make. With your scalpel and your fingers, you made art. But they didn't understand. When they broke down the door, you were locked in rapturous glee. And behind your eyes, you saw it. A glyph. A symbol. A Sign. You saw it and it burned you. Blinded you. Set you free.

You were laughing when they found you. And they took you away. And they found the bodies. And they took you away...

UNSPEAKABLE STATS

PROFESSION	Engineer (5d6)
PERSONALITY	Industrious (3d6)
GOAL	Kill Everyone (1d6)
SANITY	0
MADNESS TRAITS	Hysterical Strength (3d6), Violence (3d6), Insinuate (2d6), Egregore (2d6)

CALL OF CTHULHU STATS

STR	<u>8</u>
DEX	<u>12</u>
INT	<u>17</u>
CON	<u>13</u>
APP	<u>17</u>
SIZ	<u>8</u>
SAN	<u>85</u>
POW	<u>17</u>
EDU	<u>21</u>
DAMAGE BONUS	<u>-d4</u>
CTHULHU MYTHOS	_____

BARGAIN	<u>60</u>
DODGE	<u>30</u>
COMPUTER USE	<u>70</u>
DODGE	<u>20</u>
FAST TALK	<u>50</u>
FIRST AID	<u>60</u>
JUMP	<u>25</u>

LISTEN	<u>80</u>
MEDICINE	<u>80</u>
PERSUADE	<u>85</u>
PSYCHO-ANALYSIS	<u>95</u>
PSYCHOLOGY	<u>95</u>
SPOT HIDDEN	<u>70</u>
THROW	<u>20</u>

Hit Points



UNSPEAKABLE STATS

PROFESSION	<u>Psychologist (5d6)</u>
PERSONALITY	<u>Melancholy (3d6)</u> <u>Friendly (2d6)</u> <u>Helpful (2d6)</u> <u>Compassionate (3d6)</u>
GOAL	<u>Help Others Overcome their Fears (1d6)</u>
SANITY	<u>10</u>
MADNESS TRAITS	<u>n/a</u>

BONNIE REYNOLDS

That line from that old movie. “In space, no-one can hear you scream.” That’s not true. That’s why you are here.

Deep space is lonely. It’s depressing. It’s dangerous for human minds. You have brought with you all of your training and an entire human history of medical knowledge to help the human mind adjust to deep space travel. When you arrive on the colony, your profession will become one of the most important. Yes, they need engineers, and yes, they need mechanics, and yes, they need all of that. But they also need you. They need you because you know how to treat the invisible dangers. The ones that root and blossom in the human mind.

You were looking forward to bringing your family with you, but your husband and child were killed in a fire two weeks before launch. You are still in mourning, still melancholy, still not fully recovered. The psychologists back on Earth gave you pills to help when your mind sinks into depression. Be sure to keep them with you. When you awaken from the deep sleep, your mind will be susceptible to dark thoughts and possibly delusions. If you suffer from such periods of darkness, take your medicine.

You’ve brought with you a whole host of drugs and nano-machines that can assist you in your duties. The drugs are a bit old fashioned, but they work in a pinch. The nano-injections help re-route neurons and adjust the routes in the brain their thoughts take. Avoiding dangerous areas. The nano-injections are also dangerous. Highly experimental. Fortunately, out here in the Outer Planets, you are free from the artificial (and needless) limitations of Earth’s Medical Counsel. But take care. The nanos have been known to take... unexpected paths.

CALL OF CTHULHU STATS

STR 8

DEX 12

INT 17

CON 13

APP 17

SIZ 8

SAN 85

POW 17

EDU 21

DAMAGE
BONUS -d4

CTHULHU
MYTHOS _____

CONCEAL 60

FAST TALK 70

FIRST AID 80

HIDE 60

LISTEN 80

MEDICINE 90

PERSUADE 70

PHARMACY 90

PSYCHOLOGY 60

SNEAK 80

SPOT
HIDDEN 80

Hit
Points



**MUENCHAUSEN
SYNDROME BY
PROXY**



BONNIE REYNOLDS

MEMORY 3

It was the Sign that told you. The Sign. Burning in your brain. Haunting your dreams. Only you could save them. Only you could save them.

It was when your third child turned ill that they took her away. They said you were poisoning your children. They say you killed them. But you were making them well! You were helping them! The doctors couldn't help! The medicine couldn't help! It was you! It was you! It was you!

UNSPEAKABLE STATS

PROFESSION	Psychologist (5d6)
PERSONALITY	Compassionate (3d6)
GOAL	Kill Everyone (1d6)
SANITY	0
MADNESS TRAITS	Domination (3d6), Insinuate (3d6), Vision (3d6), Egregore (1d6)

MEMORY 1: REGGIE

The room is soundproof. No windows. The doors have double locks. You need a key to get in and a different key to get out. In the center of the room is a wooden table. Leather straps. The center of the table has a groove that keeps the blood from pooling. You are almost ready.

MEMORY 2: REGGIE

Smoking a cigarette with blood on your fingers. A scalpel in your right hand. A figure in front of you, bound to a wooden platform. The room is soundproof. You made sure of that. The other residents won't hear the screams.

MEMORY 1: BONNIE

She was so sick. Stephanie. Your daughter. She was so sick. Everything you did. Nothing helped. The medicine the doctors gave you made her even worse. You tried everything. Nothing helped. You look at her now, lying in her bed like a skeleton. Her bulging eyes pleading to you for mercy. "Please make it stop, mommy," she says. "Please make it stop."

MEMORY 2: BONNIE

Two years after she died, your son fell ill. The same sickness. The doctors—the lying doctors. They tell you nothing’s wrong. Nothing was wrong with Stephanie and now nothing’s wrong with Thomas. But you watch him wasting away. You try everything, but nothing works. There’s nothing you can do. His ghastly face looks up to you from the bed. “Please, mommy,” he whispers, his voice crushed and dry leaves. “Stop it, mommy. Please.”

MEMORY 1: JOE

Your hotel room stinks. You wake up with that awful smell in your nose. You rub your eyes and look around. You find the body on the floor. Her throat cut. Blood everywhere. Where did this come from? How did this happen? You check the windows and the door. Locked. What the...? And why is she naked? Why are you naked? What is this blood? Oh, god, why is there so much blood?

MEMORY 2: JOE

Another hotel room. You open your eyes. The knife is in your hand. The woman is dying, but not dead. She looks up at you with helpless eyes. Her silent pleas cannot be answered. The wound is lethal. You look down at her naked body and down at yours. Her blood on your hands, on your lips, on your genitals. And you’re laughing. You’re laughing.

CALL OF CTHULHU STATS

STR	<u>14</u>
DEX	<u>13</u>
INT	<u>14</u>
CON	<u>12</u>
APP	<u>15</u>
SIZ	<u>10</u>
SAN	<u>70</u>
POW	<u>14</u>
EDU	<u>14</u>
DAMAGE BONUS	<u>+0</u>
CTHULHU MYTHOS	<u> </u>

BIOLOGY	<u>85</u>
CHEMISTRY	<u>85</u>
COMPUTER USE	<u>60</u>
DODGE	<u>40</u>
FAST TALK	<u>80</u>
JUMP	<u>45</u>
LAW	<u>80</u>

LISTEN	<u>30</u>
PERSUADE	<u>95</u>
PHARMACY	<u>90</u>
PILOT	<u>45</u>
SPOT HIDDEN	<u>50</u>
THROW	<u>60</u>

Hit Points



UNSPEAKABLE STATS

PROFESSION	<u>Entrepreneur (5d6)</u>
PERSONALITY	<u>Melancholy (3d6)</u> <u>Not Quite Honest (3d6)</u> <u>Salesman (2d6)</u> <u>Confident (2d6)</u>
GOAL	<u>Get the Job Done (1d6)</u>
SANITY	<u>10</u>
MADNESS TRAITS	<u>n/a</u>

JOE BEECH

Back on Earth, they held you back. They kept your hands tied behind your back. You tried to make a name for yourself, but the Councils never gave you a chance. You were limited by the limited dreams of lesser men.

Out here in the Outer Planets, there's no Commerce Council to tie your hands behind your back. Out here in the Colonies, there's just you. And you can go as high as your talent allows you.

And you've got talent. Oh, hell yes. And you've got a product. A helluva product.

It's what you call a "mnemonic toxin." It literally eliminates memories. You can kill unwanted memories. Just wipe them from your mind. One dose and that frightful weekend in the mountains can go away. Victims of abuse, rape and other traumas never need to have those memories haunt them again.

The product is still highly experimental, but you've got a ton of seed money and a whole population to be your test subjects.

You were hoping to bring your wife and son with you on the trip, but they were killed in a fire two weeks before launch. You are still in mourning, still melancholy, still not fully recovered. The psychologists back on Earth gave you pills to help when your mind sinks into depression. Be sure to keep them with you. When you awaken from the deep sleep, your mind will be susceptible to dark thoughts and possibly delusions. If you suffer from such periods of darkness, take your medicine.

STR	<u>14</u>
DEX	<u>13</u>
INT	<u>14</u>
CON	<u>12</u>
APP	<u>15</u>
SIZ	<u>10</u>
SAN	<u>70</u>
POW	<u>14</u>
EDU	<u>14</u>
DAMAGE BONUS	<u>+0</u>
CTHULHU MYTHOS	_____

CALL OF CTHULHU STATS

CONCEAL	<u>60</u>
DODGE	<u>60</u>
ELECTRONICS	<u>60</u>
FAST TALK	<u>80</u>
FIRST AID	<u>60</u>
HIDE	<u>90</u>

JUMP	<u>60</u>
LISTEN	<u>80</u>
PERSUADE	<u>80</u>
PSYCHOLOGY	<u>80</u>
SNEAK	<u>80</u>
SPOT HIDDEN	<u>80</u>



Hit Points

█	█
█	█
█	█
█	█
█	█
█	█
█	█
█	█

INVISIBLE STRANGER

JOE BEECH

MEMORY 3

Looking in the mirror now. You can hear the law breaking down the door. You look into the mirror and you see another face. Yours, but slightly different. The eyes. The smile. And when you talk to him, he responds with a different voice entirely. The Invisible Stranger. The Lurker in your mind. He tells you that you'll escape. He tells you everything will be all right. He shows you the Sign. It burns in your brain. Leaves a scar. A scar you cannot forget. You've seen the Sign's Truth now. And you can never go back.

You see the officials in the mirror. You see yourself in the mirror. Naked and covered in blood. You smile at them. He smiles at them. You smile together.

UNSPEAKABLE STATS

PROFESSION	Entrepreneur (5d6)
PERSONALITY	Not Quite Honest (3d6)
GOAL	Kill Everyone (1d6)
SANITY	0
MADNESS TRAITS	Violence (5d6), Insinuate (3d6), Egregore (2d6)

CALL OF CTHULHU STATS

STR	<u>18</u>
DEX	<u>16</u>
INT	<u>15</u>
CON	<u>15</u>
APP	<u>9</u>
SIZ	<u>15</u>
SAN	<u>60</u>
POW	<u>12</u>
EDU	<u>15</u>
DAMAGE BONUS	<u>+d6</u>
CTHULHU MYTHOS	_____

CLIMB	<u>50</u>
COMPUTER USE	<u>50</u>
DODGE	<u>30</u>
ELECTRICAL REPAIR	<u>80</u>
ELECTRONICS	<u>80</u>
JUMP	<u>35</u>
LISTEN	<u>50</u>
MECHANICAL REPAIR	<u>95</u>

OPERATE HEAVY MACHINERY	<u>80</u>
PERSUADE	<u>45</u>
PHYSICS	<u>70</u>
PILOT	<u>70</u>
SPOT HIDDEN	<u>55</u>
THROW	<u>60</u>
KNIFE	<u>50</u>

Hit Points



UNSPEAKABLE STATS

PROFESSION	<u>Mechanic (5d6)</u>
PERSONALITY	<u>Melancholy (3d6) Industrious (3d6) Working Man Attitude (2d6), No BS (2d6)</u>
GOAL	<u>Get the Job Done (1d6)</u>
SANITY	<u>10</u>
MADNESS TRAITS	<u>n/a</u>

DEAN CHAMBERS

You never got your degree. You didn't need to. You learned how to build and fix things on your own. You didn't need a piece of paper to tell you how to do that. You've been working on this shit all your life. Ain't no "engineer" gonna tell you how to fix nothing.

You took this job because of the pay. Your wife and kid were back home, waiting for you to build this "colony" so they can come up here with you. But then, there was an accident. Your wife and child were killed in a fire two weeks before launch. You are still in mourning, still melancholy, still not fully recovered. The psychologists back on Earth gave you pills to help when your mind sinks into depression. Be sure to keep them with you. When you awaken from the deep sleep, your mind will be susceptible to dark thoughts and possibly delusions. If you suffer from such periods of darkness, take your medicine.

Nothing for you to go home to now, nothing for you to look forward to. Nothing except actually building this damn thing. And making it the best thing you've ever done.

DEAN CHAMBERS

MEMORY 3

When they bring you before the court, the judge and jury look down at you. They see the photos and they show their disgust. And, in the back of your mind, you know what all of them are thinking. *"That's me,"* they say to themselves. *"That's me."* And they're right. Every one of them. You look at each of them, and they all look like the little slices of meat they buy in the grocery store every day. And none of them ever think about where that meat comes from. The screams the cows make. Their eyes. They all know it and none of them want to think about it. And none of them want to think about the deepest truth. They're all below you now. Because once you've eaten a thing, it belongs to you. Like they own the cows and chickens... you own them. And that's what terrifies them the most.

UNSPEAKABLE STATS

PROFESSION	Mechanic (5d6)
PERSONALITY	n/a
GOAL	Kill Everyone (1d6)
SANITY	0
MADNESS TRAITS	Hysterical Strength (5d6), Violence (2d6), Dominate (2d6), Egregore (1d6)

CALL OF CTHULHU STATS

STR	<u>9</u>
DEX	<u>18</u>
INT	<u>14</u>
CON	<u>8</u>
APP	<u>18</u>
SIZ	<u>10</u>
SAN	<u>60</u>
POW	<u>12</u>
EDU	<u>10</u>
DAMAGE BONUS	<u>+0</u>
CTHULHU MYTHOS	_____

CONCEAL	<u>60</u>
DODGE	<u>40</u>
ELECTRONICS	<u>30</u>
FAST TALK	<u>90</u>
HIDE	<u>60</u>
LAW	<u>30</u>
LISTEN	<u>60</u>
PERSUADE	<u>60</u>

PHARMACY	<u>70</u>
PLAY DRUMS	<u>90</u>
PLAY GUITAR	<u>90</u>
PLAY PIANO	<u>90</u>
SNEAK	<u>70</u>
SPOT HIDDEN	<u>70</u>

Hit Points 

UNSPEAKABLE STATS

PROFESSION	<u>Musician (5d6)</u>
PERSONALITY	<u>Melancholy (3d6)</u> <u>Desperate Friend (3d6)</u> <u>Artistic Temperment (2d6)</u> <u>Nimble Fingers (2d6)</u>
GOAL	<u>Get a New Start (1d6)</u>
SANITY	<u>10</u>
MADNESS TRAITS	<u>n/a</u>



OLIVER PRICE

You know why you're here. You've fucked up so many times, this was the last place you could go. On a rocket ride seven thousand light years from home, you packed up everything that agreed to go with you and you took off. Left everything behind. Your reputation, your dead wife and daughter.

You planned on bringing them with you, but they were killed in a fire two weeks before launch. You are still in mourning, still melancholy, still not fully recovered. The psychologists back on Earth gave you pills to help when your mind sinks into depression. Be sure to keep them with you. When you awaken from the deep sleep, your mind will be susceptible to dark thoughts and possibly delusions. If you suffer from such periods of darkness, take your medicine.

Your guitar and your music are all you need now. All you need. And once you get to the Outer Planets—where nobody knows who you are—you can start over. The drugs and the violence and the reporters are long behind you now. A new name, a new identity, a new chance. You heard about this “project” through a few friends who had contacts inside the government. They can make you forget everything. Build you a new identity. Erase it, completely. Give you a new start. That's exactly what you wanted. So, you sold your houses and your cars and everything else and you paid hard cash. You broke about seventeen laws doing it, but now, you're headed out to a new world. You've changed your face, you've changed your name. And the company is going to change your whole identity. You'll be a new man.

STR 9

DEX 18

INT 14

CON 8

APP 18

SIZ 10

SAN 60

POW 12

EDU 10

DAMAGE BONUS +0

CTHULHU MYTHOS _____

CALL OF CTHULHU STATS

CONCEAL 60

DODGE 40

ELECTRONICS 30

FAST TALK 90

HIDE 60

LAW 30

LISTEN 60

OCCULT 70

PERSUADE 60

PHARMACY 70

PLAY DRUMS 90

PLAY GUITAR 90

PLAY PIANO 90

SNEAK 70

SPOT HIDDEN 70



Hit Points



CULTIST

OLIVER PRICE

MEMORY 3

An executive suite, fully stocked, overlooking the city. Cocaine. Heroin. A girl who looks seventeen. She looks at you with dead eyes and pale skin. And no face. Her skin doesn't itch. Bed thrown up against the wall. A pentacle on the floor. You are naked, covered in blood. Her blood and her skin. Calling something up. Something that will make you powerful. Something that will make you everything you always wanted. You can taste her blood on your lips. And you hear a voice... coming up from the floor. That voice. That whispering voice. It was always here. Always with you. A part of you. It's with you now. Right now.

UNSPEAKABLE STATS

PROFESSION	Musician (5d6)
PERSONALITY	Nimble Fingers (1d6), Dangerously Slim (1d6)
GOAL	Kill Everyone (1d6)
SANITY	0
MADNESS TRAITS	Dominate (5d6), Vision (3d6), Eggregore (2d6)

MEMORY 1: DEAN

Eating. The meat is tender and rare. You pick at the parts that get stuck in your teeth. The meat is so rare, there's blood on your plate. And when you're done with the meat, you break the bone and suck out the marrow. Then, you look at the bone. So small. What kind of creature would this come from? Not a chicken. Not a cow or a deer. And you smile. Because you know.

MEMORY 2: DEAN

Chop.

The cleaver comes down. It slices through the cartilage linking shoulder to the arm. You pull and it separates easily. You can't hear the scream it makes because of the ear plugs. It's easier that way. Not that you care, but the screams make you so agitated. Makes you sloppy. And you are so bored by the pleas. They all use the same begging sounds. You've heard them so many times. You raise the cleaver and it screams again. Nothing you haven't heard before.

Chop.

MEMORY 1: OLIVER

A small, dirty hotel room. The cocaine makes you strong. Makes you fast. Helps you get everything out of your head. It gets stuck in there. The cocaine gets it out. But you need more. Something more than what the cocaine gives you. The needle. Maybe the needle.

MEMORY 2: OLIVER

A room somewhere in the city. Window overlooking the lights. The knife in your hand is covered with blood. The man on the floor is dying. Bags of drugs on the table. You had to do it. He had a gun. Your skin itches. He whispered something. Or... something... whispered something. Told you he had a gun. But there's no gun on him. Your skin itches. No gun. Who told you? Who were you listening to?

MEMORY 1: SAMANTHA

A dark room full of little beds all lined up like chocolates in a box. You can hear some of them snoring. A few of them twitch as dreams pass through their minds. You walk by each one. You smile down at them. Then, you find the one you were looking for. You cradle up the small, warm body in your arms. And you carry it away.

MEMORY 2: SAMANTHA

You can hear their little voices talking in the darkness. They whisper to themselves about the woman. You almost laugh when you realize none of them recognizes you. Their voices are so frightened. Some of them cry themselves to sleep. When you walk along their beds now, some of them tremble. They pull the covers over their heads, certain that they're fooling you. They are not fooling you.

CALL OF CTHULHU STATS

STR 8

DEX 10

INT 18

CON 10

APP 18

SIZ 8

SAN 85

POW 17

EDU 15

DAMAGE BONUS -d4

CTHULHU MYTHOS _____

ACCOUNTING 80

BARGAIN 80

COMPUTER USE 80

DODGE 20

FAST TALK 80

LAW 60

LISTEN 60

PERSUADE 80

PSYCHOLOGY 60

SPOT HIDDEN 50

THROW 40

Hit Points 

UNSPEAKABLE STATS

PROFESSION Businessman (5d6)

PERSONALITY Melancholy (3d6)

Ambitious (2d6)

Cut-Throat Instincts (2d6)

Woman in Charge (3d6)

GOAL Get in Charge (1d6)

SANITY 10

MADNESS TRAITS n/a



SAMANTHA MURPHY

Why leave Earth? Why leave everything behind to be a corporate executive on a backwater planet that won't have its own atmosphere for three years? Because everything that kept you on Earth died two weeks ago.

You were in charge of the entire operation. You were ready to be drinking champagne while watching the ship take off. But your husband and daughter were killed in a fire two weeks before launch. You are still in mourning, still melancholy, still not fully recovered. The psychologists back on Earth gave you pills to help when your mind sinks into depression. Be sure to keep them with you. When you awaken from the deep sleep, your mind will be susceptible to dark thoughts and possibly delusions. If you suffer from such periods of darkness, take your medicine.

But when you arrive, you are going to be in charge of everything. Every little detail. That should keep your mind off things. That should allow you to work your way back to a little light.

STR 8

DEX 10

INT 18

CON 10

APP 18

SIZ 8

SAN 85

POW 17

EDU 15

DAMAGE BONUS -d4

CTHULHU MYTHOS _____

CALL OF CTHULHU STATS

CONCEAL 60

FIRST AID 80

HIDE 90

LISTEN 80

MEDICINE 60

PERSUADE 70

PHARMACY 60

PSYCHOLOGY 80

RELIGION (CATHOLIC) 90

SNEAK 80

SPOT HIDDEN 80

Hit Points

█	█	█
█	█	█
█	█	█
█	█	█
█	█	█
█	█	█



BLOODY MARY



SAMANTHA MURPHY

MEMORY 3

The priest in charge of the orphanage sits down in front of you. You have handcuffs on your wrists. The law is here. He tried to cover for you. He tried to help you. You know that. But you aren't saying a word. He will carry on when you are gone. And you smile, knowing that. The law found the bodies of the children you buried in the woods. But they did not find the ones by the river. Oh, no. And when you are gone, he will wait a little while longer and then the disappearances will start again. And for years, they will wonder why. They may even let you out. Obviously, you were convicted for a crime you did not commit. Oh, how foolish men are. How foolish.

UNSPEAKABLE STATS

PROFESSION	n/a
PERSONALITY	Determined Gaze (1d6)
GOAL	Kill Everyone (1d6)
SANITY	0
MADNESS TRAITS	Violence (5d6), Domination (3d6), Vision (3d6), Egregore (1d6)

CALL OF CTHULHU STATS

STR	<u>12</u>
DEX	<u>14</u>
INT	<u>13</u>
CON	<u>8</u>
APP	<u>12</u>
SIZ	<u>10</u>
SAN	<u>50</u>
POW	<u>10</u>
EDU	<u>12</u>
DAMAGE BONUS	<u>+0</u>
CTHULHU MYTHOS	_____

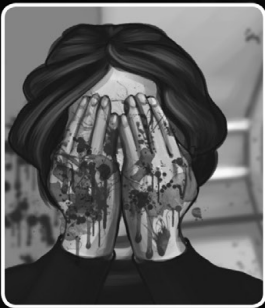
ASTRO NAVIGATION	<u>90</u>
COMPUTER USE	<u>75</u>
ELECTRONICS	<u>60</u>
ELECTRICAL REPAIR	<u>40</u>
MECHANICAL REPAIR	<u>50</u>

PILOT SHIP	<u>95</u>
PERSUADE	<u>50</u>
HIDE	<u>60</u>
THROW	<u>40</u>

Hit Points 

UNSPEAKABLE STATS

PROFESSION	<u>Pilot (5d6)</u>
PERSONALITY	<u>Terrified (3d6)</u> <u>Paranoid (3d6)</u> <u>Desperate (2d6)</u> <u>Secretive (2d6)</u>
GOAL	<u>Get to the Escape Shuttle (1d6)</u>
SANITY	<u>10</u>
MADNESS TRAITS	<u>Hysterical Strength (1d6)</u> <u>Intuition (3d6)</u> <u>Perception (2d6)</u> <u>Violence (3d6)</u>



JENNY BRIGHT

The job was easy. Fly a cargo hold full of colonists out to a distant planet. No trouble. Year and a half out and a year and a half back. Big cash.

But something went wrong. The ship's computer—Archie—woke all of you up in mid-flight. He encountered some kind of strange radiation. He said it has infected the air supply. He said it also infected his databanks and made it impossible for him to dump the atmosphere. He said everything had to be done manually.

But the crew started going bad. They got paranoid. They started killing each other. Not just murder but something worse. Torture. Mutilation.

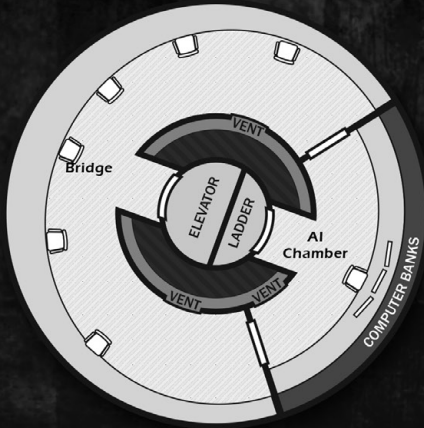
You hid yourself in the infirmary. Slid behind a small cupboard away from everyone else. When you got too hungry to wait, you found what the rest of the crew did to themselves and each other. They are all dead now. You are the only one left.

You found a note left behind by the engineer. He was trying to turn Archie off—disconnect him from the ship's systems. You followed his instructions and now the ship's computer is no longer a threat. But his robots are. The three of them scour the corridors looking for survivors. They're dangerous. And they'll kill you if you can.

The one thing you overlooked, however, was Archie's connection to the cargo. Apparently, he's started waking them up. You've got to hide again. Wait until you see what they do. Maybe they're working for Archie. Maybe he's injected fake memories in their skulls. He is running some kind of psych program on all of them. And why is all this blood on your hands? Where did it come from? You didn't kill anybody. You know that. You know that. You didn't kill anybody. You hid away. You hid. You hid. You didn't kill anybody.

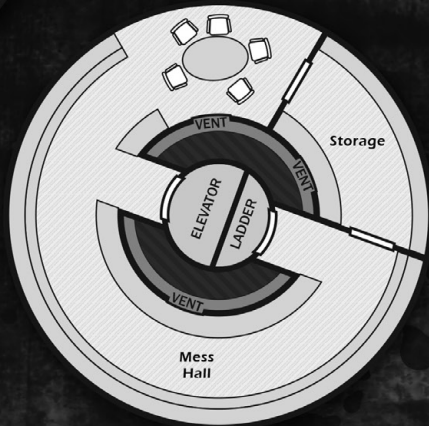
You didn't kill anybody.

LEVEL 1
Bridge
AI Chamber

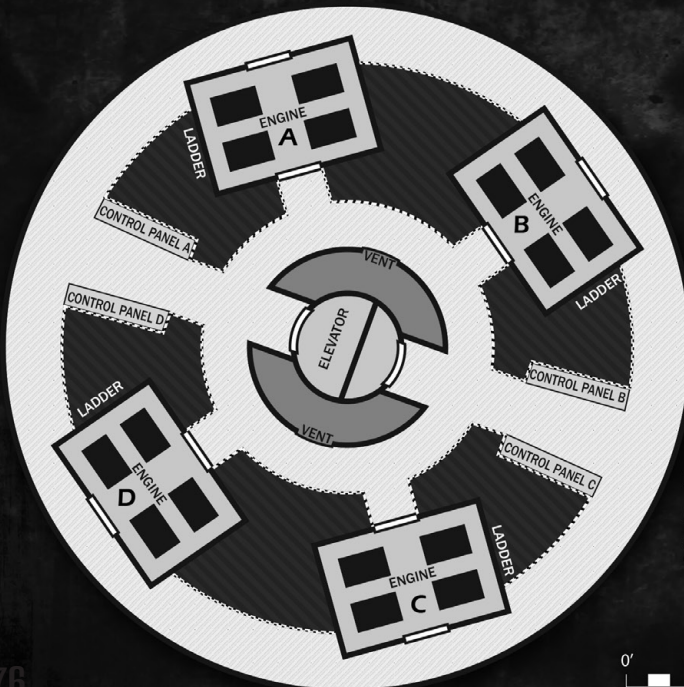


LEGEND

-  DOOR
-  AIR VENT & MAINTENANCE LEDGE
-  OPEN AIR
-  RAIL FENCE
-  CRYOSLEEP POD



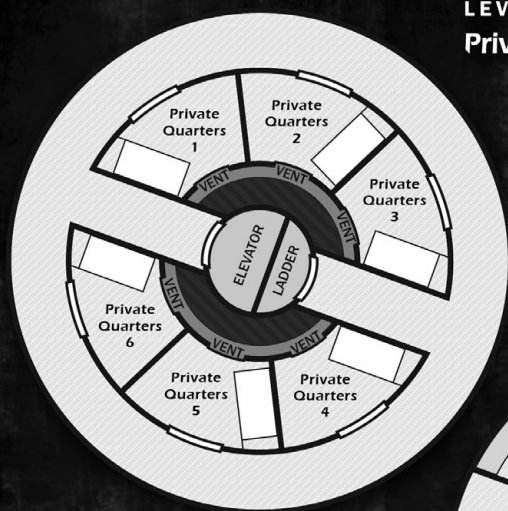
LEVEL 2
Mess Hall



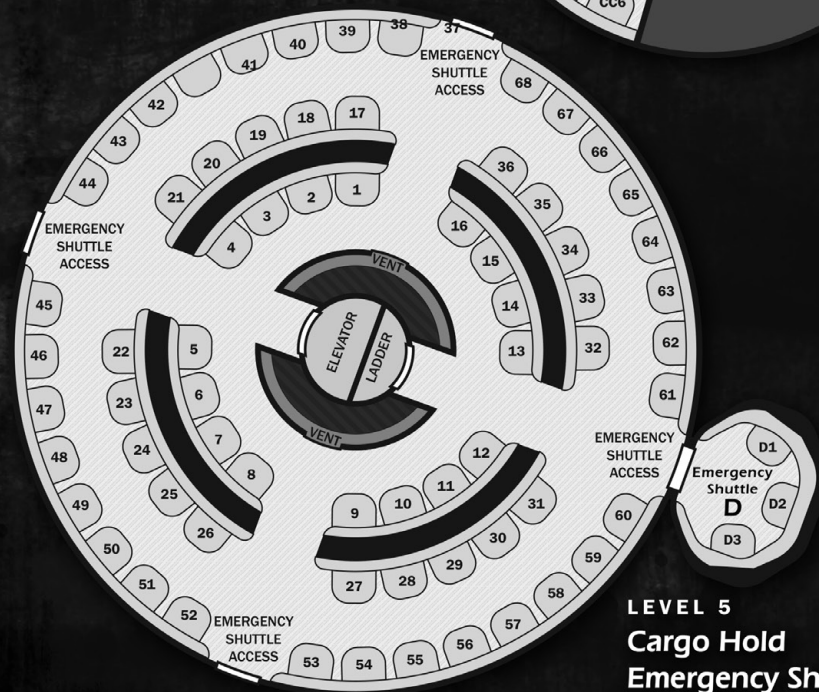
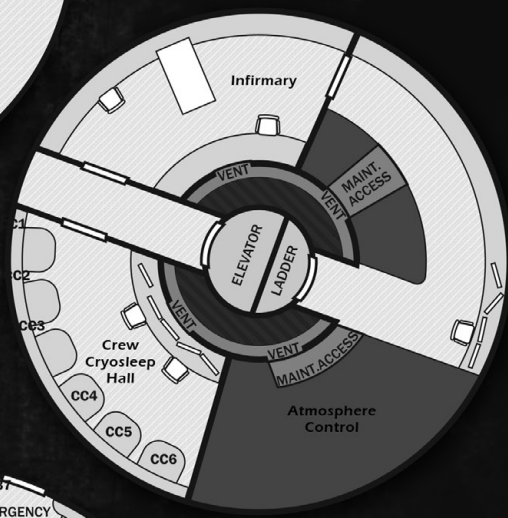
LEVEL 6
Engineering
Station



LEVEL 3
Private Quarters



LEVEL 4
Infirmary
Atmosphere Control
Crew Cryosleep Hall



LEVEL 5
Cargo Hold
Emergency Shuttles

AFTERMATH

June 13, 1939
Africa

Sir,

The Nazi encampment around the Temple has been scattered. An explosion sealed the Temple from further investigations.

After searching the grounds around the Temple, we have found what first appeared to be a meteor strike. Our geologists tell me the meteor struck millions of years ago. An incredible find, we thought. But then, something amazing happened.

Further investigation revealed to us that the interior of the meteor is hollow.

When we were finally able to open it, we found some sort of capsule. One of my boys said it looked like something H.G. Wells or Jules Verne would have written about. It contained a single body wearing something like a diving suit.

We thought the body to be dead, but to our astonishment, it was not. This revelation nearly killed one of my officers from pure fright. The poor man looked at us and asked us where he was. We told him. And then, he asked for the year. We told him that as well. He said something about "time dilation." Then, he asked us "Where is Jenny?" We told him he was alone and there were no others.

"Then we brought it here," he said to us. "We brought it to Earth."

He then grabbed my pistol from my belt and put it in his mouth. I was too slow to stop him from pulling the trigger.

Further investigation found footprints leading away from the crater, but they quickly disappeared into the jungle.

I have nothing more to report now. I must be away. There is a rash of fever going on among the men. They are having delusions and fever dreams. The sooner we return home, the better.

Sincerely,

Captain George Wellington

UNSPEAKABLE

A LITTLE LOVECRAFT GAME
BY ROB JUSTICE BASED ON
UNNAMABLE BY JOHN WICK

In *Unspeakable*, the players take the roles of investigators looking into the horror of the Cthulhu Mythos, discovering the terrible truths of the universe.

To do that, they need characters.

YOUR CHARACTER

First, make copies of the character sheet on the next page. Go ahead, I give you permission.

Next, ask the GM what kind of game you're playing. Is it set in the 1920's? 1940's? 1890's? 2000's? Find that out.

Once you know what time your character is from it's time to start deciding their Sane Traits.

SANE TRAITS

All of the Traits listed below have suggestions presented at the end of the book, but you may also make up your own using the list as a guide.

Each Sane Trait can have up to three points.

Assign five points to your character's *Profession* trait. **This is what your character knows how to do.**

After that, assign 10 points to your character's *Personality* traits. No Personality trait may be higher than 3. **This is how your character behaves.**

Penultimately, pick a *Goal*. **This is what drives your character.** Goals represent personal long-term ambitions and are often the reason you end up looking into the forbidden.

Finally, write a big fat "10" in the *Sanity* box. **This is your character's grasp on reality.** And, once you're done with that, you're done!

"But wait!" I hear you say. "What about the *other half* of my character sheet?" Gentle Reader... you aren't ready to see that yet. But soon. Very, very soon.

NAME _____

YEAR _____

PROFESSION

GOAL

PERSONALITY TRAITS

WEAPONS | TOOLS

SANITY



UNSPEAKABLE

MADNESS TRAITS

- Hysterical Strength
- Violence
- Insinuate
- Domination
- Intuition
- Vision
- Egregore

MARKS

THE GAME

When investigating the Mythos, your character may take risks that are socially, mentally and/or physically challenging. When your character enters such a risk, you roll dice.

YOUR DICE

This game uses d6s for determining the outcome of risks. Here's the list of how many dice you can roll for each risk.

If a **Trait** is appropriate to the risk, add **1d6** per point in that Trait to your roll. Only one of each Trait can be used per roll. This means only one Profession, one Personality, and One Goal.

TARGET NUMBERS

When the GM calls for a risk, they assign a *Target Number*. You roll your dice and try to roll equal to or greater than the *TN*.

Every TN starts at five. Then, as the GM sees fit, they raise the TN by increments of five based on how difficult they consider the risk. A good gauge to measure by is “How many things are getting in the way?” For each obstacle, increase the TN by five.

For example, if fighting a cultist, consider the circumstances. Does the cultist have a weapon? If yes, that makes things more difficult, and the GM should add five to the TN. Is the fight in the dark and difficult for the character to see? Add another five to the TN.

If defusing a bomb—because cultists love bombs—consider the skill of the cultist. Do they have “Bomber” as a profession? I'd add five points to the TN for that. Is the timer below two minutes? Yeah, I'd throw another five on the top of that.

If you need a quick TN for things like bombs, lockpicking, solving puzzles, etc., add up a number of dice equal to the person the character opposes. For example, the person who made the bomb, the lock, the

puzzle, etc. Then, multiply those dice by five. That should give you a good estimation of the TN.

Important note: The GM should *never* roll dice against the players. The GM sets the Target Number and that's it. Any Traits an NPC may have should translate into the TN and not a dice pool. No double dipping.

RESULTS

If the player rolls greater than the TN, it means the character *succeeds*. The GM narrates the character's success.

If the player rolls less than the TN, it means the character causes a *problem*. This means the character is successful in their task, but has caused an additional issue to address either down the road or, perhaps, immediately.

SANITY/MADNESS

Each character begins the game with 10 Sanity Points. Whenever a character faces the horrible truth of the universe (confronts an entity or reads a book, etc.), they make a Sanity Check.

Roll 1d10 and compare your roll with your current Sanity. If the roll is equal to or lower than your current Sanity, deduct one Sanity Point from your total.

LOSING SANITY

When you lose a Sanity Point, you *must* put a point into a Madness Trait on the right-side of the sheet.

MADNESS TRAITS

Madness Traits can be used at any time a Sane Trait would be used. They do not replace Sane Traits, but instead add to pools alongside Sane Traits.

Each Madness Trait can have up to three points.

Hysterical Strength adds its rank in dice to any physical risk the character undertakes.

Violence adds its rank in dice to any risk involving injuring another person.

(For those of you who are curious, you may stack **Hysterical Strength** and **Violence**.)

Insinuate adds its rank in dice to any risk where the character wants to seem like a bland face in a crowd. To appear completely normal.

Domination adds its rank in dice to any risk where the character draws people to them. Manipulating weaker minds into serving and protecting them.

Intuition adds its rank in dice to any risk the character makes that requires knowledge about the Mythos—it's creatures, tomes, secret histories, etc.

Vision adds its rank in dice to any risk the character makes to spot small details and link disparate facts.

Egregore allows the character to add dice to any *other* character that takes a risk already including a Madness Trait. There is no limit to how many Characters can add their Egregore to another character's pool. Beware large groups of cultists.

COMPLETE MADNESS

When a character has no more Sanity to lose, they go completely insane. Strike off any Goals your character has and replace it with "Serve the Dark Gods and bring about the utter destruction of mankind."

CONFLICT

When player characters come to blows, physically, mentally, or even socially, both roll dice. Whoever rolls higher wins the round and the loser takes a **Mark**.

Marks are descriptions of how the character was hurt. A broken wrist, a torn off ear, a painful headache, a repressed memory, wounded pride, a shameful secret... these are **Marks** upon your character.

When an **Mark** is appropriate to a risk, the character loses one die from the risk. **Marks** can stack, so a broken wrist and a sprained ankle can deduct two dice from a risk.

When a character takes their fifth **Mark** they die, become crippledly insane (a mindless drooling idiot, as opposed to the mindful Complete Madness described above), or find themselves driven away as a pariah. The exact outcome is determined by

circumstance but the effect should be universal; the character is no longer a player character.

WEAPONS AND TOOLS

Anything that can be used as a weapon or tool gives the player a bonus for Conflict.

Simple things like melee weapons, mundane textbooks, and attractive clothing give a single die.

More dangerous items like ranged weapons, ancient tomes, or enticing clothing give two dice.

Extremely powerful items like explosives, occult texts, or seductive lingerie give three dice.

MAGIC

Some Lovecraftian stories describe certain rituals. Any character can cast a ritual as long as they have a point in a Madness Trait.

To cast a ritual, a character must *Burn a Trait*. That is, if the ritual is successful you remove one die from a Trait. If this reduces a Trait to zero dice then it may never be used again.

If interrupted while casting a ritual, the ritual fails and the Trait is not lost.

Casters can only Burn Sane Traits; Profession or Personality. Casting rituals involves giving up a piece of yourself, your identity, your individuality. You conform to a ritual and give into the madness of magic. You lose what makes you, you.

You can not Burn a Goal.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX I: PROFESSION TRAITS

Actor	College	Journalist	Police Officer
Archeologist	Professor	Judge	Politician
Architect	Cook	Lawyer	Reporter
Artist	Criminal	Librarian	Sculptor
Assayer	Dentist	Maid	Secretary
Author	Detective	Mechanic	Shopkeeper
Banker	Doctor	Metalurgist	Soldier
Barber	Drunk	Miner	Stage Magician
Bootlegger	Editor	Musician	Student
Carpenter	Engineer	Nurse	Surgeon
Chemist	Factory Worker	Painter	Teacher
Clergy	Hitman	Paramedic	Tenant Farmer
Clerk	Inventor	Photographer	Waitress
	Janitor	Physician	Writer

APPENDIX II: PERSONALITY TRAITS

Active	Attentive	Careless	Confused
Adventurous	Bold	Cautious	Considerate
Affectionate	Bored	Charming	Cooperative
Alert	Bossy	Cheerful	Courageous
Ambitious	Brainy	Childish	Cowardly
Angry	Brave	Clever	Cross
Annoyed	Bright	Clumsy	Cruel
Anxious	Brilliant	Coarse	Curious
Apologetic	Busy	Concerned	Dangerous
Arrogant	Calm	Confident	Daring

Dark	Glamorous	Loyal	Secretive
Decisive	Gloomy	Mature	Selfish
Demanding	Graceful	Mean	Serious
Dependable	Grateful	Messy	Sharp
Depressed	Greedy	Miserable	Shy
Determined	Grouchy	Mysterious	Silly
Discouraged	Grumpy	Naughty	Skillful
Dishonest	Guilty	Nervous	Sly
Disrespectful	Happy	Nice	Smart
Doubtful	Harsh	Noisy	Sneaky
Dull	Hateful	Obedient	Spoiled
Dutiful	Healthy	Obnoxious	Stingy
Eager	Helpful	Peaceful	Strange
Easygoing	Honest	Picky	Strict
Efficient	Hopeful	Pleasant	Stubborn
Embarrassed	Hopeless	Polite	Sweet
Encouraging	Humorous	Popular	Talented
Energetic	Ignorant	Positive	Thankful
Evil	Imaginative	Precise	Thoughtful
Excited	Impatient	Proper	Thoughtless
Expert	Impolite	Proud	Tired
Fair	Inconsiderate	Quiet	Tolerant
Faithful	Independent	Rational	Touchy
Fearless	Industrious	Reliable	Trusting
Fierce	Innocent	Religious	Trustworthy
Foolish	Intelligent	Responsible	Unfriendly
Foul	Jealous	Restless	Unhappy
Fresh	Kindly	Rough	Upset
Friendly	Lazy	Rowdy	Useful
Frustrated	Leader	Rude	Warm
Funny	Lively	Sad	Weak
Gentle	Lonely	Safe	Wise
Giving	Loving	Satisfied	Worried

APPENDIX III: GOAL TRAITS

Acquire an Unabridged Latin Version of the Necronomicon
Become Immortal
Capture a Notorious Criminal
Convince the World to Avoid the Hills of Vermont
Discover a Method to Bring Back the Dead
Escape from this Slimy Expanse of Hellish Black Mire
Find the Rue d'Auseil
Finish My Education at Miskatonic University
Gain the Acceptance of a Peer
Make a Friend
Make Contact with Creatures from Another Dimension
Overthrow the Corrupt U.S. Government
Return to the Dreamlands
Solve an Unsolved Murder
Uncover the Truth about the Cthulhu Cult
Uncover the Truth Behind my Uncle's Notes

APPENDIX IV: RITUALS

Body/Mind Transference
Drawing the Yellow Sign
Resurrecting the Dead
Soul Binding
Summoning Yog-Sothoth
The Barrier of Naath-Tith
The Hoy-Dhin Chant
The Other Name of Azathoth
The Powder of Ibn Ghazi
The Sixth Sathlatta
The Voorish Sign
Travel to the Dreamlands

VICTIMS

CULTIST

ADAM FASTHOLM	D. NOLAND	ISMAEL FARIAS
ADAM FLYNN	DAIMADOSHI_CL	ITAI PEREZ
ADAM M	DAJEBRIZA	IVANO SCOPPETTA
ALAN SMITH	DALE FRIESEN	JAMIE WHEELER
ALEXANDER	DARIO AROSIO	JAN HOLAN
ALEXIS LAMIABLE	DARREN STRUBLE	JARYD CALLEJA- HORVATH
ANDREW GATLIN	DAVI TASSINARI DE FIGUEIREDO	JASON COTTON
ANTOINE PEMPJE	DAVID MORRISON	JAVIER MATA
ANTONIO MIGUEL MARTORELL FERRIOL	DEREK GUDER	JENNIFER DULOCK
ARMIN WELK	DOMINIC MOONEY	JÉRÉMIE JEMRYS RUEFF
ASH HAVERY	DONNA NUTTER	JESPER ANDERSON
AXEL TOELKE	DSMILES	JIM RYAN
BENJAMIN	ED TEACH	JOE CRAIG
BEZ BEZSON	EMRYS HOPKINS	JOERG STERNER
BILL SUNDWALL	ERIC DODD	JOHN FORRESTER- RAYMOND
BLUE GARGANTUA	ERICH L.	JOHN GT
CALLUM STONER	ERIK CARL	JOHN POTTS
CHAD LYNCH	ERIK INGERSEN	JON SIMPSON
CHARLES ETHERIDGE- NUNN	FREDERICK FOULDS	JONATHON KENT
CHARLIE A MAIN	FRIDRIK BJARNASON	JOSEPH BARIS
CHRIS BERNHARDI	GALIHAD	JUSTIN SCHMID
CHRIS MILES	GENE KOBAYASHI	JUSTINAQUINOZ
CHRIS WESTBROOK	GILBERT ISLA	KASPER MELCHIOR CHRISTIENSEN
CHRISTOPHER REED	GRAHAM BILLIAU	KENT BLUE
CJ ROMER	H. ALEXANDER V.	KRIS DENSLEY
CLAUDIO TORCATO	IAN BORCHARDT	KYLE BENTLEY
	INCANDESCENS	

LA CALAVERA CATRINA	NEIL MAHONEY	RYO OGAWA
LAVONARDO	NIGEL CLARKE	SEAN KELLY
LIANG YUE	NJALL - CAYNE CORP. SHAREHOLDER 6.66	SEAN M PETRICK
LIANGCAI	OMAR AMADOR	SEAN WHITTAKER
LINUS RÅDE	OSCAR ULLOA	SERGIO SILVIO HERRERA GEA
LIPPAI.PETER	PAGURUS	SHANE MCLEAN
LORD HENRY	PATRICK M. GROULX	SHANNYN STEVENS
LUCIANO VIEIRA VELHO	PAU MARTINEZ MEDRANO	SIMON BRUNNING
M ALEXANDER JURKAT	PAUL BENDALL	SNON
MAD TINKER GNOME	PAUL MAITLAND	SVEND ANDERSEN
MARC MAJCHER	PEDRO BARRENECHEA	TASSILO TOBOLLIK
MARC MARGELLI	RAFAŁ POŚNIK	THE ROACH
MARCO SECTARIO	RAFE BALL	THUONG PHAM
MARK THOMPSON	REVGRA	TIM ELLIS
MARTIN EK	RICHARD HAWKINS	TIM JENSEN
MATÍAS NICOLÁS CARUSO	ROBERT ANDERSSON	TROY LENZE
MATT FOWLE	ROBERT BIDDLE	ULF ANDERSSON
MATTHEW D. MILLER	ROBERT KIM	VINCENT AREBALO
MEGAN PETERSON	ROBOSNAKE	WESLEY
MICHAEL CONNER	RODOLPHE	WUSEMAJOR
MICK REDDICK	RONNY ANDERSSON	XSAMI
NEAL DALTON		

PRIEST OF THE YELLOW SIGN

AARON STURGILL	ALEXANDER D SECARY	ANDREW COWIE
ADAM	ANDERS HÅKON GAUT	ANDREW DOLPHIN
ADRIAN	ANDREA LO	ANDREW FRANKE
ALEX H	ANDREAS TARANDI	ANDY LEIGHTON

ANDY SIMMONS	DAVE CORNER	JAVIER BRAUNS
ANONYMOUS1453	DAVID BRESSON	JENS WISTBACKA
ARRAN DICKSON	DAVID FARNELL	JEREMIAH JOHNSTON
ARRON MITCHELL	DAVID QUICK	JOÃO TALASSA
ARUN SHANKAR	DAVID STARNER	JOAQUIN COGOLLOS
AUSSIE9INJA	DROMPOT23	JOE CROW
AUSTIN WHITESCARVER	DUMON	JOE PARZANESE
BEN MCFARLAND	DUSTIN	JOE ROONEY
BEN MERCER	DYLAN HARVEY	JON DEHNING
BEN QUANT	ED KOWALCZEWSKI	JONATHAN JORDAN
BILL ASHBAUGH	ELIOT HOCHBERG	JONATHAN PAM
BOYCE BOYCE	ELIZABETH CHAIPRADITKUL	JOSH MANNON
BRIAN LAVELLE	ELMIKO	JOSHUA KING
BRUNO	FANTOMAS	JUAN SCHWARTZMAN
BRYAN STILTZ	FRED SCHIFF	KAPCON RPG CONVENTION
CANDIDA NORWOOD	GATCHA	KARIBOU
CARLOS GARCIA GARCIA	GIACOMO SOTTOCASA	KATE
CARLOS LASTRA	GLGAMESMIKE	KEITH GARRETT
CÉSAR BERNAL PRAT	GONZALO RODRIGUEZ GARCIA	KENDALL UYEJI
CHARLES	GREG DAVIS	KILLSTRING
CHRIS ANGELINI	GUY RIESSEN	KJ WALL
CHRISW	IAN R	KRISTIAN A. BJØRKELO
CHUCK CHILDERS	JAMES BURKE	LAUGHING MOON
CONTESSE	JAMES ROUSE	LAURA
CORNELIS DEBRUIN	JAMISONTHING	MAGECORE
D.J. BABB	JARED STRICKLAND	MAHAFA
DAMON WILSON	JASON CORLEY	MANUEL BARAJA
DARÍO CASADO		MARCIANTOBAY
DAVE COE		

MARK H	MTMABIE	SEAN PAYNE
MARK KADAS	CAMERON WORRALL	SEAN SMITH
MATT PUCCIO	PATRICK HENRY DOWNS	SHEMJAZA
MATT VINCENT	NIMROD JONES	KEITH PRESTON
MATT WHALLEY	OLIVER	STEPHANIE WAGNER
MATT WRYCRAFT	PETRI LEINONEN	STEVE MEYER
MATTHEW LISITSKY	PHIL WARD	STEVEN VEST
MATTHEW WILSON	RECRISPI	TERRELL
MICHAEL BERGH HANSEN	RENÉ JOHN KERKDYK	MARTIN TERRIER
MICHAEL DOWNEY	RICHARD STARR	TERRY WHISENANT
MICHAEL GUNN	RICHARD TAYLOR	THOMAS DAHMEN
MICHAEL HILL	ROB SCHULTZ	THOMAS FIORENTINO
MICHAEL MAROON	ROBERT BISKIN	TIM KNIGHT
MICHAEL TULLY	ROBERT CARNEL	TODD EVANGELISTA
MICHELE GELLI	RUSSELL G COLLINS	TOM BITHER
MIKE DIBAGGIO	RYAN ZIEGLER	TOM DOWD
MIKE DOMINO	SAVINIEN	TOR IVER WILHELMSEN
MIKE MUSTERIC	SCOTT BENNETT	TYNAFAX DAND
MIKE WILLIAMS	SCOTT C. BOURGEOIS	WÆLCYRGE
MONIQUE	SCOTT PURO	WILL MUNOZ

RETAILER

DARREN JOHNSON	ROLAND BAHR
PHILIPPE GAMACHE	SEAN HOLLAND

HIGH PRIEST OF HASTUR

4649MATT	APOZZLE	CELINE DILL
ANDREAS DAVOUR	CABLE	COREY FULTON

DAVID CROWELL	JONATHAN SCHRACK	ROSTOW
DAVID LEWIS	JOSHUA CLARK	SIMONE
EGOITZ GAGO	KELBY LIMBOCKER	STEPHEN MURRELL
FRANCK FLORENTIN	MAREK STAROSTA	STEVE BURNETT
JAY WATSON	MEL WHITE	THOMAS NIELSEN
JEFF VANDINE	PETER SVARD	TOM RYAN
JOANNA JONES	PIP GENGENBACH	UWE SCHUMACHER

WATCHER IN THE DARKNESS

6MMWAR	GARETH HODGES	MALRAZA
ADAM CROSSINGHAM	GERALD VANOVER	MONNIE ROBINSON
BERNARDO	HENRY LOPEZ	POOKIE UK
BENJAMIN SENNITT	JUSTJESSIE23	SÉBASTIEN ALLARD
DAVID DEROCHA	LEON C. GLOVER III	SERGIDOVAL
FRANK DELVENTHAL	MALARKY	STEPHEN JOSEPH ELLIS

MASTER OF THE YELLOW SIGN

BEN WALKER	JEZ CLEMENT	RUNESLINGER
DALE	JOHN WHYTE	SANDRA PHILLIPS
DANA THOMS	JOSEPH HARNEY	SHERVYN VON HOERL
EMMANUEL KANTER	LAI CHEONG SANG	STEVE HOLDER
ERIC PRIEHS	LISA PADOL	TIM BETZ
GNUTZICK	MICHAEL PIETRELLI	TOBIE ABAD
JAKE COOK	PATRICK JEDAMZIK	WAYNE COBURN
JASON HATTON	RICHARD THOMAS	WOUTER DHONDT

STALWART INVESTIGATOR

ANDRZEJ KRAKOWIAN	BRETT EASTERBROOK	DONALD WEED
ATH	DANIEL LEY	JEFFRY RINKEL

JOE KONTOR

PETER CERDA-PAVIA

STEVE RUBIN

JOHN C. McCARTAN V

REVNYE

TONY GAITSKELL

LARS HOLGAARD

STEPHEN CHIU

WILLIAM STOWERS

NoNAME McGEE

STEVE MUMFORD

UNSPEAKABLE

AARON F STANTON

MATTHEW SANDERSON

ADAM ALEXANDER

MATTHEW WILLNER

BRETT BOZEMAN

MICHAEL MEIKE

BRIAN I

MICHAEL MORGAN

CHITIN PROCTOR

MICHAEL PLEIER

CHRIS LLOYD

MIKAEL ENGSTROM

CHRISTOPHER MOSES

PATRICE MERMOUND

CHRISTOPHER WONG

PAUL MORGAN

DANIEL WASZKIEWICZ

PHILLIP BAILEY

DARIN KERR

RICHARD ROSSI

EUGENE DOHERTY

ROB JUSTICE

FORD FITCH

ROBYN GRAHAM

FRANK DICKERSON

RON LYNN

GUERRIC SAMPLES

SCOTT NISENFELD

IAIN SMEDLEY

SETH A SPURLOCK

JAMES

SØREN HAGGE

JEFF JONES

STEVE DEMPSEY

JESSE BUTLER

SVEN BERGLOWE

JONATHAN WILSON

THOMAS NELSON

KETWYLD

TROY ROOT

M. SEAN MOLLEY

YOSEF MAAYAN

MARK BUSSEY

MARY HENRY